

THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF LEGITIMIST SHI'ISM
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE
IMAM JA'FAR AL-ŞADIQ

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to trace out and reconstruct those earliest tendencies and ideas which resulted in the sectarian consolidation of legitimist Shī'ism in Islam.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, dealing in sequence with the events which took place from the death of the Prophet till the time of the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. From these events have been elucidated those aspects which link up the Shī'ite ideas to form an unbroken chain.

In the first chapter it has been shown that the Shī'ite tendency in its rudimentary form started immediately after the death of the Prophet, mainly on religious grounds, and manifested itself in the Saqīfa. During the wide-spread discontent which prevailed in the reign of 'Uthmān, religious Shī'ism also embraced a large political following, but the original Shī'a maintained the religious nature of their partisanship for 'Ali in distinction from his political supporters.

The second chapter explains the ideas and activities of that small group of the Shī'ites who, in spite of al-Hasan's abdication in favour of Mu'āwiya, remained persistent in their religious feeling regarding the leadership of the community. In part B of this chapter the tragedy of Karbala has been studied at length and the Shī'ite's ideas and viewpoint have been elucidated from the speeches and rajaz material pronounced by the companions of Husayn. After Karbala the Tawwābūn movement was another step further in Shī'ite sectarian tendency.

Chapter three deals with the split among the Shī'ites after the death of Husayn and the emergence of the legitimist Shī'ite faction who gathered round Zayn al-'Abidīn. Muhammad al-Bāqir further advanced legitimist claims within the Shī'ite movement.

The fourth chapter surveys that religio-political background which provided Ja'far al-Ṣādiq a propitious time to establish a firmly legitimist branch of the Shī'ites.

The last chapter examines the theory of the Imāmate expounded by the Imām Ja'far and his circle. In part B of this chapter an attempt has been made to examine the personalities of some of the most important adherents of Ja'far who are frequently cited as the authoritative source of the legitimist Shī'ite dogmas and legal practices.

On the whole the thesis suggests that Shī'ism was originally a religious and not a political movement, and that the legitimist faction never ceased to make its existence felt among the different groups of the early Shī'ites.

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S. Husain Mohammad Jafri

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ABBREVIATIONS

BM	-	British Museum.
BN	-	Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris).
BSOAS	-	<u>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</u> , University of London.
EI (1)	-	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam</u> , 1st Edition, 1913-1938.
EI (2)	-	<u>Encyclopaedia of Islam</u> , New Edition, in progress.
EI (Sh)	-	<u>Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam</u> , Ed. by Gibb and Kramers, 1953.
JAOS	-	<u>Journal of the American Oriental Society</u> .
JBBRAS	-	<u>Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</u> .
JRL	-	John Rylands Library, (Manchester).
JRAS	-	<u>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</u> .
REI	-	<u>Révue des Etudes Islamiques</u> .
RSO	-	<u>Rivista degli Studi Orientali</u> .
SOAS	-	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.
ZDMG	-	<u>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</u> .

Note: Abbreviations used for books are given in the bibliography.

Chapter I

A. THE BEGINNING OF SHI'ISM

The beginning of the disagreement which gave rise to the term Shī'a,¹ leaving aside any question of the latter's origins and sources, whether Arabian or Persian as suggested by a number of scholars, is to be found as far back as the death of the Prophet. Hardly had the founder closed his eyes for the last time when the first open clash among his followers broke out² over the leadership of the community. The

1. The word Shī'a in this chapter is used strictly in its literal meaning as party, group, associates or in a rather looser sense the 'supporters'; and not in its applied meaning as a particular religious designation for the followers of 'Ali and the people of his House as a 'Sect' against the 'Sunnī'. In the latter elaborate meaning the word Shī'a was used quite late. However, for the etymology of the word Shī'a see Tāj al 'Arūs, V.405. Lane, Lexicon, IV, 1632-1633. Sale, Translation of the Qur'ān, 277-279-302. The word occurs a number of times in the Qur'ān with rather varied and unprecise meaning: e.g., XIX, 69. XXVIII, 4-15. XXX, 32. XXXIV, 54. XXXVII, 83 and LIV, 51.
2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 656 ff. Nawbakhtī, Firaq al-Shī'a, 23. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Kitāb al-Maḡalāt wa'l-Firaq. 3 f. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 181. Balādhurī, Ansāb, (ed. Hamidullah, Cairo) I, 579 ff. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 102 ff. Tab., I, 1817 ff. 1837 f.

vital question of a successor for Muhammad quickly revived the old inter-tribal jealousies and revealed the temporary nature of the unity that had been achieved. The rise of this question of succession marks the beginning of the most radical and long continued division in Islam. The stage where this first conflict among the Muslims was manifested was the 'Saqīfa Banī Sā'ida, a meeting place in al-Madīna for deciding crucial issues. What happened in Saqīfa at that critical moment sowed the seeds of bitter feelings which resulted, in due course of time, in the everlasting schism of the community.

Therefore, when it is intended to investigate the very beginning and root of the Shī'ite 'feelings' in Islam one has to go in detail to the earliest possible incident which originated its first cause. The history of a people in every branch, be it political, cultural, religious or constitutional, is an unbroken continuity. No religious or political organisation or a sectarian development can be fully understood without due reference to the earliest point from which it was germinated. The 'Event of Saqīfa' is inextricably connected with the conception of Shī'ite tendency and, therefore, to ignore it in tracing out the causes and origin of the later development of Shī'ite sectarianism in Islam would certainly lead to misunderstanding

and wrong conclusions.¹ Thus it seems imperative to look into the proceedings of the Saqīfa and try to ascertain the points which ultimately found expression in determining the Shī'ite discipline in Islam.

But, before we try to draw an outline of the Saqīfa a characteristic historiographical problem has to be seriously faced. One can well question the authenticity of the reports in ascertaining the exact details of what happened in the selection of the first successor to the Prophet. No doubt the controversial character of the subject itself and the difficulty inherent in the source material makes the task of this investigation far from easy. This doubt becomes still more serious when we note that the earliest report on the event extant to us was written down not before the first half of the second century,

1. Some of the scholars try to trace out Shī'ite origin from the Umayyad period or more precisely from the conflict between 'Ali and Mu'āwiya when the latter resisted the title of the former: e.g. Hodgson, The Order of the Assassins, p.8., and Watt, Islam and its Integration of Society, p. 104. I find it rather difficult to agree with this approach. My study of the sources leads me to suggest that the origin and beginning of Shī'ite 'feeling' should be sought from the Saqīfa event; and that the inclination of some of the companions of the Prophet towards 'Ali at this occasion had its roots in a number of events which took place during the lifetime of the Prophet which led them to consider 'Ali as the best candidate after Muhammad. We shall see those guiding events in brief in this chapter in order to have a clear picture of the origin of the Shī'ite idea in Islam. It does not necessarily exclude other social, political and economic factors which crept in and mixed together in the later years of the Shī'ite sectarian consolidation.

and during the reign of the first two 'Abbāsīd Caliphs. This was the time when the division of the Muslim community into Shī'ite and Sunnite denominations had set deep in the hearts, and both camps were accusing each other for their contrary affiliations. In these circumstances it seems quite possible that the different reports describing the proceedings of Abū Bakr's election would have been circulated from different quarters in their respective interests. One can also suspect the reports of the historians of Shī'ite sympathies like that of Ibn Ishāq, al Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī as being biased in Shī'ite favour; and similarly the writings of Ibn Sa'd, al-Balādhurī and al-Ṭabarī as reporting in orthodox colour. Nevertheless, a close scrutiny of all the early sources named above shows that the 'event', at least in its broad outline and essential points, is strikingly close in each source with, of course, some differences in detail. These differences, which certainly show a tendency or inclination of the writer or his informant towards one side or the other, can be discerned, though not without some difficulty.

For a fact finding study of this nature it will often suffice to excerpt and treat the earliest known coherent tradition as a definite source. Now, the position of the sources is this. The earliest work extant, relating the Saqīfa episode, is by Ibn Ishāq (d. 151 AH.). His report though concise and short, gives all the necessary information about the event. The shortness of the report from Ibn Ishāq can be explained, in that his work deals mainly with the life

of the Prophet and he mentioned the Saqīfa episode just as the closing words in connection with the events of the death of Muhammad. Ibn Ishāq's chain of transmitters is direct and short; and based on the authority of persons like 'Abdullah b. Abī Bakr, al-Zuhrī, 'Ubaydullah b. 'Abdullah b. 'Utba b. Mas'ūd, 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās, 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr, Mālik b. Anas. All the reporters given by him are prefixed with the verb of certainty and personal contact, i.e., 'Haddathanī', "he told me".

The second writer of note in order of time is Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845) who, to a great extent ignores Ibn Ishāq and investigates himself from other sources and gives a more detailed picture of the event. He records most of the speeches made on that occasion by different speakers in favour of their candidates. Ibn Sa'd's interest in details is quite natural as he was more concerned with this period than his predecessor Ibn Ishāq. But Ibn Sa'd reporting the Saqīfa episode, like Ibn Ishāq, depends wholly on Medina informants, and does not like to use Kufa or Basra sources. His Isnād, though lengthy, are direct and very often go back to a contemporary witness. His honest traditional technique and loyal quotations of the evidences of both parties preclude to a considerable extent any tendentious attempt on his part.

Then comes Ibn Sa'd's younger contemporary al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892) who goes still further in his investigations and besides incorporating Ibn Sa'd's material which he invariably quotes with the direct verb 'Haddathanī' (he told me), collects all possible

versions of Saqīfa tradition from divergent sources. He frequently quotes al-Madā'inī who takes up a kind of middle position between Kufan and Medinan traditionists. He also narrates from Ibn al-Kalbī and Abū Ma'shar, and thus does not keep up with Medina tradition. The picture, however, given by al-Balādhurī would seem to show that Abū Bakr's election went rather smoothly, without any noticeable opposition and controversy, and that it was instantly accepted by 'Alī himself admitting the superior claims and merits of the former over him. Though he does not shrink from recording quite a few traditions favouring the cause of 'Alī, on the whole his treatment of his material seems to be somewhat tendentious.¹

These three early writers, however, cover almost every point of view and leave little to be added by their younger successors - al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284/897), and al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/922). Ya'qūbī, however, with some additions from some independent sources, depends more on Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarī, in addition to his own informants, relies basically on Ibn Ishāq. Nevertheless, the details and certain traditions given by al-Ya'qūbī, which were omitted by his three predecessors,

1. To me the tendency of a writer means only the doctrinal inclination or the attachment of the author himself to a particular school, as Mu'tazilī, Qadarī, Shī'ī or 'Uthmānī; and not as it is often said that all the writers being under 'Abbāsīd rule gave a distorted and wrong picture of the Umayyads.

are of immense importance and historically cannot be ignored. Specially it is so when we see that these additions of al-Ya'qūbī are taken and accepted by his successors like that of al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Qutayba and many others. It is also interesting to note the sharp contrast between al-Balādhurī and al-Ya'qūbī in the presentation and the treatment of their materials regarding the Saqīfa. We may well ignore Mas'ūdī (d.344/956) who mentions the Saqīfa in passing and Ibn Athīr (d.630/1234) who only follows what Ṭabarī has recorded. Among later Sunnī writers, for example, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, depends completely on al-Ya'qūbī and thus on Ibn Sa'd; and the later Shī'ite writers like al-Majlisī (d.1700 A.D.) who gives a very picturesque version in the favour of the Shī'a, carry no historical value at all.

In this historiographical complexity, however, what best we can do is to take as a basis Ibn Ishāq whose work reached us in the recension of Ibn Hishām (d.218), a die-hard orthodox himself and comparatively earlier than any other writer mentioned above. We frequently discover in the pages of the 'Sīrah' that Ibn Hishām never hesitates in his task of editing Ibn Ishāq's work to correct or comment on anything with which he disagrees and often inserts some additional information¹ he thinks was omitted by the author. But we do not find any assertion or comment by Ibn Hishām as far as the Saqīfa tradition goes in the 'Sīrah'. This leads us to

1. A. Guillaume, translating the Sīrah, collected all assertions and comments of Ibn Hishām in one unit and put them collectively at the end of the book, under the heading "Ibn Hishām's Notes". There are 922 notes of various length, some of them are short and some areas as long as covering about a page or even more. See, A. Guillaume, The Life of Muhammad, 690-798.

suppose that the tradition of Saqīfa in the 'Sīrah' is a unanimous testimony by a writer of Shī'ite learning and an editor-critic of orthodox Sunnite belief. For other necessary details left by Ibn Ishāq we should draw from Ibn Sa'd and compare it with al-Balādhurī, Ya'qūbī and Ṭabarī. If a given report is found common in all these four works and also stands our own judgement and criticism then it should be accepted, otherwise it must be rejected.¹ In this way a most careful version of the eventful election of Abū Bakr is as follows.

1. Nevertheless, when we read Ibn al-Nadīm's and Tūsī's Fihrists and Najāshī's K. al-Rijāl, we come across numerous early writers of the second and third centuries who are said to have written separate books or treatises (Rasā'il) on the Saqīfa which did not come down to us; e.g., all these three early Fihrist works attribute a K. al-Saqīfa to Abū Mikhnaf's authorship and when we read the Saqīfa tradition in Ṭabarī, which runs into many pages, we find quite a number of traditions are quoted by Ṭabarī on Abū Mikhnaf's authority. This leads us to believe that Abū Mikhnaf must have written something on Saqīfa which reached Ṭabarī who recorded it in a usual form 'Qāla Abū Mikhnaf'. Ibn Nadīm also cites many treatises written on the Saqīfa by the circle of the theologians, who gathered round the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, such as Nu'mān al-Ahwal and Hishām b. al-Hakam. A modern scholar of note, Aghā Buzurg al-Tehrānī, in his voluminous and scholarly work, al-Dharī'a ila Taṣānif al-Shī'a cites a number of works written down in early centuries on Saqīfa. I, however, could find out only one by Abū Bakr Ahmad b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Jawharī, (d. 322), who wrote a book 'Al-Saqīfa' and was incorporated by Ibn Abī'l-Hadīd in his Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha Vol.2. pp.44-59.

'The Prophet's corpse, still warm, was lying in his chamber. 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib, his cousin, ward, son-in-law and a possible candidate from the family of Muhammad and the former priestly clan of Banū Hāshim,¹ along with some other family members, was busy with his funeral rites.² The Anṣār of al-Madīna, perhaps afraid of Meccan's domination, hastily assembled in the Saqīfa to elect a chief from among themselves.³ At the same time some prominent members of the Muhājirūn, Muhammad's followers from Mecca, were holding another meeting⁴ to deliberate on the critical situation which now arose regarding the leadership of the community owing to the death of the Prophet. Apparently, all these three groups were unaware of each other's activities. The council of Muhājirūn was, however, interrupted by two informants who rushed and told them⁵ what was going on in the Saqīfa.

1. See infra, part B of this chapter.
2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 656. Balādhurī Ansāb, I, 583. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh II, 102. Ṭab., I, 1839. Ibn Qutayba, (attrib.) al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 9. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd al-Farīd, IV, 258. L. Veccia Vaglieri, El (2) Art "Ali."
3. Ibn Hishām, loc.cit. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 182 f. Balādhurī, op.cit., 580. Ṭab. I, 1817. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, op.cit. 10.
4. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 656 and 658. Ibn Sa'd, op.cit. 183. Balādhurī, op.cit., 581. Ya'qūbī, op.cit., 124. Ṭab. I, 1822.
5. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 656. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 581. Ṭab., loc.cit. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, Sharḥ, II, 23. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd al-Farīd, IV, 257.

Hearing that, Abū Bakr, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāh rushed to the assembly to prevent any unexpected development. When they reached the scene they saw Sa'd b. 'Ubāda sitting on a cushion, with a special turban on his head and an orator speaking in his favour.¹ Sa'd b. 'Ubāda was apparently the only candidate of the Anṣār, although many of them were inclined to recognise 'Ali as the rightful successor to the Prophet.²

Abū Bakr taking the lead of his party, however, demanded seriously to know what the Anṣār were doing. They replied that they wanted to elect an Amīr and began to set forth their claims and virtues. On that Abū Bakr said, "We do not deny the Anṣār their merits, but the Quraysh take precedence over you; they are the noblest

1. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 259. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 581, Ṭab., I, 1822 f. 1837 f. Ibn Sa'd and Ya'qūbī mention in detail the Anṣār's arguments in their favour but do not mention Sa'd b. 'Ubāda's name in particular. I think here we must accept Ibn Ishāq, Balādhurī and Ṭabarī's version in favour of Sa'd b. 'Ubāda. Also see al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, loc.cit. which mentions Sa'd's candidacy and presence in full detail; Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, op.cit. 24 ff. and Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, op. cit. 258 f.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 103 ff. Ṭab., I, 1818. Both Ṭabarī and Ya'qūbī mention this report repeatedly with different Isnād, whereas Balādhurī does not mention this tradition but states that a number of the companions did not pay homage to Abū Bakr instantly and asked 'Ali to rise and assert his candidacy. See Ansāb, I, 586 ff. Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Hishām also do not mention it specially with the name of the Anṣār. Under the circumstances of the Anṣār I am inclined to accept Ya'qūbī and Ṭabarī in this connection.

of all Arabs in descent and are settled in the centre. So, here are two worthiest men from among them: one 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, for whom the Prophet prayed, 'O God confirm his faith;' and the other is Abū 'Ubaydah, whom the Apostle declared, 'a leader of the people.' Choose one of them whichever you like and pay homage to him." But both the men named exclaimed, "Indeed we will not take advantage of you, for you only were second to the Apostle of God."¹

A critical examination of these proposals and secondments of each other strongly suggest that Abū Bakr and 'Umar had formed an alliance long before, possibly with Abū 'Ubaydah acting as the third of them.² It is also probable that the Anṣār knew this situation and thus acted quickly and tried to safeguard their position against the Muhājirūn.³

1. This account is common to Ibn Hishām, Ibn Sa'd, Balādhurī, Ya'qūbī and Tabarī all loc.cit. with some differences in Isnād and wording but with the same meaning and sense. Also see Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, II, 24 ff. and Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd al-Farīd, IV, 257 ff.
2. This observation is strongly strengthened by a number of traditions recorded by Balādhurī, in Ansāb I, 579-580, to the effect that immediately after Muhammad's death, 'Umar and Abū 'Ubaydah went to Abū Bakr and asked him to accept their instant allegiance. The same traditions are also recorded, with different Isnād and wording, by Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 181-182.
3. This idea is supported by a number of events which took place between the Muhājirūn and Anṣār especially in the last two years of Muhammad's life at Medina, see Ibn Hishām, Balādhurī and Tabarī.

However, it was not before a number of hot and bitter arguments and dialogues between the Anṣār and the Muhājirūn, setting forth their claims and suggesting different prospects were exchanged that 'Umar snatched an opportune moment and swore fealty to Abū Bakr. Abū 'Ubaydah followed his example, and the majority of those present also paid homage to him.¹ There were, however, some of the Anṣār who said, "We will not give our allegiance to any one but 'Ali,"² and one of them, al-Munzir b. Arqam, rose and said, "We cannot fail to appreciate that there is one whose rights none can dispute, if he seeks this authority. And that man is 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib."³ But this and some other similar voices were lost in the tumult; Sa'd b. 'Ubāda was trampled down by the unruly mob,⁴ and thus Abū Bakr secured the nomination as the successor to the Prophet of God in the assembly hall of the Anṣār. The task was still far from being complete, however.

The victorious party then came to the mosque where a large crowd of the Muslims from all quarters of al-Madīna rushed to find out what was happening. 'Ali

1. Common to all sources mentioned above.
2. Ṭab., I, 1818. . فقالت الانصار او بعض الانصار لانباع الاعلى
3. Ya'qūbī, II, 103. وان فيهم لرجلا لو طلب هذا الامر لم ينازعه فيه احد يعنى على ابن ابي طالب .
4. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 660. Balādhurī, op.cit. 582. Ṭab., I, 1823. Al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, II. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, op.cit, 25.

too, unaware of what had taken place in the Saqīfa, when he heard the tumult from the mosque went there along with those of the Hāshimites with him in the house; and was joined by his close friends and associates. 'Umar realising the critical situation immediately proclaimed with his characteristic sternness, "Abū Bakr has been selected the Caliph of the Prophet. Henceforth if anyone shall presume to take upon himself the title of the Caliphate let him suffer death; as well as all who may nominate or uphold him." This measure was instantly adopted by 'Umar and thus a bar was put to the attempts of any other candidates. He then demanded every one present in the crowded mosque to pay homage to Abū Bakr.¹ The situation seems to have been utterly confused and extremely critical.

Clannish rivalries among Quraysh or the Muhājirūn themselves found it easier to accept the leadership of Abū Bakr - a man of an insignificant branch. They were also very much afraid of the everlasting domination of the Medinans in case they should fight among themselves.² The Banū Aws found it much better to submit themselves to a Qurayshite leader than to allow a member of the rival tribe of Banū Khazraj to rule over

1. See Ibn Hishām, *Sirah*, II. 661. Balādhurī, *Ansāb.*, I, 584. Tab., I, 1823. Kāmil, II, 221. *al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa*, I, 9 ff. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Safwa*, I, 97. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, *Sharh*, II, 40. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, *Iqd*, IV, 258 f.

2. See many references in Ibn Hishām, of the conflicts between the Muhājirūn and the Ansār ensued in Muhammad's lifetime. Also see, Tab., I, 1683 f.

them.¹ The Banū Khazraj saw their position as far too weak in case of a united front of the Muhājirūn and the Banū Aws - their old rivals in city politics of al-Madina;² and found it unwise to lag behind in gaining the favour of the ruling authority which was nearly agreed upon. Thus the result of group politics enabled Abū Bakr to exact the homage of almost all the factions of the infant community. But 'Ali with his close associates and some of the Hāshimites did not comply with the demand of 'Umar and quietly left the mosque. He then, with his supporters and friends assembled in his house and held a council.³ Abū Bakr and 'Umar, who perhaps were aware of 'Ali's pretensions⁴ and the respect he commanded in a certain group of the companions of the Prophet, feared there might be some outbreak on his and his partisans' part, and thus summoned them to the mosque. They refused to come. 'Umar with his cut-and-thrust policy

1. See the Statement made by one 'Usayd b. Hudayr of the tribe of Aws against the Khazraj. Tab. I, 1843. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, II, 39.

قال بعضهم لبعض وفيهم أسيد بن حضير وكان أحد النقباء والله لئن وليتها الخرج عليكم مرة لا زالت لهم عليكم بذلك الفضيلة ولا جعلوا لكم معهم فيها نصيبا أبدا فقوموا فبايعوا أبا بكر فقاموا إليه فبايعوه .

2. There is hardly need of any proof or reference to demonstrate the rivalry between the Aws and Khazraj.
3. Ibn Hishām, op.cit., 658. Balādhurī, op.cit., 583, and 585 f. Ya'qūbī, op.cit., 105. Tab., I. 1818-1822. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd Sharh, II, 45. Al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 10.
4. See part B of this chapter.

decided to act promptly before it was too late. He, therefore, with an armed band marched to 'Ali's house, surrounded it and threatened to set the house on fire if they would not come out and pay homage to the elected Caliph. 'Ali however, came out and attempted to remonstrate, alleging his own claims; but 'Umar proclaimed the penalty of death decreed to all who should attempt to claim the leadership. The scene soon grew furious and violent, the scimitars flashed from their scabbards and the band tried to pass on through the gate. Suddenly Fāṭima appeared before them in a furious temper and cried reproachfully, "Before God, I say, either you get out of here at once or, with my hair dishevelled I will make my appeal to God." This made the situation most critical and 'Umar left the house with his band without achieving his task of getting 'Ali's allegiance.¹

There were also a number of 'Ali's partisans among the companions of the Prophet both from the Anṣār and the Muhājirūn who delayed for some time in accepting the Abū Bakr's succession, insisting that 'Ali should have been chosen.² They were, however, fain to yield

1. See many versions of this whole tradition in Balādhurī, op.cit., 586. Ya'qūbī, op.cit., 105. Tab., I, 1818. Abū Bakr Jawharī, in Ibn Abī'l-Hadīd, Sharh, II, 45 and 56. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, al-'Iqd al-Farīd, IV, 259 f. Abū'l-Fidā', annals, I, 156. Ibn al-Athīr Kāmil, II, 221. al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 12-13. The last gives a very detailed version of it, and agrees in outline with al-Ya'qūbī. Also see L.V. Vaglieri, El (2) art. Fāṭima, who, commenting on these events, says, "Even if they have been expanded by invented details, they are based on fact."
2. Refer to all sources mentioned above; Ya'qūbī loc.cit. is the best detailed on this point. Also Tab., loc.cit. and al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, loc.cit.

and gradually one after another were reconciled to the situation and swore allegiance to him. But 'Ali held himself apart in proud and indignant reserve until the death of Fāṭima which happened after six months.¹ In this way, however, Abū Bakr b. Quḥāfa from the Qurayshite clan of B. Taym succeeded in becoming the first successor to the 'Seal of the Prophet' and messenger of God.

Thus accepting this more probable outline of the fateful event of the Saqīfa we can infer how dissension arose in the Muslim community on account of the question of succession to the Prophet. Who was to be viceregent of Muhammad? Had he, as the Shī'ite tradition asserts, designated 'Ali, his son-in-law, the son of his guardian and protector Abū Ṭālib², and the father of his two grandsons? Or, did he expect his successor to be chosen by the leaders of the people in an assembly of some kind? These were questions that rent Islam in twain, that led eventually to civil war, and that, ultimately, furnished the historical setting for the evolution of the doctrine of the Imāmate. The task remains to be investigated in this study how the minority party or defeated group after the death of Muhammad organized their sectarian opposition, preserved its entity and developed the doctrine of 'Imāmate', with all its subsequent requirements, as against the principle of election for the leadership of the theocracy. The arguments in Saqīfa put forward by Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Abū 'Ubayda for each other's fitness of the Office, which should be accepted as historically of some merit, will help us

1. See Ya'qūbī, op.cit., 105. Balādhurī, op.cit., 586. Ṭab., 1, 1825. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, op.cit., 260.

2. Watt, EL (2), art. 'Abū Ṭālib'.

in understanding the later theological argumentation from both groups. In fact the arguments advanced by Abū Bakr for 'Umar and Abū 'Ubayda, and in return by these two for Abū Bakr - e.g., being the Qurayshite, by virtue of being early converts to Islam, and their long companionship with the Prophet, their services to the cause of Islam and lastly their nearness to and the esteem with which they were held by Muhammad - are of the same nature as 'Ali before Abū Bakr,¹ and later on his partisans put forward in far greater degree and detail to support his cause.

It would be helpful if we here assume at the outset, founded on our study of the Saqīfa, that the conflict between the supporters of 'Ali and the victorious majority at this stage was somewhat of the nature of 'WHAT OUGHT TO BE' and 'WHAT IS DONE IS BINDING'. This 'what ought to be' in course of time created an infallible Imām and the Institution of Imāmate; 'what is done is binding' established a mighty and sweeping caliphate empire, though by necessity on the principle of theocracy, at least in theory.

1. Besides other sources, the unknown author of al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 10 ff. mentions in detail 'Ali's arguments with Abū Bakr for his claims to the Office when the latter asked 'Ali for the homage. This account can be compared in outline with al-Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh II, 103 ff.

B. THE FIRST SHI'A PARTY OF 'ALI AND ITS FOUNDATIONS

The division of the newly emerged community of Islam has generally been explained in terms of purely political differences, as being simply a matter of partisanship in regard to the leadership of the community on the demise of its Founder. Shi'ism specially is characterised as merely a political faction of the whole community. This appears to be an oversimplification of a complex situation, and those who thus emphasize the political nature of the Shi'a controversy in Islam are perhaps accepting too readily a separation between religion and politics in the Arabian society of that day, out of which Islam emerged. Islam in its very birth is both a religious and a political phenomenon as its founder was at once a religious teacher and Prophet as well as a temporal ruler and statesman; and thus the whole Islamic movement as proclaimed by its founder has always been both political and religious. It is political because of the environment and circumstances in which it grew; and religious because of the status Muhammad claimed as the messenger of God appointed and sent by Him to deliver His message to mankind.¹ Likewise, Shi'ism too in its inherent nature has always been both religious and political, and these co-existing aspects are found side by side throughout its history. It is therefore difficult to speak at any stage of its existence about the political Shi'a as

1. Qur'ān, II, 151. 99. V, 15.19. and many other verses.

distinct from the religious one. On the other hand when we analyse different possible relations which the political constitution and religious beliefs in Islam bear to one another we find the claims and the doctrinal trends of the supporters of 'Ali more inclined towards religious aspects than the political ones;¹ whereas the upholders of Abū Bakr were bent more towards the political side than the religious one. And thus, it seems paradoxical that the party whose claims in its rudimentary stage were based chiefly on spiritual and religious considerations, as we shall examine in detail presently, should be traditionally named as merely political.

The nature of the support given to 'Ali manifests that the victory of Abū Bakr and his supporters on the 'day of the Porch' was understood, by one group of the closest and most important companions of Muhammad, as a break in the religious and spiritual succession after the Prophet. The manifesto of Abū Bakr's election and the arguments put forward by his opponents, the Anṣār, as expressed by the speeches made on both sides in Saqīfa,² clearly show that the decision of his appointment was, to a great extent, based on social, political and tribal grounds, partly if not wholly neglecting the spiritual claims on which Muhammad had basically founded

1. See below

2. See the account of the Saqīfa given above in part 'A' of this chapter.

his mission.¹ On the other hand the claims of 'Ali appeared to be based on the incomparable services he had rendered to Islam, his renowned and perhaps undisputed knowledge in religious matters,² the love, special consideration and confidence in which he was held³ by Muhammad and, lastly on a wide-spread idea of the hereditary sanctity of the clan of Hāshim.

To trace the hereditary sanctity attributed to the Banū Hāshim by Muslim historians requires a detailed study of pre-Islamic Mecca. Our present work, however, does not allow us to go very deep into details of the religious and political set-up of the Arabian society before the advent of Islam. Nevertheless, a word is necessary to point out that the inclination of some of the Arabs from among the 'Companions' was partly a natural corollary of the already existing ideas among the Arabs of the day who combined together constituted Muhammad's 'ummah at al-Madina. In the first place we must necessarily keep in mind that the Muslim community which emerged at Medina under the leadership of Muhammad was not composed of one social background or origin. This 'Ummah consisted of the Meccans, both from the Quraysh al-Biṭāh (those who

1. See very many verses in the Qur'ān in which Muhammad declares his being the messenger and the Apostle of God to deliver God's message to mankind, and purify them, e.g., 11, 99, 151 etc.
2. Veccia Vaglieri, El, (2) art "Ali."
3. See below.

inhabited the district immediately round the Ka'ba) and Quraysh al-Zawāhir (those whose quarters were in the outskirts); of Madinans, who were divided into Aws and Khazraj, both tribes of South Arabian stock, still preserving many of the characteristics of their original land; of the desert Arabs and even some of the Arabs and non-Arabs from far off places.¹ All of them together made a common society under Islam and therefore when we consider a problem common among them we have to take into consideration the different temperament and inclinations of each group, and not those of one people, group or place. In this way, however, we can presume that the Arabs of different origin and social background understood Islam, at least in its early stage, according to their own social and moral ideas. With this necessary background in mind let us have a glance at the Arabian society in general.

Arab society, both nomadic and sedentary, was organized on a tribal basis, and of all the social bonds, loyalty to the tribe was considered the most important.² Thus the religion³ of the Arabs was originally

1. Like Bilāl of Abyssinia and Salmān of Persia.
2. This is what is called al-Asabiyya - the feeling of mutual loyalty. Most emphatic expressions of this feeling are excessively evident in pre-Islamic poetry.
3. Even the word religion, or the degree in which it was held, cannot be applied equally to all the Arabs who inhabited different parts; to some it was a more strong and deep-rooted phenomenon while to some others it was less important.

the worship of tribal symbols, which later became identified with certain forces of nature, often represented by numerous deities which they used to worship. The tribal deity, symbolized in the sacred stone (Anṣāb), was called the Lord (rabb) of its temple. Thus Allah the supreme deity of the Meccan sanctuary was described as Rabb al Ka'ba, or Rabb Hāḍha al-Bayt.¹ The word Rabb, however, often referred not to the deity but to the person in charge of the tabernacle.

There was no organized priestly hierarchy, but certain clans acted as guardian of the sanctuaries. This guardianship passed from one generation to another, together with the reputation for hereditary sanctity.² This sanctity which had its original source in the magical power attributed to the idol which they served, was strictly connected with the idea of nobility of race (Sharaf) synonymous with "the pride of descent from noble ancestors". The nobility of race being thus hereditary, the priestly clans of long standing represented the highest aristocracy of Arabia. Traces of this sort of aristocracy are to be found in the belief of the Arabs (especially of the South) that members of certain families have a Charisma or spiritual power - Sharaf.³ The guardianship of a sanctuary, a 'House' (Bayt), and 'Honour' (Sharaf) came to be understood as being inseparable.⁴ As

1. The Qur'ān, CVI, 3.
2. Ibn Durayd, K.al. Ishtiqāq, 237.
3. R.B. Serjeant, BSOAS, XXI, 10 f.
4. Ibn Durayd, Isht., 173 and 283. Also see R.B. Serjeant, "Haram and Hawtah, the Sacred Enclave in Arabia", in Mélanges Taḥa Husain, 42 f.

a result priesthood in Arabia was very often combined with tribal headship, even with kingship. We may go even further, by stating that political leadership there was originally of a religious and priestly nature. The South Arabian monarchial institution of the MUKARRIB is a clear proof of the office of priest-king who embraces at once religious and temporal authority.

The clans of political rulers could have attained the status of great nobility after first acquiring power by political means, but nevertheless they could not equal the sacerdotal lineages. Thus, for example, the Kings of Kinda ranked only after the four most noble priestly houses.¹

It is apparent that priestly status not only was the foundation of political leadership, but when the latter was attained by men from non-priestly clans, it imposed upon them religious functions. They were also mediators between men and deities. As a result, the idea of tribal leadership and service to the God became synonymous. Those who led the tribe were, of necessity, the guardians of the tribal Bayt. They were the 'Ahl al-Bayt',² 'the people of the House' or "the Bayt of

1. Ibn Durayd, Isht., 238. Agh., VII, 105 ff. These four houses were: Al-Zurāra b. 'Udās of the Banū Tamīm; Al-Hudhayfa b. Badr of the Fazāra tribe, the confederation of the Qays; Al-Madan of the Banū Hārith b. Ka'b in Yaman; and Dhu'l-Jaddayn b. 'Abdillāh b. Humām of the Banū Shaybān. Also see, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, III, 331 ff.

2. Agh., XX, 42, and XI, 89. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 112.

such and such a tribe".¹ Together these leading clans formed the noble estate of Arabia: 'the Buyūtāt al-Arab'.² Even later when the meaning of the Ahl al-Bayt became limited to the descendants of the Prophet, the term Buyūtāt al-Arab survived into later centuries in the sense of the tribal aristocracy and nobility.³

It is against this background that we have to consider the status of the Banū Hāshim, not only among the people of Mecca but in a wider circle because of their vast contacts with the people of different places through the yearly fair of 'Ukāz and the pilgrimage of the Ka'ba. Some western scholars have sceptically questioned whether the ancestors of Muhammad were really as important in dignity, nobility and influence as the sources suggest or whether their importance has in fact been grossly exaggerated. The basis of this doubt is that the 'Abbāsids were descendants of Hāshim, whereas the rivals whom they ousted, the Umayyads, were the descendants of 'Abd Shams; and that they have been treated unsympathetically by the historians who happened to write under the 'Abbāsid regime; and that because of this reason Hāshim and his sons and grandsons, the ancestors of the 'Abbāsid caliphs, had been given greater prominence in extant histories than they really possessed. This whole hypothesis is, however,

1. Agh., XI, 89. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 112.
2. A.S. Tritton, EI (2) art. "Ahl al-Bayt."
3. Ibid. Also see R.B. Serjeant, "Haram and Hawtah, The Sacred Enclave in Arabia", in Mélanges Taha Husain, 43 f and "The Saiyids of Hadramawt, (An Inaugural lecture, SOAS, 1957)5f.

naive, and to a great extent open to criticism.

Scrutiny of the sources suggests that this has not happened to any appreciable extent, and that there are no grounds for supposing any serious falsification or large scale invention in presenting Muhammad's ancestry.¹

There is no need to go as far back as Quṣayy, father of 'Abd al-Dār and 'Abd Manāf, about whom an unanimous historical testimony is this that he was the unrivaled supreme authority of Mecca both in religious and political matters.² After the death of Quṣayy, 'Abd al-Dār inherited his father's authority but he died early and his sons were too young effectively to maintain their rights. 'Abd Manāf, the younger son of Quṣayy, had been the powerful rival of his elder brother and ultimately concentrated some of the chief offices of his father in his person³ after the death of 'Abd al-Dār. Eventually the sons of 'Abd Manāf inherited their father's influence; and among them Hāshim, though the youngest, was entrusted with the

1. Watt, Muhammad at Mecca, 31. Also see, R.B. Serjeant, The Saiyids of Hadramawt, 7.
2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 124-125. Azraqī, Akhbār Makkah, 66. Tab., 1, 1092 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Iqd, III, 312-313. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 69 ff. Also see, R.A. Nicholson, A Literary History of the Arabs, 65.
3. Azraqī, Akhbār Makkah, 1, 63, states that 'Abd Manāf possessed not only al-Rifāda and al-Siqāya but also Qiyāda, leadership of Mecca. Also, see Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 74.

most honourable offices, pertaining to the Ka'ba, of al-Rifāda and al-Siqāya, i.e., providing food and water to the pilgrims.¹ There are no serious grounds to doubt the accounts given by the early tradition that Hāshim achieved a great success and glory in his lifetime by his acts of public welfare and by his splendid hospitality² extended to the pilgrims visiting the Sacred House from all parts of Arabia. When Hāshim died he was replaced by his brother al-Muṭṭalib. For a short time, it seems that the fortune of the family, under the leadership of al-Muṭṭalib, was declining, but was soon recovered by Hāshim's son 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib who had been brought up in Medina with his mother and was brought to Mecca by his uncle al-Muṭṭalib.³

'Abd al-Muṭṭalib took charge of the family affairs.⁴ This is not the place to discuss whether or not the family of Hāshim at that time was as prosperous and influential in Meccan internal affairs as it used to be. The same sources which are too often suspected of being

1. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 135 f. Ṭab., 1, 1089 f. Ibn Sa'd, Ṭabaqāt, 1, 75-80. Azraqī says after 'Abd Manāf the offices of the Rifāda and Siqāya came to Hāshim and Qiyāda was given to 'Abd Shams. See, Akhbār Makkah, 1, 63.
2. Ibn Hishām, 1, 135-136. Ibn Sa'd, loc.cit., Azraqī, loc.cit. Ṭab., loc.cit.
3. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 137 f. Ṭab., 1, 1082 f. and 1088. Ibn Sa'd, 1, 82-83.
4. The other sons of Hāshim died without leaving male posterity and so the term Banū Hāshim and Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib became synonymous. See Al-Zubayrī, K.al-Ānsāb al-Quraysh, 15 ff.

biased in presenting Muhammad's ancestors in unduly favourable circumstances do not hesitate to tell us that in the beginning of his career 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib faced serious set-backs. But, the grand offices of al-Rifāda and al-Siqāya secured for the House of Hāshim a commanding and permanent influence, and we can well assume that by the virtue of these offices a widespread fame abroad must have kept it at least of some regard at home. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib personally, however, seems to be a man of initiative and energy¹ which was necessary to become a man of consequence in the Meccan merchant aristocracy. He greatly enhanced his position by restoring the ancient well of Zamzam.² In course of time, however, he became the chief custodian³ of the Ka'ba and was also regarded a renowned judge of the customary law.⁴ Eventually, because of his being the sole person in charge of the main services pertaining to the most respected sanctuary of the peninsula he became the most or one of the few most prominent figures

1. Watt, Muhammad at Mecca, 33.
2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 142 ff. and 151. Tab., 1, 1088. 'Isāmī, Simt al-Nujūm, fol. 81 a-b. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 84 ff. Watt, El (2) art "Abd al-Muṭṭalib."
3. Tab., loc.cit. Simt al-Nujūm, 75a 76a. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 83 ff.
4. 'Isāmī, Simt al-Nujūm, fol. 77b. Tab., 1, 1088 f. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 85.

in Mecca.¹

After 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib his eldest surviving son Abū Ṭālib inherited his father's place.² True, Abū Ṭālib did not prove himself of that calibre and energy as his father and grandfathers were, and consequently the family lost much of the power and command in the inner circle of Meccan aristocratic society.³ Nevertheless, we should not allow ourselves to be confused that the downfall of the family in material aspects should have necessarily at once deprived it in the minds of the people of the memory of their immediate past. The regard for a successor of three or four illustrious generations could not have waned so soon, especially among the people abroad. The sanctuary of the Ka'ba was of extreme antiquity and was a highly important and popular centre of worship in the peninsula.⁴

1. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 85, says - "Wa kāna Sayyid al-Quraysh Ḥaṭṭa Ḥalaka." He was the leader of the Quraysh until his death. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 142. says:

وشرف في قومه شرفا لم يبلغه أحد من آبائه، وأحبّه قومه وعظم
خطره فيهم .

Tab., 1, 1088. We can, however, infer that because political leadership in Arabia in general was originally considered of priestly nature, Abū Ṭālib must have enjoyed a widespread political influence too. His concluding a defensive league with the powerful tribe of al-Khuzā'a and his being the only representative of Mecca at the time of Abrahā's abortive attack are pointers towards his considerable influence in political spheres along with his religious prerogatives.

2. Watt, El (2) art "Abū Ṭālib", and Muhammad at Mecca, 32.
3. Watt, El (2) art "Abū Ṭālib", and Muhammad at Mecca, 32.
4. The best references can be numerous verses of the Qur'ān describing the Ka'ba: e.g. 11, 126-127.

The offices of al-Siqāya and Imārat al-Bayt (Keeper of the Ka'ba) are taken notice of by the Qur'ān also.¹ Supplying the pilgrims with water must have been a lucrative job in Mecca where water is so scarce and the water of Zamzam, which soon shared in the sacredness of the sanctuary, was required not only by the yearly pilgrims but also by the huge trade caravans halting at Mecca.² There are many early writers who give us detailed accounts of the universal influence of the Ka'ba, of the vast contacts of the people of Mecca due to its being a centre for the trade caravans from Yeman in the south, Dūmatu'l-Jandal in the extreme north and from other far off places, and of the 'Ukāz being the greatest of all the Arabs' yearly fairs. It is, therefore, natural that the honorific services, attached to the sanctuary, rendered by the House of Hāshim for such a long period, must have extended the family's fame and prestige to a very wide area as taken home by all the people of far and near who had ever visited Mecca. We can thus conclude that at the time of Muhammad's emergence, though, his family was at a low ebb in material and political aspects but still had the glory and memory of the longstanding sacerdotal lineage of Hāshim. Psychologically at least, the works and deeds of three generations cannot be washed out from the hearts of the people abroad by the sudden decline in wealth and political influence, of the present generation, at home. They were, however, commonly recognised,

1. The Qur'ān, IX, 19.

2. Hamidullah, 'The City State of Mecca', Islamic Culture, 266, July, 1938.

by the Arabs, as guardians of the Temple, the Ahl al-Bayt of Mecca.¹

It is in this family background that Muhammad arose claiming to be the messenger of God, and then strongly and successfully supported his claims as being the true restorer of the religion of Abraham and Ishmael.² Abraham was not only acknowledged by the Arabs as their tribal father³ but was also believed, in popular legend, to be the founder of the sanctuary of Mecca. This legend was no Muslim fiction but the popular belief long before the time of Muhammad. Otherwise, it could not have been referred to in the Qur'ān as an acknowledged fact;⁴ nor would certain spots around the pre-Islamic Ka'ba have been connected, as we know them to have been, with the names of Abraham and Ishmael.⁵ Muhammad, however, made the full use of this popular and deep rooted legend of Abraham attached with the Ka'ba to which the Arabs in general and his four generations in a special prerogative were so closely connected.

All the facts which have been discussed above, combined together make an inseparable background against which the problem of succession to Muhammad has to be considered. Again, we should keep in mind, as has already

1. Tab., 1, 2786 f.
2. Qur'ān, 11, 136.
3. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 1, 68.
4. Qur'ān, 11, 126-127.
5. Qur'ān, 11, 125.

been pointed out, that the problem of the succession should not be considered only from the Meccan point of view because the 'Ummah of Muhammad at the time of his death was composed of the people from almost all parts of Arabia with somewhat different approaches, backgrounds and ideas. It is, therefore, natural that different people saw the problem from different angles.

Indeed, the way in which the problem of succession was solved, immediately after the death of the Prophet, had also its roots in the pre-Islamic customs of Arabia. The Caliphate was understood to combine both political and religious leadership (Imāma). Such combinations were well known to the Arabs, but of course with different degrees of emphasis on one or the other.

The majority of the Muslims, who readily accepted Abū Bakr, paid more attention to the political side in accepting the customary procedure of succession to the chieftainship in its new interpretation given by Abū Bakr, and largely disregarded the religious principle and the old idea of the hereditary sanctity of a certain house. This assumption is strongly supported by the statement made by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb when he said to Ibn al-'Abbās: "The people do not like having the prophethood and caliphate combined in the Banū Hāshim."¹

1. يكرهون ان تجتمع فيكم النبوة والخلافة فيكون بجابجا .

Tab., 1, 2769 and 2770. We must assume that both Abū Bakr and 'Umar were well aware of the importance which the principle of inherited sanctity held in the Muslim community. At the same time they must have realised that should the election of Abū Bakr be open to doubt, the unity of the 'Umma would be seriously endangered. So, personal feelings apart they had to dissociate the caliphate from the priesthood of the Ka'ba; and thus the statement of 'Umar to Ibn 'Abbās, is a clear expression of this new idea henceforth attached to the caliphate.

There were some other people, specially from other parts of Arabia,¹ who used to think that in Mecca leadership together with priestly prerogatives, were inherited in the clan of 'Abd Manāf by the Hāshimites, though after the death of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib they were overshadowed by the Umayyads in political matters. The victory of Muhammad again brought the Banū Hāshim to power, and this was ultimately recognised by Abū Sufyān, when he surrendered to the Prophet. In the normal, customary turn of events, Muhammad on his death should have been replaced by another Hāshimite to rule the 'Ummah brought into being by Muhammad. And thus, the widespread idea of the inborn holiness of the Banū Hāshim meant, to some of the companions, that the problem of succession to the leadership of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet was not only political but also based on deep-rooted religious considerations. These were the people, whom we can describe as the more legalistically minded, who could not agree to the interpretation given by Abū Bakr and his supporters, for they understood the leadership of the community as above all a religious office. To them Muhammad was the restorer of the true religion of Abraham and Ishmael, and so in him the hereditary sanctity of his clan attained its highest level. When he died, his successor could only be a man endowed with the same qualities on the principle of hereditary sanctity.

Neither Banū Taym b. Murra, the clan of Abū Bakr, nor Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b, the people of 'Umar, had ever been

1. As we shall see presently that most of the supporters of 'Ali at this first stage were of South Arabian origin.

the recipients of hereditary sanctity, and so to those who laid stress on the religious principle they were not rightful candidates to succeed Muhammad - the Prophet of God and the son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Hāshim and 'Abd Manāf. According to the legitimists, therefore, the candidate could only come from the Banū Hāshim; and among them they could find no one else¹ other than 'Ali. He, too, was the grandson of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. He was the son of Abū Tālib, Muhammad's uncle, the guardian and protector, who gave him the care and love of a father whom Muhammad had lost before his birth. He was the nearest and closest associate of Muhammad, almost a son, for the Prophet acted as his guardian during the famine of Mecca,² and subsequently adopted him as a brother both before the Hijra³ and again in Medina.⁴ He was the first

1. Muhammad's uncle 'Abbās could also be a candidate, but as he was only a late-comer to the fold of Islam, and betrayed no particular qualities of character nor rendered any appreciable service to the cause of Islam, there was never any question of his candidature. Moreover, 'Abbās himself never claimed or proposed himself as successor but supported 'Ali's candidature. As 'Ali's other three brothers, Tālib, the eldest of them, fought at Badr against Muslims, and embraced Islam very late. Ja'far, though an early convert, was killed long before the Prophet's death. 'Aqīl also fought at Badr against Muslims and became a convert to Islam during the conquest of Mecca.
2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 245, 246. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 15. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, 11, 472.
Ibn al-Ḥakīm, Ghara'ib, IV, 1166.
3. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, 11, 473, and also commentaries of the Qur'ān by Ṭabarī, Ibn Kathīr and Tha'labī, under the verse 214, ch. XXVI.
4. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 504. Ibn Ḥabīb, K. al-Muḥabbar, 70.

man to embrace Islam,¹ Khadīja being the first woman. He was also the husband of Fāṭima, the Prophet's only surviving and beloved daughter; and he was the father of the Prophet's two grandsons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn for whom Muhammad's love was profound.²

It seems plausible that these inherent personal qualities and virtues of 'Ali secured him a unique and advantageous place over all other family members and companions of Muhammad and earned him a band of friends who were devoted to him with a special zeal and consideration even during the lifetime of the Prophet. Perhaps it is because of this that the Shī'a claim the existence of Shī'ism even in the lifetime of the Prophet; and the earliest heresiographers, Sa'd al-Ash'arī and al-Nawbakhtī, tell us clearly that the Shī'ism (in the sense of a particular regard and appreciation of 'Ali's personal merits) had already been started in Muhammad's lifetime,³ probably

1. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 1, 245. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, IV, 116 ff. Also, see L.V. Vaglieri, El, (2) art. "Ali."
2. The births of al-Hasan and al-Husayn increased Muhammad's affection for both 'Ali and Fāṭima, and enhanced the position of the boy's father. For Muhammad's love for his children, especially male, was extreme, and having lost his own sons, he showered boundless affection upon his grandsons. (Al-Hasan and al-Husayn were born three and four years after the marriage of 'Ali and Fāṭima, or five and six years after the Hijra. Some authorities assert their birth took in the third and fourth year of Hijra. See Abūl-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 33 and 54.
3. See Sa'd al-Ash'arī, K. al-Maqālāt wa'l Firaq, 15. Nawbakhtī, Firaq al-Shī'a, 23.

from the very beginning of his Medinan period. And then, this idea of 'Ali's superiority, over all others around Muhammad, was greatly strengthened by a series of events which took place during the Prophet's life in which he showed some special consideration for his cousin and son-in-law. A few of them should be pointed out as important to illustrate this assumption.

1) At the outset of his mission, when the verse "Warn your tribe, the nearest Kinsmen,"¹ was revealed, Muhammad gathered all the Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and informed them about his mission. Explaining his task he asked them who would volunteer himself to become his minister and deputy to help in furthering the cause. No one, however, came forward but ridiculed him instead, except 'Ali who volunteered himself enthusiastically and was accepted by the Prophet as his brother, minister and deputy.²

This commonly reported tradition in its inherent nature and the form in which it is presented seems to be a later adjustment and projection based on 'Ali's early conversion and association with the Prophet and cannot be given any credit. Nevertheless the spirit of the tradition as revealed by its component points can be of some value. When we analyse the tradition three main points are apparent: Muhammad's invitation to his kinsmen for the participation and help in the task he had undertaken; the Qurayshite's refusal, as an example of the

1. The Qur'ān, XXVI, 214.

2. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb II, 473. A.J. Wensinck, Concordance., I, 34. Also see Commentaries of the Qur'ān by Tabarī, Ibn Kathīr and Tha'labī under the verse 214. ch., XXVI.

common conservative response to a new idea; and lastly 'Ali's support and co-operation due to his close association with his guardian Muhammad from his very childhood. All these three points, however, seems to be quite natural, and on these grounds, therefore, early Shī'a found it convenient to put a few words in the mouth of the Prophet to support the cause of 'Ali.

2) Then comes the matter of the religious brotherhood between 'Ali and Muhammad. The Prophet adopted 'Ali as a brother in faith ('Ukhuwwah) both before the Hijra and again in al-Madina.¹

3) Next 'Ali's position was further elevated in the eyes of the companions when he was appointed by Muhammad as the standard-bearer, both at Badr and Khaybar, and in other wars.²

4) The nomination of 'Ali by the Prophet as the acting head of Medina during the expedition to Tabūk³ was another important record to 'Ali's credit.⁴ Perhaps later a tradition was added to this occasion that the Prophet said to 'Ali: "You are to me what Aaron was to Moses except that there will be no Prophet after

1. See Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 504. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 270, and Ibn Ḥabīb, K. al-Muḥabbar, 70-71. For the sake of brevity in references I would keep up with Ibn Ishāq who is repeated by the majority of later writers like Ṭabarī and others.

2. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 613, and II, 73.

3. In the year AH 9/630 A.D.

4. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 519-520.

me."¹

5) Yet another very important event was the communication of the chapter of al-Barā'a.² First the Prophet dispatched Abū Bakr to deliver the Sūra to the people of Mecca. He was on the road to Mecca when suddenly the Prophet called 'Ali and ordered him: "Go immediately, overtake Abū Bakr and send him back to me, and you go to Mecca to deliver the message." 'Ali acted thus. Abū Bakr in great surprise returned to the prophet and asked whether anything wrong had transpired concerning him. The Prophet said nothing had happened except good, but he had been commanded by God that this message should be delivered either by himself or by a nearest relative of his.³

1. Ibn Hishām, loc.cit. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 16. Nawbakhtī, Fīraq, 19. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, 11, 473. Muslim, ṣaḥīḥ, VII, 120. Ibn Ḥanbal gives another more emphatic version, see Musnad, I, 331. This tradition along with the event of Tabūk has been recorded by the majority of historians and traditionists. Furthermore, when we see that Muhammad was referring to many similarities in his person and mission with other great Prophets of the past, we find no difficulty in accepting this tradition. His comparison of himself with Moses would have been incomplete without an Aaron, and obviously no other person in his family context could serve him as Aaron but 'Ali.
2. The Qur'ān, ch., IX, also known as Tawba.
3. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, 11, 545 f. Repeated by the majority of historians and most of the traditionists too.

All these events¹ may have been taken by some of the Prophet's companions as indicative of his inclination towards 'Ali, though he did not or could not nominate him explicitly perhaps because of the old Arabian practice that a leader should be selected by the people. Thus, we infer that because of the events which took place during the lifetime of the Prophet in favour of 'Ali, because of the idea that the question of the succession was primarily religious, not merely political, and, because of the popular notion of the hereditary sanctity of the Banū Hāshim, all these factors combined together, made a group of Muhammad's followers think that 'Ali was the most suitable person to keep the Covenant intact.

1. There are no serious grounds to doubt the authenticity of these events which have been recorded by the writers of all schools of thought and also seem plausible in their context. But, if we have to be extremely cautious and sceptical, even then we cannot ignore the fact that these events in favour of 'Ali were so widely in circulation that majority of historians had to record them. In this series of events, however, I have intentionally ignored the famous tradition of Ghadīr al-Khum on which Shī'a put much stress and is recorded by a number of historians like that of Ya'qūbī and others. According to Horovitz the oldest evidence of Ghadīr are the verses composed by al-Kumayt, d. 126, and which are proved to be undoubtedly genuine, see, Horovitz, El (1) art. Kumayt. The Shī'ite sources claim that the oldest evidence is the verses of Hassān b. Thābit composed on that occasion. cf. Amīnī, Ghadīr, II, 32. Vaccia Vaglieri, (El (2) art. Ghadīr Khum) accepting Ya'qūbī's report suggests that there was some kind of event at Ghadīr in which Muhammad would have shown some favour to 'Ali, and that this circumstance provided the Shī'a a suitable ground on which to weave an elaborate story of 'Ali's nomination by the Prophet there.

A commonly suggested obstacle in the way of 'Ali is said to have been his comparatively young age at the time of Muhammad's death. Nevertheless, we hear of the pre-Islamic Mecca that though the Senate House was a council of elders only, al-Azraqī¹ and Ibn Durayd² assure us that the sons of the chieftain Qusayy were privileged to be exempt from this age limit.³ In later times more liberal concessions seem to have been in vogue and we hear, for instance, that Abū Jahl was admitted to the Senate although he was quite young, and Hākim b. Hazam was admitted when he was only fifteen or twenty years old.⁴ Furthermore, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi tells us: "There was no monarchic king over the Arabs of Mecca in the Jāhiliya. So whenever there was a war, they took ballot among chieftains, and elected one as King, were he a minor or a grown man. Thus on the day of Fijār, it was the turn of the Banū Hāshim, and as the result of the ballot al-'Abbās, who was then a mere child, was elected, and they seated him on the shield."⁵ Taking into consideration these practices of pre-Islamic times, the mere age factor of 'Ali, it seems, did not mar his credit in the eyes of those who had the ideas of the hereditary sanctity of the Banū Hāshim.

When, however, Medinan requirements or politics took a different course and selected a man who could not

1. Akhhbār Makkah, 64-65 - 465.

2. Ishtiqāq, 97.

3. Azraqī, Akhhbār Makkah, 65.

4. Ibn Durayd, Ishtiqāq, 97.

5. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, al-'Iqd al-Farīd, III, 315.

satisfy the ideals set in the mind of a group of the community, this group, though very small, showed its resentment at accepting him. How serious was this opposition or resentment to Abū Bakr before it became reconciled with him is almost impossible to ascertain because the Shī'ite sources exaggerate it to the extreme whereas the Sunnite sources try to ignore or minimise it as much as possible. Thus according to the Shī'ite assertions a large number of the Muslims refused to pay the poor tax (Zakāt) to Abū Bakr because they refused to accept him as the successor of the Prophet. The Shī'ites allege that all those tribes who rebelled against Abū Bakr are conveniently named by the Sunnīs as apostates and their movement as the Riddah (apostasy)¹ and that part of the so-called apostates were in reality the sympathizers of 'Ali and not the denouncers of Medinan rule.²

1. See Riddah movement in Tab., under the year II A.D., which is the best comprehensive account.

2. Prof. B. Lewis very ably observes the real cause of the Riddah movement as follows:

"The refusal of the tribes to recognise the succession of Abū Bakr was in effect not a relapse by converted Muslims to their previous paganism, but the simple and automatic termination of a political contract by the death of one of the parties." The Arabs in History, 51 f.

In this they include the followers of Mālik b. Nuwayra, the head of a section of the apostates,¹ who with some other apostate tribes continued to perform prayers and followed the precepts of Islam.² They only refused to acknowledge Abū Bakr as the head of the 'Ummah and thus to pay him the poor tax.³ In fact, this assumption that they rebelled because of their consideration for the family of Muhammad is a projection back into the past on the ground that these apostate tribes helped 'Ali later on at the battles of Camel and Siffīn. Thus, it is evident that the story that a part of the Riddah movement was in favour of 'Ali is the result of the wishful thinking of the later Shī'ites to show that the

1. Shī'ite sources even go to the extent of saying with certainty that Abū Dharr had already warned Abū Bakr that if he did not resign the Caliphate in favour of 'Ali a group of the Arabs would apostatize, and that Mālik b. Nuwayra spoke harshly to Abū Bakr and even scolded him for depriving 'Ali of his rights. See Tabarsī Ihtijāj, 40-50. We cannot give any importance to these reports. S.D. Khulousy "Shī'ism and its Influence on Arabic Literature", SOAS, thesis 1947, p. 51, very strongly holds that all the Riddah tribes were Shī'a and they apostatized only to support 'Ali. I have found no sources to support this statement.
2. See Tab., 1, 1873, 1896, 1926, 1928. Ibn Athīr, Kāmil, 11, 135 ff.
3. This is very clear from Sa'd al-Ash'arī's Maqālāt, 4, and al-Nawbakhtī's Firaq, 25, when they report that some of the tribes said, "We will not pay the Zakāt to Abū Bakr until we are sure to whom the right of succession belongs." If this report is true it would suggest that these tribes had their doubts about Abū Bakr's rights to the leadership of the community. Yet, whether this doubt was in favour of 'Ali is still not clear.

cause of 'Ali was so widespread even at that early stage.¹

Historically, however, a definite and clear opposition manifested itself within Medina when a considerable number of the notable Companions upheld 'Ali's cause and resented paying homage to Abū Bakr. The names of individual supporters vary in the different sources, but the most commonly accepted are recorded as follows:²

Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān,³ Khuzayma b. Thābit Dhu'l-Shahādātayn,⁴

1. Leone Caetani has thoroughly studied the Riddah movement and finds no evidence that the Riddah tribes apostatized to support the cause of 'Ali. Caetani also observes that in reality only the Arabs of Central Arabia fell away where as the rest of Arabia was conquered for the first time by Abū Bakr. See, Annali dell' Islām, 2, II, 85 ff.
2. In the footnotes below, for their biographical references, I have tried to give a short note for each of them to show their position and standing in the community. The list of this group has been presented here mainly from Ya'qūbī but sources like Ibn Sa'd and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr are also consulted and are, in most cases, in agreement to that of Ya'qūbī. II, 105 ff. Another detailed account of the persons who opposed Abū Bakr is given by Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd in Sharḥ Mahj al-Baladha, 44-58, who quotes "Kitāb al-Saqīfa" of Abū Bakr Ahmad b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Jawharī as his authority.
3. A ḥalīf of the Anṣār and a distinguished warrior. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, 1, 105. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 15. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, Sharḥ, II, 51-52.
4. So called because the Prophet placed his testimony to be worth that of two men. Ibn Sa'd, IV 378 ff.

Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī,¹ Sahl and 'Uthmān b. Hunayf,²
 Khālīd b. Sa'īd,³ Az-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām,⁴ al-Bara' b.
 'Azib, 'Ubayy b. Ka'b,⁵ Salmān al-Fārsī,⁶ Abū Dharr

1. A distinguished companion and the host of Muhammad in Medina until his house was built. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, I, 498. Ibn Sa'd III, 484 ff. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, II, 636.
2. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 471 f. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, II, 585. Sahl b. Hunayf fought at Siffīn from 'Ali's side and his brother 'Uthmān was a great favourite of 'Ali who appointed him governor of Basra during his caliphate. See famous directive of 'Ali to him. Nahj al-Balāgha, Kutub. 104.
3. An Umayyad, governor of Ṣanā'a appointed by the Prophet, after he came back from Ṣanā'a he wanted to pay homage to 'Ali. Though 'Ali declined to accept his homage, Khālīd did not recognize Abū Bakr until three months later. Ya'qūbī, II, 105. Ibn Sa'd, IV, 97. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 588. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharḥ, II, 58.
4. Az-Zubayr was the most energetic supporter of 'Ali, and no doubt sincere in his whole-hearted attitude. It was only later that ambition made him strive for the Caliphate. Ya'qūbī, II, 105. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 656. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharḥ, II, 56.
5. The young Bara' and 'Ubbayy b. Ka'b, Medinan aristocrats, represented pro-Alid Anṣār. Their loyalties to 'Ali were stronger than that of their fellow tribesmen. See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 364 and III, 498. Also see Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharḥ, II, 52.
6. According to the popular tradition he was a Persian and ardent follower and companion of the Prophet who ransomed him from slavery and adopted him as his Mawlā and a member of the Ahl al-Bayt. Ibn Sa'd, IV, 75. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, II, 572. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 138.

al-Ghifārī,¹ 'Ammār b. Yāsir,² and al-Miqdād b. 'Amr.³

These, however, formed the nucleus of the first 'Alid party or Shī'a. It cannot be said that all of them were equally enthusiastic and warm supporters. We may surmise that some of them were lukewarm supporters who recognized 'Ali's position as the most worthy for the office of the Caliphate because of his personal merits, but nevertheless paid homage to Abū Bakr without much resentment.⁴ The attitude of Salmān al-Fārsī, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, 'Ammār and al-Miqdād seems to have been a bit different from that of other supporters, for these men are regarded by all the Shī'a as "the Four Pillars" (al-Arkān al-Arba'a) who formed the first Shī'a of 'Ali.⁵ Naturally after 'Ali's compromise with Abū Bakr the reason for further opposition on the part of his

1. Abū Dharr b. Jundal al-Ghifārī was one of the earliest followers of Muhammad, an ascetic and extremely devoted to the piety. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, IV, 219 f. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 105.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 105. He was south Arabian affiliated to the Quraysh and an early convert to Islam. See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 246.
3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 105. Miqdād was also South Arabian either from al-Kinda or al-Bahra, adopted by certain aswad b. 'Abd Yaghūth of the Banū Makhzūm. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, I, 289 and II, 434.
4. See Abū Bakr al-Jawharī, "K.al-Saqīfa", in Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, 44-58.
5. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 15. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 17. Kashahī, Rijāl, 4. mentions only three excluding 'Ammār.

supporters ceased to exist and this elite of the first Shī'a dwindled away physically. But can ideas, once propagated, ever die out? The later years in the history of the development of Islamic thought provide an answer to this question.

C. THE PERIOD OF SHAYKHĀN¹ AND THE
PROBLEM OF SHŪRA

What has been said before in parts A and B of this chapter will suffice to show our view that the beginning of the Shī'ite feelings and inclinations had their basic elements and roots in the old conception of the inborn holiness of the Banū Hāshim, in the special consideration with which 'Ali was held by Muhammad who was, above all, fully conscious of his family's traditionally priestly nature and exalted position, and lastly, in the events which took place during Muhammad's lifetime in favour of 'Ali.² These convictions found their first open expression at the episode of the Saqīfa and thus, we may accept that the Saqīfa was the starting point which ultimately developed into Shī'ite Sectarianism. However, after the initial defeat of 'Ali's supporters and 'Ali's own recognition, after six months, of Abū Bakr's administration, circumstances were such that active Shī'ism lost much of its open manifestation. Therefore, the period between the Saqīfa and the Shūra should be taken as a temporary pause in the history of the development of Shī'ism.

Nevertheless, a close scrutiny of the early sources and specially a careful comparison of the Shī'ite and the Sunnite early records give an investigator the feeling

1. Abū Bakr and 'Umar are usually mentioned by this title.
2. See Supra part B of this chapter.

that two different undercurrents were going on throughout this period: (1) 'Ali's passive attitude towards the ruling authorities and (2) Abū Bakr's and 'Umar's constant attempts to displace Banū Hāshim and specially 'Ali from their prerogative claims to the leadership of the community.

The first point can be illustrated by comparing 'Ali's active life during Muhammad's period¹ with his absolutely inactive life in the period immediately following the Prophet's death.² We see that 'Ali, who had been, throughout Muhammad's life, the most active and enthusiastic participant in all the enterprises in the cause of Islam and was in the forefront of all the battles fought under Muhammad,³ suddenly changed to leading a quiet life, almost confined to the four walls of his house.⁴ On the one hand, he declined to make use of the whole-hearted military support offered

1. See Veccia Vaglieri, *El* (2) art. 'Alī b. Abī Tālib."
2. Ibid.
3. For the details of 'Ali's active life in the cause of Islam, during Muhammad's lifetime, at once the best and most reliable work is Ibn Ishāq's Sīrah in the recension of Ibn Hishām.
4. Veccia Vaglieri, *El* (2) art. 'Ali. For the Shī'ite sources see Tabarsī, Ihtijāj, 66. Hillī, al-Bāb al-Hādī 'Ashar, 76. Muḥid, Irshād, 1, 98 ff.

to him by Abū Sufyān to fight for his rights,¹ for he considered that such action would lead to the destruction of the infant Islam.² The character of 'Ali as presented by both the Sunnite and the Shī'ite sources suggests that his love, sincerity and loyalty to the cause of Islam was beyond any doubt above personal considerations. On the other hand, the co-operation given by him to the ruling Caliphs appears to be of the same nature as any opposition leader, in our modern times, gives to the ruling party in order to maintain the solidarity, security and integrity of a nation or country and, at the same time, he tries to correct what he regards as the mistakes of the government and criticises the policies from which his party standpoint differs. That was the attitude of 'Ali. The points of difference between him and Abū Bakr and 'Umar in religious and political matters are difficult to ascertain because the source material on both sides, Shī'ite and Sunnite, is extremely tendentious. The earliest Sunnite sources in this connection are Ibn Sa'd, Balādhurī and Ṭabarī respectively who wrote in the period when the conception of "orthodoxy" with the basic idea of recognising the first four Caliphs as the 'Rāshidūn' was firmly established. Naturally every effort was made to show as much agreement as possible at least between 'Ali,

قال ابوسفیان لعليّ ما بال هذا الأمر في أقلّ حيّ من قريش والله لئن شئت لأملأنّها عليه
خيلا ورجالا
1. Ṭab., I, 1827. Balādhurī, Ansāb, I, 588. This statement is commonly repeated by the following historians; e.g. Ibn Athīr, Kāmil, II, 276.

2. Ṭab. loc. cit. Balādhurī, loc. cit.

Abū Bakr and 'Umar, though to some extent with the exclusion of 'Uthmān,¹ in religious and political matters. On the other side the Shī'ite sources give a completely different and extreme view of 'Ali's disagreement, not only with 'Uthmān but also with Abū Bakr and 'Umar, on almost every matter whether religious or political.² The extreme nature of these reports from the Shī'ites and the exaggerated tone and form in which they are presented speak for themselves and made their authenticity more than doubtful and cannot be given any historical value. In short, according to the Sunnite sources 'Ali was a valued counsellor of the Caliphs³ who preceded him; according to the Shī'ites he was the person who, dominated by his heroic love and sense of sacrifice for the Faith, and disregarding his personal grievances, saved the Caliphs from committing serious mistakes to which they were often prone and which would otherwise have been suicidal for Islam. These Shī'ite sources even go to the extent of making 'Umar often declare: "Had there not been 'Ali, 'Umar would have perished."⁴ From the individuality of 'Umar's character, however, this sort of statement is altogether impossible to make. The

1. Even the reason of the serious differences between 'Ali and 'Uthmān has been put on Marwān, 'Uthmān's notorious secretary; and thus attempts were made to save, as much as possible, the position of 'Uthmān too.
2. See, for example, Majlisī, Bihār VIII, Ṭabarsī, Ihtijāj, Mufīd, Irshād, etc.
3. Ibn Sa'd, II, 339 ff.
4. "Law la 'Ali La-halaka 'Umar", see Majlisī, Bihār, VIII, 59, Ṭabarsī, Ihtijāj, I, 103.

result, therefore, is that from these two extreme reports we are quite unable to ascertain the exact points of disagreement between 'Ali and his first two successful rivals. The truth, however, seems to have been, as Veccia Vaglieri suggests,¹ that "'Ali was included in the council of the Caliphs, but although it is probable that he was asked for advice on legal matters in view of his excellent knowledge of the Qur'ān and the Sunna, it is extremely doubtful whether his advice was accepted by 'Umar," who had been a ruling power even during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr. Further evidence of 'Ali's opinions not being taken on religious matters is manifested from the fact that very seldom did his decisions find authority in the later developed "Orthodox" schools of law, whereas 'Umar's decisions found common currency among them. On the other hand 'Ali is a frequently quoted authority on matters of law in all Shī'ite branches.² On political and administrative matters his disagreement with 'Umar on the question of Dīwān³ and his absence from all the wars fought under 'Umar⁴ can be well cited. Thus without going into further details we can assume, as stated above, that his attitude towards the Caliphate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar had been somewhat passive and withdrawn.

There now remains the second observation made above

1. El (2) art. "'Ali."
2. For the 'Ithnā 'Asharites, see Kulaynī, Usūl al-Kāfī, and Furu' al-Kāfī; for the Ismā'ilite, see Qādī Nu 'mān, Da'ā'im al-Islām.
3. Veccia Vaglieri, El (2) art. "'Ali."
4. Ibid.

to be examined: i.e., Abū Bakr's and 'Umar's attempts to disown the Banū Hāshim in general and 'Ali in particular from his prerogative to the leadership of the community. The first and the most important step in this direction was taken by Abū Bakr on the day following the Prophet's death when Fāṭima came to claim the estate of Fadak. She asserted that this estate was given to her father unconditionally as his share of the spoils of Khaybar.¹ Abū Bakr flatly refused her claim, quoting Muhammad's words: "We (the prophets) do not leave as inheritance, what we make legal alms."² He maintained that Fadak belonged to the community as a whole, and that Fāṭima was entitled to the usufruct, but could not hold the right of ownership.³

This question of inheritance soon became one of the most debated problems in the conflict between the Shī'ites and their opponents.⁴ As a matter of fact, Abū Bakr's refusal was a calculated move of high policy, by which he wished to prove that 'Ali and his family had no claims to any legacy from the Prophet. He thought

1. For details of her claim see Ibn Sa'd, II, 314 ff. Ibn Hishām, Sīrah, II, 353. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Istī'āb, II, 571, and El (2) art. "Fadak."
2. This tradition is given in many versions slightly differing one from another - see Ibn Sa'd, II, 314 ff. Bukhārī, II, 435. A comparison of these traditions from the Shī'ite point of view is made by 'Amilī in his A'yān al-Shī'a, II, 461 ff. Also see Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 106.
3. Bukhārī, Sahīh, II, 437.
4. Jāhiz, Rasā'il; "min Kitabihi fi'l-Abbāsiyya", 300 f.

that to accept the rights of the family of 'Ali to the inheritance of Fadak might be regarded as equal to admitting their rights to the succession of the Prophet in all spheres spiritual as well as material. This fear, perhaps, was based on the ground that Muhammad as the leader of the community was entitled to one fifth of the spoils of war (Khums), and by this special right he became owner of the Fadak. To inherit a property token of exalted position and prerogative was somewhat different from an ordinary inheritance. It is reported that after this event Fāṭima did not speak to either Abū Bakr or 'Umar until she died, which took place after six months, and was buried at night.¹

The Caliphate of Abū Bakr was short-lived and lasted only for about two years. On his death bed he explicitly appointed 'Umar, "already a ruling power behind him"², as his successor. To counteract any possible opposition Abū Bakr summoned 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf and 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, who were among the early converts and men of consequence in the community, and entrusted them with the charge of wholehearted support for 'Umar.³

This, in all probability, must have been on the suggestion of 'Umar himself who designed to counter-weight

1. Tab., IV, 1825. Bukhārī, Saḥīḥ, v. 288. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VIII, 29. Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, 288. Ibn Hajar, Sawā'iq, 9.

2. B. Lewis, The Arabs in History, 51.

3. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 8 ff and 12 f. Ibn Athīr, Kāmil, II, 291, 292.

any likely opposition of the Banū Hāshim by appealing to this branch of the Quraysh,¹ who in the past had been rivals of the 'Ahl al-Bayt.' The emergence of these two companions was very characteristic in many ways, especially for the formulation of the later history of the Caliphate for they represented the wealthiest circles² of the Muslim community. However, 'Abd al-Rahmān was brother-in-law to 'Uthmān and the two men could be expected to uphold one another. The former also had wholehearted support of his kinsman Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ.³ In this way the direct support and also the influence of the most important elements among the Muhājirūn was secured to oppose any possible activity from the Banū Hāshim and the partisans of 'Ali.

However, the dominating personality of 'Umar and his most realistic understanding and grasp of the tides of the time were strong enough not to allow any manifestation of discontent during his reign which was continuously occupied in conquering rich nations and giving the poor Arabs a new zest for life. The occupation of Abū Bakr with quelling the Riddah tribes and of 'Umar in conquering foreign lands, consciously or unconsciously, kept internal feuds at rest. After reigning successfully

1. 'Abd al-Rahmān belongs to the Banū Zuhra and 'Uthmān to the Banū Umayya. Both the tribes were rivals of Banū Hāshim before Islam.
2. For the new class of the rich which arose during the early times of Islam see Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 222 ff.
3. Also from the Banū Zuhra, and a cousin of 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf.

for about one decade, however, the powerful Caliph met his end by the dagger of a Persian slave and died on 3rd November, A.D. 644.¹

The task 'Umar started from the time of the Saqīfa which was to break the theocratic principle of succession, he completed from his death bed. Before his death he appointed a special council to elect his successor. The most startling point is that this consisted only of the Muhājirūn with the complete exclusion of the Anṣār.² The members of the Shūra were: 'Uthmān, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf, Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, 'Ali, Zubayr, Ṭalḥa and Abdullah b. 'Umar.³ It is not intended to repeat the events but it is necessary to recall what has a direct bearing on the development of Shī'ism. It is reported that 'Umar himself laid down the regulations for the council according to which they had to act. The regulations were that (1) the new Caliph should be one of this committee, elected by the majority vote of its members; (2) that in the case of two candidates having equal support the one backed by 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf was to be nominated; (3) that if any member of the council shrank from participating he was to be beheaded instantly; and that when a candidate was duly elected, in the event of one, or two members of

1. See G. Levi Della Vida, *El* (1) art. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.
2. Perhaps because of the pro-'Alid sympathies of the Anṣār and secondly, he wanted to eliminate any possibility of an Anṣār being suggested as candidate as well.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 16-17 and 21. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh II, 137-138. Ṭab. I, 2778. Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, 291.

the conclave refusing to acknowledge him, this minority, or in the case of equality the group opposed to 'Abd al-Rahmān, were to be slain.¹ To enforce this order 'Umar called in Abū Ṭalḥa al-Anṣārī, commanding him to select fifty strong men to stand by.²

There is room for doubt about the report that 'Umar imposed these regulations on the members of the committee. We can only try to assess this kind of report with the help of other possible guiding factors or circumstances. Thus when we compare 'Umar's characteristic sternness dominant in his personality and his cut-and-thrust policies evident throughout his career, with the nature of the regulations said to have been imposed by him on the members of the electorate council, we find it possible to accept them. Secondly, the way all the historians record this story makes it clear that 'Umar was sure that only one of these six Companions³ could become the next Caliph but he was afraid that they would oppose each other in order to take the opportunity for themselves which would result in the destruction of the community.⁴

1. To carry it out 'Umar is said to have appointed Suhayb, a mawlā of 'Abdullah b. Jud'ān, to cut off the head of any defaulter: See Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 138. Tab., I, 2779 ff. Kāmil, III, 35 ff. Balādhurī Ansāb, v. 15 f. and 18 ff. Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh II, 74 ff. Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, 291.
2. Balādhurī, op.cit. 18-20. Tab., loc.cit., Dhahabī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Mas'ūdī, loc.cit.
3. فقال (عمر) انى نظرت فوجدتكم روساء الناس وقادتهم ولا يكون هذا الا مراا فيكم. See, Tab., I, 2778 and Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 18.
4. Tab., I, 2778, ولكنى اخاف عليكم اختلا فكم بينكم فيختلف الناس .

Thus motivated by his sincerity he laid down such conditions to save the 'Ummah from serious split. Thirdly, these regulations are recorded not only by Ya'qūbī, Ṭabarī, Dhahabī, but also by al-Balādhurī who is very careful in reporting anything which may harm the personalities of the first two Caliphs. Finally, five different chains of Isnād from whom this report is given include Rāwīs of all schools of thought and inclinations.¹ Thus, taking into account all these points we may consider these regulations as being laid down by 'Umar himself.

However, analysing the rules set by 'Umar as mentioned above it can be said that 'Abd al-Raḥmān was in fact made the arbiter and the final authority of the whole committee. And, as he was most unlikely to vote against his old friend and brother-in-law,² the nomination of 'Uthmān was certain. Moreover, 'Abd al-Raḥmān could rely on the support of his cousin Sa'd. In this way, however, 'Umar gave a final blow to the priestly claims of the Banū Hāshim by giving their old rivals, the Banū Umayya³ a new lease of power.

Brocklemann⁴ doubts whether in reality 'Umar appointed the council, which tends to suggest the existence of

1. I, 'Umar b. Shu'ba from Ibrāhīm; II, Muhammad b. Abdulḥak from Qatāda III, Abī Mikhnaf from Ibn 'Abbās b. Sahl; IV, Mubārak b. Fazāla from 'Uhaybdullah b. 'Umar; V, Yūnus b. Ibn Ishāq from 'Amr b. Maymūn al-'Awdī. See Tab. loc. cit.
2. See this relationship in Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 19. Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, 291 f. Tab., 1, 2780.
3. Naturally Banū Umayya considered it as a golden chance and Abū Sufyān in particular regarded the Caliphate of 'Uthmān as the return of the whole Umayyad clan to power, and he advised them to hold it by all means. See Aghānī, VI, 98-99.
4. History of Islamic Peoples, 63.

"free elections" among the early Muslim community. This seems to be nothing more than a farfetched conjecture which raises more questions than it answers. For it is almost certain that 'Ali, wrongly or rightly, was convinced as to the certainty of his rights, and would never have agreed to make them the subject of debate in a self-instituted council of electors. Also had there been no superior Will and had the most careful arrangements not been made by the dying Caliph, a great dissension would have broken out immediately. Although both al-Zubayr and Ṭalḥa nourished great ambitions, 'Umar knew full well that only two candidates could be taken seriously, 'Ali and 'Uthmān, each being backed by his own clan,¹ the Hashimites and the Umayyads respectively. At the same time, perhaps, he also knew that 'Ali stood a much better chance than 'Uthmān (because of all those reasons given above in part B). Obviously, 'Umar could not openly deny the rights of 'Ali, and had he not appointed him to the Shūra, he would have left a way open for him to oppose the election of 'Uthmān.

Al-'Abbās is reported to have warned 'Ali not to take part in the Shūra, and that he could reserve freedom of action for himself² but, as we have seen it was not possible on account of the provisions made by 'Umar.

1. See 'Umar's conversation with the members of the Shūra in Ṭab., I, 2779. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 16 and 22.
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 91. Ṭab., I, 2780. Kāmil, III, 35. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, Iqd IV, 276.

From the accounts of Balādhurī, who is not always sympathetic to the cause of 'Ali, it appears that 'Ali yielded only under direct pressure,¹ when threatened by force of arms if he declined to abide by 'Umar's will.² When we recall that twelve years before, immediately after the death of the Prophet, 'Ali had protested against the nomination of Abū Bakr, it is not difficult to suppose that he would have been extremely disappointed to see that again, on a third occasion, 'Uthmān was given preference over him.

It is by no means easy to ascertain what exactly happened in the deliberations and debates of the council which resulted in the appointment of 'Uthmān, as our sources are utterly confused and often contradictory. But, in the mass of material handed down to us there is a tradition at once very important and most revealing. It is said that after long debates and wrangling which lasted about three days, when the Muslims gathered in the mosque to hear the decision of the electoral body, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf first offered the Caliphate to 'Ali on the condition that he should govern, besides the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet, in accordance with the precedent established by the two former Caliphs. Accepting the first two conditions, 'Ali declined to comply with the third, declaring that in all cases respecting which he found no positive law of the Qur'ān or

1. Tab., I, 2795.

2. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 21-22, also Tab., I, 2779-2780. Kāmil, III, 35 ff.

decision of the Prophet, he would rely upon his own judgement. Then 'Abd al-Rahmān put the same conditions to 'Uthmān who readily consented to them¹ - and where-upon he declared him the Caliph. We shall see presently that this point was later made the basis of the differences between the Sunnite's and the Shī'ite's legal theories and practices, and the Shī'ites rejected the decisions of the first three Caliphs.

The authenticity of this commonly reported tradition has often been questioned by some of the scholars. The present writer, however, holds strongly, and not without a good many reasons, that the tradition, in all probability, is genuine and should be accepted. The tradition bears the testimony of both the Sunnī and the Shī'a historians alike and only the Sunnī theologians tried to ignore it, simply because of the fact it was damaging to the newly established concept of the Jamā'a accepting the first four Caliphs as the Rāshidūn, and their precepts as precedents for the formulation of the so-called "Orthodoxy". Apart from this historical evidence the most convincing reason in support of this view lies in 'Ali's own independent nature and in the marked individuality of his character. If we try to delineate

1. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 22. Tab. 1, 2786; more clear version see on p. 2793 f. Ya'qūbī Ta'rikh, II, 139-140, says that the same conditions were put before 'Ali and 'Uthmān three times by 'Abd al-Rahmān and every time the answer was the same, i.e., 'Ali rejected the third condition and 'Uthmān accepted all conditions without any hesitation. See also Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, I, 188 and 194. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 279.

Ali's character from the beginning until his death, the following main characteristics emerge. He was uncompromising in his opinions, straightforward, and above all too stern in his religious outlook.¹ These three features are found to be predominant throughout his career. It is not possible here to go into details of his biography in order to support this view but the following examples can be forcibly cited in support of our assumption of his character. There is his total refusal when he was advised not to expel Mu'āwiyā and other Umayyad governors until he became firm and strong enough in the capital;² his insistence that Hadd punishment should be carried out on 'Abdullah b. 'Umar for the murder of Hurmuzān³ and also the fact that when all others refused to administer the flogging punishment on Walīd b. 'Uqba, he took on this task himself.⁴ Moreover, we cannot deny the fact that there were points of disagreement between him and Abū Bakr. We also know with certainty that he did hold a view entirely opposed to that of 'Umar regarding Dīwān and recommended the distribution of the entire revenue without holding anything in reserve,⁵ which 'Umar did

1. which was obviously one of the reasons of his failure during his own Caliphate.
2. Tab., I, 3083 f. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 151. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 240-241. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 156. Kāmil, III, 101. The first thing 'Ali did after assuming office was to expel all the governors appointed by 'Uthmān. See details and 'Ali's reply or stand thereon, in Tab., I, 3085 f.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 24 Tab., I, 2796.
4. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 33. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 225.
5. See El (2) art "Ali."

not accept. This was not an insignificant difference because it involved so many administrative and financial questions. In addition, there must have been many more points of serious difference. Moreover, al-Minqarī, an important writer on Ṣiffīn, who died in 212 AH, preserves for us a letter of Mu'āwiyā, which he wrote to 'Alī accusing him of being responsible for the murder of 'Uthmān. In this letter, however, among the charges levelled by Mu'āwiyā against 'Alī, is one that he did not even co-operate with Abū Bakr and 'Umar during their caliphate, and maintained his disagreements with them.¹

'Abd al-Raḥmān knew these differences full well and at the same time he also knew equally well 'Alī's independent and uncompromising nature. Now, at this time, perhaps with the death of the most dominating personalities like Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Abū 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrāḥ, it was not so easy to put off 'Alī without any serious excuse because his possible rivals (or rival in the person of 'Uthmān) were much inferior to him at least as far as their services to Islam were concerned. Therefore, he put such a condition he was sure 'Alī's self-reliance would reject and this would give him the excuse he wanted.

'Uthmān was a weak man. Apart from considerations of family relationship and personal friendship and also other reasons, 'Uthmān's weakness was probably one of the reasons why 'Abd al-Raḥmān supported him as he was desirous to have a man who would rely on his advice and serve his interest - the interest of the Qurayshite's

1. Naṣr b. Muzāḥim al-Minqarī, Waq'āt Ṣiffīn (Cairo 1365 AH), p. 97.

aristocracy and the rich. 'Ali belonged to the poor ascetic-minded class,¹ whereas 'Abd al-Rahmān and other members of the Shūra were all very rich people whose wealth is reported to have run into millions.² So, apart from group politics and party partisanship, it was quite natural for them to elect someone who represented their own class.³

However, 'Uthmān was proclaimed the third Caliph. Nevertheless, his selection did not go without serious

1. He is often reported to have said "Yā ṣafrāu wa yā Bayḍāu ghurri ghayrī," "O, gold and silver try to tempt someone else other than me." Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 542.
2. For the immense wealth and property owned by 'Abd al-Rahmān see Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 542. El (1) art 'Abd al-Rahmān'; Khuda Baksh, Politics in Islam, 151. For Zubayr see, Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, 174. Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 542. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 108. For Talha see, Muharrad, Kamīl, I. 217-218. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 220. Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 543. For Sa'd, b. Abi Waqqās see also Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 543. Khuda Baksh, Politics in Islam, 151. For 'Uthmān see the following note.
3. 'Uthmān is reported to have left after his death 100,000 Dīnārs and one million Dirhams, and his estates at Wādī al-Qur'ā, Hunayn and other places were estimated to be worth 200,000 Dirhams, in addition to a number of horses and camels. Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., 542. Besides this immense wealth he also combined in himself old nobility of the Umayyads.

opposition¹ from 'Ali himself and some of his old and ardent partisans. 'Ammār and Miqdād are reported to have been loud in their protest against the election of 'Uthmān.²

In short, the notable declaration made by 'Ali declining to follow the precedents established by the two former Caliphs forms the most important and perhaps the earliest theoretical points which ultimately gave rise to the later development of two different and separate divisions of law under the pretext of Shī'i and Sunnī.³ An exponent of the 'History of Ideas' will tell us that it often takes a considerably long time for a given idea to present itself in a complete form. And, we shall see that the idea expressed by 'Ali in the Shūra took at least fifty years to manifest itself in a distinguishable form.⁴

To conclude this phase, however, we can remark that the selection of 'Uthmān was very largely based

1. Under the tribal rivalries, we can very well imagine that the Banū Hāshim must have been bitter on the rise of their rivals the Banū Umayya.
2. See the arguments put forward by 'Ammār and Miqdād and the words of strong protest made by them, in Tab., I, 2785 ff. Kāmil, III, 37. Still more detailed versions in Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 155 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 279 f.
3. cf. Ameer Ali, Muhammadan Law, (1917) II, 4-5.
4. At the earliest, perhaps, at the time of the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.

on economic, social and tribal¹ considerations. On the other hand, the protest launched against it, from men like 'Ammār and Miqdād, was very largely based on religious aspirations.² The arguments put forward by these supporters of 'Ali were almost the same as were sounded at Saqīfa against the nomination of Abū Bakr, i.e., 'Ali's relationship with the Prophet and his unsurpassed services to Islam.³

1. See in Tab., 1, 2785, the speeches in favour of 'Uthmān made by Ibn Abī Sarḥ and Umayyad, and a chief of the clan of Makhzūm, a strong ally of the Umayyads.
2. See the speeches in favour of 'Ali made by 'Ammār and Miqdād in Tab., 1, 2785. Kamīl, III, 37. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 155 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Id, IV, 279 f.
3. Vide - all references above, in No. 2. Specially see the statement of 'Ammār in Tab., 1, 2785.

فقال عمار ايها الناس ان الله عز وجل اكرمنا بنبيه واعزنا بدينه فاني تصرفون
هذا الامر عن اهل بيت نبيكم .

and the statement of al-Miqdād in op. cit. 2786.

فقال المقداد ما رايت مثل ما اوتى الى اهل هذا البيت بعد نبيهم
اني اعجب من قريش انهم تركوا رجلا ما اقول ان احدا اعلم ولا اقضى منه
بالعدل اما والله لو اجسد عليه اعوانا .

D. THE RE-EMERGENCE OF THE 'ALID PARTY

The period of sixteen years, beginning from the Caliphate of 'Uthmān until the termination of the Caliphate of 'Ali by his assassination, is at once extremely important and hopelessly confused. It is confused because of the fact that the source material is, to a great extent, stamped with the political or religious tendencies of the early writers,¹ and is often contradictory. It is important because firstly, it created an atmosphere which encouraged Shī'ite tendencies to become more evident; secondly, the events which took place gave an active and sometimes violent nature to the hitherto inactive Shī'ite movement. Thirdly, the circumstances which prevailed involved the Shī'ite outlook, for the first time, in a number of political,

1. For example see the great difference between Ṭabarī and Ibn Athīr on the one hand and Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī on the other. The first two suppress many events which the last two mention with great emphasis, the story of Abū Dharr can be cited as a good example in this connection which is omitted by both Ṭabarī and Ibn Athīr saying that they do not want to record unpleasant things, but Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī record them with full details. I feel that Balādhurī is a well balanced and the best source on this issue who does not suppress any report and, though a die-hard orthodox himself, speaks freely of the misfortune of 'Ammār and Abū Dharr. Another work of 7th century writer Md. Ibn Yāhya Ibn Abī Bakr al-Ash'arī, al-Tamhīd wa'l-bayān fī maqāt al-Shahīd 'Uthmān, has recently been published from Beirut. But it is nothing more than a reproduction of Ṭabarī with few additions clearly biased in favour of 'Uthmān.

geographical and economic considerations. The following pages are intended to show, without going into great detail, that the whole period was one in which the urges of the first Shī'ites to express their ideas on the succession of 'Ali, the religious zeal of the Companions, personal hatreds, provincial and economic interests, political intrigues, and the discontent of the poor against the rich were all mixed together. This confusion, however, not only provided a new sphere of activities for the Shī'ite movement, but also widened its circle for those who wanted an outlet for their political grievances, especially against Mu'āwiya who represented the Umayyad aristocracy and Syrian domination. They, accidentally, became supporters of 'Ali and saw in him the champion of the political independence of Iraq, and in this sense accidentally they were, for the time being, of the same mind as the religious supporters of 'Ali who believed in his right to the Caliphate based on the theocratic principle. The emergence of the political Shī'a is characterised both by the increase in its sway and number, and also by the sudden rapid speed with which it grew from now on. In this part, however, we will examine the events which led to the murder of 'Uthmān, the succession of 'Ali, the rising of Mu'āwiya, and, ultimately to a clearer view of the "Shī'ite Attitude".

Abū Bakr and 'Umar did not give their respective clansmen any particular share in the rule of the Muslim community, nor were their clans politically of much consequence. It was different with 'Uthmān. His clan

had, after Muhammad's victory, taken second place to the Hāshimītes, but nevertheless preserved much of their old importance. When 'Uthmān was elected, they regarded it as a triumph for the whole clan, not solely his personal success.¹ Also the Umayyads considered it natural that the Caliph should give them a share of the profits. They were too powerful for 'Uthmān to dare to refuse, and swarmed round him, avid for power and greedy for gold. The weak Caliph, who perhaps thought that his strength lay in the support and goodwill of his clansmen, did what he could to satisfy their appetites. The people were painfully disillusioned when 'Uthmān showed himself inherently disposed to have a special regard for improving the lot of the members of his family and his tribe.²

It is a historical fact that within a few years of 'Uthmān's accession the Umayyads claimed among themselves the governorships of all the important provinces.

1. See Abū Sufyān's statement on the Caliphate of 'Uthmān and his advice to him thereon. Agh., VI, 98, 99. Mufīd, Irshād, 100.
2. 'Uthmān even made no secret of bestowing favours on his kinsmen and found an excuse for it by saying, "The Prophet used to bestow offices on his kinsmen and I happen to belong to people who are poor. So I let my hands a bit loose in regard to that which I have been entrusted with by virtue of the care that I take of it." See Tab., 1-2948-49 also see Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 25 and 28. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, 3, 64. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Iqd, IV, 280. Ibn Abī'l-Hadīd, Sharh, I, 196.

of Baṣra, Kūfa, Syria and Egypt.¹ These Umayyad governors in turn relied on the support of their own kinsmen whom they pampered and allowed to dominate the counsels.²

What really mattered in this connection more than anything else, however, was not that the Umayyads dominated all positions of power and vantage, but rather the indisputable fact that they were allowed latitude enough to use their powers arbitrarily and unfairly for the benefit of themselves and their kinsmen,³ and thus incurred the dissatisfaction and hatred of many of the Muslims.⁴ 'Abdullah b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ, who administered Egypt, was an extremely unpopular man, one whom the prophet during the conquest of Mecca ordered to be

1. See, Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, III, 64 ff. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 25 ff. Tab., I, 2801 ff. Kāmil, III 41 ff. Ya'qūbī, Tā'rīkh, II, 142-143. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 147-148. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 223-224. Also, Muhammad Ibn Yahyā Ibn Abī Bakr al-Ash'arī, al-Tamhīd wa'l-Bayān fī maqāt al-Shahīd 'Uthmān, (Ed. Zayīd, Beirut, 1964), 38 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 280 ff.
2. See Tab., I, 2932 f.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 25 ff. Kāmil, op.cit. 41. Ya'qūbī, Tā'rīkh, II, 142-143. Mas'ūdī, op.cit. 223-224. Dīnawarī, loc.cit., and al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 30 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 280 ff.
4. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 26 ff. and Tab; and Kāmil from the years 33 to 35. passim.

killed.¹ Al-Walīd b. 'Uqba, 'Uthmān's half brother, was even more heartily hated by the Kufans whom he treated in brutal fashion. He divided lands among his favourites and finally disgraced himself by drunkenness.² 'Uthmān was obliged to recall him and appointed another close relative, Sa'īd b. al-'As³ who infuriated the local notables by his high-handed treatment, and then frightened them by declaring that the Sawād of Kūfa would become "a garden of the Quraysh."⁴ The result was that a group of the Qur'ān Readers, mostly Yamanites such as Mālik b. Hārith

1. Tab., 1, 2871. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 49. We can however, recall Ibn Abī Sarh's enthusiastic support given to 'Uthmān at the occasion of the latter's election in the mosques of the Prophet; and his quarrel with and harsh replies to 'Ammār when 'Ammār insisted that 'Ali, being the nearest kinsman of the Prophet and by virtue of being a Hāshimite, should be elected. Then in support of Ibn Abī Sarh some one from the tribe of Makhzūm, an old rival of the Banū Hāshim, said to 'Ammār, "This is a matter to be settled between the chief clans of the Qurayshites, who are you to interfere in our disputes." See Tab., 1, 2785. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Iqd, IV, 279. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, I, 193-194.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 142. Agh., V, 127. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 224. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 31, 33. Tab., 1, 2845. Kāmil, III, 52-53. al-Ash'arī, Tamhīd, 38 ff. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Iqd, IV, 307 f.
3. Balādhurī, op.cit. 33.
4. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V. 40 f and 44. Agh., XI, 30 ff. Tab., 1, 2916.

al-Ashtar al-Nakha'ī, Sulaymān b. Šurād al-Khuzā'ī, Hujur b. 'Adī al-Kindī,¹ Sharīh b. 'Awf al-'Absī and others protested in vain against sa'īd's behaviour.² Instead of making proper inquiries, 'Uthmān ordered the agitators to be sent to Syria for Mu'āwiya to deal with.³ This clash with the Qurra' set the seal on 'Uthmān's unpopularity in religious circles as well.⁴

Apart from appointing many of his clansmen to lucrative posts, 'Uthmān also made large gifts to others.⁵ At the same time he treated some of the Companions of the Prophet very harshly. Thus 'Abdullah b. Mas'ūd, then in charge of the treasury in Kūfa, was recalled after a quarrel with al-Walīd b. 'Uqba, and the Caliph allowed him to be manhandled in his presence.⁶

1. Balādhurī, op.cit. 41. These names should be taken seriously as they afterwards appeared to be the leaders of the Shī'ite sectarian movement in Kufa and were never reconciled with Mu'āwiya.
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 41 and 43 f. Tab., I, 2908 ff.
3. Balādhurī, op.cit. 43. Tab., I, 2909 ff.
4. These fanatics even made the full use of the event when 'Uthmān burnt all the compilations of the Qur'ān after the new recension had been made, and they later accused him of having removed certain passages from the Holy Book. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 62. The Shī'ite sources are unanimous and emphatic on this point.
5. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 26, 27, 28. Tab., I, 2953-4. al-Ash'ārī, Tamhīd, 99.
6. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 227. Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, II, 102. Balādhurī, op.cit. 36-7.

Even worse was the treatment 'Ammār b. Yāsir received, when he came from Egypt with a letter of complaints against Ibn Abī Sarh.¹ He was reviled and beaten until unconscious.² But perhaps worst of all were the sufferings of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī.³

During the last few years of 'Uthmān's reign the whole population was seething with discontent⁴ over the spectacle of Umayyad aristocrats seated in high offices, rolling in wealth and luxury, indulging in debauchery, lavishly spending the immense wealth⁵ which they appropriated to themselves illegitimately. Naturally enough, the resulting disequilibrium in the economic and social structure, was bound to arouse the jealousy of various sections of the population, and provided combustible material for an explosion. There were various manifestations of this discontent, for example, Abū Dharr, the fearless and uncompromising partisan of frugality and asceticism, who violently protested against the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few and demanded distribution of lands among the community.⁶ 'Uthmān, who did not like the idea of Abū Dharr thundering against

1. Balādhurī, op.cit. 48.

2. Ibid.

3. See Infra.

4. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 227. for details see Tabarī's accounts of the last years of 'Uthmān's Caliphate.

5. Mas'ūdī, op.cit. 222 ff.

6. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V 52 ff. Kāmil, III, 56-57. Tab., I, 2858 ff.

the wealthy in the mosque of Medina,¹ sent him to Syria.² Not long after, the Caliph received a letter from Mu'āwīya, complaining of Abū Dharr's insidious activities.³ 'Uthmān ordered that he should be sent under escort, bound to a wooden camel-saddle, so that he arrived in Medina half-dead and with the flesh torn off his thighs.⁴ After a few days the Caliph exiled him to al-Rabdhā, where he soon died.⁵ His misadventures were broadcast widely throughout the provinces, awakening an echo of bitterness against 'Uthmān and the class of the rich simultaneously with the propagation of 'Ali's claims to the Caliphate.⁶

We must strongly dissent from the viewpoint of those writers⁷ who have laboured a good deal to represent the rebellion against 'Uthmān as being due only to the evil machinations of some mischief-mongers, and that the grievances they manipulated as being all faked and artificial. Such writers ignore the fact that these mischief

1. Abū Dharr also declared that 'Ali was the legatee of the Prophet and the inheritor of his knowledge. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 148.
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 53. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 148, Kāmil, op.cit. 57. Tab., loc.cit.
3. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Tab., 1,2859.
4. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Neither Tabarī nor the later Ibn Athīr give these details saying that "I do not like to mention many unpleasant things which occurred in this connection." See Tab., 1, 2862 and Kāmil, III, 56-57.
5. Vide no. 5 above.
6. See, for example, Abū Dharr's speech, recorded by al-Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 148.
7. Like, for example, al-Ash'arī, al Tamhīd, and to some extent, even Tabarī and Ibn Athīr.

mongers, if such they were, had real grievances to work on and the tacit support of the Sahāba to provide the necessary sanction. It must be remembered that to work discontent into open rebellion, two things are essential. First, leadership, and leadership must come from those who command respect in society. Second, time and opportunity to organise and concert action. And both of these were present.

The attitude of the Sahāba, prominent among them being 'Ali, Ṭalḥa, and Zubayr, is quite clear. There is ample material to prove that almost all of them, especially these three, were equally loud in their opposition to the ways of 'Uthmān.¹ Even if we do not agree with the reports that they wrote letters to the provincials or actually incited them in an active and systematic manner, the fact remains unchallenged that they made no secret of their views and moral support for the rebels.²

1. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 26 ff and 60 ff. Ṭab., 1, 2955.
2. See their behaviour in Balādhurī, Ya'qūbī, Ṭabarī, Mas'ūdī, and Kāmil. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 32 AH) who played an all-important role in the election of 'Uthmān, is also reported to have hinted long before the outbreak of disturbances that he held 'Uthmān's actions to be a violation of the pledge given by him at the time of this election. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 57. Ṭab., 1, 2980. Ibn 'Abd Rabbīhi, Iqd, IV, 280.

There is an important point for our purpose in the story of the punishment given to Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī. When 'Uthmān ordered Abū Dharr to be exiled he strictly forbade that anyone should see him off except Marwān who was to escort him out of Medina. 'Ali accompanied by Ḥasan and Ḥusayn and his partisan 'Ammār b. Yāsir went along with him for a long distance. When he was reminded of the Caliph's orders by Marwān, 'Ali replied by hitting the head of Marwān's beast with his stick and cursing him. When it was time to part, Abū Dharr wept and said, "By God whenever I see you, I remember the Prophet." Marwān reported the whole matter to 'Uthmān who became very indignant at such a breach of orders. When he questioned 'Ali, the latter replied that he was not supposed to obey orders that were not compatible with common sense and justice. "My merits and excellencies are far beyond yours, I fought at the battle of Badr, while you stayed peacefully at home. I was present when allegiance was sworn to the Prophet at al-'Aqaba. When you were not."¹ Later, these points were more commonly argued by the supporters of 'Ali; and we see that Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī, the Shī'ite poet, availed himself of these points and gave vent to his ultra-Shī'ite views.²

1. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 53 ff. More detailed account is given by Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 229-230, and Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 148-149 and Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, VIII, 252 ff.
2. For the verses al-Ḥimyarī composed thereon see Agh., VII, 134.

However, though al-Zubayr and Talḥa had quite a large following in Baṣra and Kūfa respectively¹ they were far less important than 'Ali. Thus we find that 'Ali was often surrounded by the protestors, gathered in Medina from the provinces, to support their cause,² and at the same time he was approached and appealed to by the Caliph to intercede with the rebels.³ 'Ali, perhaps compelled by the demand of justice, now stood in defence of the injured Companions, and demanded punishment for the blameworthy. He himself protested against the rich gifts made by the Caliph to his kinsmen.⁴ Soon he adopted the role of the spokesman of the Readers;⁵ and ultimately he became a much stronger champion of the cause of the agitators than they would have found among themselves.⁶

After 'Ali paid homage to Abū Bakr, and the first party of his supporters dispersed, he kept aloof from all the activities until the end of 'Umar's rule. The protest raised after the election of 'Uthmān showed that 'Ali's candidature had many partisans,⁷ but they did not form any particular group and acted only as individuals. Once the Caliphate of 'Uthmān became accepted by the

1. Tab., 1, 2955. Kāmil, III, 80.
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 26 and 60. Tab., 1, 2955 ff. Kāmil III, 75, 79-81. al-Ash'arī, Tamhīd, 54.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 61. Tab., 1, 2948 f. Kāmil, III, 81.
4. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 28. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, III, 76.
5. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 26 وكانت منكم القوم also see p.60 f. Tab., 1, 2956 f. Kāmil, III, 78-79, 81.
6. Balādhurī, op.cit. 63 f. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, III, 81-86.
7. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 140-141.

community, the spontaneous opposition of men such as al-Miqdād or 'Ammār ceased. When with the course of time, the Caliph began to lose popularity, the old partisans of 'Ali immediately took the opportunity of giving rein to their long suppressed desires to see 'Ali as the Caliph¹ and started to collect new supporters. Now two different groups, but with the same end, were working simultaneously, serving each other's purposes consciously or unconsciously. One, the poor and lower section of the population, which was the hardest hit by the disequilibrium in the economic structure, and the other was the partisans of 'Ali making best use of the situation.²

The second group, led by men like Abū Dharr, al-Miqdād, 'Ammār, Ḥudhayfa and several of the Anṣār, enlisted some new active supporters like Abū 'Amra al-Anṣārī, al-Husayn b. Mundhir al-Raqqāshī called also Abū Sasān and Shutayra b. Shikl al-'Absī.³ This circle also included the Hāshimites, as well as 'Ali's clients and servants. Among them were Qambar b. Kadam,⁴ Maytham

1. See Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 148.

2. Ibid.

3. Kashshī, Rijāl, 5 and 8. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 115-161-344 and 349. Majlisī, Bihār, VIII, 47. 'Amilī, A'yān, VI, 390 ff. and VII, 62.

4. A Mawlā of 'Ali, lived in Kufa until the times of al-Ḥajjāj. See Kashshī, Rijāl, 48 ff. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 246. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, Lisān al-Mizān, IV, 475.

b. Yahya al-Tammār,¹ and Rushayd al-Hujarī.²

The most important figure who has been described by later writers was 'Abdullah b. Wahb b. Saba', also known as Ibn al-Sawda, a former Jewish rabbī converted to Islam. He is described as having become 'Ali's principle supporter, travelling from place to place in order to sow discontent against the rule of 'Uthmān.³ 'Ali al-Wardī suggests that 'Abdullah b. Saba' never existed and the activities attributed to him were carried out by 'Ammār b. Yāsir.⁴ Modern scholars of note seem to agree that 'Abdullah b. Saba' is a legendary figure and a projection into the past.⁵

It is an interesting phenomenon that, in the years which followed, both the hatred against 'Uthmān and the number of the supporters of 'Ali were growing side by side. The pious opposition to Umayyad aristocracy became eagerly involved with partisanship for 'Ali.⁶

1. A Mawlā of the Banū Asad crucified in Kufa by 'Ubaydullah b. Ziyād in the year AH 61/680 A.D. Kash., Rijāl, 53 ff. Hā'irī, Muntaha 315. Majlisī, Bihār, IX, 629.
2. Executed by Ibn Ziyād in Kufa in AH 61/680 A.D. See Kash., Rijāl, 50 ff. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 134. He is said to have been called by 'Ali Rushayd al-Balāya (i.e., one who suffers trials.) This is a typical example of projection into the past by later Shi'ites; see Majlisī, Bihār, IX, 629.
3. See Tab., 1, 2942 ff. Kāmil, III, 77 ff. al-Ash'arī, Tamhīd, 55 ff.
4. 'Ali al-Wardī, K. Wa'z al-Sultanī, 125 ff.
5. B. Lewis, Origins of Ismā'ilism, 25. Hodgson, "How did the early Shi'a become Sectarian", JAOS. 1955, p.2. and El (2) art. "Abdullah b. Saba'."
6. Hodgson, "How did the Early Shi'a become Sectarian", JAOS, 1955, p.3.

Not only did the partisans of 'Ali conduct propaganda but Ṭalḥa and Zubayr worked against 'Uthmān too. Thus when Muhammad b. Abū Bakr¹ and Muhammad b. Abū Hudhayfa reached Egypt² to rouse the people against the Caliph, they met Muhammad b. Ṭalḥa sent there by his father for the same task. Even the widows of the Prophet opposed the Caliph,³ particularly 'A'isha, who was loud in her denunciations of 'Na'thal' as she nicknamed him.⁴

The revolt reached its climax in the year AH 35/656 A.D. when the rebels marched on Medina under the leadership of the "Readers". The contingent from Kūfa was led by Mālīk b. al-Ashtar, that from Basra by Hukaym b. Jabala al-'Abdī, while the Egyptians had four leaders, Abū 'Umar b. Budayl al-Khuzā'ī, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Udays al-Balawī, Kināna b. Bishr al-Tujibī and 'Urwa b. Shayyim al-Kinānī.⁵

1. The son of the Caliph Abū Bakr, Muhammad, was a devoted follower of 'Ali and a bitter enemy of 'Uthmān. See Tabari under the years 33, 34, 35 and during the Caliphate of 'Ali. Also Hodgson, op.cit. p.2., and El (1) art. "Muhammad b. Abū Bakr."
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 49.
3. Umm salma once took care of the injured 'Ammār b. Yāsir. See Balādhurī, V, 48-49 and 50. al-Imāma wa'l-Siyāsa, I, 30.
4. One of the big beard and hairy chest. Tab., I, 3112. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 34. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rikh, II, 152.
5. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 59 ff. Tab., I, 2955 ff.

The purpose of recording these names is only to point out that all of them, except the last one, are Yamanites. Some of the pro-Alid Medinese, both Muḥājirūn and Anṣār, such as 'Ammār b. Yāsir, Rifā'a b. Rāf'i, al-Ḥajjāj b. Ghaziyya and 'Amir b. Bukayr also joined them.¹

The events that led to the murder of 'Uthmān are outside the scope of this study. The assassination of the Caliph, however, exceeded the desires even of those of the leading Ṣaḥāba who were openly against the Caliph, for they wished only to depose, not to kill him. There seems no valid reason to doubt the report given by our sources that 'Ali dispersed many times the unruly mob who wanted to hurt the Caliph² and during the siege he even appointed his sons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn to protect him from the hands of the angry besiegers.³

Out of the confusion which followed the murder of 'Uthmān, one thing was certain that the only candidate acceptable to the rebel Qurra' was 'Ali;⁴ but now he was reluctant⁵ to accept the office which is said to have been claimed by him after the death of the Prophet and again at the time of 'Uthmān's nomination. It was,

1. See Balādhurī, loc.cit. Jahshiyārī, al-Wuzarā wa'l Kuttāb, 14. Tab., and Kāmil, under the years 35.
2. Tab., 1, 2988 f. Balādhurī, op.cit. 62 ff and 69. also Kāmil, III, 72 ff.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 69. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 232. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 290-291.
4. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 70, 71. Tab., 1, 3066 ff. Kāmil, III, 98. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 291 and 310.
5. Tab., 1, 3066 ff. Kāmil, III, 99f.

perhaps, because of the problems which 'Uthmān's successor would have to face at once. But at last, pressed by the demands from almost all quarters,¹ except of course the Banū Umayya and the close adherents of 'Uthmān,² 'Ali is reported to have agreed to take the responsibility with the explicit declaration that he would rule, besides the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet, according to what he would think right and to enforce law and justice, regardless of any criticism or clash of anyone's interest.³ There is little historical evidence to support this statement though it seems in accordance with 'Alis' independent nature. Talḥa and Zubayr, though the rebel contingents from Baṣra and Kūfa respectively are said to have been their supporters,⁴ knew that they had no chance, and were the first to swear allegiance.⁵ Only a few

1. loc. cit. Tab., Kāmil, loc. cit. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 70-71. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 291.
2. Balādhurī, op. cit. 74 ff. Kāmil, loc. cit. Tab., loc. cit.
3. See Shi'ite sources like that of Ṭabarsī, Ihtijāj, 102. Mufīd, Irshād, 93.
4. It is commonly reported by all historians that Talḥa had a large following in Basra and Zubayr in Kufa and the contingents which came from these two cities were largely under the influence of these two Companions. See Tab., I, 2955. Kāmil, III, 80. al-Ash'arī, Tamhīd, 107.
5. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 70. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 154, 386. Tab. I, 3067 f. Kāmil, III, 98.

individuals declined to pay him homage, and some of them fled to Syria¹ to join Mu'āwiya carrying 'Uthmān's blood-stained shirt.

Apart from these, and Mu'āwiya with his following, who preserved a non-committal attitude, 'Ali was acclaimed by the community as the fourth Caliph. But he was the first among the Caliphs who, because of the circumstances of his birth, combined in his person both the dynastic and theocratic principles of succession.

'Ali, however, inherited very great problems indeed which none of his three predecessors had to face. The murder of 'Uthmān was not a simple assassination committed by an individual to settle his personal grievances, as was the case with 'Umar. It was a revolt in which religious fanaticism, personal animosity, political intrigues as well as justifiable complaints and discontent of the poor against the rich all had their part. Leave 'Ali alone, who, due to the rigidity in his ideals was lacking in the political practicability required for the harsh conditions in Arabia, the situation was not easy to deal with even by a seasoned politician and a shrewd realist. True, the actual murderers fled, and it would have been impossible for the moment to find them, but Mālik b. Ashtar and the other Readers around 'Ali were nearly as responsible, yet they were not the actual murderers. On the other hand, he himself was convinced that their movement was based on just and right demands,²

1. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Also Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit.

2. See Supra, 'Ali's role as the spokesman of the Qurra'.

but was taken over by some unruly extremists¹ who were now beyond his reach. In vain, however, did he try to find a peaceful solution.² He cursed the slayers of 'Uthmān,³ and yet surrounded himself with their associates.

Before long, however, his election was questioned and his authority challenged. Even 'A'isha, one of the main instigators against 'Uthmān⁴, when she heard the nomination of 'Ali on her way back from the lesser pilgrimage, refused to enter Medina and went back to Mecca.⁵ Some time later, Talḥa and Zubayr saw an opportunity to dissociate themselves from 'Ali, and asked permission to perform the 'Umra. He understood what they planned, but did not refuse their request.⁶ They joined 'A'isha in the Holy City and announced that they had been forced to

1. See 'Ali's answer to Talḥa and Zubayr that "the murder of 'Uthmān was an act of 'the days of ignorance', I am not indifferent to what you demand but at present they are beyond my power. As soon as I get hold of them I will not hesitate to punish them." *Tab.*, I, 3080. *Kāmil*, III, 100. Also see Talḥa and Zubayr's speeches before the people of Basra in which they say, فغلب سفهاء الناس الحما حتى قتلوه. *Tab.*, I, 3127.
2. *Tab.*, I, 3080 ff. *Kāmil*, III, 100 ff. *Dīnawarī*, *Akhbār*, 156.
3. *Tab.*, loc.cit. *Kāmil*, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, 158. Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, II, 248. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī, *Iqd*, IV, 302.
4. *Tab.*, I, 3112. Also see B. Lewis, *The Arabs in History*, 60.
5. See the full account of it in *Tab.*, I, 3112. *Kāmil*, III, 105. Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, 156.
6. *Tab.*, I, 3091. Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, 156. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, *Sharḥ*, I, 232.

swear allegiance under duress.¹

Now 'A'isha, once foremost in condemning 'Uthmān, assumed the role of his avenger.² Zubayr and Talḥa were individuals of small calibre, both schemers and intriguers, but not really leaders of the masses. Jealous of each other, they would have never concerted their efforts, but inspired by 'A'isha they found a way to make a bid for power. Though the real commander of the armed forces was 'A'isha, the triumvirate marched from Mecca to Basra in October 656 A.D. 'Ali, though reluctant³ to take arms, was nevertheless obliged to act. He went to Iraq, where he succeeded in collecting an army from among the Kufans and ultimately defeated 'A'isha, and her associates in the 'Battle of the Camel.' Talḥa and Zubayr were slain and 'A'isha, fell prisoner, but 'Ali treated her generously and sent her safely to Medina.⁴

After the battle of Jamal, 'Ali then had to deal with the much more dangerous party of Mu'āwiya, who displayed the blood-stained shirt of 'Uthmān,⁵ calling for

1. Tab., 1, 3112 ff. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, loc.cit.
2. Tab., loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, op.cit. 157 f. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 242 f.
3. For the hesitant attitude of 'Ali see Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 151, Tab., 1, 3082 ff. and 3092 ff.
4. Tab., 1, 3231. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, 'Iqd, IV, 328 f.
5. See in Tab., 1, 3255. Agh., XV, 71.

revenge.¹ Mu'āwiya knew full well that if 'Ali consolidated his authority he would dislodge him from his position in Syria and the only way to hold it was to question the validity of 'Ali's title to the Caliphate, which was not difficult, considering the circumstances in which he was installed. The Qurra' were against any compromise with him and Mālik b. al-Ashtar advised 'Ali not to enter into correspondence with the Governor of Syria.² Nevertheless, 'Ali tried peaceful means. Only when those failed, and it became obvious that Mu'āwiya had resolved to fight,³ did he march with his forces to meet the Syrians.

The conflict of Ṣiffīn has been thoroughly and critically studied by a number of scholars⁴ and there is little left to be added to it. However, as the immediate result of Ṣiffīn another fanatical group henceforth called Khārijites⁵ emerged and remained a consistent

1. 'Ali denied the right of vengeance to Mu'āwiya, stating that the sons of 'Uthmān were more entitled to claim it. See Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 285.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 160. Also see the text of 'Ali's letter in Mubarrad, Kāmil, loc.cit., and the speeches of 'Ali's close friend before the battle of Ṣiffīn and his attitude, in Minqarī, Waqi'āt Ṣiffīn, 103, 104, 105, and 106.
3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 163.
4. See Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom. B. Lewis, The Arabs in History, 62, though very brief conveys the whole situation with full grasp of the situation.
5. In this study I will confine myself to the Shī'ite movement only and will avoid as much as possible touching upon the Khārijites.

cause of 'Ali's weakness.¹ On the other hand, the arbitration at Adhrush turned out against 'Ali and further weakened his position.² Eventually when he was preparing for a final struggle against Syria, a Khārijite fanatic, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Muljam struck him with a poisoned sword at the mosque of Kufa. Before he breathed his last he entrusted his heritage to his eldest son al-Hasan³. He died on the 17th of Ramaḍān AH 40/25th January 661 A.D., after a reign of four years and nine months. He was then sixty-three years old.⁴

Now with this brief outline of the major events which took place during the short-lived Caliphate of 'Ali, we will try to analyse their causes and consequences. In the first place it must be kept in mind as a historical fact that his succession was greatly resisted by some of the Companions of the Prophet and resulted in the first civil wars in Islam. But at the same time his so called 'failures' proved to be epoch-making in the history of the Shī'ites. The bitterness of the supporters of 'Ali created by his defeats and disappointments, provided a historical foundation for them to move towards a Sectarian tendency, and the

1. See Wellhausen, al-Khawārij wa'l-Shī'a, Arabic trans. by 'Abd al-Rahmān Badawī, Cairo, 1958.
2. B. Lewis, The Arabs in History, 63. Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 92.
3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 62. Tabarsī, Ihtijāj, 103, Majlisī, Bihār, IX, 409. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 291.
4. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 189.

destruction done to him gave the later Shī'ites enough material for the construction of a separate Discipline within the body of Islam.¹

An attempt to grasp the situation as a whole shows that the selection of 'Ali was at once a triumph for a particular view of succession hitherto unable to succeed, and a great shock to all those who had successfully set up a new idea of leadership devoid of the principle of hereditary primacy after the death of the Prophet.²

With the succession of 'Ali these two rival views for the first time came into physical clash, crystallizing into definite forms - the former view, soon defeated again, was to find its expression in a separatist tendency towards a sectarian organisation; the latter re-emerged victoriously and more vigorously and shaped itself in such a way as to become "The Centre of the Islamic 'Ummah", Jamā'a.³

Ya'qūbī records for us those speeches with which 'Ali was hailed by his enthusiastic supporters, mostly from the Anṣār, on the occasion of his installation, and which contain those tendencies and sentiments with

1. See the following chapter.
2. See part B of this chapter.
3. I am intentionally avoiding here the term orthodoxy which is a later conception.

which he was viewed by this group.¹ For example, Mālik b. al-Ashtar² pledged his allegiance with the words that 'Ali was "Waṣī al-Awṣiyā" and "Wārith 'ilm al-Anbiyā,"³ Hodgson doubts whether these terms were really used for 'Ali at such an early stage.⁴ In the first place, as one of the guiding principles, we must keep in mind that Mālik b. al-Ashtar was of a Yamanite origin. South

1. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 154-155. There is a tendency among scholars to suspect any report given by Ya'qūbī which could support the Shī'ite cause, because of his Shī'ite leanings. If Ya'qūbī can be suspected of his being biased in favour of the Shī'ite then why cannot all other historians of opposite affiliation be suspected for suppressing all those reports which can serve the Shī'ite purpose. We know with certainty that all extant histories were written when the division of the community into the Shī'ite minority and the so-called "orthodox" majority was clearly established, and it was natural for the historians belonging to the "orthodox" majority to suppress anything in favour of the Shī'ites. In this situation, however, I personally feel, that Ya'qūbī's reports should be considered as a precious historical document which survived from the tendentious attempts of the historians of the majority party. See, Petersen, 'Ali and Mu'āwiya in Early Arabic Tradition, 169 ff.
2. For the speeches of Thābit b. Qays al-Anṣārī, Khuzāyma b. Thābit al-Anṣārī (see and compare the support given by these two to 'Ali at the Saqīfa in part B of this chapter) and Sa'sa'a b. Sawhān, see Ya'qūbī, loc.cit.
3. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit.
4. Hodgson, op.cit. p.2.

Arabia was a land of ancient civilisation where for a thousand years Kings had succeeded one another according to a dynastic principle and had been regarded as having superhuman qualities. Even if the seventh-century Arabs had no personal experience of Kingship, they must have been influenced by a continuing tradition.¹ Thus the words like 'Waṣī' and 'Wārith' from a man of Yamanite origin seem to be a natural and spontaneous corollary of the deep-seated cultural background.

In the second place, there are numerous references in the contemporary poetry which reflect the same spirit. For example, Abū 'Aswad al-Du'alī sings the song when praising 'Ali, "Thou art the noblest of the Quraysh in merit and Religion," "I see God and the future state through my love to 'Ali," "Ali is the Aaron, 'Ali is the Waṣī."² Strothmann agrees that there are distinguishable religious honours accorded to 'Ali in the poetry of al-Du'alī.³ Thirdly, the term Wārith is frequently used in the Qur'ān⁴ especially in connection with the family of 'Imrān and Ismā'il, and Muhammad was using

1. Montgomery Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads," JRAS, 1960, 161 cf. J. Ryckmans, L'Institution Monarchique en Arabie avant l'Islam, Louvain, 1951, 229 ff.
2. See Mubarrad, Kāmil, III, 936 f. Mas'ūdī Murūj, II, 293-294. Also see the verses composed by al-Kumayt and Kuthayyir in Mubarrad, Kāmil, III, 935.
3. Strothmann, El (1) art. 'Shī'a' and see the verses of al-Du'alī in Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, Sharh, IX, 314.
4. e.g., XXXVI, 32.

these prerogatives to his advantage to attract mainly⁹⁵ the "People of the Books". It is then very likely that some of the partisans of 'Ali would have used the same terminology to strengthen their views.

Fourthly, when we read the accounts of the battles of Jamal and Šiffīn we come across plenty of war poetry exchanged between the combatants of both sides, in which the word Waṣī and the like expressions are frequently used from 'Ali's side. It is, however, not possible to quote here all these verses; we can only give the names of the reciters and references where they can be found. Thus in the battle of Jamal those who uttered verses in which they described 'Ali with the titles of Waṣī or the expressions of this sort are: Abū'l-Ḥaytham b. Tihān,¹ Khuzayma b. Thābit,² 'Abdullah b. Budayl b. Waraqa al-Khuzā'i,³ 'Umar b. Hāritha al-Anṣārī,⁴ Sa'īd b. al-Qays al-Hamdāni,⁵ Ziyād b. Labīd al-Anṣārī,⁶ Zahar b. Qays al-Ju'fī.⁷ Those who recited verses in the battle of Šiffīn from 'Ali's side with these expressions make a long list and we will confine

1. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, Sharh, I, 43. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd citing these verses on the battle of Jamal refers to a 'Kitāb al-Jamal' by Abī Mikhnaḥ. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 93, mentions a Kitāb al-Jamal in the list of Abī Mikhnaḥ's works.
2. Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, Sharh, I, 145.
3. Ibid., 146.
4. Ibid., 144.
5. Ibid., 144.
6. Ibid., 145.
7. Ibid., 147.

ourselves to referring to a few of the most explicit: they are; Mughīra b. Hārith,¹ 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Dhu'ayb al-Aslamī,² Ash'ath b. Qays al-Kindī,³ Hujr b. 'Adī al-Kindī,⁴ Nu'mān b. 'Ajlān al-Anṣārī,⁵ Zafar b. Hudhayfa al-Asadī and Khuzayma b. Thābit.⁶

Apart from all these historical facts, we have already seen that there had been a devoted party from the very beginning who had a personal enthusiasm for 'Ali largely based on religious considerations,⁷ and thus it was not unlikely that at the time of his accession it would have expressed its allegiance in these terms.⁸ It is of little importance to mention here that the Shī'ite poets of the next generation like al-Kumayt, Kuthayyir and al-Sa'yyid al-Himyarī used abundantly the

1. Ibid. 149. Nasr b. Muzāhim al-Minqarī, Waḡd 'āt Siffīn, 438. both of them refer to Abī Mikhnaḥs', Kitāb al-Siffīn, Ibn Nadīm, 93, mentions this /Fihrist, work too.
2. Al-Minqarī, op.cit. 435. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, op.cit. 149.
3. Al-Minqarī, op.cit. 28. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, op.cit. 147 f.
4. Al-Minqarī, op.cit. 434.
5. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, op.cit. 149.
6. For the last two see Askāfī, Naqd al-'Uthmāniya, 84.
7. See part B of this chapter.
8. For the use of the term Waḡī for 'Ali at this early stage also see Imām Abū'l-Ḥadīd Ahmad b. Abī Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, Balāghāt al-Nisā, 41 ff. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, I, 143-150.

terms Waṣī and the like¹ for 'Ali especially when describing the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn.

However, the purpose of producing all this evidence was to show that there was a party who looked at 'Ali's accession to the Caliphate from quite a different angle from the other Muslims. This then, at once solves the problem that his election did not have the same meaning for the rest of the Companions or the other Muslims as that of the first three Caliphs; and at the same time it also answers the question why 'Ali was immediately forced to face serious opposition from different quarters.

The first serious resistance, as we have seen, came from 'A'isha, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr. The triumvirate raised the claim for the blood of 'Uthmān and took upon themselves the responsibility of taking revenge. But the question is whether it really was the only reason for their rising? "Was only 'Ali really responsible for the murder of 'Uthmān?" Had Ṭalḥa and Zubayr not been equally responsible² in sowing hatred and propagating rebellion against the murdered Caliph? Was 'A'isha not

1. For these three poets see their *Dīwāns* and also Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, III, 935. Abu'l-Faḍl Ahmad b. Abī Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, *Balāghāt al-Nisā'*, 67 ff. Also see J. Horowitz, *El* (1) art. 'Kumayt'; C. Van Arendouk, *El* (1) art. 'Kuthaiyir'; and Brockelmann, *El* (1) art. 'Saiyyid al-Himyarī'. Perhaps still later poets reflect their predecessor's expression, thus al-Khadījī says: "Their reddish mother came riding on a camel, intent on fighting the "Waṣī", backed by a huge army of death. Thus the War of the Devil against the Believers began." Khadījī, *Dīwān*, MS. 655c. See Cat. JRL. col. 748 c. foll. 136/a-b.
2. For the role of Ṭalḥa and Zubayr precise references are frequently given above.

an equal participant¹ in arousing people against 'Na'thal'? No student of Islamic history can ever deny the fact that all of them were partly, in one way or another, responsible for the bloody-handed treason in the capital.²

A deep study and a careful effort to capture the real tendency and spirit of the whole period³ would show that the blood of 'Uthmān was made an easy excuse, by the triumvirate or later on by Mu'āwiya, to check the obvious danger of the rule of the ascetic group in Islam, supported by the lower classes of society and by the Anṣār of Medina of which two groups 'Ali happened to be the representative. The emergence of these groups, however, was a real threat to the Meccan

1. Even the verses of Ibn Umm Kilāb, also attributed to 'A'isha the responsibility of the murder of 'Uthmān, see Tab., 1, 3112.
2. B. Lewis very ably remarks "Ṭalha and Zubayr, two disgruntled Meccans, 'Amr,...and 'A'isha the widow of the Prophet, formed centres of intrigue and conspiracy against the Caliph... 'Ali's role is not clear. Though himself an obvious candidate for succession....he does not appear to bear any direct responsibility for the murder." See The Arabs in History, 60 f.
3. I think that the best approach towards understanding this complicated period is to make an overall assessment out of the detailed study of all possible sources. To depend too much on the different reports and events separately often leads to confusion and wrong conclusions.

aristocracy¹ and to the Syrians who adopted Islam in order to derive the greatest material advantages from it. A brief explanation of this whole theory is this. With the beginning of 'Uthmān's caliphate Islam was rapidly moving towards an "Umayyadism". The term "Umayyadism" is invented here to represent a phenomenon of a growing tendency of "Arab Aristocratism" which emerged from an old aristocracy of a vital faction of the Qurayshite clan of Umayya.² This aristocracy was first suppressed by Muhammad's victory and a new concept of society, and this suppression was maintained by Abū Bakr and 'Umar. But at the same time, ironically enough, Muhammad's experiences of a new concept of unity and organization under Islam gave a new impetus and fresh blood to the old conception of Arab aristocracy, which could only find its way during 'Uthmān's rule. However, during

1. Thus, for example, the battle of Ṣiffīn is described by the historians as the battle of Badr in which the newly converted Anṣār of Medina showed a great zeal against the infidel Qurayshites of Mecca. Thus Ukrusha bint al-Atrash, one of the women agitators of Ali's side, used to call Ṣiffīn, Badr al-Ṣughra, the lesser Badr, and al-'Aqaba al-Ukhra, the second pledge of al-'Aqaba. Ibn al-Jawzi, Mir'āt, Paris, Ms. No. 6131, fol. 96a.
2. See in Tab., 1, 2917 Mu'āwiya's address before the agitators of Kufa who were sent to him by 'Uthmān. In this speech Mu'āwiya clearly mentions the superior rights of the Quraysh in general and of the clan of Umayya in particular. He then especially mentions the name of Abū Sufyān saying that he was the noblest and the son of the noblest of the Qurayshites. Tab., 1, 2917. وقد عرفت قريشاً اباسفيان كان اكرمها وابن اكرمها .

'Uthmān's life Ṭalha and Zubayr¹ played an important role against him but only because of selfish ambitions and for personal reasons. After 'Uthmān's murder, when they failed in their ambitions, they were of the same mind as Mu'āwīya in Syria to revolt against 'Ali, for the sake of the same ideals.²

The conflict at the battle of the Camel brought about a serious split in the Islamic 'Ummah. Ya'qūbī records for us that the supporters of 'Ali were at first called "the people of 'Irāq" (Ahl al-'Irāq)³ as well as the party of 'Ali (Shī'at-'Ali) or al-'Alawīya.⁴ Their opponents were called Shī'at al-'Uthmān or more

1. As far as 'A'isha is concerned the reason for her hatred for 'Ali can simply be explained by the latter's attitude towards her when she was suspected of an affair with Safwān b. al-Muattil al-Sulamī, for 'Ali advised the Prophet to question her slave girl. See Bukhārī, III, 103 ff. 'A'isha's quarrels and rivalries with Faṭīma, and 'Ali's questioning of her father Abū Bakr's election also contributed to her bitterness towards 'Ali. See 'Umar Abū Naṣr, 'Ali wa 'A'isha, 25 ff.
2. This theory, if elaborated, will easily explain the problems such as (1) the development of Shī'ism from now on under the leadership of men politically, economically or otherwise absolutely unimportant and (2) often even without any leader; (3) the success of Mukhtār's movement among the Mawālī; (4) the emergence of the idea of Mahdism; (5) the importance given to the persons of the House of 'Ali as the infallible Imāms; (6) the emphasis on their piety and self-denial and lastly the constant need felt by a group of the Muslims to find a leader who could satisfy their spiritual aspirations.
3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 234. Also see the verse of Ka'b b. Ju'ayl in Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 282.
4. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 234.

commonly al-‘Uthmāniyya.¹ They included the faction of ‘A’isha, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr or "the companions of the camel" (Aṣḥāb al-Jamal)² and the Syrians (Ahl al-Shām), also known as Shī‘at Mu‘āwiya.³ But, according to the tendency of the epoch their positions were described in religious terms (Dīn) either for ‘Ali (dīn ‘Ali)⁴ or of ‘Uthmān (dīn ‘Uthmān)⁵. Another way of expressing this was to say that one held the ‘Alawite or the ‘Uthmānite opinion (Ra’y al-‘Alawiyya or Ra’y al-‘Uthmāniyya respectively.)⁶

Until the battle of Jamal, however, the term Shī‘a was only occasionally used for a small personal following of ‘Ali, who from the very beginning regarded him as the most worthy person in the community after the Prophet. After the battle of Jamal the name Shī‘at ‘Ali was used for all those who stood with him against ‘A’isha and from now on the original Shī‘a were confusedly mixed up with the political Shī‘a. It is in this wider sense that the term Shī‘a was used in the document of the arbitration at Ṣiffīn.⁷

Our sources give us some useful information on how the later Shī‘ites classified different groups of ‘Ali's supporters at this stage. They are named as: al-Aṣfiyā’,

1. Ya‘qūbī, Ta’rīkh, II, 218.
2. Ibn Abi’l-Ḥadīd, Sharḥ, II, 174.
3. Abū’l-Fidā’, Mukhtasar, I, 182.
4. Ṭab., I, 3196 and 3199.
5. Agh. XIII, 38.
6. Kash., Rijāl, 60.
7. See al-Minqarī, Waq‘āt Ṣiffīn, 578, and Ṭab., I, 3337.

the sincere friends, al-Awliyā', the devoted friends, al-Aṣḥāb, the companions and Shurtāt al-Khamīs, the picked division.¹ To whom the first three terms refer is not quite clear, though various Shī'ite sources indicate the group of earlier followers (Miqdād, Salmān, 'Ammār, Abū Dharr, Ḥudhayfa, Abū Ḥamza, Abū Saṣān and Shutayr) as belonging to the al-Aṣfiyā'. The idea of these classes is certainly of a later date. Nevertheless, we must make some distinction between those followers of 'Ali who put more emphasis on the religious side of his succession as Waṣī, and those who supported his cause mainly on political² grounds, especially after he made Kufa his capital.

However, right from this point of conflict at Jamal we find frequent use of Shī'at Ahl al-Bayt or Shī'at 'Al Muhammad³ with which the followers of 'Ali, and afterwards those of his successors, called themselves. Occasionally the nickname al-'Turābiyya' was also used, their adversaries endeavouring to give it a sense of contempt. This was derived from the Kunya of 'Ali, Abū Turāb, 'the Father of Dust', given to him by Muhammad.⁴

1. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 175. Tab., II, 1., Kash., Rijāl, 4.
2. For this different outlook of the followers of 'Ali in his support see the following chapter.
3. Ahg., XI, 122.
4. Tab., I, 1271 ff. Bukhārī, II, 435.

On the other hand, the followers of 'Ali nicknamed their opponents, the 'Uthmānites al-Na'thaliyya.¹ They also called them al-Qāsītūn (those who act wrongfully)²; al-Nākithūn (those who break their allegiance)³; and al-Māriqūn (those who missed the Truth of Religion).⁴ The name Shī'at Mu'āwiya was later replaced by the more general al-Umawiyya.⁵

Let us close this chapter with the conclusion that the Shī'ite tendency in its rudimentary form started immediately after the death of the Prophet mainly on religious grounds and manifested itself in the Saqīfa. Then it apparently disappeared during the Caliphates of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. When widespread discontent prevailed in the reign of 'Uthmān against the Umayyad oligarchy all those directly or indirectly affected found their outlet in the whole-hearted support of 'Ali. The original Shī'a took this opportunity promptly and fully exploited the situation to satisfy their long suppressed desire to see 'Ali as the successor of the Prophet. In this way, religious Shī'ism embraced a large political

1. Agh. VIII, 17.
2. Lisān al-Arab, IX, 253. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, Sharh, I, 201. Majlisī, Bihār, IX, 634.
3. Nickname of the Ashāb al-Jamal, Lisān al-Arab, III, 18. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, loc.cit.
4. Ibn Abi'l-Hadīd, loc.cit.
5. Agh., XIII, 38. Kash., Rijāl, 61. Ibn 'Asākir, Tabyin Kidhb al-Muftarī, 152.

following. But this, as we shall see, could not go on very long and was reassimilated by the ruling powers. Nevertheless, besides this political following 'Ali left behind him a zealous personal party who had sworn to him that they would be "friends of those whom he befriended and enemies of those to whom he was hostile."¹ They believed that 'Ali was in "accordance with truth and guidance" ('ala'l-haqq wa'l-huda), and his opponents consequently in error.² In short, they insisted that he, by the circumstances of his birth, was specially qualified to bear supreme authority in the community. Their belief in his rights remained unshaken even though he was hated by the Kharijites, resisted by the Syrians and the party of Mu'awiya, unloved by the supporters of Zubayr and abandoned by the neutrals of Adhruh.

1. Tab., 1, 3350 f. see also Watt, "Shi'ism under the Umayyads", JRAS, 1960, 160 f.
2. Watt, loc.cit.

A.

ABDICATION OF AL-HASAN

Though during the last year of 'Ali's Caliphate Mu'āwīya had under his military subjugation a large part of the Islamic state,¹ and despite the authority vested in him by 'Amr b. al-'Aṣ at Adhrūh, he could not claim the title of Amīr al-Muminīn while 'Ali was alive. He was content to be styled as Amīr² only. As soon as his rival fell he found the road open to the ultimate goal of his ambitions. Favourable circumstances and the weakness of al-Hasan coupled with Mu'āwīya's characteristic shrewdness³ made it easier for him to complete the task he had started after the death of 'Uthmān.

al-Hasan, the elder son of 'Ali and Fāṭima, was acclaimed the Caliph immediately after the death of his father,⁴ by the Kūfans while the people of the holy cities of Mecca and Medīna were not against his

1. Hodgson, "How did the early Shī'a become Sectarian"? JAOS., 1955, p.2.
2. Tab., II, 5.
3. As most of the writers assess him, see Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, p. 138.
4. Tab., II, 1 ff. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II, 302. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 191. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-Ghāba, II, 13. al-Imāma wa'l al-Siyāsa, 1, 163. Kāmil, III, 161. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 23.

nomination.¹ Weak, and inexperienced, Hasan had little of his father's personality to his credit. Nevertheless, the nomination of Hasan to the Caliphate shows, though somewhat vaguely, the feelings of the people of Iraq for the House of the Prophet and their inclination towards the legitimate succession in the line of 'Ali. The factors leading to his nomination were not only political but also those of religious aspirations. The respect and consideration of the people commanded by him were not only because of his being a Hāshimite and also not only because of his being the son of 'Ali, but his being the grandson of the Prophet through Fāṭima was also taken into account.² All that did not work in favour of al-Hasan, however. Apparently he had an army of 40,000 at his command, collected

1. I have closely examined all early sources to find a single voice raised by the people of the holy cities against the nomination of Hasan, but I could not find one, which leads me to suggest that the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina were not at least against Hasan, while they had been lukewarm in "their loyalty to the representatives of the Sufyanids". Hitti, History of the Arabs, 189.
2. This is well indicated by the reply, for example, given by Sa'd b. Mus'ūd al-Thaqafī, the governor of al-Madā'in, to his young nephew Mukhtār when the latter suggested to his uncle, when Hasan took refuge in his castle, to capture and hand him over to Mu'āwiya and get honour and wealth from him. Said Sa'd, "Curse of God upon you!" "How can I arrest the son of the daughter of the Prophet; you are indeed a bad man to suggest me such a wicked thing." See Tab., II, 2. Kāmil, III, 161.

فقال له سعد عليك لعنة الله أثب على ابن بنت رسول الله صلعم فأوثقه
بشس الرجل أنت .

by his father to make a final attack on Syria,¹ but not all of them were completely loyal even to 'Ali himself,² and now by his sudden death their morale was sunk. al-Hasan suspected or even witnessed disaffection, treason and fickleness among some of his troops.³ The strength of Mu'āwiyā, the unreliable attitude of the majority of Hasan's supporters and above all the lack of energy and courage in his nature made him inclined to accept a peaceful solution with Mu'āwiyā. The mild-tempered new Caliph who had a horror of shedding Muslim blood,⁴ vainly hoped that if he ceded the Caliphate to Mu'āwiyā, he would in time succeed without an armed struggle, for his rival was much older.⁵ On the other hand, Mu'āwiyā tacitly recognised the rights of the son of 'Ali (by entering into an agreement with him almost on equal footing) and preferred to obtain their cession by peaceful negotiation rather than by force. al-Hasan defeated, or even killed, still represented danger, unless he resigned his rights, because another member of the Hāshimite

1. Tab., II, 1. Kāmil, III, 161. Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, 102.
2. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 231. Nahj al-Balāgha, 78, 305, 205, 184. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 20 f.
3. Tab., II, 2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 191. Kāmil, III, 161. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 230.
4. Tab., II, 1.
5. Hasan was 37 or 38 at the time of his abdication while Mu'āwiyā was 58 years old in AH 41 when he obtained Hasan's allegiance.

House could claim to be his successor. But should he give up his claims in Mu'āwiya's favour this would defeat any such claim.

Nevertheless, at the news of 'Ali's death Mu'āwiya moved quickly with an army towards Maskin.¹ The purpose of this quick action was twofold. First, by his demonstration of arms and strength Mu'āwiya wanted to compel Hasan for terms, and secondly, if that failed, then to attack the 'Irāqī forces before it was too late. Hasan was thus compelled to take the field before he had either strengthened himself in his position or organized the administration which was now thrown into confusion by the death of his father.

Receiving intelligence that Mu'āwiya had already taken the field, and was advancing to meet him, Hasan sent Qays b. Sa'd b. 'Ibāda, a trusted friend of his father, in the advance, with 1200 troops to hold the enemy in check, while he followed with the main army.² At Maskin when Qays encountered Mu'āwiya, the latter offered him a sum of one hundred thousand dirhams to defect from Hasan and join him, which Qays rejected³ in disgust. Mu'āwiya's agents were actively working all

1. Tab., II, 2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 191. Also see Wellhausen, who calls Mu'āwiya on this occasion, an aggressor. Arab Kingdom and its Fall, 104.

2. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, III, 161.

3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 191.

over ⁶Irāq and trying to rouse Hasan's forces against him.¹ Thus when Hasan reached the suburb of al-Madā'in someone spread the news that Qays was defeated and slain.² An affray took place among the ranks of Hasan followed by a fierce tumult in which one soldier was killed, and he himself, attempting to interfere, was jostled and wounded, and obliged to retire into the citadel. He had taken refuge from the violence and was in danger of treason.³ Some of his army chiefs even wrote to Mu'āwiya to come to Iraq and that they would seize his person and make him over to Mu'āwiya. Mu'āwiya dispatched these letters to Hasan⁴ to make him realize his weak position, and proposed to make peace on any condition which Hasan should suggest.⁵ It seems that under these circumstances Hasan, disheartened, had no other way except to withdraw his claims. He was apprehensive of disastrous consequences in an armed conflict with Mu'āwiya for himself, his family and his handful of trustworthy followers. He saw that he had an active and powerful enemy to be counted with, and fickleness and treachery among his own people. Ultimately

1. Ibid., Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 230.
2. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Ṭab., II, 2. Kāmil, III, 161.
3. Ṭab., II, 2. Ya'qūbī, II, 191. Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 230-231, Kāmil, III, 161.
4. Bukḥarī, Saḥīḥ, II, 71, Muḥīd, Irshād, 195.
5. Ṭab., II, 3.

he decided in favour of a peaceful settlement.¹

Terms of peace between Hasan and Mu'āwiya were agreed over.² Apart from the financial arrangement³ which he secured for himself and his brother Husayn, the other conditions on which he resigned the Caliphate were: (1) that Mu'āwiya should rule according to the Book of God and Sunnah of the Prophet;⁴ (2) that the lives and property of the companions and followers of 'Ali (Shī'at 'Ali) wherever they were in the Islamic world would be secured and they would not be molested

1. Tab., II, 3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 191. Also see Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 36 ff. and Aghānī XI, 122. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 230 ff. Kāmil, III, 161 ff.
2. Surprisingly enough, except for Ibn Hajar al-Haythamī, in his Sawā'iq, 18, our early sources do not mention all conditions collectively and we have to collect them at one place from different sources. It is strange to note that historians like Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī do not mention the terms of peace at all, whereas Tabarī mentions some, Kāmil some others and Dīnawarī still others. Tabarī splits them at different places, for example, the first condition regarding financial arrangement he described directly in connection with the abdication of Hasan under the events of AH 40, II, p. 3, but the condition no.2, (see next page) about the general amnesty for the followers of 'Ali, he mentions far away on p. 13, in connection with Ziyād. I have, however, tried to collect them in one unit from all possible sources.
3. See Tab., II, 3-4. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 231. Hasan received 500,000 dirhams which were in the State treasury of Kufa and the income from the land tax of Darabjird.
4. Ibn Hajar, Sawā'iq, 18.

in any way,¹ (3) that Mu'āwiya would desist from cursing of 'Ali at least in Hasan's presence;² (4) that Mu'āwiya would not have the right to nominate his successor;³ (5) and finally that Hasan would be entitled to resume the Caliphate on the death of Mu'āwiya.⁴ The last condition, though not mentioned by all sources and if we are to be extremely cautious in accepting it as having been genuinely made, nevertheless we must accept it as a tacit understanding without which the treaty, in all probability, could not have existed.

It is by no means easy for a student of this phase of Islamic history to make a clear assessment of Hasan's action; whether it was only due to his fondness of ease and comfort, or he did it as the only course left to him. But a close analysis of the events which took place before and after his abdication does not fail to indicate that had he acted otherwise it might have meant a complete destruction of the House of 'Ali.⁵ Yet al-Hasan's surrender was extremely

1. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 251. Tab., II, 13.
وقد صالح الحسن معاوية على امان اصحاب علي حيث كانوا .
2. Tab., II, 4. Ibn Ḥajar, Sawā'iq, 18.
3. Ibn Ḥajar, Sawā'iq, 18.
4. Ibid. Ibn Athīr, Uṣd al-Ghāba, II, 13. al-Imāma al-Siyāsa, I, 163. In fact the conditions 4 and 5 are in effect not very much different from each other.
5. To support this hypothesis I propose to refer to the tragic fate of Husayn and his followers 20 years after Hasan's abdication. There is no valid reason to doubt that had Hasan acted like his brother he would have met the same fate.

distasteful to those of the Iraqians who had been supporting 'Ali and then al-Hasan chiefly because they bitterly hated Syrian domination;¹ and it was equally disappointing to those of the Khārijites who gathered round Hasan to find an opportunity to fight against Mu'āwiya.² There was still another group represented by men like Hujr b. 'Adī al-Kindī, who also disliked al-Hasan's action, but for quite a different reason. Undoubtedly, this was the party of 'Ali (Shī'at 'Ali, as distinct from the political supporters of 'Ali)³ who believed in his legitimate

1. Wellhausen, The Arab Kingdom and its Fall, 177.

2. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 231.

3. I stress the point that the term Shī'at 'Ali or the party of 'Ali should be divided into two distinct groups: (1) political supporters of 'Ali who saw in him the champion of the political independence of Iraq, and in this sense accidentally they were, for the time being, of the same mind as the (2) religious supporters of 'Ali, who uncompromisingly believed in his right to the Caliphate. The first kind of group scattered when the grip of Mu'āwiya became irresistible. See in Tab., II, 3-4, the reply of the troops under the command of Qays b. Sa'd when he asked them whether they would like to fight either without an Imām or submit themselves to an Imām of Error الإمام الضلالة; they accepted the latter and went to Mu'āwiya's side.

نقام قيس بن سعد في الناس فقال يا ايها الناس اختاروا الدخول في طاعة امام ضلالة او الصبر مع غير امام قالوا لا بل تختار ان ندخل في طاعة امام ضلالة فها هو معاوية فقال لهم رسول معاوية انا قد امرنا ان نعرض عليكم البراءة من علي واللعن له فان فعلتم تركناكم وان ابيتتم قتلناكم . . . قالوا اللهم اننا لسنا فاعلي ذلك .

succession to the Caliphate and were not ready to reconcile with any other alternative. It seems that they were disappointed in Hasan¹ but still remained persistent in their ideas regarding the leadership of the community.² They did not lose their identity as an opposition to the rivals of the House of the Prophet; and refused to accept what the majority had willingly or unwillingly³ accepted.

Later on, not only the Shī'ites but Sunnite historians too explained Hasan's actions as meritorious, saying that he reconciled the opposing parties.⁴ The year of his abdication became known as "‘Am al-Jamā‘a,⁵ and a tradition was put in the mouth of the Prophet saying that "this son of mine is a Lord, Sayyid, he will reconcile the two branches of the Muslims."⁶ The tradition is certainly forged, and the whole idea to attribute Hasan's action to a meritorious deed is undoubtedly a fabrication of the following century when a

1. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 222.
2. Ibid.
3. Compare the behaviour of Hujr and his companions with those 1200 troops under Qays b. Sa‘d quoted in n. 3 ~~above~~ p. 112 *above*.
4. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-Ghāba, II, 13.
5. Tab., II, 199. Jāhiz, Rasā'il, "Risāla fi Banī Umayya", 65.
6. Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ, II, 443. ‘Amilī, A'yān, IV. 54.

"Central Body"¹ in Islam was emerging from a tangled situation and thus reflects the tendency with which this "Central Body" was formed. The Shī'ites explained Hasan's action thus to safeguard his position which was the characteristic tendency of the later Shī'ites. On the other hand, the Sunnites accepted it thus to fulfill the need for the formation of a "Central Body" to reconcile the two opposing groups; that is, the party of 'Uthmān and that of 'Ali. This "Central Body" later on received the title of 'the Orthodox congregation', or Jamā'a,² in Islam, leaving behind and branding as a sectarian body those who could not and did not agree to reconcile.

Though by his abdication al-Hasan prevented Muslim bloodshed, he did not heal the split in the community. In fact, his abdication had far-reaching consequences. Previously he had been, at least nominally, the head of the Jamā'a. Now the events developed in the opposite direction, and the al-'Uthmāniya branch became the "Central Body" of Islam with Mu'āwiya at its head, while Shī'at 'Ali was reduced to the role of a small opposition

1. The idea of orthodoxy came very late. There is, however, a great difficulty in choosing a proper terminology. At this point there was no idea of orthodoxy attached to any one group. What we can best do, as Montgomery Watt suggests, is to use the term "Central Body" because of its having the majority of the people under its sway.
2. The tradition, for example, "Inna'ummatī lā tajtami'ū 'ala ḍalālatin", My community will not agree on an error, (Wensinck, Concordance, 97) is the outcome of this tendency. The word 'Ummāh' here signifies the Jamā'a or majority of the Muslims.

party, and thus was thrust into a sectarian role. The spokesman of this opposition, however, was not al-Hasan himself but Hujr b. 'Adī and his party. Supported by a number of fellow Kufans he never ceased to protest against Mu'awiya and the official cursing of 'Alī from the pulpits,¹ which had been imposed by Mu'awiya as a propaganda measure.

The period of nine years, between al-Hasan's abdication in AH 41 and his death in AH 49, is one in which Shī'ite sectarianism was passing through a stage of, so to speak, fire underground, with no conspicuous activities above the surface. A historical survey of this period for the Shī'ite sectarian growth is very difficult as our early sources are almost silent. Nevertheless, it is not completely free from the voices raised in support of the House of the Prophet and against the rule of Mu'āwiya. We hear now and then of individuals or small parties, mainly from Kufa, visiting Hasan, and also Husayn, asking them to rise in action to which they did not agree.² However, this silence of the Shī'ites in this period might have been because of two reasons. First, Mu'āwiya's grip, mainly through his trained, loyal and skilled Syrian forces, was too strong to allow any rising, and secondly, Shī'ite sectarianism was not organized enough to raise its head. But it was passing through a natural process of evolution

1. See Tab., II, 112. Kāmil, III, 187-194.

2. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 222. al-Imāma al-Siyāsa, I, 165.

until it could register a widespread support and then translate itself into action.

al-Hasan, however, had only deluded himself with the idea that he might become successor to Mu'āwiya. But he died long before his rival.¹ The cause of his death is said to have been poison, administered by one of his wives.² Some of the early sources mention Mu'āwiya as the instigator.³

Immediately after the death of Hasan, however, the Shī'ites of Kufa held a meeting in the house of Sulaymān b. Ṣurad al-Khuzā'ī and wrote to Husayn inviting him for rising against Mu'āwiya.⁴ But Husayn honoured his brother's treaty with Mu'āwiya and asked them to keep quiet as long as Mu'āwiya was alive.⁵ But the more enthusiastic among them could no longer remain idle. Ḥujr b. 'Adī al-Kindī, who had been active in his opposition to Mu'āwiya, with his fellow Kufans, revolted openly against him.⁶ Their stand was not only to protest against the

1. Mu'āwiya died in Rajab AH 60/April 680 A.D. He was then seventy seven years old. He was 58 in AH 41 when he obtained Hasan's allegiance. Hasan was only 37 or 38 at the time of his abdication.
2. See Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 52. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 225.
3. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 5. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 33 and 51. Mufīd, K. al-Irshād, 196 ff.
4. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 203. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 238. Mufīd, Irshād, 206.
5. Dīnawarī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Mufīd, loc.cit.
6. See Tab., II, 115 ff. Kāmil, III, 187-194.

cursing of 'Ali but that the right of Caliphate is only for the house of 'Ali and Mu'āwiya was a usurper.¹ We do not know very much about the strength of the movement at this stage but we are told that even for a stern hand like that of Ziyād it was not easy to capture Ḥujr and his companions.² Ziyād, however, captured Ḥujr and fourteen other active Shī'ites, but not without difficulty,³ and dispatched them to Syria with a charge-sheet attested by some of his sycophants.⁴ Mu'āwiya, who normally preferred diplomatic means to extreme measures, could not tolerate any rising in support of the house of 'Ali. He immediately ordered their execution. They were put to death at a place called Marj 'Adhrah.⁵

Ḥujr and his companions should not be considered as a few extremist revolters. They were representatives of, or strictly, forerunners of a growing movement of the Shī'ite cause. Those who were arrested and executed did not belong to one tribal group but represented different social affiliations.⁶ The reaction to this persecution was serious enough.⁷ The

1. Ṭab., II, 131. وزعم ان هذا الامر لا يصلح الا في آل ابي طالب .
2. See Ṭab., II, 123. Kāmil, III, 187, 188, 189.
3. Ṭab., II, 128.
4. Ṭab., II, 131. Kāmil, III, 191.
5. Ṭab., II, 138 ff. Mas'ūdū, Murūj, III, 12.
6. For the complete list of their names and tribes see Ṭab., II, 143. Kāmil, III, 191.
7. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 237.

Shī'ites of Kufa once again made a representation to Husayn to lead an armed revolt against Mu'āwiya which was again turned down by him with the same advice as before.¹ Mu'āwiya was not completely unaware of these approaches to Husayn and was alarmed by the consequences. He wrote a threatening letter to Husayn and in his reply Husayn adopted a negative attitude.²

Excepting the revolt led by Hujr which resulted in a cruel persecution, the period between the death of al-Hasan in AH 49, and the death of Mu'āwiya in AH 60, is again a quiet one in the history of the Shī'ite sectarianism. A general impression which we get from rather hazy accounts given by the early sources is nothing more than of fear and caution from both sides. Extreme measures against Hujr and his meagre revolt taken by Mu'āwiya, who usually achieves his ends by other means, indicate his uncompromising attitude towards Shī'ite sympathies, and which was obviously the result of his fear of this opposition. On the other hand, Husayn's repeated refusal to lead the Kufan enthusiasts into an open conflict with Mu'āwiya reveals his cautious attitude to avoid any such situation which could afford Mu'āwiya to annihilate completely the supporters of his rival house. In other words, it seems, throughout this period Mu'āwiya was looking for an opportunity to find an excuse to destroy those followers of 'Ali who could not be bought by money or by other

1. Ibid. 238. Mufīd, Irshād, 206.

2. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 238.

means, and thus get rid of them for the consolidation of the Caliphate in his house. It is not unlikely that one of the reasons for the imposition of cursing 'Ali from the pulpits¹ was to provoke the Shī'ite sectarians to a rising which could give him a chance for their physical destruction. Hujr and a few others became victims of this provocation while others remained cautious and careful. And Husayn, by his counter-action, was trying to avoid any such situation and to wait for a more suitable time, which is proved from his replies to the Shī'ites of Kufa. In this way he saved himself and his party from an obvious danger on the one hand, and honoured the treaty² between Hasan and Mu'āwiya, in which he was involved in some way, on the other.

A great event of this period, however, which had far-reaching consequences in the history of the development of the Shī'ite "Passion", was the nomination of Yazīd by Mu'āwiya. After the death of Hasan, an obvious candidate of Iraq and al-Hijāz, Mu'āwiya moved to fulfill

1. See in Tab., II, 112, and also in Kāmil, III, 187, the duties imposed by Mu'āwiya on Mughīra b. Shu'bā when the latter was appointed governor of Kufa in AH 41 that he should vigorously carry out the cursing of 'Ali and propaganda against him and his followers, and multiply the propaganda to disgrace, dishonour and blemish him and his followers, and also to propagate the virtues of 'Uthmān and his supporters and make them popular among the masses. The same charter was given to Ziyād b. Abih when he was entrusted the governorship of Kufa after the death of Mughīra in AH 51.
2. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 238.

his plan, to nominate his son Yazīd to the Caliphate.¹ It was not an easy task, however, and to this end Mu'āwiya had to act with great caution. Nevertheless, Mu'āwiya proceeded with the appointment of Yazīd and, in due course, commanded his subjects to swear allegiance to the new heir-apparent. Husayn, 'Abdullah b. 'Umar, 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās, 'Abdullah b. al-Zubayr and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Bakr refused and opposed the idea as foreign.² Thus, while his task was incomplete, because these five most important personalities of the time did not agree, Mu'āwiya died in Rajab, AH 60.

1. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 228 and the references below in n. 2.
2. This is out of the scope of this study to go into detail how Mu'āwiya carried out his plans. I have only touched on it in passing for the sake of continuity and as far as it is necessary for our purpose in connection with the development of the Shī'ite sectarianism. For details see Tab., II, 173 ff., 196 and 179 ff. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 203 ff. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 36 ff. Kāmil, III, 198 ff. For a critical version see Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its fall, 140 ff. Also another useful work on this is by Ibn Hajar, Tathīr al-Jinān wal-Lisān, a small treatise published with his well-known work Sawā'iq Muhriqa.

B. MARTYRDOM OF AL-HUSAYN

On Mu'āwiya's death Yazīd ascended the throne¹ according to his father's unprecedented testament. The Umayyad grip on the Islamic world, however, at least physically, was so strong that Yazīd, who was never held in good opinion for his conduct, character and behaviour in any pious Islamic circle,² succeeded in becoming 'Commander of the Faithful'. But his title was very much challenged until he could receive homage from the five³ most notable personalities of Islam at that time, whom Mu'āwiya in spite of his utmost efforts could neither buy nor force as he did

1. According to Abū Mikhnaḥ on the first Rajab AH 60, Tab., II, 216. See also Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, 145.
2. For Yazīd's character and conduct see particularly Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 1-11. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III 75 ff. Damirī, Hayāt al-Hayawān, 261 ff. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 261 ff. Jāhiz, Rasā'il, "Risāla fī Banī Umayyā," 294 ff. Ibn Hajar, Sawā'iq, 135. It is surprising to note that some of the western scholars of Islam, contrary to the unanimous reports of Muslim writers of all times, try to picture Yazīd in favourable terms. The reason seems to be that when these scholars assess the Umayyad rulers they ignore their close connection and proximity with the Prophet of whom they claimed to be rightful successors and on whose authority they derived their title.
3. al-Husayn b. 'Alī, 'Abdullah b. al-Zubayr, 'Abdullah b. Abī Bakr, 'Abdullah b. 'Umar, and 'Abdullah b. Abbās. Of these the first two were considered as the most dangerous to the Syrian throne.

with all other persons and tribes.¹ Naturally after his accession the first task Yazīd undertook, in order to secure undisputed possession of the Caliphate, was to order the governor of Medina, al-Walīd b. 'Uqba, to exact homage from the refractory, and if they refused to behead Husayn and Ibn al-Zubayr,² for only these two were the most dangerous as possible pretenders. The weak Walīd b. 'Uqba, who was perhaps also conscious of the personality of Husayn³ as the grandson of the Prophet could not force him to abide by the orders of

1. Ṭab., II, 196. For the details of calculated and careful measures taken by Mu'āwiya for the nomination of Yazīd see Ṭab., under the years 56 and 60 AH. Kāmil, III, years 56 and 60 AH. For a critical version see., Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, 141 ff.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 287. Ṭab., II, 216 ff. Kāmil, IV, 5. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 12. In all these sources only the names of al-Husayn and Ibn al-Zubayr appear, which again indicates that the immediate danger to Yazīd's authority was, first of all, from al-Husayn and then from the son of al-Zubayr. That the importance of Husayn was much more than that of Ibn al-Zubayr is clearly proved by the unanimous reports given by the early sources that as soon as Husayn reached Mecca people abandoned Ibn al-Zubayr and gathered round Husayn only. See Ṭab., II, 233. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 242. Kāmil, IV, 8. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 13 f.
3. See the reply of Walīd to Marwān when the latter rebuked him for losing an opportune moment to behead Husayn. Walīd retorted, "curse upon you O Marwān, you are advising me to kill the son of the Prophet, only because he refuses to pay immediate allegiance to Yazīd. By God, if the whole wealth and treasures of the world are given to me I would not sell out my religion by killing Husayn and thus become slight on the day of judgment." Ṭab., II, 219. Kāmil, IV, 6. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 242. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 15.

the ruler in Syria at once, and consequently Husayn with his close followers and family members succeeded in seeking refuge in Mecca.¹

al-Husayn, like his brother al-Hasan, combined in his person the right of descent both from the Prophet and 'Ali and, in addition, unlike al-Hasan, had inherited his father's virtues and chivalrous disposition. After the death of al-Hasan he was the obvious Hāshimite candidate. But in the preceding years he did very little to support his rights, restricting himself to a negative attitude towards Yazīd's nomination. Nevertheless, he could no longer keep himself aloof because of the pressing demand from the Shī'ites of Kufa. As soon as they heard of his refusal to acknowledge Yazīd and of his escape from Medina to Mecca, they held an emergency meeting again² in the house of Sulaymān b. Šurad al-Khuzā'ī. In this crucial meeting only the leaders of the Shī'ite movement in Kufa seemed to be present, who unanimously decided to invite Husayn to come to Kufa and take over.³ Accordingly they wrote a

1. On the 28th Rajab 60 AH.
2. It seems that the house of Sulaymān b. Šurad was the centre of Shī'ite activities in Kufa, because we hear of all the meetings of the Shī'ites in Kufa which were held in his house. For the reasons unknown he is not seen at Karbalā, but again he appears as the moving spirit in Tawwābūn movement and was killed among them by the Umayyads. See, Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 25. Ibn al-Athīr, Usd al-Ghaba, II, 351. K.V. Zettersteen, El (1) art. "Sulaymān b. Šurad."
3. Tab., II, 233 f. Kāmil, IV, 8. Mufīd, Irshād, 208. Also see Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 242, and Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 64.

number of letters urging him to come to Kufa as they have no Imām other than him.¹ Thus the first letter Husayn received on the 10th of Ramaḍān 60 AH, was signed by Sulaymān b. Ṣurad al-Khuzā'ī, al-Musayyib b. Najaba, Rafā'a b. Shaddād and Ḥabīb b. al-Muzāhir.² This must have been the real incentive to Husayn for they were the trusted followers of his house from the very beginning and had proved their loyalties at the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn with 'Alī. Here again, we must be very cautious in using the term "the Shī'ites of Kufa", in connection with those who wrote to Husayn to come to Kufa. All of them were not Shī'ites in the strictly religious sense of the term, but were political upholders of the house of the Prophet for their political interest. However, apart from those mentioned above a good number of other Kufans also wrote a succession of letters to Husayn, each signed by more than one, for the same purpose,³ but motivated by political reason. The political considerations behind this invitation were that the Kufans resented the supremacy of the Syrians, and were anxious to throw off their rule.

The actions of Husayn, however, show that from the beginning till the end he had no intentions for power or the Caliphate. We do not have any report that while

1. Tab., II, 234 ff. Kāmil, loc.cit. Mufīd, loc.cit.
2. Tab., II, 233 ff. Mufīd, Irshād, 209. Kāmil, IV, 8.
3. Tab., II, 234 f. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 241. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 243. Mufīd, Irshād, 209.

he was at Mecca he tried to enlist any support from the people gathered round him; we also do not have any record that he attempted to send his emissaries to stir up a rebellion in the places sympathetic to his house, like that of Yaman.¹ And, above all, had he acted promptly on the invitations of the Kufans, while the governorship was in the hands of the weak al-Nu'mān b. Bashīr al-Anṣārī, he might have had a fair chance of success. His speedy arrival would not only have forestalled any effective action on the part of the Umayyad government, but would also have stirred real enthusiasm among the Kufans. This they emphasized when the leaders of the movement wrote: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. To al-Husayn b. 'Alī from his Shī'a, the faithful Muslims. Further! Make haste, for the people are awaiting you, as they have no Imām other than you. So haste, and again make haste! Peace."²

In spite of all that Husayn, however, tarried. But, perhaps, either as the grandson of the Prophet, he felt it his duty to respond to the appeal of the Muslims, or was plunged into action by the demand of allegiance to Yazīd, which his filial pride did not allow him. Still he did not take any hasty decision and as a precaution sent his cousin Muslim b. 'Aqīl to Kufa as his emissary

1. See, Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 16.

2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 242. Tab., II, 233-234. Also Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 64.

with instructions to ascertain the truth of these representations and then to report to him accordingly.¹ On Muslim's arrival he was enthusiastically received by the Kufans. A meeting (perhaps for the sake of secrecy at this stage the meeting was composed of only leaders of the Shī'ite movement) was held² in which Muslim read Husayn's letter. Ṭabarī records for us another letter of Husayn in reply to the Shī'ites of Kufa. The content of this letter is worthy of note, which reads; "You have invited me to come to Kufa because you have no Imām to guide you, and you hope that my arrival there will gather you on the way of God. I am sending my cousin Muslim to report to me about your affairs. If it is in agreement with what you have written to me, I will come to you soon. But you must keep in mind that the function of an Imām is nothing more than to follow the Book of God; make justice as his behaviour and conduct; he must be a follower of Truth and submit himself completely to the Will of God."³ The last sentence of the letter, explaining the duties of an Imām and the nature of the Imāmate, invites us to think over the whole approach and attitude of Husayn towards the problem. In response to Husayn's

1. Ṭab., II, 228 and 235. Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 244.
2. Ṭab., II, 237.
3. Ṭab., II, 235. Kāmil, IV, 8. With slight different wordings see Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 244 and Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 242.

letter, however, 'Abis b. Abī Shabīb al-Shākirī, Ḥabīb b. al-Muzāhir and Sa'īd b. 'Abd Allah al-Ḥanafī, who were among the leaders of the movement, made warm speeches and gave assurances of their whole-hearted support till the last breath.¹ We shall see shortly that they did remain loyal to the cause till the end and ultimately gave their lives with Husayn. Apart from them the masses of Kufa did not think it wise to lag behind in supporting the movement which, they thought, might become successful in throwing off the Umayyad domination and bringing them new opportunities. Consequently, 12,000 or 18,000 men of Kufa swore allegiance to Muslim in the name of Husayn.²

Having received the news of this success from Muslim b. 'Aqīl, Husayn, however, decided to go himself to Iraq.³ Ibn 'Abbās and other friends of Husayn tried vainly to persuade him not to trust to the Kufans' promises, reminding him of their instability and treacherous nature.⁴ On the other hand, Ibn al-Zubayr urged him on

1. Tab., II, 237 f. Kāmil, IV, 9. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 242.
2. Tab. gives two versions, on p. 229, II, he mentions 12,000, but on p. 264 he gives the number as 18,000. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 64, also gives both versions. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 249, mentions only 18,000.
3. This letter of Muslim was sent to Husayn on the 12th of Dhu'l Qa'da 60 AH, and was dispatched by 'Abis b. Abī Shabīb al-Shākirī, 27 days before the murder of Muslim. Tab., II, 264 and 271. Mufīd, Irshād, 230.
4. Tab., II, 273-74. Kāmil, IV, 15. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 257. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 64-5.

for he wanted to make a bid for power, and while Husayn was in Hijāz this was impossible as the people would never give him precedence over the grandson of the Prophet.¹ Notwithstanding Husayn left for Kufa on Tuesday the 8th Dhīl Hijja, 60 AH.

A brief outline of the events which resulted in the tragic fate of Husayn at Karbala is as follows.²

"Receiving the news of Muslim's arrival in Kufa and the support given to him by the Kufans, Yazīd sent his strong man 'Ubaydullah b. Ziyād to Kufa to crush the movement by taking any possible measure required.³ Knowing full well all about the insurrection in Kufa in favour of the son of 'Ali, Ibn Ziyād rode into the city in disguise, wearing a black turban, covering his face and was surrounded by a squadron of horsemen.⁴ Naturally, the Kufans, who were expecting al-Husayn, mistook Ibn Ziyād for the former, greeted him enthusiastically, gathering all around his horse and shouting, "Hail to you O son of the Prophet, we were awaiting you,"⁵ etc., etc. When they, however,

1. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 14. Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 79. Tab., II, 233 and 274. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 242. Kāmil, IV, 8. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 65.
2. The necessity of giving this outline will be justified in the following pages.
3. See the content of the appointment letter of Yazīd to Ibn Ziyād to take charge of Kufa immediately and do whatever he could to crush the movement. Tab., II, 228 and 240. The famous early historian al-Jahshiyārī gives still more detailed a version of this letter. See al-Wuzara wal-Kuttāb, 19.
4. Tab., II, 229 and 241. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 246. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 66.
5. See, Tab., II, 229 and 241. Kāmil, IV, 10. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 66.

discovered their error, they completely lost heart and ultimately abandoned Muslim, who was captured and beheaded¹ together with Hānī b. 'Urwa, in whose house he had stayed. This unreliable attitude of the political supporters of Husayn, so called the Shī'ites of Kufa in general, once again proves the weakness of their character as it was pointed out by those of the travellers coming back from Kufa and happened to meet Husayn on his way. For example, at a place called Ṣaffāh he met Farazdaq, the poet, and enquired about the affairs in Kufa. Farazdaq replied, "Their hearts are with you but their swords are with your enemy."²

Husayn left Mecca on the same day Muslim b. 'Aqīl was being beheaded in Kufa,³ knowing nothing about the recent developments there.⁴ There is another point which should be given some attention and could be of some help in assessing the tension of the situation. Husayn, who delayed so long to go to Kufa, did not wait for the

1. Tab., II, 267. Kāmil, IV, 10. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 66. Also see Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 78 ff.
2. Tab., II, 277. Kāmil, IV, 16. Dīnawarī, Akhhbār, 258. Mufīd, Irshād, 228.
3. According to Dīnawarī, Akhhbār, p. 256, it was the same day, i.e. Tuesday, the 8th Dhī'l-Hijja when Husayn left Mecca. Dīnawarī is seconded by Mufīd in Irshād, p. 228. Tab., II, 271, says Husayn left Mecca the next day after Muslim was killed at Kufa.
4. Husayn received the news of Muslim's death at a place called Tha'labiya, the sixth stage from Mecca to Kufa, and exactly the half-way between Mecca and Kufa.

Hajj which was only two more days off, and without giving any consideration for what the people would think of him for ignoring the sacred ceremony so loved by the Arabs. This sudden decision proposes some emergency situation in Mecca itself which made him leave the Sacred House without any further delay. Tabarī, quoting Husayn himself, reports that the Umayyad government sent some soldiers disguised as pilgrims to arrest him.¹ Though it is difficult to prove this report still we cannot rule out a possibility of this kind altogether, keeping in view what happened to the Holy cities later on, by the hands of the army sent by Yazīd, in connection with Ibn al-Zubayr.² Perhaps Husayn, (if this version be true) in this situation, preferred to reach among his supposed supporters and sacrifice his Hajj, rather than to allow himself to be arrested or assassinated helplessly.³

Husayn, however, at the head of a little band of followers and relatives including women and children was pushing on towards Kufa. On the other hand, Ibn Ziyād, after killing Muslim and Hānī, made Kufa a

1. Tab., II, 278. Shī'ite sources say that Yazīd sent some soldiers disguised as pilgrims to assassinate Husayn, and then run away amid the crowds.
2. For a critical version of the attack on the Holy cities by Yazīd's army, see Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 147 ff.
3. When we compare Husayn's consistently negative attitude towards the Kufans with that of his sudden and hasty decision to reach Kufa, we have to find out a reason for it.

scene of terror and horror¹ and in this way brought it well under control. At the same time he put strong blockades on all the roads leading to Kufa.² On al-Qādisiyya which, by normal route, joins Kufa with al-Hijāz, he put a strong check post with an army of four thousand troops under the command of Ḥaṣīn b. al-Numayr al-Taḡīmī.³ Thus Husayn's messenger Qays b. Mushir, whom he dispatched from Ḥājir, the fourth stage from Mecca, with a letter to the Kufans informing them about his arrival, was arrested at this check post and was beheaded in Kufa before Ibn Ziyād.⁴ Similarly, other borders like Quṭṭuṭāna, La'la'a and Khaffān which join Kufa with Basra and other parts of al-'Irāq were being heavily patrolled by the Umayyad army,⁵ and consequently it was almost made impossible for anyone to go out of or come into Kufa.⁶ Meanwhile

1. See Ibn Ziyād's inaugural speech and orders which he gave after taking over the governorship of Kufa from Nu'mān b. Bashīr. He emphatically declared that anyone suspected of Husayn's support would be hanged without any trial, his house would be set on fire and his property would be confiscated. Ṭab., II, 242. Kāmil, IV, 10. Mufīd, Irshād, 214.
2. Lammens, El (1) art. "Husayn b. 'Ali."
3. Ṭab., II, 288 f. Kāmil, IV, 17. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 256.
4. Ṭab., II, 289 f. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit.
5. Ṭab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit.
6. Ṭab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit. Lammens, loc.cit.

Husayn reached Baṭn 'Aqīq, a place only a few stages from Kufa, where he heard that an army of 4000 had been posted at al-Qādisiyya and changed his route to enter Kufa from another side. Ḥaṣīn b. Numayr, receiving the intelligence of this change of route by Husayn, sent a detachment of one thousand troops commanded by Ḥurr b. Yazīd al-Riyāhī, who met the former at Dhū Jasam and surrounded him to round him up and bring him to Kufa before Ibn Ziyād.¹ Husayn refused to submit himself and ordered his small caravan to set out back to Medina. Ḥurr, though according to the instructions of Ibn Ziyād he did not allow him to go back, yet he did not like to use his force against 'the grandson of the Prophet.'² It was, however, agreed that they should keep on travelling along the Euphrates, in the opposite direction to that of Kufa, until fresh orders came from the governor.³ They had only reached as far as Karbalā when the messenger of Ḥurr returned back with the strict orders from Ibn Ziyād not to allow Husayn to move an inch further.⁴ Thus, Husayn was forced to encamp at Karbalā.

1. Tab., II, 296 ff. Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 261. Kāmil, IV, 19.
2. Tab., loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit.
3. Tab., II, 299 f. Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 262. Mufīd, Irshād, 236. Kāmil, IV, 19.
4. Tab., II, 307. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, Akḥbār, 263. Mufīd, Irshād, 238.

Immediately after, Ḥasīn b. Numayr reached Karbalā from Qādisiyya with the rest of the 3000 troops. He was followed by another division of 4000 troops, under the command of 'Umar b. Sa'd who took the chief command of the field.¹

Now they surrounded Husayn from all sides, laid siege of his small camp and cut it off from the river.² The climax, however, came on the 10th of Muḥarram, the seventh day after his arrival at Karbalā, when Husayn with all his companions and relatives, except an ailing son 'Ali, was massacred.³

This is a brief summary of the lengthy accounts of the tragic end of Husayn, given unanimously by almost all the early historians.⁴ The purpose of giving this outline, here, however, which would otherwise be irrelevant in this study, is firstly to analyse how it

1. Tab., II, 308 ff. Kāmil, IV, 21. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 264. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 244.
2. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, loc.cit.
3. 10th October 680 A.D. Husayn was fifty-six years old at that time.
4. For details see Tab., years 60-61 AH. Kāmil, same years. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 243 ff. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 64 ff. Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 55 ff. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 440-272. Mufīd, Irshād, 207-263. It is regrettable to note that no study has yet been made of the tragedy of Karbalā - an event which undoubtedly played an immensely important role in the early development of Shī'ite sectarianism in particular, and left in general such a deep impression on the Islamic world that hardly any other event could. A thorough study of it, however, can lead us to very useful and revealing factors.

became so easy for the Umayyads to crush Husayn and the movement behind him; and secondly to determine the elements of religious sentiment among those who readily sacrificed their lives with Husayn and thus made another step forward to the Shī'ite sectarian consolidation.

We have already pointed out that all those who invited Husayn to Kufa, and then those 18,000 who paid homage to Muslim b. 'Aqīl as Husayn's envoy, were not Shī'ites, in the religious sense of the term, but were supporters of the House of 'Ali for political reasons. Indeed they wrote to Husayn a succession of letters and gathered round his envoy but it was chiefly a time-serving policy to safeguard their future in case Husayn should come in power. Nevertheless, it was also an expression of their hidden desire, though on political and material grounds, to throw off the Syrian rule which at that time, they thought, was possible only through Husayn. As soon as Ibn Ziyād, well known to Islamic history for his high-handed policy¹, took over the governorship of Kufa and after all those extreme and

1. For the high-handed policy and cruel character of Ibn Ziyād see Tabarī and Ibn Athīr, from the years 57 to 63. Balādhurī, Ansāb, IV B, 77-97; Balādhurī devotes a complete chapter to Ibn Ziyād. Also see Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, and Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil. In fact, the cruel character of Ibn Ziyād is a unanimously accepted historical fact which does not need any further proof and should be accepted as a unanimous report given by the Muslim writers of all times. The unanimity in report, from the writers of different inclinations, without any kind of other instance, is a proof by itself.

severe measures which he energetically carried out¹ to crush the movement, the Kufans saw their hopes gone and they completely lost heart. They found it easy to make peace with the Umayyads rather than to endanger themselves.

There were some, however, though small in number, who invited the 'son of the Prophet' and led the movement motivated mainly by their religious feelings. Where were they when Husayn was so helplessly killed at Karbalā? We have seen that, after the execution of Muslim and Hānī, Kufa was kept under firm control. Anyone suspected of sympathy with Husayn was subjected to death.² Naturally all the leaders of the movement who were genuine in their support to it hid themselves to escape execution or arrest, not because they betrayed Husayn and wanted to save their lives, but, as we shall see presently, because they wanted to make themselves of some help to Husayn who was on the way. This may be seen by scrutinizing the names of those who gave up their lives at Karbala with Husayn, for the same men had been leading the movement in Kufa. The majority of them, as soon as they heard of Husayn's arrival at Karbalā, in spite of all the obstacles, somehow managed to reach there and laid down their lives before Husayn or any one of his relatives were hurt. And of those who were not seen with Husayn at Karbalā, some were already arrested and some others due to the heavy blockade of

1. See Supra.

2. See Supra.

the roads could not make their way to Karbalā in time until it was all over. Still apart from the Banū Hāshim and Husayn's kin there were ninety-two persons¹ from among the Shī'ites who fought for him till the last breath. Out of these ninety-two, fifty-eight were from the Shī'ites of Kufa alone.² Ṭabarī and other sources tell us in detail how secretly they could manage to escape from Kufa and reached Karbalā.³ Besides, we find about a dozen names of those who came to Karbalā with the Umayyad army and when they saw the sacriligious treatment of the Umayyads with the grandson of the Prophet, they could no longer resist their feelings for the House of the Prophet and defected from the Umayyad ranks⁴ and put their lot with Husayn.

Furthermore, it should be noted again that the blockade of all the routes coming into Kufa and its vicinity made it almost impossible for the majority of those Shī'ites of Kufa who were in hiding, and also for those residing in other cities like that of Basra to come to the help of Husayn. Nevertheless, nine

1. See Ṭab., and Kāmil, under the year 61 AH. No one page can be referred to. Also see, Mufīd, Irshād. Sam'āwī, Iḥṣār al-'Ayn fī Ahwāl al-Anṣār al-Husayn, 39 ff. Hibat al-Dīn, Nuḥdat al-Husayn, 102 ff.
2. See Sam'āwī, Iḥṣār al-'Ayn fī Ahwāl al-Anṣār al-Husayn 47 ff.
3. See Ṭab., II, 309-372. Kāmil, IV, 22-39.
4. See Ṭab., loc. cit. Kāmil, loc. cit.

persons from Basra¹ did reach Karbalā and shared their lot with Husayn.² We have, therefore, a good ground to suppose that had there not been so many obstacles and had they got sufficient time to mobilize their strength, quite a good number of those four thousand Tawwābūn (Penitents) who later on sacrificed their lives in the name of Husayn would have been with him at Karbalā. Circumstances allow us to suggest that those who gave their lives for the sake of 'the dead Husayn' would have done so for the living Husayn. On the other hand, the aim of elaborating this fact, however, is not to suggest that had there not been those crushing circumstances Husayn's fate would have been any different. It would certainly have been the same in any case, because of the well organized military strength of the Umayyads in contrast with the weak and disorganized movement of the Shī'ites. But, the aim is to suggest that under slightly better circumstances it would not have happened so helplessly and without any resistance, and thus we could get a more clear picture of the physical strength

1. See Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit.
2. The losses incurred from different tribes supporting Husayn at Karbalā were: Kindah, 13; Hawāzin, 20; Tamīm, 17; Asad, 6; Madhhij, 7; Thaqīf, 12; the rest were of unknown tribal affiliation. See W. Montgomery Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads", JRAS, (1960) p. 16 cf. Tab., II, 386. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 270. Tabarī mentions from the Madhhij, 7 and does not record Thaqīf's 12; while Dīnawarī omits Madhhij, 7 and mentions Thaqīf as having contributed 12 persons who were killed. Scrutiny of other sources confirms both reports, i.e., from Madhhij, 7, and Thaqīf 12.

of the Shī'ite sectarian movement even at this stage. To support this assumption we can very well cite the successes achieved, not long after Karbala but with better circumstances and opportunities, by al-Mukhtār¹ and Ibn al-Zubayr,² both much less important than the grandson of the Prophet. An analysis of the sources allows us to say that some of the component parts of Husayn's movement, later on frustrated or perverted, gave vent to their indignation against the 'ruling majority' under the banners of al-Mukhtār and Ibn al-Zubayr. This comparison also leads us to another important point. Al-Mukhtār and Ibn al-Zubayr, however, achieved considerable successes in their enterprises and both were able to rule certain parts of the Muslim State for quite a few years, but could not leave any religious following behind them³ after they had fallen,

1. al-Mukhtār b. 'Ubayda al-Thaqafī siezed possession of Kufa in 66 AH (685-686 A.D) and captured Mesopotamia and the eastern provinces. He, however, lost his control of power and was killed in Ramadān, 67 AH. G. Levi Della Vida, El (1) art. "al-Mukhtār?"
2. 'Abdullah b. Zubayr proclaimed his caliphate in 61 AH (680-681 A.D) and by 64 AH he established his power in Iraq, Southern Arabia and in a great part of Syria. He was killed in a battle against Hajjāj on the 17th Jumāda, 1, 73 AH (4th October 692); hence he ruled for nine years. M. Seligsohn, El (1) art. "Abdullah b. Zubayr."
3. There is no trace that Ibn al-Zubayr left any sectarian following behind him; the name of al-Mukhtār was kept for a very short time and was followed by a group but soon after lost its sectarian identity and was merged in a wider group. See B. Lāwis, The Origins of Ismā'ilism, p. 27. Nawbakhtī, Firaq al-Shī'a, p. 45.

though as much martyrs as Husayn himself. The reason is both obvious and vital. Neither they nor their upholders had any specific principle or particular view which could keep their memory alive in the annals of sectarian organization in Islam. Husayn, on the contrary, though completely and helplessly a failure in his action, he and his cause were so upheld by a section of the Muslims that his name became an emblem of a sectarian entity in Islam known as the Shī'ites. This was because of the fact that his movement was linked up with a 'particular view' about the leadership of the community.¹ The memory of al-Mukhlār and Ibn al-Zubayr died with the lapse of time and could only find place in the annals of history. The memory of al-Husayn remained alive in the hearts and minds of a section of the people. This section being an integral part of the religious unity of Islam was thrust into a sectarian role.

Now, here is the place to examine the second inference to be drawn from the outline of Karbala given above - i.e., to determine the religious feelings of those who willingly gave their lives with Husayn. Our early sources do not lack in providing us ample proofs of that doctrinal stand which urged the companions of Husayn to choose to die with him rather than to live in peace and comfort which was possible for them

1. I have traced out this 'particular view' right from the death of the Prophet and the event of Saqīfa. See first chapter, Supra.

even till the last moment. This can be well elucidated by examining those speeches and pledges of loyalty made by them on several occasions, and also from that war poetry in Rajaz,¹ (verbal duels) which according to the Arabian warfare, were exchanged between the combatants of both sides. A few of them will suffice to illustrate the point that there was a particular doctrinal stand for which the followers of Husayn stood and died.

1) We have seen that Husayn's messenger Qays b. Mushir, whom he sent forward from Hājir to inform the Kufans about his arrival, was arrested at Qādisiyya from whence he was sent to Ibn Ziyād for the trial. The governor ordered him to go to the pulpit and curse Husayn if he wanted to save his life.² Qays found it an opportunity to propagate his cause and addressed the people thus: "O people of Kufa! I am Husayn's messenger and I declare before you that Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, is the best man of his time among the men of God on earth, and has better claim upon you than anyone else. It is, therefore, your religious duty to support him against the tyrants Ibn

1. It was customary among the Arabs that when two combatants come to fight each other, both declare in verse their tribe, its deeds and status and the stand for which they were going to fight. These verbal duels before actual duel made a huge bulk in Arabic literature.

2. Tab., II, 288-9. Kāmil, IV, 17. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 258. Mufīd, Irshād, 230.

Ziyād and his master Yazīd."¹ Naturally, Ibn Ziyād's anger was inflamed and Qays was beheaded² instantly.

If we compare Qays' attitude with that of Ḥujr b. 'Adī al-Kindī about twelve years before,³ we find a consistent way of thinking which links them with one another in an unbroken chain of the Shī'ite sectarian doctrine. His introduction of Husayn with special reference to his relationship with the Prophet, and that he was the best man of his time on the earth goes back to the ideas promulgated from the very beginning by the supporters of 'Alī.

2) When the first detachment of 1000 troops, sent by Ibn Ziyād under the command of Ḥurr, confronted Husayn, and he decided to return to Medina,⁴ he addressed his followers asking their opinions. For the sake of brevity we shall quote here only two of those speeches made on this occasion by the companions of Husayn in his reply. A devoted follower, Burayr al-Hamdānī, addressed Husayn: "O son of the Prophet, this is God's greatest blessing upon us that he has given us this opportunity to be with you to sacrifice our lives for you. We count ourselves the luckiest people of this 'Ummah to be killed and our bodies cut into pieces in

1. Tab., II, 289-303. Kāmil, IV, 17. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 258. Mufīd, Irshād, 230.
2. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Dīnawarī, loc.cit. Mufīd, loc.cit.
3. See part A Supra of this chapter.
4. Tab., II, 298. Kāmil, IV, 19. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 262. Mufīd, Irshād, 236.

your service, and thus we will be able to claim Muhammad's intercession on the day of judgment. How a people (ummah) can ask God's mercy while they kill the grandson of His messenger; and how will they show their faces to God on the Day of Resurrection?" Then one Nāfi' b. Hilāl spoke: "O son of the Prophet! You know that there were trying times for your grandfather, the Prophet of God, and it was not possible even for him to fill the hearts of all people with love and sincerity. So was the situation with your father 'Ali who had to fight again and again against the Blasphemers. Now you are facing the same situation. We all are wholeheartedly with you and will follow whatever you will decide. We would be friends only with those who are befriended with you and enemies of those who are enemies of you".¹

These speeches again reveal that religious view which prevailed throughout Shī'ite sectarian thinking. Specially, the declaration of Nāfi', that we will be friends of your friends and enemies of your enemies, takes us back to the year 37 AH when a group of the Shī'ites swore to 'Ali that they would be friends of those whom he befriended and enemies of those to whom he was hostile.² Now in 60 AH, after twenty-three years, the same words were being repeated again by a group of the followers of 'Ali's son and thus the continuity

1. Mufīd, Irshād, 242. Tab., II, 301, gives the name of Zuhayr b. Qayn instead of Burayr, and different wording.
2. Tab., I, 3350. W. Montgomery Watt tends to accept this report as genuine, cf. Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads," JRAS, (1960) p. 159, 160.

of thought was kept alive in the development of Shī'ite sectarianism.

3) On the night of 'Ashūra (10th of Muharram), when all hopes for peace were gone and it was certain that the following morning would bring the summons of death for each one of Husayn's small band, he gathered his companions and addressed them. In this address he clearly warned them of the surety of being massacred in the morning, and emphatically asked them to leave him alone and run away secretly in the veil of night¹ as the enemy wants nothing else except his head. All the prominent companions and relatives of Husayn, in replying to his address, refused to leave him until all of them were killed. Perhaps we would not like to consider the pledges made on this occasion by the relatives of Husayn, like 'Abbās his half brother and others,² which may be interpreted as the clannish loyalty to the head of the clan. We would, therefore, examine the words and pledges of those only who had no blood, clannish or even tribal relationship with Husayn except, so to speak, the sectarian loyalty.

From among the companions, the seventy years old Muslim b. 'Awsaja stood up and exclaimed: "How will we show our faces on the Day of Judgment to your grandfather, the Prophet of God, if we leave you at this moment. By God, we will not depart from you until our

1. Tab., II, 321-322. Kāmil, IV, 24. Mufīd, Irshād, 243-244.

2. For their words of pledge see Tab., II, 322. Kāmil, IV, 24. Mufīd, Irshād, 244.

bodies are torn to pieces in your defence."¹ Then Sa'd b. 'Abdullah al-Hanafī addressed Husayn saying: "By God, we will not depart from you until by sacrificing our lives we will prove before God that we have faithfully fulfilled the duty we owe to the Prophet concerning you. This is the moment of the trial of our Islam and the trial of our sense of duty we owe through you to the Prophet from whom we received the message of Islam."² Similar speeches were made by others.³

The contents of all these pledges mentioned above, on two occasions, provide very useful points with which to emphasize that religious urge which made the companions of Husayn so firm and enthusiastic even at that moment of calamity. The aspects prevailing in these pledges are: (1) the emphasis on Husayn's close and direct relationship with the Prophet and not only with 'Ali;⁴ (2) that to betray Husayn is as to betray the

1. Tab., II, 322 f. Kāmil, IV, 24. Mufīd, Irshād, 244-245.
2. Tab., loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. Mufīd, loc.cit.
3. Tab., II, 322-323, Kāmil, loc.cit. Mufīd, loc.cit.
4. I would like to emphasize the point that the upholders of al-Hasan and al-Husayn based their claims on their relationship with the Prophet and not with 'Ali. We shall see in detail that a small group of the main body of the Shī'ites remained persistent on this point and upheld Husayn's surviving son 'Ali, Zayn al-'Abidīn, and not Muhammad al-Hanafīya, on the very ground that the former was the great-grandson of the Prophet while the latter was only the son of 'Ali.

Prophet, or the other way round, loyalty to Husayn is loyalty to Muhammad, the Prophet of God; (3) that to give him up is as to renounce Islam which was conveyed by his grandfather, the Prophet; (4) that Husayn's betrayal this day will cause them to perish on the Day of Judgment and deprive them of the intercession of the Prophet. The essence of all these aspects, however, is that in their thinking there was an Imām or central authority who was the focal point for the love normally showered on, or directed to, the person of the Prophet himself.¹

4) On the day of 'Ashūra, shortly before the fateful battle began, Hurr b. Yazīd al-Riyāhī, a respected commander of the Umayyad army, the first man who confronted Husayn and forced him to halt at Karbalā,² away from the river, now was himself confronted by his own conscience and feelings. He developed a great conflict in his mind - either to wet his hand in the blood of the grandson of the Prophet, or to give up the rank and power and a bright career before him. His feelings won over him ultimately to choose the latter. He pushed his horse towards Husayn's camp, threw himself at his feet³ and exclaimed: "O son of the Prophet! Here is

1. A.A.A. Fyzee, "Shī'ī Legal Theories", p.113, in, Law in the Middle East, ed. Majid Khadduri and H.J. Liebesny, (Washington, 1955).

2. See Supra.

3. Tab., II, 333 f. Kāmil, IV, 26. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 267-268. Mufīd, Irshād, 229.

the man who did you great injustice in rounding you up to this place and caused you so much troubles. Is it possible for you to forgive a sinner like me? By God, I never imagined that these people would go so far as to shed the blood of the grandson of their Prophet. I only thought that some sort of reconciliation will ultimately prevail, and in this way I would be able to retain my rank and position. But now when all hopes for peace are gone I cannot buy Hell for this worldly gain. Forgive my mistakes and allow me to sacrifice myself for you. Only by doing this I can ask for forgiveness from your grandfather and from God on the Day of Resurrection."¹ Husayn, however, embraced him. Hurr then went in front of the Umayyad army and addressed his fellow men saying: "O people! What happened to you? I never thought that you could go so far as to be ready to shed the sacred blood of your Prophet's son. What will you say on the day of judgment when the Prophet will ask you about him?"² Consequently Hurr was among the first who gave his life for Husayn.³

1. Tab., II, 333-334. Kāmil, IV, 26. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 267-268. Mufīd, Irshād, 229.
2. Tab., II, 334. Kāmil, IV, 27. Mufīd, Irshād, 230.
3. The defection of Hurr to Husayn on the day of 'Ashūra, shortly before the battle began and his being killed by the Umayyads, is as historical as the event of Karbalā itself. See Tab., loc.cit. Mufīd, Irshād, 229 f. and all the sources referred to above. In this context the speeches of Hurr quoted above, from Tabarī on the authority of Abū Mikhnaf and from the Shī'ite sources on the authority of 'Ali b. al-Husayn who was present at Karbalā, seem extremely plausible.

The physical defection of Hurr from the established order was, however, not of much importance. It was the principle on which Hurr defected from the majority which should be counted seriously. This was, perhaps, the greatest visible victory for the Shī'ite viewpoint for which the companions of Husayn were fighting to death. The working of Hurr's mind at this last moment, as expressed in his statements mentioned above, was exactly the same as that of the companions of Husayn. This again supports the view that there was a particular way of thinking directed to the Shī'ite doctrine.

5) Now the last but not the least important in this connection are those Rajaz verses (verbal duels) exchanged between Husayn's companions and their opponents.

I. The same Hurr when engaged in battle was proclaiming: "I will strike my sword on your heads in the cause of that Imām who is the best among all the inhabitants of Mecca."¹

II. Nāfi' b. Hilāl al-Jamalī of Husayn's camp came forward and asked for his combatant proclaiming: "I am from the tribe of Banū Jamal and I am of the religion of 'Ali (Dīn Ali)." From the opposite side one Muzāhim b. Hurayth came forward saying: "I will fight with you, I am of the religion of 'Uthmān (Dīn 'Uthmān)." Nāfi' retorted: "No, thou art of the religion of Satan."²

1. Tab., II, 350. Mufīd, Irshād, 215.

2. Tab., II, 342.

III. When Zuhayr b. Qayn al-Bijalī was engaged in fighting, some one from the opposite rank asked him: "You were not from among the Shī'ites of 'Ali but were known to be as an 'Uthmānī." Zuhayr replied, "But now being with Husayn you must recognize that I am a Shī'a of 'Ali."¹

These are only a few instances of 'Rajaz' exclaimed by the combatants at Karbalā,² which sufficiently reveal the fact that the Shī'ite sectarian thinking was fully active among those who chose to be with Husayn. The statement of Hurr that Husayn is an Imām best of all dwellers of Mecca, and Nāfi's and Zuhayr's declarations that they are of the religion of 'Ali are complete explanations by themselves and need no further comments. Yet the pronouncement of Husayn's followers that they are of the religion of 'Ali does not fail to suggest that they meant this term in a strictly religious sense in contrast with those who also called themselves with the same name at Jamal, Ṣiffīn and other occasions with 'Ali but on political grounds and, with the changing circumstances assimilated themselves with the ruling majority who were now going to kill the son of 'Ali.

1. Tab., II, 319.

2. War poetry in Rajaz pronounced by the combatants of both sides in Karbalā preserved in Tabarī, mainly on the authority of Abū Mikhnaḥ, who often relates from eye witnesses, makes useful reading and provides important points. See Tab. under the year 61, passim, in connection with Karbalā, which covers a good number of pages. I have, however, quoted only three of them for the sake of brevity.

On the other hand by looking at all these quotations referred to above we find that throughout the incident of Karbala there had been a persistent, continuous doctrinal tendency among the followers of Husayn, based on their declaration of being of the religion of 'Ali. This very tendency in the course of time, as we shall see later, was translated into a more elaborate form of the Shī'ite sectarian tenets, and developed its own theology (kalām) and law (fiqh) in opposition to the Sunnī creed.

Commenting on the tragedy of Karbala, even a scholar like Hitti lets himself write that "Shī'ism was born on the tenth of Muharram."¹ But the information we get from our sources does not confirm this view. Instead, the fact as revealed by an analysis of the historical sources,² is that the death of Husayn "set the seal on official Shī'ism."³ For that purpose we have gone into detail in citing from those speeches, pledges and war poetry pronounced before the death of Husayn; and which clearly show the nature of the existing tendencies prevailing before the tragedy occurred. What is more true to say is that the tragedy did play an immensely important

1. Hitti, History of the Arabs, 191.

2. See all the evidence and references quoted above in connection with Karbalā.

3. A.A.A. Fyzee, "Shī'i Legal Theories", p. 113, in Law in the Middle East, ed. Majid Khadduri and H.J. Liebesny.

role, not in the creation of Shī'ism, but in the consolidation of the Shī'ite's sectarian 'feelings'. The fate of Husayn was destined to become the most effective measure in the propagation and comparatively¹ rapid spread of Shī'ism. It is also undoubtedly true to admit that the tragedy added to the Shī'ite doctrine another element of 'passion' which makes human psychology more receptive to doctrine than anything else. From now on we find that this 'passion' element becomes a characteristic feature of the Shī'ite. The tragedy of Karbala, however, in its immediate and far-reaching consequences, created four thousand Tawwābūn who let themselves die as a way of repenting for their negligence² with regard to the 'grandson of the Prophet'. It provided a ground from which al-Mukhtār was able to launch his movement.³ It provided a penetrating slogan to the 'Abbāsids to overthrow the Umayyad regime;⁴ and ultimately, the name and memory of al-Husayn became an inseparable part of the Shī'ite's moral and religious fervour.⁵

In the end of this phase a word seems necessary about the authenticity of the reports mentioned above from which we have tried to deduce the religious stand of the companions of Husayn. Ṭabarī relates all these

1. Comparing the period before the tragedy of Karbalā.
2. See part C below.
3. See part B Chapter IV, below.
4. Ibid.
5. G.S. Hodgson, "How did the Early Shī'a Become Sectarian", JAOS, (1955) p.3.

speeches, pledges and rajaz along with the lengthy accounts of Karbala from Abū Mikhnaf. Abū Mikhnaf as one of the oldest and best of Arabic historians has thoroughly and critically been studied by the scholars like Wellhausen¹ and Wüstenfeld² and is found the most reliable and authentic writer on the annals of Kufa and al-‘Irāq under the Umayyads. Their investigations find that as a rule he does not take his material from predecessors or far distant sources but collects it himself by enquiring in the most diverse directions from all possible people who could have first-hand information or who had been present to see and hear for themselves.³ The Isnād is with him a reality and not merely a literary form. His chain of transmitters is always very short and through this proximity of events he often relates from an eye-witness account, with only one intermediary.

Gibb suggests that Abū Mikhnaf presents an ‘Iraqī or Kufan, rather than purely Shī‘ite point of view in his historical narrative, but is weak and unreliable as a traditionist.⁴ In this, no doubt, his sympathies

1. See Wellhausen, preface to his Arab Kingdom and its Fall.
2. Wüstenfeld, Der Tod Husains und die Rache, Introductory chapter.
3. Wellhausen, loc.cit.
4. H.A.R. Gibb, El, (2) art. "Abū Mikhnaf". I fail to understand in what sense Gibb has used the term "traditionist" for Abū Mikhnaf. In the list of Abū Mikhnaf's works Ibn Nadīm, Tusī or Najāshī do not cite any work by him on Hadīth proper. See Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 93.

are on the side of Iraq against Syria, for 'Ali against the Umayyads. Yet in this there is not much of a bias noticeable, at least not so much as positively to falsify facts.¹ Only on occasion does he seem to hush up what it does not suit him to state. For example, he suppresses the information that 'Aqīl fought against his brother 'Ali.²

In the list of Abū Mikhnaḥ's works, however, Maqtal al-Husayn is unanimously recorded by all early bibliographers.³ It is beyond any doubt certain that Ṭabarī copied and preserved this Maqtal to us in its original form. Wüstenfeld, translating Maqtal al-Husayn into German,⁴ has convincingly seen in his long introduction that the authenticity of this Maqtal as of the genuine authorship of Abū Mikhnaḥ is beyond any doubt. Besides, when we compare Ṭabarī's accounts of Abū Mikhnaḥ, with that of al-Ya'qūbī⁵ and other early writers reporting on Karbala from Abū Mikhnaḥ, we find that the accounts

1. Wellhausen, loc. cit.

2. Wellhausen, loc. cit.

3. ^{On al-Nadīm} Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist, 93. Tūsī, Fihrist, No. 585, p. 155. Najāshī, Rijāl, p. 245. On Tūsī (b. 385 AH) and his Fihrist see Sprenger's preface on his Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1853; and Browne's valuable discussion of biographical authorities, Lit. His., IV, 355-358. On Najāshī, (b. 372 AH) also see Browne, loc. cit.

4. Wüstenfeld, Der Tod Husains und die Rache.

5. Ya'qūbī died 284/297.

are almost the same. Furthermore, early Shī'ite writers like Mufīd¹ (b.336, d.413 AH) and others relate the tragedy of Karbalā, apart from Abū Mikhnaf, from 'Ali b. al-Husayn who was twenty-three years old when he was present at Karbala but could not take part in the battle due to his illness and thus was saved from the general massacre of the Banū Hāshim. We find that the Shī'ite accounts of Karbala also confirm what Ṭabarī has recorded from Abū Mikhnaf.

We have seen that Abū Mikhnaf's Isnād are always very short and often he relates events from the eye-witnesses.² In the instances quoted above (from 1 to 5) he relates with the verb "Haddathanī", he told me,³ and his Isnād ran thus:

- 1) Abū Mikhnaf: Muhammad b. Qays,⁴ eye-witness.
- 2) Abū Mikhnaf: Abū Janāb al-Kalbī⁵ from 'Adī b. Ḥurmala, eye-witness.
- 3) Abū Mikhnaf: 'Uqba⁶ b. al-'Ayzār, eye-witness.

1. Mufīd, Irshād al-Qulūb. Mufīd died in 413 AH and it is said that on his advice his pupils Abū'l-'Abbās al-Najāshī and Shaykh al-Tūsī wrote their Kitāb al-Rijāl and Fihrist respectively. See Aghā Buzurg al-Tihirānī Musannafī 'al-Rijāl, IX, p.423.
2. Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, preface.
3. See Ṭab., under the year 60 and 61, passim.
4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 360.
5. He belongs to the 'fifth class' and died in 147 AH at Kufa. Ibn Sa'd Tabaqāt, VI, 360.
6. He belongs to the 'fifth class'. Ibn Sa'd, op.cit. 362.

- 4) Abū Mikhnaf: 'Abdullah b. 'Aṣim from Dakhār b. 'Abdullah, eye-witness.
- 5) Abū Mikhnaf: Yahin b. Hānī b. 'Urwa, eye-witness; and
- 6) Abū Mikhnaf: Hārith¹ b. Husayra from 'Abdullah b. Sharīk al-'Amirī, eye-witness.

In most cases mentioned above Abū Mikhnaf cites the last name with the observation, "Wa Kāna Qad Shahida Qatl al-Husayn", "and he witnessed the murder of Husayn."²

Now, let us see the time factor here at the advantage of Abū Mikhnaf. Principally he records events of Iraq and its capital Kufa and about the people among whom he lived. We do not know precisely the date of his birth but at the rising of Ibn al-Ash'athⁱⁿ AH 82, he had already reached man's estate.³ The tragedy of Karbala took place in AH 61. It is therefore feasible that he had the opportunity of meeting in his early age those who had witnessed the tragedy of Karbala themselves; and in his old age he had met with those who heard the story of Karbala from eye-witnesses. And therefore, we can justify his assertion which he very often did for the last link of his Isnād with "he witnessed the murder of Husayn".

1. Belongs to the 'third class', Sufyān al-Thawrī took Ḥadīth from him. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 334.
2. See Tab., under the year 61, passim.
3. Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom and its Fall, preface, p. vii.

Finally, by examining the very contents of the reports above (1 to 5) we find that the ideas expressed in them are not new but are almost the echo or repetition of those already promulgated and announced long before Karbala by the supporters of 'Ali, as we have already seen before. Even the fundamental points expressed in them like Shafā'a (intercession)¹, the Day of Judgment², and love and respect for the Prophet frequently go back to the time of the Prophet and have also been a persistent theme of the Qur'ānic injunctions. We can, therefore, conclude that the speeches, pledges and rajaz verses expressed at Karbala by the companions of Husayn and reported by Abū Mikhnaḥ as preserved in Ṭabarī are, in all probability, historically sound and serve our purpose to infer the religious stand of the companions of Husayn.

1. See EI (Sh) art. 'Shafā'a.'
2. See EI (Sh) art. 'Qiyāma.'

C. THE REACTION AFTER KARBALĀ

The martyrdom of al-Husayn had a great religious significance and a deep after-effect upon the Shī'a and gave a new turn to the mode and nature of the Shī'ite movement. The tragic fate of the grandson of the Prophet stirred the religious and moral sentiments, particularly those of the Kufan followers of 'Ali who had so zealously asked him to come to Iraq to guide them to what they thought to be the Path of God.¹ But when he came down to Iraq they did not or could not stand with him in the hour of trial. Soon after, however, they realised that their weakness or rather fickleness was the cause of the tragedy. A deep sense of repentance set in provoking their religious conscience,² and in order to expiate their sin and obtain God's forgiveness, they thought, they must make similar sacrifice. They believed that they could only show real repentance by exposing themselves to death while seeking vengeance for the blood of al-Husayn. Hence they named themselves Tawwābūn (penitent) and are known to the history by this self-imposed title.³

1. See in part B of this chapter the letters written by the Shī'ites of Kufa to Husayn inviting him to come to Kufa.
2. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 204 ff. Tab. II, 497. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 100. Kāmil, III, 334.
3. Wellhausen, Die religions-politischen oppositionsparteien im Alten Islam., Trans. Abdurrahmān Badawī, al-Khawārij wa'l-Shī'a, (Cairo 1958), p. 89.

The movement started under the leadership of five¹ notables of Kufa with a following of a hundred persons, none of whom was below sixty years of age.² This age factor should be noted as it indicates the maturity of their religious thinking and behaviour. They began, however, to prepare for a rising against the Umayyad government³, and listened eagerly to the impassioned exhortations of 'Ubaydullah b. 'Abdillah al-Murri.⁴ The first meeting took place towards the end of the year 61 AH⁵ in the house of Sulaymān b. Ṣurād al-Khuzā'i⁶ who with four other Shī'ite leaders of Kufa, al-Musayyib b. Najaba al-Fazāri,⁷ 'Abdullah b. Sa'd b. Nufayl al-Azdī, 'Abdullah b. Wāl al-Tamīmī and Rafā'a b. Shaddād al-Bajili, held a council in the presence of other members of the party.⁸ All of them unanimously entrusted the leadership of the

1. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 205. Ṭab. II, 497. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 101.
2. Wellhausen, loc.cit. Ṭab. II, 499.
3. Ṭab., II, 497 ff. Balādhurī, Ansab, V, 204 ff.
4. A missionary of the people of Kufa in the times of Sulaymān b. Ṣurād al-Khuzā'i. See Ṭab., II, 507.
5. Balādhurī, op.cit. 206. Kāmil, III, 334.
6. Balādhurī, op.cit. 205. Ṭab. II, 497. Kāmil, III, 332.
7. A devoted follower and companion of 'Ali, see Balādhurī, op.cit. 205. Ṭab. loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit.
8. Balādhurī, op.cit. 205 ff. Ṭab., II, 497 ff. Kāmil, III, 333. See the speeches delivered by these five leaders, especially to note the emphasis put on Husayn's relationship with the prophet.

movement to Sulaymān b. Ṣurād al-Khuzā'ī¹ and from that time he is referred to as the Shaykh al-Shī'a.²

They decided to seek God's pardon by fighting to the death the killers of Husayn, and to prove the purity of their intentions, some of them even willed their property as "Ṣadaqāt for the Muslims".³ Sulaymān b. Ṣurād also entered into correspondence with Shī'ite leaders in other cities, namely with Sa'd b. Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān in al-Madā'in and al-Muthanna b. Mukharriba al-'Abdī in Basra, who promised their support.⁴ The movement, however, went on secretly for about three years, increasing in number and strength, looking for a suitable time and opportunity. As long as Ibn Ziyād remained in power no action was possible, but the position changed with the death of Yazīd in AH 64/683 A.D., and the successful rising of Ibn Zubayr.

The sudden death of Yazīd brought about a great weakness in the strong control of the Umayyads and offered long-awaited opportunities to the under-current movement. Ibn Ziyād, who had resided in Basra as the governor of both cities, was expelled by a rebellion of the inhabitants and went to Marwān who was now Caliph in Syria.⁵

1. A companion of the Prophet, a great partisan of 'Ali and one of the most enthusiastic to invite Husayn to Kufa to take charge of the affairs.
2. Balādhurī, op.cit. 205 and 207. Ṭab., II, 499. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 189. Kāmil, III, 333.
3. Balādhurī, op.cit. 206. Ṭab., II, 501. Kāmil, II, 233.
4. Balādhurī, op.cit. 206. Ṭab. II, 502-504. Kāmil, III, 233-234.
5. Balādhurī, op.cit. 207.

The Kufans, on their part, ousted 'Amr b. al-Ḥārith, the deputy of Ibn Ziyād in Kufa¹ and asked Ibn Zubayr to appoint his governor. Ibn al-Zubayr promptly sent 'Abdullah b. Yazīd al-Khaṭ'amī, who took charge of the city in Ramaḍān 64 AH.²

Now with the obstacles removed the activities of the Tawwābūn became open. The governor of Ibn al-Zubayr is reported to have endeavoured to dissuade Sulaymān b. Surād and his followers from carrying out their plans,³ nevertheless, he did not take any action to crush the movement for it was indirectly serving Ibn Zubayr's interest. At the same time, however, al-Mukhtār b. 'Ubaydah al-thaqafī, who later appeared in Kufa, was organizing another group apparently for the same purpose but with somewhat different motives. Although al-Mukhtār tried to enlist the support of the Tawwābūn, they refused to join hands with the Thaqafite adventurer.⁴ They had no wish to participate in any doubtful adventure, and even announced that they would refrain from fighting the Syrians, if the latter would hand over Ibn Ziyād to them and accept the rights of the Ahl al-Bayt.⁵

1. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Tab. II., 508. Kāmil, III, 335.
2. May, 684 A.D. Balādhurī, op.cit. 207. Tab., II, 509.
3. Balādhurī, op.cit. 208.
4. Balādhurī, op.cit. 207. Tab., II, 509 ff.
5. Balādhurī, op.cit. 210. Tab., II, 508 and 558. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 192.

They did not proclaim any particular member of the Ahl al-Bayt as the Imām, though there are very strong indications to suggest that they regarded 'Ali (later on known as Zayn al-'Abidīn) the surviving son of Husayn as the rightful successor.¹ This suggestion is founded on many factors. Firstly, the very idea of the leadership based on hereditary sanctity which attracted the Arabs of Shī'ite tendencies was still confined into the progeny of Muhammad through Fāṭima, as it was transferred from Hasan to Husayn and not to any other member of the Hāshimite clan; secondly, the name of Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafīya had not yet appeared on the scene for the leadership of the Shī'ites;² thirdly, even Mukhtār who was the main progenitor of Ibn Ḥanafīya's leadership first approached 'Ali b. Husayn, and only when he failed in his attempt to get his confirmation did he turn to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya³ and ingratiate himself with his name; and fourthly, it was too natural for at least a group of the Shī'ites of Kufa to regard the twenty-three years

1. See part A of the following chapter on Zayn al-'Abidīn.
2. The movement of the Tawwābūn started towards the end of 61 AH and Mukhtār arrived in Kufa after the death of Yazīd in 65 AH and started his propaganda under the name of Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafīya. Thus the name of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya appeared four years after, when the Tawwābūn were almost ready for action. See Balādhurī, op.cit. 207. Tab., II, 506 and 534.
3. See Tab., K. Dhayl, 119. Kash, Rijāl, 85. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 272. Ya'qūbī, II, 309. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 83 says, فلما يئس المختار من علي بن الحسين كتب الى عمه محمد بن الحنفية يريد به علي مثل ذلك .

old son of al-Husayn as the successor to his father, as they had regarded the thirty-seven years old Hasan as the legitimate successor to 'Ali b. Abī Tālib.¹ Obviously the people were the same and their thinking was still the same so there is no reason to doubt that they would have applied the same principles in the case of 'Ali b. al-Husayn. Yet as long as he himself raised no claim publicly to the succession of his father and grandfather, the Tawwābūn also refrained from discussing this problem.² Instead they concentrated on their main goal, active repentance for their negligence in carrying out their duties in regard to the son of the Prophet. They did not seek political conquest or booty and discouraged those who desired material benefits from joining them.³

The severe standards set by Sulaymān b. Šurad proved too much for the majority of the original volunteers, and from the 16,000⁴ who registered themselves, only 4000 turned up and marched under his banner.⁵

1. See part A of this chapter.
2. Nevertheless, their poet, 'Abdullah b. al-Ahmar mentioned in his verse "a caller" who "invited them to salvation", obviously an Imām, but without giving his name. See Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 38.
3. Tab., II, 540. Balādhurī, op.cit. 208-209. Kāmil, III, 340.
4. Tab., II, 539. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 192. Balādhurī, loc.cit.
5. Tab., loc.cit. Balādhurī, op.cit. 208. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 194. The beginning of more organized and appealing movement of Mukhtār at this time was another reason.

First, however, they went to Karbalā at the grave of Husayn and gave themselves up to wild and unprecedented expressions of grief, weeping and crying for the suffering and tragic death of the son of the Prophet.¹ Wellhausen suggests that it was the first precedent of the glorification of the grave of Husayn and was purely Arabic in its character and nature since the Arabs were used to glorifying the Black Stone fixed in the Ka'ba.² After spending a day and night in mourning, they left the grave of Husayn and ultimately reached 'Ayn-al-Warda, where they met the Syrian army of Ibn Ziyād about 30,000 strong.³ They engaged the Syrians fiercely, shouting "Paradise, Paradise for the Turabites."⁴ After three days fighting the majority, including Sulaymān b. Surād, were killed.⁵

The first point to be taken very seriously is this, that all the 4000 Tawwābūn were Arabs only and not a single Mawlā. It was Mukhtār who for the first time conceived the idea of attracting Mawālī and gave a wider appeal to the Shī'ite movement. Secondly, among these four thousand Tawwābūn many of the chief tribes of the

1. Balādhurī, op.cit. 209. Tab., II, 546. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 194.
2. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 194 cf. Tab., II, 547.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 210. Also see Tab., II, 555 ff.
4. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 102.
5. See Tab., II, 558 ff. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 210 ff.

Arabs were represented though the outstanding number was from the South Arabian or Yamanite tribes.¹ Thirdly, the penitent army included a very large number of the Qurrah,². All these facts, however, indicate two fundamental points. Firstly, that the Shī'ite movement was still Arabian in its character and untouched by non-Arab elements - doctrinal or otherwise. And secondly, the movement of the Tawwābūn, who represented the "Central Body" of the Shī'ites at this juncture, was absolutely a religious affair. Husayn himself, when he met Yazīd's army, was aware of his dignity as the grandson of the Prophet, as well as the son of 'Ali, and the Tawwābūn by their action were certainly combining loyalty to 'Ali with loyalty to Muhammad himself and thus were taking the matter strictly as a religious issue. Finally, if we compare the feelings and the words of those of the Shī'ites who gave up their lives with Husayn at Karbala³ with the speeches and expressions made by the Tawwābūn⁴ we find the same sentiments based on the same religious principles. But there is a great difference however. At Karbala the presence of Husayn himself was a great

1. Kuzā'ah, Fazārah, Azd, Bakr b. Wā'il, Bajilah, Muzaynah, 'Abd al-Qays, Kindah, Himyar, 'Abs, Asad, Hamdān, al-Ashar and Khath'am. Tab., II, 497, 559, 566, 599, 601. Also see Wellhausen, Shī'a, 189.

2. Wellhausen, Shī'a, 194.

3. See part B Supra of this chapter.

4. See Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 205-207. Tab. II, 498-501.

personal obligation on the Shī'ites who fought and were killed with him. In the case of the Tawwābūn there was no personal binding force which could keep them zealous enough to make them die except a strong feeling of duty and a feverish sense of religious obligation. Thus the Tawwābūn pushed Shī'ism another step further towards an independent and self-sustaining existence.

We have pointed out above that a little before the Tawwābūn were about to march against the Syrians, al-Mukhtār b. Abū 'Ubaydah al-Thaqafī arrived in Kufa with his ambitious plans and tried to gain the support of Sulaymān b. Ṣurad and his Tawwābūn, but they refused to join any doubtful adventure. This study, however, is meant only to survey the development of the central or legitimist¹ body of the Shī'ites and its consolidation arising from the Imāmate of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, and does not cover the revolutionary, extremist or other ramifications of the Shī'ites which branch out at different stages. Our view is that there was, from the very beginning, a central or legitimist stream which was going to form, though certainly unconsciously, what ultimately came to be known as the Imāmite Shī'a. The movement of Mukhtār and the emergence of the idea of Mahdī attached to the person of Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiya are therefore outside the scope of this study and have

1. By the legitimate branch I mean 'Ali, Hasan, Husayn and his descendants in the main line who became Imāms, with the exclusion of Zayd b. 'Ali and other branches.

no direct bearing on the legitimists group at this stage.

Nevertheless, there were many cross-currents and much intermingling of ideas between these branches, and naturally the long continued Imāmite line was certainly affected by some ideas introduced by those who cut themselves off from the middle way. For example, the idea of Raj'a and the very idea of Mahdī in its technical meaning were ultimately adopted for their convenience by the later Imāmites. With these common points we shall deal as the necessity arises.

It should also be noted here that from this time of the confusion and rivalries in the leadership which followed the death of Husayn, this study has to deal with two different questions. One is how the legitimist Shī'ism survived as a separate identity without being absorbed into the Sunnite synthesis. The other is how it maintained its own character distinct from the revolutionary and extremist branches of Shī'ism itself. To resist the latter possible form of absorption was certainly more difficult than the former, as extremist and revolutionary ideas are often more appealing than moderate ones.

Beginning of the Legitimist¹ faction
among the Shī'ites.

A. 'ALĪ ZAYN AL-'ABIDĪN

As long as Husayn was alive the Shī'ites remained united, considering him the only head of the House of the Prophet.² But his sudden death and the quiescent attitude of his only surviving son 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn left the majority of the Shī'ites in confusion and uncertainty as to who would take his place. Thus the period following Husayn's death marks the first conflict in regard to the leadership of the followers of 'Alī, resulting in their division.

1. To find a proper heading for this chapter is rather difficult. The term 'Legitimist' was used in the first chapter for those of the Muslims who supported the cause of 'Alī against the first three Caliphs. In this chapter the term 'Legitimist' is used for those of the Shī'ites who supported the Imāmate of Husayn's son 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn as against 'Alī's third son, from a Hanafite woman, Muhammad al-Hanafīya.
2. It is a historical fact that as long as Husayn was alive we do not find any support given to any other person, or any pretender who claimed the leadership. Even the "Crafty and ambitious" son of al-Zubayr, as Mu'āwiya used to call him (see Tab., II, 197) could not dare to make public his ambitions. It should be borne in mind in particular that the confusion in leadership, among the so called Shī'ites in general, started only when the last son of 'Alī and Fāṭima was dead.

'Alī b. al-Husayn was the only one of the sons of Husayn whose life was saved from the massacre at Karbala because he did not take part in the fighting due to his illness.¹ He was at that time twenty-three years old.² After his return, Zayn al-'Abidīn lived in Medina for most of his life, avoiding political activities as much as he could. The tragedy of Karbala, left a deep mark on him.³ Rather naturally he bore a deep grudge against the Umayyads, holding them responsible for the death of his father.⁴ In spite of this feeling, however, he always refrained from expressing any hostile attitude towards them. As a result, the Umayyads too maintained good relations with him. In particular Marwān b. al-Hakam and his son 'Abd al-Malik, who was Zayn al-'Abidīn's fellow traditionist, had even a certain affection for him.⁵

When the Medinese rose against Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya in the year AH 62/682, Zayn al-'Abidīn, in order to emphasize his neutrality left Medina and went to stay on his estate outside the city.⁶ When Marwān was

1. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. SOAS. fol 22b. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 212. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya Wa'l-Nihāya, IX, 104.
2. Ibn Sa'd, op.cit. 212 and 221. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 22 b, 27 a and b. Ibn Kathīr, loc.cit.
3. Ibn Kathīr, op.cit. 107. Qādī Nu'mān, loc.cit. 'Amīlī, A'yān al-Shi'a, IV, 343 ff. Muḥid, Amālī, 123-129.
4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 212.
5. Ibid. 215 and 220.
6. Tab., II, 405, 409 and 420.

compelled by the Medinese to leave the city he took his wife to Zayn al-'Abidīn and asked him to protect her.¹ Zayn al-'Abidīn accepted the responsibility and sent her to al-Tā'if, escorted by his son 'Abdullah.²

When Yazīd's army led by Muslim b. 'Uqba defeated the Medinese in the Battle of Ḥarra, and sacked the city, Zayn al-'Abidīn and his family were left unmolested on Yazīd's express orders. Moreover, while all the other Medinese were obliged to swear a humiliating oath of allegiance, declaring themselves slaves of the Caliph, Zayn al-'Abidīn was allowed to pay ordinary homage only.³ These things, if on the one hand they show the neutral policy of Zayn al-'Abidīn, on the other hand they also indicate that the Umayyads, after killing Husayn, started to realize the respect which the progeny of Muhammad commanded among the majority of the Muslims.

In the conflict between the Umayyads and Ibn al-Zubayr, Zayn al-'Abidīn remained neutral. Ibn al-Zubayr did him no harm but held him in Mecca under his supervision. The most important factor in his policy is his attitude towards al-Mukhtār who tried his best to obtain the support of Zayn al-'Abidīn. At the very outset of his alleged mission he made Zayn al-'Abidīn a present of 20,000 dīnārs. Some time later Mukhtār again sent him

1. Tab., II, 409, 410, 420.

2. Tab., II, 420.

3. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 222. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 79 f. Dīnawarī, Akhbar, 276. Tab., II, 421. Also see Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 215.

40,000 dīnārs.¹ Zayn al-'Abidīn could neither accept nor refuse the money but laid it by until he later secured permission from the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik to keep it.² Al-Mukhtār even wrote a letter to Zayn al-'Abidīn offering him his allegiance.³ Zayn al-'Abidīn not only declined to accept this allegiance but tried to persuade Ibn al-Hanafiya to break with al-Mukhtār.⁴ He even publicly denounced him as a liar, but Ibn 'Abbās warned him of the possible consequences.⁵ Zayn al-'Abidīn took the advice, but nothing could change his resentful attitude towards al-Mukhtār, not even the grisly gift of 'Ubaydullah b. Ziyād's head, which Mukhtār sent to him and not to Ibn al-Hanafiya, and which was delivered in a most dramatic manner.⁶ When

1. Tab., K. al-Dhayl, 119. Kash., Rijāl, 85. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 213, mentions only one gift of 100,000.
2. Ibn Sa'd, loc.cit. Tab., K. al-Dhayl, 119. Ibn Kathīr, Bidāya, IX, 106. Kashshī, Rijāl, 85, says that Zayn al-'Abidīn accepted and spent the first gift of 20,000 dīnārs sent to him by al-Mukhtār and used that money on the rebuilding of the house of 'Aqīl b. Abī Tālib, but he refused to accept the second gift of 40,000 dīnārs and sent it back to al-Mukhtār because of his propaganda for the Imāmate of Muḥammad b. al-Hanafiya. See Ibid.
3. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 272. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 83.
4. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Mas'ūdī, loc.cit.
5. Balādhurī, loc.cit. Mas'ūdī, loc.cit. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 213.
6. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 309. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 29b, 30a.

Mukhtār was killed Zayn al-ʿAbidīn denounced him in violent terms, but again Ibn ʿAbbās pointed out that Mukhtār was the avenger of the martyrs of Karbalā. The reason for this hatred towards al-Mukhtār seems to be his proclamation of Ibn al-Hanafīya's Imāmate which Zayn al-ʿAbidīn might have considered the usurpation of his rights.

Al-Kulaynī and other Shīʿite traditionists record a number of traditions stating that al-Husayn expressly appointed Zayn al-ʿAbidīn as his successor.¹ Most of these traditions are attributed to Zayn al-ʿAbidīn's eldest son Muhammad al-Bāqir. The authenticity of these traditions is doubtful, and it is likely that they would have been invented by later Shīʿites.² Yet there are certain indications of the tendency of that period which makes us pause a little while in rejecting these sort of traditions. It is beyond any doubt historical that Muʿāwiya clearly nominated his son Yazīd

1. The most commonly reported is that Husayn, before leaving for Iraq, entrusted ʿUmm Salima, the widow of the Prophet, with his will and letters, enjoining her to hand them over to the eldest of his male off-spring in case he himself did not return. Zayn al-ʿAbidīn was the only son that came back, and so he was given his father's will and became his nominee. See, Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 188. Majlisī, *Bihār*, XI, 7. ʿAmilī, *Aʿyān*, IV, 332. Qādī Nuʿmān, *op.cit.* fol.21 a does not mention any of these traditions but only says that he was successor (Waṣī) to his father (Husayn).
2. It is also possible that Muhammad al-Bāqir himself might have introduced these traditions in order to support his claims to the Imāmate against his half-brother Zayd, see part B *infra*.

as his successor to the Caliphate. Then it seems likely that Husayn, who was convinced of his right to the leadership of the Muslims, would have thought to bequeath his heritage to his son who could represent the same rights as he had himself done. Thus what is meant here by the tendency of the epoch is that the practice of the father nominating his son to the succession had already started at that time and was rigidly followed by the following generations. Nevertheless, the fact remains unchallenged that after Husayn's death the majority of the Shī'ites followed not Zayn al-'Abidīn but Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, though the penitents, as we have seen, thought of Zayn al-'Abidīn as a prospective Imām. Notwithstanding, even the remnants of the penitents who survived the battle of 'Ayn al-Warda were attracted by Mukhtār to the side of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya.¹ The reason was obvious. They wanted an active movement and could find an outlet only under the banner of Mukhtār. Zayn al-'Abidīn could not tolerate this situation for long, however.

Zayn al-'Abidīn, being the son of Husayn and the descendant of the Prophet, resented the pretensions of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya. Thus during the pilgrimage to Mecca in the year AH 73/693 A.D. he is said to have raised his claims, against those of his uncle.² From the traditions in this connection,³ however, we may

1. Ibn Khaldūn, 'Ibar, III, 172.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 218 ff.

3. See Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 218 ff. Majlisī, Bihār, X, 282, 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 336.

deduce that Zayn al-'Abidīn disputed the claims of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya, since we find that Abū Khālīd al-Kābulī, Qāsim b. 'Awf and some other followers of the latter abandoned him and went to Zayn al-'Abidīn's side, thus making the nucleus of his party.¹ The majority of the Shī'ites, however, continued to recognize the Imāmate of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya and later on his son Abū Hāshim 'Abdullah. In order to disprove their assumptions, the adherents of Zayn al-'Abidīn quoted a tradition from the Prophet known as Ḥadīth al-Mubāhala.

The tradition runs thus: "Once a representative body from among the Christians of Najrān led by two monks came to the Prophet to content his religious claims. After many days of discussion and arguments which could not convince either party, Muhammad received God's revelation which commanded: 'And whoso disputeth with thee concerning him (Jesus), after the knowledge which hath come unto thee, say unto him: "Come, we will summon our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, then we will pray to invoke the curse of Allah upon those who lie."² Muhammad convinced of his truth put the suggestion of mutual cursing (Mubāhala or Mulālā'ina) including their families, before the Christians to which they agreed. Next morning Muhammad accompanied by 'Ali, Fāṭima, Hasan and Husayn, came to the appointed place. When the Christians saw him with his dearest ones to

1. Kash., Rijāl, 80, 82f..

2. The Qur'ān, III, 59.

subject them to a trial of God, they lost courage, and did not dare to curse him, but submitted and offered to pay tribute."¹ This tradition has been transmitted on a number of Isnāds but the earliest of them go as far back as the circle of Zayn al-‘Abidīn's adherents and these may be taken as genuine.² Thus Hadīth al-Mubāhala was the beginning of the idea of limiting Ahl al-Bayt to the progeny of Fāṭima introduced by Zayn al-‘Abidīn. We shall see that this idea was made more clear and specific by the Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq during his Imāmate by his introducing another tradition known as Hadīth al-Kisā.

However, towards the end of his life Zayn al-‘Abidīn seems to have succeeded in gathering round him a small band of adherents. Among his earliest followers, apart from Yahya b. ‘Umm al-Ṭiwāl and Muhammad b. Jubayr b. Mu‘ṭim, was also Jābir b. ‘Abdullah al-Anṣārī,³ a

1. Wāhidī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl, 74 ff. Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, III, 212 ff. Majlisī, Bihar, IX, 49-52. Louis Massignon, (El (1) Supplement) commenting on Mubāhala says that Mubāhala was in fact an interview of the Prophet with the Christians of Najrān which ended in a diplomatic agreement-Muṣālahā. See also R 50. 1933. pp. 103 ff.
2. (a) ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hasan al-Hāfiz, Abu’l-Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. Aḥmad; ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Sulaymān b. al-Ash‘ath, Yahya b. Hatān, Bishr b. Mehrān, Muhammad b. Dīnār, Dāwūd b. Abī Hind, al-Shaybī from Jābir b. ‘Abdullah al-Anṣārī (Wāhidī, loc.cit.) (b) ‘Isa b. Furqād, Abu’l-Jārūd from Zayd b. ‘Alī, (Ṭabarī, loc.cit.) Yet another Isnād leads to Ibn Jurayj who was well-known for his sympathies towards the Husaynid Imāms. For Ibn Jurayj's pro-Husaynid's attitude see Kash., Rijāl, 274.
3. He died in the year AH 78/697-698 A.D. Hā‘irī, Muntaha, 72. Also see Kash., Rijāl, 27 ff.

companion of the Prophet and a devoted supporter of 'Ali b. Abī Tālib. On account of his prestige¹ as a Sahābī, Jābir was a very important acquisition² for Zayn al-'Abidīn's party. Another important figure was the Kufan Sa'īd b. al-Jubayr, a Mawlā of Banū Asad, a warm-hearted and brave man,² though because of his excessive zeal, unreliable as a traditionist.³ He was Zayn al-'Abidīn's main spokesman, and gained many sympathisers among his fellow-traditionists,⁴ especially from the old companions of 'Ali b. Abī Tālib such as 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Layla al-Anṣārī.⁵ The group of Zayn al-'Abidīn's active supporters included also two young Kufans: Abū Hamza Thābit b. Dīnār al-Thumālī, an Arab from the tribe of Azd,⁶ and Furāt b. al-Aḥnaf al-'Abdī,⁷ who showed strong extremist tendencies. Both were later

1. Jābir participated in the pledge of al-'Aqaba and in the Bay'at al-Ridwān. See Ibn 'Imād, Shadharāt, I, 84. and Kash., Rijāl, 27.
2. He even refused to hide his partisanship and support of the House of the Prophet. Dhahabī, Tārīkh, IV, 3. Kash, Rijāl, 79.
3. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, VI, 187.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 79. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 38 quotes several Kufites, among them Ibān b. Taghlib and Hukaym b. Shu'ayb al-Sayrafī, who must have been at that time a very young man.
5. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 173. Also see Kash, Rijāl, 67.
6. He died in the year AH 150/767 A.D. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 70.
7. Accused of ghuluw and perversion in religion, Hā'irī, Muntaha, 240.

close companions of al-Bāqir.¹

The poet Abū al-Ṭufayl 'Amir b. Wā'ila² played rather an enigmatic role. A Kaysānite and a former associate of Mukhtār, he had been one of the leaders of the Kaysānites and after the death of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya he believed in his concealment in Jabal Raḍwa.³ Yet he moved in the circle of the companions of Zayn al-'Abidīn as well, and in a certain sense was his follower though he did not expressly recognize his Imāmate.⁴

Al-Farazdaq, the renowned poet of that time, was another devoted follower of Zayn al-'Abidīn who composed numerous verses to propagate the cause of the Imām.⁵ But his most famous Qaṣīda in praise of the Imām celebrates the occasion when Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik is reported to have been over-shadowed by the respect the people showed for the Imām while both were trying to reach the Black Stone in the crowded Ka'ba, thus

1. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 38 quotes among the sympathisers of Zayn al-'Abidīn Ibrāhīm and Hasan, sons of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya, Ṭā'ūs b. Kaysān and others.
2. He was known as a traditionist and traditions on his authority are quoted by Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, V, 455-6.
3. Agh. XIII, 167-168.
4. See Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 167-168.
5. Agh., XIV, 78.

deeply offending the prince.¹ This Qaṣīda is very important in that it shows the particular emphasis,² on Zayn al-ʿAbidīn's noble birth as a descendant of the Prophet³ as distinct from Muhammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya. Farazdaq, however, had to pay for his praise for the Imām and was imprisoned by the order of the prince. When Zayn al-ʿAbidīn heard about the misfortune of the poet, he sent him a gift of 12,000 Dirhams, but the poet refused to accept the gift saying that he had composed the poem purely from religious zeal.⁴

1. Agh. loc.cit. Bayhaqī, K.al-Mahāsin wa'l-Masāwī, 131-132. Abū Nuʿaym, Hilya, III, 139. Kash., Rijāl, 86 ff. Qādī Nuʿmān, Sharh al-Akḥbār, MS. fol. 27a. Ibn Kathīr, Bidāya, IX, 108-9. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, III, 620. Subkī, Tabaqāt al-Shafiʿiyya, I, 153 ff. In fact this Qaṣīda is quoted by almost every historian, biographer and in all literary works who have mentioned anything about Zayn al-ʿAbidīn.
2. The Qaṣīda begins with the line
هذا الذي تعرف البطحاء وطأته × والبيت يعرفه والحل والحرم
3. See particularly the verses Nos. 3 and 13 which read
هذا ابن فاطمة إن كنت جاهله × بجده أنبياء الله قد ختموا.
من جده ران فضل الأنبياء × وفضل أمته رانت لها الأم .
one may note here with interest that the poet in praising Zayn al-ʿAbidīn particularly emphasizes his being the grandson of Fātima and thus of the Prophet, while he does not refer to his being the grandson of ʿAlī b. Abī Tālib. See the Qaṣīda in, Farazdaq, Dīwān, I, 847 f. and the references below, n.4.
4. Farazdaq remained in prison and then proceeded to satirize Hishām. Fearing the poet's biting tongue, the prince released him. See the whole story in Agh., XIV, 78. Bayhaqī, Kitāb al-Mahāsin wa'l-Masāwī, 131-132. Abu Nuʿaym, Hilya, III, 139. Kash., Rijāl, 87 f. Ibn Kathīr, op.cit. 108-9. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, III, 621. and Subkī, loc.cit.

The authenticity of this famous Qaṣīda of Farazdaq can hardly be doubted. The occasion on which it is reported to have been composed may be true, but the later part of the story about the Imām's gift and Farazdaq's reply in these words seems to be a latter addition as it does not agree with the careful attitude and policy adopted by Zayn al-ʿAbidīn.

However, all these reports of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn's adherents suggest that the Husaynid line had always been a focus of devotion and special regard, though by a very small minority, and that Zayn al-ʿAbidīn gathered round him some zealous followers who looked upon him as the legitimate Imām of the House of the Prophet. But in the period between the death of Husayn and the death of Ibn al-Zubayr, Zayn al-ʿAbidīn was certainly left without any visible following. The latter Shīʿite traditionists tried to fill in this gap but these traditions can easily be rejected. According to al-Kashshī, for example, Muḥammad al-Bāqir said: "After the death of Husayn all the people apostatized, except three - Abū Khālīd al-Kābulī, Yahya b. ʿUmm al-Ṭawīl and Jubayr b. Muʿtim, and only later did others join them, and their number increase."¹ This tradition seems to be highly doubtful

1. Kash., Rijāl, 81-82. Abū Khālīd Wardān al-Kābulī, nicknamed Kankār. See Ḥāʾirī, Muntaha, 319, for Yahya b. ʿUmm al-Ṭawīl see Ibid. 326. Jubayr b. Muʿtim must have been mentioned by mistake instead of his son Muḥammad b. Jubayr, for he died in AH 58/677-678 A.D. Ibid. 74 and 254.

because a nucleus of the legitimist faction was not openly formed in opposition to the successful propaganda of Mukhtār for the Imāmate of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya until the death of Ibn al-Zubayr. Even if Zayn al-ʿAbidīn had made any plans to claim the Imāmate before the year 73 AH in which Ibn al-Zubayr was killed, this must have been done within the circle of his closest dependents. Of these, however, his Mawlā Shuʿayb attained some fame, being counted as a traditionist.¹ Furthermore, among the Alids whom Ibn al-Zubayr held in the prison of ʿArim, the name of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn is nowhere mentioned, which again indicates that till then he was absolutely quiet. At the same time, on the other hand, quietness does not mean complete absence of an idea, the expression of which often depends on the prevailing circumstances and opportunities.

Apart from these reports which may be considered of some historical value, a tissue of legends was woven around Zayn al-ʿAbidīn's person making it difficult to extract anything factual from this tangle. Even the commonly recorded report that he was the son of a daughter of Yazdigird,² the last King of the Sasanid dynasty, is highly doubtful. It is said that during

1. Kash., Rijāl, 85.

2. Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, V, 211. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 462. Qādī Nuʿmān, op.cit. fol. 27b. Shablanjī, Nūr al-İbsār, 169. Ibn Khallikān, II, 209. Ibn Kathīr, Bidāya, IX, 104. In fact all the biographers, both Sunnite and Shīʿite, who have mentioned anything about Zayn al-ʿAbidīn, have called special attention to this point that his mother was a Persian princess.

the Caliphate of 'Umar two daughters of Yazdigird fell prisoner along with others and in accordance with 'Ali's advice one of them was given in marriage to 'Abdullah b. 'Umar, the other to Husayn¹ and she bore him Zayn al-'Abidīn.² Zayn al-'Abidīn was born in AH 37/657 A.D.³ and so the Persian princess, if captured during the lifetime of 'Umar, would have remained childless for about twenty years as Husayn's wife. The story, therefore, seems to be an expression of wishful thinking on the part of the Persian Shī'ites, who wanted the Imām to be regarded as descendants not only of the Prophet but also of the Sasanids. They even gave Zayn al-'Abidīn the honorific name Ibn al-Khayratayn (the son of the two preferred ones), i.e., two preferred nations of peoples - the Quraysh among the Arabs and the Fars among the 'Ajam.⁴

Apart from sentimental reasons, there were also political calculations at the base of this tradition, for the alleged descendant of Zayn al-'Abidīn from Yazdigird made him and his progeny legal claimants of the rulership

1. In another version there were three sisters, one of whom became the wife of Husayn and bore Zayn al-'Abidīn, the second married Muhammad b. Abī Bakr and bore al-Qāsim who later on became a famous traditionist, and the third falling to the lot of 'Abdullah b. 'Umar gave birth to his son Sālim. See Ibn Khallikān, loc.cit. Ibn Kathīr, loc.cit. Mubarrad, op.cit. 461-462.
2. See Ibn Khallikān, loc.cit. Mubarrad, Kāmil, loc.cit. Majlisī, Bihār, X, 4 ff. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV 309. Mufīd, K. Irshād, 269.
3. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 221.
4. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 463. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, III, 209. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 310.

of 'Irān, in the eyes of the Persians. However, the mother of Zayn al-'Abidīn appears to have been a slave woman from Kābul.¹

There are many stories told by both the Sunnite and the Shī'ite authors² about his devotion in prayer, his generosity,³ his sorrow and copious tears on the death of his father and about his other extraordinary qualities. Nevertheless, his piety was great, and must have been sincere, for he was not addicted to making show of his virtues. When travelling with people who did not know him he remained incognito, so as not to take advantage from the fact that the Prophet

1. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 364. Other authorities say that she was a slave from Sind. The Shī'ites assert that the princess died at Zayn al-'Abidīn's birth, and he was cared for by a slave woman. As the people believed her to be his mother, he married her to Zuyayd, a Mawlā of Husayn, in order to disprove these tales. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 310. Mufīd states that she was captured by 'Abdullah b. 'Amir, when he conquered Khurāsān, during the reign of 'Uthmān. See K. al-Irshād, 269 ff.
2. For Sunnī writers see, Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 216, 218, 219 and 222. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 203; II, 261 ff., III, 120 ff. Ibn Kathīr, Bidāya, IX, 103-108. Shablanjī, Nūr al-Ibsār, 168 ff. For Shī'a writers See Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, K. al-Hujja, Majlisī, Bihār, XI. Mufīd, Irshād, 259 ff. 'Amilī, A'yān al-Shī'a, IV, 308-461.
3. There are many stories told about his generosity. It is said that he used to help the poor anonymously, carrying at night a sackful of victuals, and with his face covered, knocked at the doors of the needy. Only after his death, when the unknown benefactor ceased to reappear, did people understand who this friend had been. See Qādī Nu'mān, Sharh al-Akhbār, fol. 23. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 363. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 137. Shablanjī, loc.cit. and Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 222.

was his ancestor.¹ During prayers he was oblivious of everything else, and sometimes had fits of trembling.² Due to his excessive prayers he was known as Zayn al-'Abidīn (the ornament of the pious) an honorific name given to him by his fellow-traditionist and friend, al-Zuhrī.³

He was an eminent traditionist in the Medinese circle of learned men. Ties of friendship linked him with the greatest Medinese lawyer of his times, Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib who, for his part, respected the Imām with the highest esteem.⁴ Though it is true that Sa'īd had a regard for Zayn al-'Abidīn, there is no evidence to support the Shī'ite's assertion that he was a follower of Zayn al-'Abidīn. In fact, though friend he was, he did not become Zayn al-'Abidīn's follower nor did he hold common views in legal matters, being a strict adherent to the line derived from 'Umar and Zayd b. Thābit.⁵

At that time the schools of legal thought were still in their embryonic state, and there could not

1. Mubarrad, Kāmil, II, 482.
2. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 216.
3. Ibn Sa'd, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 363. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 135. Ibn Kathīr, op.cit. 106 and 109. He is reported to have had callosities on his forehead and knees, caused by his prolonged prostrations and they earned him the nickname of Dhu'l-Thafināt. See also, Qāḍī Nu'mān, Sharh al-Akhhār, MS. fol.22.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 76 and 78. Qāḍī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 31a.
5. Kash., Ibid., 82.

have been any serious differences of opinion between Sa'id and Zayn al-'Abidīn. Yet it is possible that Zayn al-'Abidīn as well as his uncle, Muhammad b. al-Hanafīya, were partial to the Traditions related on the authority of 'Ali b. Abi Tāhib.

Zayn al-'Abidīn died in the year AH 94/712-713 A.D., and was buried in the cemetery of al-Baqī'. He spent 23 years of his life under his father and 34 years as the Imām¹ himself.

1. Apart from other common sources quoted above, both Sunnite and Shī'ite, I have frequently used a precious manuscript in the possession of the School of Oriental and African Studies. It is Sharh al-Akhhbār fī faḍā'ili 'l-'A'immati'l-Athār, by the most brilliant jurist, theologian, and historian of the Fātimid dynasty, Abū Hanīfia al-Nu'mān b. Muhammad b. Mansūr b. Ahmad b. Hayyūn, d. 363/974. This work is of double interest; it is a work of Ismā'īlī origin, and a very early one, compiled about 350/961, from early sources of which many are possibly lost. It is of great interest to note that when I compared the reports given by Qādī Nu'mān in his Sharh al-Akhhbār with other Sunnī works (such as Wafayāt of Ibn Khallikān, Hilya of Abū Nu'aym, Tabaqāt of Ibn Sa'd, etc.) and Shī'ite works (such as al-Kāfī of Kulaynī, Irshād of Mufīd and Ihtijāj of Tabarsī, etc.) I found that almost all reports are the same, except sometimes with different Isnāds. It is also very interesting to note that the first and the most highly esteemed Ithnā 'Asharite traditionist, Muhammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī, who wrote al-Kāfī, died in 328 or 329, about twenty-three years before Qādī Nu'mān wrote his Sharh al-Akhhbār and there is no considerable difference in the traditions recorded by both the authors regarding the personal qualities and virtues of Zayn al-'Abidīn; though often Isnāds are different, and of course Kulaynī is more detailed than Qādī Nu'mān.

B.

MUHAMMAD AL-BAQIR

Zayn al-‘Abidīn by raising claims to the heritage of Husayn, and by collecting a number of adherents, had already blazed the trail, but he was only a forerunner of the legitimist Shī‘a, not its creator. His eldest son Muhammad al-Bāqir inherited his father's heritage and following and it was his task to evolve the basic principles of the legitimist faction. Some scholars¹ doubt whether he really achieved any degree of success in his lifetime, or even claimed the Imāmate. Indeed, there is a strong possibility that many traditions attributed to him might have been produced by some of his fanatical followers who survived him. Or even these might have been produced by later Shī‘ites. Yet, there being no decisive criterion for their admission or rejection, we must, as far as our own common sense and circumstances of the epoch allow, accept them in the form found in the earliest existing collection, the "Usūl al-Kāfī."² The testimony of the later Imāms of the same line, and their rejection of many traditions forged by the fanatical followers of the House, make the case in favour of some of these traditions a little stronger.

1. See W. Montgomery Watt, "Shī‘ism under the Umayyads," JRAS, 1960. pp.165-166. Donaldson, The Shī‘ite Religion, 41.
2. By Muhammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Kulaynī, died in AH 329/939 A.D.

According to the unanimous Shī'ite traditions before his death Zayn al-'Abidīn nominated Muhammad al-Bāqir, his eldest son, as his Wasī and successor to his heritage.¹ We may doubt the existence of any explicit will of Husayn for the nomination of Zayn al-'Abidīn as his successor, but we should accept the received tradition that Zayn al-'Abidīn before his death must have explicitly nominated his son al-Bāqir, at least in the circle of his adherents. In support of this assumption there are two obvious and natural reasons. First, during Zayn al-'Abidīn's time the majority of the Shī'ites abandoned the Husaynid line and went over to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya and then accepted the Imāmate of the latter's son Abū Hāshim. Zayn al-'Abidīn thought it usurpation of his rights and, not without much effort, succeeded in winning over a group of the followers on the principle of legitimate succession, through Fāṭima, in the line of Husayn.² It is then very natural that he would have entrusted his eldest son to continue the task on the same ground he had established for himself.

The second and more convincing fact is the conflict between the Husaynids and the Hasanids which came into the open during Zayn al-'Abidīn's last years on the question of the administration of the Sadaqāt from the estates left by the Prophet. Al-Hasan b. al-Hasan, known

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 300 ff. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 473 ff. Qāḍī Nu'mān, Sharh al-Akhbār fol. 32a. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 100 ff.

2. See part A of this chapter.

as al-Muthanna¹ was then in charge of the Ṣadaqāt. This office was contested by Zayn al-ʿAbidīn.² There is a possibility that the persecution meted out by al-Ḥajjāj to the followers of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn³ may have resulted from information given to him by al-Hasan al-Muthanna.⁴ There is no evidence that al-Hasan al-Muthanna had any designs on the Imāmate, but nevertheless he must have been jealous of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn as he considered his own elder lineage to be more entitled to the spiritual heritage of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. Thus keeping in view this tension between Zayn al-ʿAbidīn and his paternal cousins over the right of the administration of the Ṣadaqāt of the Prophet, it is but natural that he would have nominated his eldest son as his successor to the material and spiritual heritage of the House. After the death of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn, however, al-Bāqir resumed the family quarrel⁵ and when Hasan al-Muthanna died, instead of Zayd b. al-Hasan al-Muthanna, he succeeded in getting the management of the estate in his hands,⁶ though only temporarily.

Though Muhammad al-Bāqir inherited his father's following he had to face many more serious problems

1. He was at Karbalā with Husayn, but due to his tender age of four or five he was spared. Ḥāʾirī, Muntaha, 91-92.
2. Mufīd, Irshād, 274.
3. Kash, Rijāl, 82.
4. Ibn ʿUtbah, ʿUmdat al-Ṭālib, 77.
5. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 189.
6. Dhahabī, Taʾrīkh, IV, 113. Mufīd, Irshād, 285.

than his father. Zayn al-'Abidīn had only to counteract Kaysānite propaganda which he did on the ground that he was the descendant of the Prophet as well as of 'Ali.¹ With the Imāmate of al-Bāqir many descendants of Fāṭima took either motivated by ambition or discontent with the idea of the Imām being merely a spiritual guide, raised their own claims to the heritage of the Prophet. Thus the immediate problem facing al-Bāqir was not from outside but within the family circle from which his half-brother Zayd b. Zayn al-'Abidīn, whose energies appealed to many Shī'ites, was more threatening than others.² In these rivalries Bāqir and his followers were overshadowed by the party of Zayd, which led the former to put special emphasis on legitimacy within the Shī'ite movement.

Al-Bāqir thus resorted to the principle of nomination by an explicit "text" (Naṣṣ). He claimed that Zayn al-'Abidīn had appointed him to the succession in the presence of his brothers,³ and entrusted him with a

1. See Part A Supra.
2. Another serious rival was 'Abdullah b. Maḥdī, the son of al-Hasan al-Muthanna b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib, who found himself in opposition to al-Bāqir for he coveted the Imāmate for his son Muhammad better known as al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. His efforts to spread propaganda in the name of the youthful future al-Maḥdī had already met with certain success during the lifetime of al-Bāqir. The extremist al-Mughīra b. Sa'id, the former supporter of al-Bāqir, changed his allegiance and with the whole circle of his disciples joined 'Abdullah al-Maḥdī and al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 129 ff. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 52.
3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 302. Mufīd, Irshād, 280. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 473. Hurr al-'Amilī, Wasā'il, 109.

casket, which contained secret religious scrolls and the weapons of the Prophet.¹ After the death of Zayn al-ʿAbidīn, al-Bāqir's brothers demanded their share of the contents of the casket, but he refused, saying that it was given to him as his exclusive inheritance.²

Both al-Bāqir and later on his son Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq insisted upon the importance of these weapons, which were the same to the Muslims, they maintained, as the Tabūt (Ark of the Covenant) had been to the Israelites.³ Yet from contradictory reports at our disposal it is difficult to ascertain whether these weapons were in reality in the possession of al-Bāqir and Jaʿfar.⁴

There is a large number of traditions, recorded by the early Shīʿite traditionists, and attributed to al-Bāqir describing the nature and function of an Imām.

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 301. Mufīd, Irshād, 281. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 101. ʿAmili, Aʿyān, IV, 474.
2. Vide n. / above.
3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 282. ʿAmili, Aʿyān, IV, 474.
4. On the one hand, at the time of al-Hasan's death his sons were very young and all of them were no doubt under Husayn's guardianship and submitted themselves to his headship of the House. Then Husayn is reported to have used ʿAli's sword in the fighting at Karbalā. On the other hand, there are many traditions asserting that after Hasan's death the weapons of ʿAli passed to his descendants and later on Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, a grandson of Hasan, was seen fighting with ʿAli's sword in hand during his uprising in Medina and that this sword was broken when he fell mortally wounded. See Abuʿl-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 188. Tab., III, 247. Other versions stating that it came to the possession of the ʿAbbāsids are very doubtful indeed. See, Tab., Ibid.

Some of these must be considered as being of his genuine authorship at least on the ground that he introduced them in order to strengthen his claims against other pretenders of the family. Thus he said that Muhammad was endowed with the sum of knowledge available to all preceding prophets, and he had imported it to 'Ali, who in turn bequeathed it to his descendants.¹ Every Imām, before death, passes it on to his successor.² It includes both the external (Zāhir) and the esoteric (bāṭin) meanings of the Qur'ān.³ In fact no one except the Imām can claim to possess the whole of the Holy Book.⁴ The Imāms also know the greatest name of God.⁵ They are the Light of God, that like the sun in daytime illuminates the hearts (i.e. minds) of the Faithful.⁶ Only through the guidance of an Imām can man keep to the path of Truth.⁷ For this reason the knowledge of a true

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 136. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 475.
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 135. 'Amilī, loc.cit.
3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 139. 'Amilī, op.cit. 476.
4. Kulaynī, loc.cit.
5. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 140. The introduction of this sort of tradition from al-Bāqir himself or from his close circle shows the beginning of Gnostic influence on Shī'ism.
6. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 115, 116. The doctrine of Light too was first introduced to Shī'ism at the time of Bāqir, but was developed during the Imāmate of Ja'far by the semi-extremists and extremists of Kufa under the influence of Gnostic, mainly Manichaeian ideas.
7. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 141.

Imām "from among the people of the House", who serves as "the proof" (al-Ḥujja), is necessary, and no one can attain salvation without it.¹ No efforts will avail anyone without guidance from the true Imām of his time.² Complete obedience to the Imām is a religious duty (al-Ṭā'at al-Mafrūdah)³ imposed on the Faithful by the express command of the Qur'ān: "Obey God and obey the Prophet, and the rulers from among yourselves."⁴ The Imāms are vice-regents (Wulāt al-'Amr) of God upon the earth⁵ and His "miraculous signs" (Āyāt al-'Allāh)⁶ mentioned in the Qur'ān. This compulsory obedience was due first to 'Alī, and then in turn to al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Zayn al-'Abidīn and al-Bāqir.⁷

Perhaps the most important tradition of al-Bāqir in this connection is one in which he describes the nature and superhuman character of an Imām. In this he made a clear distinction between the offices of an Apostle of God (Rasūl), a prophet (Nabī) and an Imām

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 105-106. Mufīd, Irshād, 56-57.
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 107.
3. Kumayt, Hāshimiyyāt, 121. Mufīd, Amāli, 42.
4. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 124. Thus the term "Ulil'Amr Minkum" in Qur'ān IV, 59, is interpreted by the Shī'ites as the Imāms of the House of the Prophet, whereas it is held by the Sunnīs as any ruler who could impose rule and order.
5. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 124.
6. Kulaynī, loc.cit.
7. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 112. 'Āmilī, A'yān, IV, 475-476.

(Muhaddith).¹ An apostle, according to him, is a person who hears the voice of the angel and sees him either in a dream or when awake; a Nabī, he said, is a prophet who also hears the voice of the angel under the same conditions, but does not see him. Muhammad and some of his ancient predecessors were both apostles and prophets (Rasūl and Nabī). A Muhaddith does not see an angel either in dreams or awake, nor does he hear voices, but he is spoken to by God internally ('Ilqā). The Imāms are in fact Muhaddithūn,² speakers of God.

Thus, as held by the Shī'ites, Muhammad al-Bāqir tried to establish his position as the Imām declaring himself the representative of God on the earth and divinely inspired interpreter of His words.

Now the most vital question to be considered here in this connection is whether al-Bāqir could really achieve any success of religious consequence in his lifetime. A close scrutiny of the biographical literature from both Sunnite and Shī'ite sources will help us to reach a concrete answer. In this attempt, however, it is necessary to keep in mind that the biographical data of the followers of al-Bāqir which had been recorded in full detail by the Imāmite writers, was never

1. The term Muhaddith is used here in the meaning of Speaker, who speaks as inspired by God; and should not be confused with its common meaning as simply a traditionist.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 102, 103 and 166.

disputed by the Sunnī compilers of biographical dictionaries (Kutub al-Rijāl).¹ Instead, whenever Sunnī writers mention the names of the adherents of the legitimist Imāms, they immediately remark that he was a Rāfidī or Ghālī or Shī'ī. Then, we should also note the fact that the Imāmite writers themselves specifically mention that such and such a person changed his affiliation at such and such a time and went over to Zayd or al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, whatever the case might have been. Furthermore, the writers of the Zaydiyya sect² do not claim these sectarians of al-Bāqir's group as from among their own number. All these facts, however, support the view that the list of al-Bāqir's followers, which we are going to examine presently, as the legitimist faction, is not a mere fiction.

It is no doubt true that immediately after the death of Zayn al-'Abidīn a tussle for the leadership started between al-Bāqir and his half-brother Zayd, and that many active Shī'ites preferred the latter because of his bold attitude.³ But in course of time al-Bāqir succeeded in attracting quite a considerable number including some of those who had gone over to Zayd. The most important of them were: Zurāra b. A'yān, his brother Humrān and Hamza b. Muhammad b. 'Abdullah

1. Besides biographical dictionaries see also here-siographers like al-Bāghdādī, al-Faraq Bayn al-Firaq; Ibn Hazm, al-Fisāl; and al-Sharastānī, al-Milal.
2. See "Majma' al-Fiqh", collection of traditions attributed to Zayd b. Zayn al-'Abidīn, edited by A.K. Qādī, thesis, SOAS.
3. See infra.

al-Tayyār.¹ Zurāra in particular was a very important acquisition, for he became the most eminent theologian and traditionist of his time, with a wide circle of disciples in Kufa. His brother Humrān was formerly a disciple of Zayn al-‘Abidīn and later made himself known as an extremely devoted supporter of al-Bāqir,² who promised him paradise and declared that he would be "from our Shī‘a in this world and the next."³ Hamza Ibn al-Tayyār, although for a time opposed to al-Bāqir, after hesitating between various sects, finally chose to follow him.⁴

Apart from Zurāra other important acquisitions of al-Bāqir, who were later accepted by the Shī‘a as the Fuqahā of the sect were: Ma‘rūf b. Kharrabūdh,⁵ Abū Baṣīr al-Asadī,⁶ Burayd b. Mu‘āwiya,⁷ Muhammad b.

1. Kash., Rijāl, 117 f.
2. Al-Bāqir said that Humrān was always his supporter: "He never apostatized from us." Tūsī, K.al-Ghayba, 223. Hā‘irī, Muntaha, 120.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 117.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 137 and 223. Hā‘irī, Muntaha 257 and 279.
5. Kash., Rijāl, 155. Ma‘rūf, a Mawla of Quraysh, living in Mecca, had a reputation for being rather a weak traditionist and could not be compared with Zurāra. He seems to have been of moderate Shī‘ite attitude. See, Kash., Rijāl, 138-139. Hā‘irī, Muntahā, 304-305. Tafrīshī, 205, a-b.
6. Kash., Rijāl, 155.
7. Abū‘l-Qāsim, Burayd b. Mu‘āwiya al-‘Ijlī, an Arab by origin. al-Bāqir promised him paradise as he did to some others.

Muslim b. Riyāḥ al-Ṭa'ifī¹ and al-Fuḍayl b. Yasār.² The prominent figure among them was Muhammad b. Muslim b. Riyāḥ, a Kufite Mawla of the Thaqīf, a miller by trade, known also as al-Awqas (the one-eyed). Described as the "most trustful of all men" he was well-known as a great jurist in Kufan circles, and a contemporary fellow-lawyer of Ibn Abī Layla, Abū Ḥanīfa and Sharīk al-Qādī. He seems to have been a counterpart of Zurāra, for while the latter was a traditionist as well as a speculative theologian, and the originator of the Shī'ite School of Kalām, Muhammad b. Muslim combined knowledge of the science of Tradition with the work of a practical lawyer and was renowned for quick and drastic solutions. He was also a well-known ascetic.

Among these followers of al-Bāqir, Abū Baṣīr Layth al-Bakhtarī al-Murādī also attained fame and reputation as a great Shī'ite faqīh and traditionist. Abū Baṣīr, a Mawlā of Banū Asad, became the favourite companion of al-Bāqir and later of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Ja'far is reported to have said that Abū Baṣīr, Burayd, Zurāra and Muhammad b. Muslim were "the tent-pegs of the world", and that without them the prophetic traditions would have

1. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 243.
2. Abū'l-Qāsim al-Fuḍayl b. Yasār al-Nahdī, an Arab from Basra, was a favourite of Bāqir and later of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq who said of him, "al-Fuḍayl is from us, the people of the House", thus repeating the words of the Prophet about Salmān. See Kash., Rijāl, 139-140. Al-Fuḍayl died during the Imāmate of Ja'far, Hā'irī, Muntaha, 243. Najāshī, Rijāl, 219, calls him al-Faḍl. See also Tafrīshī, fol. 157 b.

been lost. They were the fastest runners and the closest associates of the Imāms.¹ Another striking figure was Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī, who occupied a high place among al-Bāqir's associates, and to him may be traced many suspect or downright spurious traditions, especially those relating to miracles.²

Al-Kumayt b. Zayd al-'Asadī,³ a renowned poet of his time, was another great and very important supporter of al-Bāqir. He served the cause of the Imām more than any other follower through his poetic genius. His devotion which found expression in his talented poetry took the name and fame of al-Bāqir far and wide. But his collection of poetry, devoted to the praise of the Ahl al-Bayt, the "al-Hāshimiyyāt", caused him some serious trouble. The anti-Alid Viceroy of Iraq, Yusuf b. 'Umar, brought this work to the notice of the Caliph, 'Abd al-Malik.⁴ Al-Kumayt, however, managed to extricate himself from danger, and in order to please the Caliph he even wrote some poems in praise of the Umayyads.⁵ Nevertheless, the poet remained a great favourite of the Husaynid Imāms and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq said of him: "Al-Kumayt has not ceased to be aided by the Holy Spirit."⁶

1. Kash., Rijāl, 113. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 249-250.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 132-133. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 73.

3. See Agh. XV, 113, 130. Jāhiz, Bayān, 1, 46.

4. Agh. XV, 113.

5. Kash., Rijāl, 136. Agh. XV, 117 f. and 120 ff.

6. Kash., Rijāl, 136.

Though the city of Basra was generally anti-Shī'ite, al-Bāqir succeeded in making several followers there too, such as Muhammad b. Marwān al-Baṣri¹ and Mālik b. A'yān.² In Mecca also, al-Bāqir earned quite a few staunch followers. The main figure among them was Maymūn b. al-Aswad al-Qaddāh al-Makkī, a Mawlā of the Banū Makhzūm.³

The most important point in studying the development of the legitimist Shī'a during al-Bāqir's period is the beginning and introduction of extremist ideas in its hitherto moderate tendency. Their origin can be found in Kufa where the bulk of al-Bāqir's followers resided, though the Imām himself lived always in Medina. There in Kufa,⁴ Jābir al-Ju'fī,⁵ a most striking personality among the adherents of al-Bāqir, was the chief representative of the Imām. We find that most of the extremist beliefs

1. A Kufite by birth but living in Basra. Died in AH 161 aged 83 years. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 293. According to al-Kashshī, he was a descendant of Abū Aswad al-Du'alī, see Rijāl, 140.
2. Hā'irī, loc.cit. Kash., Rijāl, 140 f.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 160. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 193-194. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akhbār, MS. fol.32 a and b relates some traditions of al-Bāqir on the authority of Maymūn al-Qaddāh.
4. B. Lewis gives a most appropriate description of Kufa when he says "A new and growing town, with a population composed of men of innumerable creeds and races, all turbulent and discontented, hating the government, the religion it represents, and the oppressing class which maintained it. It was an admirable breeding ground for syncretist." See Origins of Ismā'ilism, 26.
5. See Sam'ānī, Ansāb, fol. 113 b. Najāshī, Rijāl, 93-94; also see chapter V part B.

were evolved in Kufa, mainly under the leadership of this particular man,¹ and then they were attributed to al-Bāqir which he accepted tacitly, for they suited his interest in many ways. Two of them are easily discernible. First, by allowing his Kufan propagandist to circulate these extremist ideas al-Bāqir was able to attract many of the Kaysānites and the list of his later adherents shows that he succeeded in this to a considerable extent. The other and more compelling reason was to distinguish himself from his half-brother Zayd b. Zayn al-'Abidīn, who adopted a more moderate policy.

Though Zayd's popularity was very disturbing to al-Bāqir, yet he restricted himself to attacking only the friends and followers of Zayd. Nevertheless, when an opportunity presented itself, he did not hesitate to contest Zayd's rights quite sharply. Thus when Sa'id b. al-Manṣūr, one of the leaders of the Zaydite circle asked him: "What is your opinion about nabīdh, for I have seen Zayd drinking it?" al-Bāqir replied: "I do not believe that Zayd would drink it, but even if he did, he is neither a Prophet nor a Trustee of a Prophet, only an ordinary person from the Family of Muhammad, and he is sometimes right and sometimes may commit an error."² This was both an open denial of Zayd's rights to the Imāmate, and an indirect ascertain

1. A great number of the traditions bearing the stamp of extremism are related by Jābir al-Ju'fī. See chapter V, part B.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 151.

of his own position as the prophetic Wasi. Muhammad al-Bāqir was the son of Fāṭima bint al-Hasan,¹ and so, being the descendant of the Prophet and of 'Ali on both sides, he had a great advantage over Zayd, whose mother was a slave-woman from Sind,² but the former never showed any inclination to organize an active movement, and maintained the pacific policy of his father. On the other hand, Zayd, a disciple of Wāṣil b. 'Atā', the Mu'tazilite, was strongly impressed by the ideas of his teacher, and laid emphasis on the principle of "ordering good and prohibiting evil", if necessary, by force. Accordingly, he believed that if an Imām wanted to be recognized, he had to claim his right, sword in hand.³ Al-Bāqir and Zayd quarrelled over this point for when the latter asserted that an Imām must rise against the oppressors, the former remarked: "So you deny that your own father was Imām, for he never fought the issue."⁴ When Abū Bakr b. Muhammad al-Ḥaḍramī and his brother 'Alqama, two Kufan Shī'ites asked Zayd whether 'Ali was an Imām before he resorted to the sword, he refused to answer the question, which made them break their alliance with Zayd and they went

1. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 211, 320 and 325 f.

2. She had been given to Zayn al-'Abidīn by Mukhtār. See Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 92. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 211 and 325 f.

3. Nashwān al-Himyārī, Hurr al-'Ayn (Tafsīr) 186. Shāhrastānī, Milal, I, 154 f.

4. Shāhrastānī, loc.cit.

over to al-Bāqir.¹

A crucial question was that of the rights of Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Zayd agreeing with the Mu'tazilites, held that the first two Caliphs had been legally elected Imāms, though 'Ali was the preferable candidate, and this greatly impressed the traditionist circles. At the same time he rejected the Mu'tazilite doctrine of "the intermediate state", but did not object to the opinion of Wāṣil, that in the conflict of "'Ali and his adversaries" one of the opposing sides was certainly wrong, though Wāṣil was not sure which,² whereas Zayd regarded the virtues of 'Ali as of such a high order, that the idea of him not being in the right was inadmissible.

However, Zayd's special emphasis on accepting the Caliphates of Abū Bakr and 'Umar and his popularity on this ground among moderate circles shows, on the one hand, that the question of the Caliphate of the Shaykhān had already been under serious discussion at that time, and on the other hand, that Zayd's success by adopting this stand created an embarrassing and complicated situation for al-Bāqir. Zayn al-'Abidīn himself never spoke against the two first Caliphs, but during al-Bāqir's time the extremist views were becoming more and more popular among the legitimist section of the Shī'ites. Al-Bāqir was asked time and again what he

1. Kash., Rijāl, 261-262. Ibn Nashwan al-Himyārī, Hurr al-'Ayn, 185.

2. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 49.

thought of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, but he always stated - at least in public - that they were legal Imāms.¹ Yet certain Shī'ites of Kufa asserted that he disavowed the two Shaykhs and only concealed his real opinion by resorting to the principle of Dissimulation.² This propaganda no doubt earned him the sympathy of many extremist and semi-extremist circles, but on the other hand it discouraged those who wanted an active and more practicable movement to bring Ahl al-Bayt to power, and were already disappointed with al-Bāqir's quiescent policy. These moderates, so to speak, therefore preferred to range themselves on the side of Zayd³ who, in order to secure certain advantages, became more emphatic in his assertions of the two Shaykhs, at the same time rejecting the principle of Taqiyya. Al-Bāqir was infuriated by the attitude of these Kufan Shī'ites and said, "Even if the Butrites formed one battle-line from east to west, God would not grant glory to the world through them."⁴

Among these Kufan Shī'ites was al-Ḥakam b. 'Utayba al-Kindī, one of the most eminent lawyers of his city.⁵

1. Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya Wa'l-Nihāya, IX, 311. Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, IV, 300. Ibn al-Jawzī, Sifat al-Safwa, II, 61. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 185.
2. Traditions referring to the poet Kumayt quote Bāqir as very violently disavowing Abū Bakr and 'Umar. See Kash., Rijāl, 135. On the other hand Kumayt himself did not express himself openly against the first two Caliphs. See his verse in Hāshimiyyāt, 155.
3. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 52 ff. Kash., Rijāl, 154.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 152.
5. Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, IV, 242. Also see Ibn Hajar, Asqalānī, Tahdhīb, II, 434 ff.

He put 'Ali b. Abī Tālib above Abū Bakr, but nevertheless remained mild in his Shī'ite partisanship, which made him highly popular among the followers of Zayd. As the judge of Kufa, he exercised a strong influence upon his fellow-citizens thus greatly helping the cause of Zayd.¹ Naturally, al-Bāqir, who considered that he possessed better rights to the Imāmate than his younger half-brother, and also objecting to the generally compromising attitude of Zayd and his partisans spoke of them in a bitter way, giving expression to his anger thus:² "Ḥakam b. 'Utayba and other associates of Zayd led astray many people. They say, 'We believe in God and the Last Day,' but they are not believers." The successor of al-Bāqir, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, upheld the same view and accused Ḥakam of blaspheming against al-Bāqir,³ and even called the Zaydites al-Nuṣṣāb (i.e., dissenters) who hated 'Ali.⁴

The problem of the Shaykhān at this stage draws our attention to another problem - that of religious practice. Al-Bāqir adhered to the Traditions derived from 'Ali and his supporters, or at least attributed to them. There were, however, certain disagreements even between the Ahl al-Bayt, for Zayd was inclined to accept the practice of the Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth of Kufa, mainly based on the

1. Ibn 'Imād, Shadharāt, I, 151.
2. Al-Bāqir ultimately succeeded in converting three of Ḥakam b. 'Utayba's most important disciples to his side, as I have mentioned above: Zurāra, Ḥumrān and Ḥamza.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 137. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 263.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 149.

rulings of 'Umar. Thus it was al-Bāqir who established the beginnings of the Madhhab Ahl al-Bayt. Al-Kashshī records for us a very important tradition which says: "Before the Imāmate of Muhammad al-Bāqir the Shī'ites did not know what was lawful and what was unlawful, except what they learned from the (other) people. Until Abū Ja'far (i.e. al-Bāqir) became the Imām, and he taught them and explained to them the knowledge (of law), and they began to teach other people, from whom they were previously learning."¹

This tradition clearly indicates that until the time of Bāqir the Shī'ites followed the same principles as the Aṣḥab al-Ḥadīth of Medina, Kufa and elsewhere. Even later the differences in the sphere of the Furū' were in reality few.² Al-Bāqir absolutely forbade all intoxicants, including nabīdh,³ allowed by the Kufan jurists. This measure was aimed to strike at Zayd and his party. Another problem was that of Mut'a (temporary marriage), the prohibition of which the Kufan and most of the Medinese lawyers put in the mouth of 'Umar. For this very reason, in order to deny the authority of the

1. Kash., Rijāl, 267. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. fol 33a, records the same tradition with a slight difference. Ibn Nadīm says on the authority of Abū'l-Jārūd, that the Imām has written a commentary on the Qur'ān, known as "Kitāb al-Bāqir", see Fihrist, 33.
2. Schocht, The Origins, 262 ff.
3. Kulaynī, Furū' al-Kāfī, I¹, 193. Also see Dhahabī, Tadhkirat al-Huffāz, I, 160. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 36a.

second Caliph, al-Bāqir permitted Mut'a.¹

However, the above mentioned accounts, seem to make it highly probable that Muhammad al-Bāqir did claim the Imāmate as the inheritance of his father, and that the small nucleus established by Zayn al-'Abidīn began to develop under al-Bāqir, into a legitimist faction within the Shī'ite movement. If we reject this then we will have to reject many established historical facts - foremost among them is the rivalry and even quarrel between him and Zayd. Nevertheless, the dates of the deaths of the chief associates of al-Bāqir indicate that these developments in his favour took place towards the end of his life, for most of the renowned traditionists and jurists of his circle survived him at least for a decade.

At the time of al-Bāqir's death, the legitimist faction though still limited in number, was to be found in all the main centres of Hijāz and Iraq. It possessed the elements necessary for its future growth into a strong and popular movement. It possessed a theoretical foundation, still only partly formulated and uncertain, and although it was not completely separated from the current ideas permeating the Madh hab Ashāb al-Hadīth, it was nevertheless sufficiently individualised to be regarded as a doctrine in its own right. It had in Zurāra and his disciples its own school of speculative

1. Schacht, Origins, 266 ff. Mālik b. Anas, al-Muwatta, III, 23. Murtada b. Dāī, Tadhkirat al-'Awām, 270-271.

theology, and an embryo for a school of jurisprudence. Finally, it had a "department of propaganda and literature" represented by the poet al-Kumayt.

The majority of this "legitimist" faction of the Shī'ites still consisted of the Arabs residing in Kufa and mostly of Yamanite extraction,¹ though the number of the Persian Mawālī, with a few of Greek origin, was increasing rapidly. The increase of Mawālī resulted in the sectarian doctrine becoming influenced by extraneous ideas. But these influences, especially Manichaen, did not become intelligible enough till the following epoch.

It is not certain when al-Bāqir died. The earliest date is given as AH 113/731-732 A.D.², the latest as 126/743-744 A.D.³ The most acceptable, however, seems to be AH 117/735 A.D., as given by Ya'qūbī.⁴ There can be no doubt that he was no longer alive when Zayd revolted in Kufa, but he could not have been dead for many years then, as Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's position was still not well established.

Sharastānī tells us that some of al-Bāqir's followers refused to believe that he died and expected his

1. For the details of the tribes of Shī'ite allegiance at this stage see Mui'zz al-Dīn Qazwīnī, Ansāb al-Qabā'il al-ʿIrāqiya, pp.2-20. 'Umar Rida Kahhālāh, Mu'jam Qabā'il al-Arab, I, 133 to 173 and II, 757.
2. See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 324. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, II, 579. Abī'l-Mahāsīn, Nujūm, I, 273 f. says he died in AH 114.
3. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 232.
4. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 387. also Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, IV, 300.

Raj'a.¹ If this report has any truth in it, it is a further proof that al-Bāqir in his lifetime was recognised by a group of people as their Imām. Nawbakhtī classifies his followers as al-Baqiriyya² which was replaced after his death by al-Ja'fariyya,³ derived from his son and successor. These names given by heresiographers, however, should not be taken seriously as they are very often used to mention the followers of certain persons and not as a sect.

Much has been recorded about his person and extraordinary qualities, a feature common with all Shī'ite Imāms in particular. These reports though seems to be legendary, nevertheless serve some historical purpose in that they show current views and the tendencies of the epoch.

What we can, to some extent, accept from the tangle of legends woven around him is this. It seems he inherited many of his father's qualities: he was extremely generous, devoted to acts of piety and peaceful by nature, never thinking to organize a revolt to assert his rights.⁴

1. Milal, 1, 166.

2. Firaq, 25.

3. This name should not be confused with the Maḍḥhab al-Ja'farī, given very often to the present Twelve Shī'a.

4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 321. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 299 ff. Qāḍī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akhbār, MS. SOAS. fol. 32a ff. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 262 ff. Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt, II, 579. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 100 ff. Ibn al-Sabāgh, al-Fuṣūl al-Muḥimma, 192 ff. Muhammad b. Talḥa, Maṭālib al-Su'ūl, 51 ff. Shablanjī, Nur al-Ibsār, 160 ff.

Instead, he strove to impress people by his extensive knowledge in matters of religion, and in fact he came to be considered as one of the most erudite men of his time. Because of this learning according to al-Ya'qūbī he was nicknamed al-Bāqir,¹ "the one who splits knowledge open", that is, he scrutinised it, and examined the depths of it.² But according to Ibn Khallikān, he received the appellation - al-Bāqir - the Ample, because he collected an ample fund (Tabaqqar) of knowledge.³

He was visited by many jurists, who attracted by the fame of his learning, came to discuss legal problems. Among them were Muhammad b. Minkadir, Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān, Qatāda b. Di'āma, 'Abdullah b. Mu'ammār al-Laythī and the Khārijite Nāfi' b Azraq.⁴

Al-Bāqir, however, lived as an Imām for about nineteen years and left his heritage to his son and successor Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.

1. Al-Bāqir is derived from the verb Baqara, to split asunder.
2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, II, 384. Bayhaqī, K.al-Maḥāsin wa'l-Masāwī, III, 298 ff. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 33a.
3. Ibn Khallikān, loc.cit.
4. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. 33a, 'Amilī, op.cit. 490 ff. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 100 ff. Kulaynī, loc.cit. Shahlanjī, loc.cit.

The Era of the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.

A. THE BIRTH, PARENTAGE AND PERSON OF JA'FAR.

'Abū 'Abdallāh Ja'far, the eldest son of Muhammad al-Bāqir, was born in Medina either in AH 80/699-700¹ or 83/702-703.² It is difficult to choose between these two dates as our sources are divided. The year AH 80, however, seems to be more correct as Ibn Khallikān and other writers mention his birth in the 'Amm al-Juhāf, the year of the flood in Mecca, which according to al-Ṭabarī and others occurred in AH 80.³

From his father's side Ja'far, of course, was a Husaynid descendant of the Prophet. Besides, like his father, he had a double claim to 'Alī, as Muhammad al-Bāqir was an Alid from both his father's and mother's sides.⁴

From his mother's side Ja'far was the great-great-grandson of Abū Bakr,⁵ and thus he was the first among

1. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 115. Ibn Khallikān, I, 300. Ibn al-Jawzī, Safwa, II, 93. 'Amīlī, A'yān, IV, 54. Muhammad b. Ṭaḥlha, Maṭālib al-Su'ul, 89.
2. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 112. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 79. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 193. Majlisī, Tadhkirat al-A'imma, 139 and Bihār, II, 79.
3. Ṭab., II, 1040.
4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 320. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 60. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. fol 32a. Ibn al-Sabāgh, Fusūl, 192.
5. Ibn Khallikān, I, 300. Qādī Nu'mān, loc.cit. 'Amīlī, A'yān, IV, 542.

the Ahl al-Bayt who combined in his person the descent of Abū Bakr as well as of 'Ali. His mother Umm Farwa¹ was the daughter of al-Qāsim b. Muhammad b. Abū Bakr.² As Qāsim married the daughter of his uncle 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abū Bakr, Umm Farwa happened to be the great-granddaughter of Abū Bakr from both the father's and mother's sides. It was because of this fact that Ja'far is often reported to have said that he was "a double descendant of Abū Bakr."³

Ja'far was brought up for his first fourteen years under the guardianship of his grandfather Zayn al-'Abidīn. He observed his acts of charity, his love for long series of prostrations and prayers, and his withdrawal from

1. Her Kunya was 'Umm Qāsim and her real name is given as either Qarība or Fāṭima, see: 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 452.
2. Tab., III, 2509. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 115. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 79. Ibn Khāllikān, I, 300. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 194, 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 452.
3. Diyā' Bikrī, Ta'rīkh al-Khamīs, II, 287. Abi'l-Mahāsīn, al-Nujūm al-Zāhira, II, 8. Shablanjī, Nūr al-Ibsār, 145. Muhammad al-Sabbān, Is'āf al-Raghībīn, 227. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 542. It is to be noted that the first and most important of all Shi'a traditionists, al-Kulaynī and those who followed him among the Shi'a traditionists like Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, al-Mufīd and Kashshī do not mention it, nor does the Ismā'īlī writer Qādī Nu'mān in his Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS., or in the Da'ā'im. Moreover, the fact that the historians of Shi'a leanings like al-Ya'qūbī and Mas'ūdī and non-Shi'ites like Tabarī also do not make any mention of this saying of Ja'far, makes us doubt the authenticity of this report. Nevertheless, it is very useful to see how pious Sunnism tried to cement the relationship between the Imāms of the House of the Prophet and the tenets of the Jamā'a.

politics.¹ At the same time Ja'far noticed his grandfather's claims to the Imāmate and his efforts, though meagre and limited, in collecting round him some devoted followers, against the popular appeal of the Imāmate of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiya and then his son Abū Hāshim.² He also saw the respect with which Zayn al-'Abidīn was held by the famous lawyers and scholars of Medina and elsewhere.³ In his mother's house young Ja'far saw his maternal grandfather, Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr, accounted by the people of Medina as one of the most erudite and esteemed traditionists of his time.⁴

Outside the family the childhood of Ja'far coincided with a rapidly growing interest in Medina in the acquiring of knowledge of prophetic traditions and of seeking explanations of the Qur'ānic verses. His boyhood also witnessed the culmination of Umayyad power, the final establishment of their administrative imperium, a period of peace and plenty, but hardly of religious fervour. It seems probable that an environmental background of this kind in the life of a boy of fourteen may have

1. See Chapter III, A.

2. Ibid.

3. See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, Ibn 'Imād, Shadharāt, I, 104. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 46. Kash., Rijāl, 76-78 f. and Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akhbār, MS. fol. 25 b and 35 a. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 135.

4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 189 ff. Tab., II, 1183. Ibn 'Imād, Shadharāt, I, 62. Shaybānī, Taysīr al-Wusūl, IV, 23.

influenced his thinking and personality giving his future work a certain direction.

With the death of Zayn al-‘Abidīn Ja‘far entered his early manhood and spent about twenty-three years under his father Muhammad al-Bāqir. In all these years not only did Ja‘far see his father's efforts to establish himself as the Imām of the House of the Prophet, but as the eldest son he participated in these activities. Thus he noticed the resentful attitude of his father towards the claims of Zayd b. ‘Ali and the Hasanid claimants to the leadership. When al-Bāqir died, however, Ja‘far was thirty-seven or thirty-four years old and was destined to live for a period of at least¹ twenty-eight years as the head of the Husaynid faction of the Shī‘ites - a period longer than any other Imām of the House could attain.²

Much has been recorded about the person of Ja‘far but it is all so much mixed up with legendary accounts that it is really very difficult to separate facts from legend. The sources, whether Imāmīte or Ismā‘īlite, are very late and belonged to the period when Ja‘far was looked back on by these sectarians in some sense, as the fountain-head and the main source of their religious dogma and practice, and thus, they tried to attach every possible virtue and extraordinary quality to his person. Even pious Sunnī writings could not escape the

1. If we take his date of birth as AH 83. Otherwise, taking AH 80, the period of his Imāmate would be thirty one years.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 193.

influence¹ of this mythical image of the persons of the Imāms, especially in the case of Ja'far when he was accepted as a Qutb in mystic schools. The best we can do in this situation is to make a general picture of his personality based on the popular belief regarding his character as presented by the earliest extant sources.

We are told that he inherited many of the characteristic which distinguished his father and forefathers.² In his house he used to sweep the courtyards and the rooms himself. He entertained generously not only the guests but the needy visitors as well.³ He upheld the family tradition of charity,⁴ and following the example set by Zayn al-'Abidīn, went round knocking at the doors of the poor of Medina at night with a leather bag full of food.⁵

1. As for example Abū Nu'aym's Hilyat al-Awliya, Farīd al-Dīn Aṭṭār's Tadhkirat al-Awliya or Abi'l-Mahāsīn's al-Nujūm al-Zāhira. Even the titles given to these works speak for themselves.
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 194-199. Abū Nu'aym, III, 194. Apart from Kulaynī Kāfī, K.al-Hujja, also see the venerated way in which the personalities of 'Alī Hasan, Husayn, Zayn al-'Abidīn and Muhammad al-Bāqir are presented by Ya'qūbī, Mas'ūdī and even Ibn Sa'd. The same tendency manifests itself, to a great extent, in late Sunnī collections of Ḥadīth, e.g. Tirmidhī, Sahīh, II, 308 ff. See Wensinck, Handbook of Early Muhammadan Traditions under the headings "Alī, Hasan and Husayn".
3. Kulyanī, Kāfī, 198. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 195. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. fol. 39b. Ibn al-Jawzī, Safwa, II, 98. Mufīd Amālī, 204. Shaykh Ṣadūq, Khisāl, 89.
4. See many traditions recorded by Kashshī, Rijāl, 121 ff., and Kulaynī, Kāfī, 199 ff. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 557 ff.
5. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 195. Abū Nu'aym, Hilya, III, 196. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 146. Shablanjī, Nūr al-Ibṣār, 147.

He showed kindness and delicacy of feeling even towards men of very low standards. Once an Aramaean peasant from the Sawād, who had been coming over a period of time to pay the Imām daily visits, failed to arrive, and Ja'far, noticing it, enquired about him. Someone remarked: "It is a fellow we can well dispense with, a Nabātī." Ja'far answered: "The nobility of a man is in his mind, and his dignity is in his religion, in his generosity and his fear of God, for all men are equal in their descent from Adam."¹

Despite the commonly recorded and universally accepted reports of his extreme piety and self-denial, Ja'far used to wear costly and decorative clothes. He prayed in them and circumambulated the Ka'ba exquisitely attired and perfumed,² thus bringing on himself the disapproval of some ascetically minded devotees, such as 'Ibād b. Ṣuhayb and Sufyān al-Thawrī. When Sufyān reproached Ja'far, saying that 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib used to wear a shirt bought for four dirhams, he replied: "Certainly 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib dressed himself like that, but if he did the same today, he would appear strange. The best clothes in every epoch are those which the contemporary people wear."³

Ja'far is usually given the honorific name of al-Ṣādiq, the truthful, allegedly on account of his truthfulness

1. Muhammad b. Ṭalḥa, Matālib al-Su'ūl, 82. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 591.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 248. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 547.

3. Kash., Rijāl, 248-249. 'Amilī, loc.cit.

in relating traditions.¹ Yet some of his contemporaries thought Ja'far to be "weak in traditions" (da'if al-Ḥadīth). Perhaps this was after he associated himself with the extremists² of Kufa. It seems likely, therefore, that to contradict these doubts he was nicknamed al-Ṣādiq, though it is difficult to ascertain when for the first time this title was used for him. We find a report, though from a late source, which attributes to the Caliph al-Mansūr the initiation of the idea of Ja'far's being al-Ṣādiq. The circumstance in which it has been described appears to be worth considering. Mansūr was trying to justify the legal rights of the 'Abbāsids to the Caliphate which was being severely disputed by the 'Alid claimant Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya and his supporters. At that critical moment Ja'far not only kept himself away from the political struggle but also discouraged his followers from taking part in those activities. When Mansūr sent for him to come to Kufa, Ja'far expressed his complete neutrality in the activities of his cousins and his hatred of involving himself in any sort of political adventure, whereupon Mansūr praised him as the most Trustworthy and Truthful of his time.³ This explanation becomes more

1. The references to this effect are numerous, both in Histories and the books of Traditions and Rijāl, the earliest ones are: Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 115. Ṭab., III, 2509 (who says Ja'far was truthful but does not mention him with the title al-Ṣādiq). Kash., Rijāl, 279-280. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. fol. 42a. Dimyarī, Hayāt al-Hayawān, II, 103. Ibn Khallikān, I, 300. Shablonjī, Nūr al-Ibsār, 145. Ibn al-Imād, Shadharāt, I, 220.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 208-209.

3. Abu'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 177-178 and 236 f.

appealing when one sees that Ja'far had been against al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's claims and at times supported Mansūr's Caliphate.¹ He was anxious to assure the 'Abbāsids of his loyalty and often tried to impress upon his listeners that he did not like to displease "these cousins of his",² (i.e. the 'Abbāsids). Mansūr is also reported to have mentioned Ja'far after his death as the noblest of all the 'Alids.³

However, apart from al-Ṣādiq he was also known as al-'Alim and al-Shaykh, but the more usual way of addressing him or speaking about him was by using his Kunya Abū Abdallah or occasionally Abū Ishāq.⁴ Another way of addressing him was 'Yabna Rasūl Allah', O son of the Prophet. We often find in our early sources⁵ that this form of address was frequently used for the Imāms of the Husaynid line.

Ja'far is also reported to have had a weakness of making mistakes in speaking Arabic. When Juwayriyya b. Asmā' criticised him for making these mistakes Ja'far was greatly pained and retaliated by calling Juwayriyya

1. At least he remained silent when others issued legal decisions (Fatwās) in support of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 261.
3. Tab., III, 213.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 279-280. Tab., III, 2510.
5. For example see Tabarī under the years 41 for Hasan and 60 and 61 for Husayn, which is reported often by Abū Mikhnaf and sometimes by al-Madā'inī and Wāqidī.

a Zindīq.¹ Nevertheless Ja'far's fame for religious learning was great, greater than that of his father or any other Imām of the Imāmites. Perhaps the earliest historical reference in presenting Ja'far as one of the most respected and highly esteemed personalities of his epoch, and as having profound knowledge and learning, is al-Ya'qūbī who says it was customary for scholars who related anything from him to say "the Learned One informed us".² Even the famous jurist of Medina, the Imām Mālik b. Anas is reported to have said, when quoting Ja'far's traditions: "The Thiqā Ja'far b. Muhammad himself told me that";³ Similar compliments for Ja'far are attributed to the Imām Abū Ḥanifa.⁴ The Shī'ite sources even mention Abū Ḥanifa as the pupil of Ja'far which is certainly not true. In any case we do not find in the Kitāb al-Kharāj of Abū Yūsuf more than two traditions from the authority of Ja'far.⁵ It is, however, not intended at this place to discuss Ja'far as a traditionist, but the aim is to make a possible assessment of his personality. In this connection, however, Shahrastānī's remark whether influenced by pious Muslim thinking or based on some original sources at his disposal, would be helpful.

1. Kash., Rijāl, 252. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 83.

2. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 115.

3. Qādī Nu'mān, Sharḥ al-Akḥbār, MS. fol.42a.

4. Ibid., fol. 39a.

5. See 'Ijāz Husain, "An Index of the Traditions quoted in K. al-Kharāj of Abū Yūsuf", SOAS, Thesis 1932, p.108.

He says: "His knowledge was great in religion and culture, he was fully informed in philosophy, he attained great piety in the world and he abstained entirely from lusts. He lived in Medina long enough to greatly profit the sect that followed him, and to give his friends the advantage of the Hidden sciences. On his father's side he was connected with the 'tree of prophecy', and on his mother's side with Abū Bakr."¹

Whether we accept Shahrastānī's assessment of Ja'far or not, one might consider the fact that quite frequently Kufan as well as Medinese jurists, such as Muhammad b. 'Abd. al-Rahmān b. Abī Layla, Muhammad b. Shubruma, Sufyān b. 'Uyayna, Ibn Jurayj and Rūh b. al-Qāsim² came to him asking for his views on various legal matters or for his interpretation of Qur'ānic verses.³ Some, as al-Ja'd b. Dirham, the Qadarite,⁴ and the dualist Abū Shākir al-Daysānī,⁵ a member of the Gnostic sect of Bardesaniens, visited him in order to hold disputations. Then, there is a body of Mutakallimūn or speculative theologians, in whom al-Ash'arī⁶ takes much interest and

1. Shahrastānī, Milal, I, 166.

2. Also even ascetics like Abū Yazīd al-Bistāmī, Ibrāhīm b. Adham and Mālik b. Dīnār are mentioned as his disciples. See Qushayrī, Risālat al-Qushayriyya, 136 ff. Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, Tadhkira, I, 167, ff. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 113.

3. Qādī Nu'mān, op.cit. fol. 39a.

4. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 570.

5. Ibid. 569. Tabarsī, Ihtijāj, 171.

6. Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn.

devotes a number of pages, who are often seen round Ja'far referring to him their problems. Besides, in mystic accounts we find that Ja'far's discourses with his contemporaries on points of asceticism and mystical behaviour are given much prominence. For example, Qushayrī gives a full account of Ja'far's discussions with Shaqīq al-Balḡhī (died AH 194) who is presented as a pupil before his master.¹ Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār, who never tires of referring to Ja'far's name, quotes, for example, Dāwūd al-Ṭāī' (died AH 165) who comes to Ja'far asking his opinion about certain matters.

Ja'far said to Dāwūd: "You yourself are the most pious and ascetic person of this age, why have you come to ask me for my opinion?" Dāwūd replied: "O son of the Prophet, you are best among the creatures of God on earth, and it is our duty to ask your opinions."² Indeed this sort of information has little historical value and betrays a pious tendency of late century Islam. Nevertheless all these reports, some of them of early origin, apart from many exaggerated details, would show that Ja'far did attract a great many people and did hold a considerably distinguished place in different circles of his time - for some as the Imām and inheritor (Wārith) of the knowledge particularly in the House of the Prophet, for others as a devoted scholar and well versed in matters of religious learning.

Whereas too much has been recorded about his virtues

1. Qushayrī, Risāla, 136 ff.

2. 'Aṭṭār, Tadhkirat al-Awliya, I, 167 ff.

and extraordinary personality, little is reported about his domestic life and personal appearance. We are told that his complexion was very fair, his nose was somewhat bent, and his hair was black.¹ He had ten children, seven sons and three daughters. Only three of them, Ismā'īl, Abdullah and Umm Farwa were from his first wife Fāṭima bint al-Husayn b. 'Alī b. Husayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib; Mūsā, Ishāq and Muhammad from a concubine called Hamīda; 'Abbās, 'Alī 'Asma and Fāṭima from different wives.²

Ja'far died in AH 48/765 A.D., supposedly of poisoning instigated by al-Manṣūr, but this allegation is absolutely incredible and the cause of his death must have been natural. The story of his being poisoned was obviously invented by the later Shī'ites to suit their belief that each Imām should die as a martyr. He was buried in the cemetery of al-Baqī' in the grave of his father and grandfather.³

1. Majlisī, Tadhkirat al-'A'imma, 139.
2. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 547. Shahrastānī, Milal, I, 165.
3. See Tab., III, 2510. Mufīd, Irshād, 303. 'Amilī, A'yān, IV, 544-545.

B. THE GENERAL RELIGIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE IMAMATE OF JA'FAR.

The Imāmate of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq saw the most crucial period of Islamic history, both in political and doctrinal spheres. It coincided with many epoch-making events, violent movements, the natural results of various undercurrent activities and revolutionary attempts, and above all the compromising attitude between 'the Ahl al-Hadīth'¹ and the Murjites in their efforts to

1. As we shall have to use this term frequently in this chapter it would be helpful to explain briefly its meaning and importance in the first century of the Islamic era. At first we hear of a term Qurra' (Readers) which was in common use until the beginning of the ninth decade after the Hijra and was applicable to the Readers of the Qur'ān, collectors of the Traditions and all those who applied them in a practical way by judging legal cases. Thus the divines of Basra and Kufa who revolted against al-Hajjāj were all described as Qurra'. Then roundabout this time the term Qurra' was replaced by the term Ahl al-Hadīth. This included both the collectors of the traditions and the practical lawyers. Gradually, however, the function of traditionist (Muhaddith) became separated from that of practical lawyers, perhaps after the rise of the 'Iraqī School of Ra'y. (See Ibn Qutayba, Ma'ārif, 171-179.) Although at first the Medinese attributed the name Ahl al-Hadīth to themselves, the cognate term Ashāb al-Hadīth was also used to describe all those who studied the Prophet's traditions, whether Medinese or not. (See Shahrastānī, I, 206) Abu'l 'Ala al-Ma'arrī says that both the terms were interchangeable. (See Risālat al-Ghufrān, 386). They, however, claimed to be the spokesmen of the community and the interpreter of the word of God and the custom of the Prophet; and despite the differences between the various Ahl al-Hadīth, they were looked upon, in a general way, as the backbone of the community.

Cont..

standardise a main body of the doctrines for the synthesis of the Jamā'a or Muslim community. The very existence of this many-sided and complex situation eased the rise of Ja'far's Imāmate to a prominence so far denied to his father and grandfather. Thus the fundamental point to be investigated is how the Imāmate of Ja'far attained so great a prominence, which the testimony from every source, Shī'ite as well as Sunnite, asserts, after having been reduced to an insignificant following by the abandonment of the line of the quiescent Imāms by the majority of the Shī'ites who had been persuaded to join the extremist and revolutionary factions. The answer to this question, however, cannot be found without examining a series of events and their ultimate results - the results which appeared in the success of the 'Abbāsīd house and the subsequent repudiation and frustration of the Shī'ites.¹

Con. Thus, Madhhab Ashāb al-Hadīth, especially when they adopted the doctrine of postponement (Irja) became a standard form of Islam and continued for a very long time, See Subkī, Tabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya, II, 259, who says: اتفق أصحاب الحديث أن أبا الحسن علي بن اسماعيل الأشعري كان أماً من أئمة أصحاب الحديث ومذهبه مذهب أصحاب الحديث. also see, Ibn 'Asākir, Tabyin Kidhb al-Muftarī, 254. اهل الحديث and 340 اهل العلم والحديث سمعت الشافعي يقول: اذا رايت رجلاً من أصحاب الحديث فكانني رايت يقول رجلاً من أصحاب النبي. and Tiblis Iblīs, II, 340. Also see Schacht, El (2) art. 'Ahl al-Hadīth', who deals mainly with their legal aspect.

1. S. Moscati (Per Una Storia Della Antica Si'a, RSO, 1955, p.251.) observes that after their success the 'Abbāsīds joined hands with the rest of the Muslims and pushed the Shī'ites, on whose strength they rose to power, into the role of an opposition.

It is not possible, however, nor would it be desirable, to go into details of all those events of far-reaching consequences which took place before and during the Imāmate of Ja'far and, as we have tentatively assumed, made it 'crucial'. Nevertheless, a broad outline and brief survey is necessary.

When the Umayyad's autocratic rule and their libertine way of life frustrated the expectations of the Muslims, especially after the massacre at Karbalā, many Muslims conceived the idea of a leader guided by God. This leader they called al-Mahdī.¹ Though its use became the chief characteristic of the Shī'ites, it had a great appeal among non-Shī'ites as well.

The first to be proclaimed as al-Mahdi was 'Ali's third son Muhammad² from a Hanafite woman. The massacre of al-Husayn,³ the only surviving grandson of the Prophet, at Karbalā, the destruction of the Ka'ba, the siege of Medina and the misfortunes inflicted on the pro-'Alid Kufans were sufficient grounds to light the fire for a

1. It is outside the scope of this study to account for the origin of the idea of Mahdī in Islam, the knowledge of which was undoubtedly supplied by some of the newly converted Jews and Christians. Foremost among them were 'Abdullah b. Salām, a Jew from B. Qaynuqa; Abū 'Abdillāh Wāḥb b. Munabbih al-Yamanī, a man of very mixed Himyarite, Persian and Jewish antecedents; Ka'b al-Aḥbār, a Yamanite Jew; Ibn Juraij, a Greek by origin, well versed in Christian lore and Tamīm al-Dārī, an Arab Christian clerical.
2. B. Lewis, Origins of Ismā'ilism, 25.
3. Husayn was also called "al-Mahdī, son of al-Mahdī", but this as yet had no Messianic implications. See Tab., II, 546.

Mahdī uprising, though the revenge of 'the blood of the Son of the Prophet' was made the main cry.¹ Husayn's surviving son Zayn al-'Abidīn, afraid to stake his life for political adventures caused the restless Kufite sympathisers of the House to find any other member of the 'Alid descent for a moral support. Thus, in the beginning it was perhaps not the personality of Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafīyya which impressed the Kufites but the basic need of a figure head in whose name the movement could be launched.² Mukhtār understood the situation only too well and made full use of it. He gathered the Kufan Shī'ites in his house and declared: "Al-Mahdī Muhammad b. 'Alī, the son of the Wasi, sent me to you as his trusted man, minister and chosen supporter, and as his commander. He ordered me to fight against the Blasphemers and claim vengeance for the blood of the people of his House, the excellent ones."³

Mukhtār's propaganda of Ibn al-Hanafīyya's Mahdism gained the unqualified support of the most fanatical and extremist groups of the Shī'ites, composed mainly of South

1. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 218. and also see Tab., II, 606-607 and 633.
2. Even Muhammad Ibn Hanafīyya had always been reluctant to claim the role of Mahdī for himself. See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 94.
3. Note the emphasis not on Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafīyya, but on 'al-Mahdī,' and 'the son of the Wasi'. (Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 218) Ibn al-Hanafīyya in fact may have agreed to Mukhtār's suggestions, when the latter said, "your silence is your agreement", but diplomatically preserved a non-committal attitude. In any case Mukhtār so interpreted his behaviour before the Shī'ites of Kufa.

Arabian Yamanites,¹ and a very large number of Persian Mawālī living in Kufa who, in fact, outnumbered the former. These Mawālī who formed the backbone of Mukhtār's movement called themselves Shī'at al-Mahdī (the party of al-Mahdī), Shī'at Al Muhammad (the party of the Family of Muhammad), or the Shī'at al-Haqq (the party of Truth).² Consequently a sect, in its own right, considerably well organised, active and equipped with ideas of different extractions emerged with the name of Kaysāniyya, either after the Kunya of Mukhtār himself or after a highly controversial figure Abū 'Amra Kaysān.³

Though Mukhtār's rule was soon ended by his being killed with the majority of his followers, Kaysānism introduced by his governors to various provinces became too widespread to be eradicated. These sectarians, some of whom lived as far as Khurāsān, continued to recognise Ibn al-Hanafīyya as their Imām-Mahdī and to revere him to an extravagant degree. After his death in AH 81/⁴ 700-701 A.D. the extremists of the sect believed in his

1. See Baghdādī, Farq, 32. Also see in Tab., II, 704, the verse of A'sha Hamadān.
2. Tab., II, 672-710. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 253. For the other titles which they were given see Tab., II, 691. Balādhurī, loc.cit. and Agh., V, 155.
3. For the name Kaysāniyya there are a number of suggestions and the person of Abū 'Amra Kaysān has also been a great historical problem. For various suggestions and possibilities see Shahrastānī, Milal, I, 147. Baghdādī, Farq, 26. Balādhurī, Ansāb, V, 229. B. Lewis, Origins of Ismā'ilism, 27.
4. Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, V, 115.

ghayba (concealment) and Raj'a (Return),¹ while the majority accepted the eldest of his sons, Abū Hāshim 'Abdullah as the new Imām, directly appointed by him.² The former group was represented by three notable poets, Abū'l-Tufayl 'Amir b. Wa'ila, Kuthayyar and al-Sayyid al-Himyarī;³ the last named later became a follower of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.

Al-Kashshī records an interesting story about two men from the entourage of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, al-Sarrāj and Hammād b. 'Isa, who were known to believe that Muhammad al-Ḥanafīyya was still alive. Ja'far reproached them and pointed out that Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya was seen being buried, and his property had been divided and his widow had remarried.⁴ Nevertheless, the doctrine of 'Return' from that time became one of the chief characteristics of almost all branches of the Shī'ites.

The Messianic expectations of the Kaysānites, however, influenced a great number of the Muslims, Shī'ites as well as non-Shī'ites. Mahdism in fact became a common

1. There was among these extremists still another group known as al-Karbiya, who believed in the Godhead of Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya. This was led by two of al-Bāqir's former followers, Sa'id and Bayān. This group, however, could not survive for long. See B. Lewis, *op. cit.* 27-28, and Hodgson, *El* (2) art. "Bayān b. Sam'ān."
2. Ibn Khaldūn, *Ibar*, III, 172. Thus Abū Hāshim became recognised as the official head of Shī'a. See De Goeje, "Al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb*," ZDMG, 1884. p. 394.
3. See the verse of Kuthayyar in *Agh.*, VIII, 32; and the eulogy of Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya by al-Sayyid al-Himyarī, in *Agh.*, VII, 4.
4. Kash., *Rijāl*, 203.

vehicle for the expression of the general feelings of the epoch, and was used as an effective instrument for political adventures.

There was a widespread dissatisfaction of both a political and social nature which had many causes. The Arabs of Iraq were opposed to the hegemony of the Syrians. The non-Arab Mawālī resented the high-handed treatment meted out to them by the Arab ruling class, and the increasing number of Arabs entitled to the allowances must have added to the burdens imposed on the subject and conquered peoples. Because of the omnipresence of religion in every sphere of life, the social ferment and opposition against the existing regime were expressed in religious terms. General discontent, however, was not directed against the legal and religious foundations of the Islamic state as such.¹ The laws contained in the Qur'ān and the Sunna were the Word of God and the example of the Prophet under divine inspiration, and so they could not be wrong. But the rulers who applied these laws, and whose duty it was to preserve justice, were responsible for distorting or neglecting the commands of God and the custom of the Prophet. Thus the hope for liberation and change in the political and social system meant not the abolition of the existing legal basis and the introduction of another law, but the faithful application of the divine rules.²

1. W. Ivanow, "Early Shī'ite Movements", JBBRAS, 1939, p.3.

2. Ibid.

Thus anti-Umayyad propaganda found expression mainly and perhaps spontaneously in religious terms. "The main concern of the Umayyads", as Schacht remarks, "was not with religion and religious law, but with political administration, and here they represented the organising, centralising, and increasingly bureaucratic tendency of an orderly administration. They were interested in questions of religious policy and theology insofar as these had a bearing on loyalty to themselves".¹ Besides, let us add and admit freely that the close proximity in time of Umayyad rule with that of Muhammad and the Rāshidūn Caliphs and the vast difference in their way of life made the Muslims watch with greatly shocked concern the personal lives, conduct and behaviour of the Umayyads, addicted to wine-bibbing and singing-girls. Thus, with the emphasis on their impiety and ungodliness, the Umayyads were represented as Usurpers, who deprived the family of the Prophet of their rights, and inflicted untold wrongs upon them.² The sack of Medina and the burning of the Ka'ba were also laid at the door of the unpopular dynasty.³

This propaganda descrying the Umayyads and depicting

1. Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law, 23.
2. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 710.
3. Jāhiz, Rasā'īl, "Kitāb Faḍl Banī Hāshim", 99, and "Risāla fī Banī Umayya", 66. Also see Tafsīr of the verse 50, ch. XVII, The Qur'ān.

their rule as an epoch of tyranny (Zulm),¹ at the same time placed before the eyes of the masses a hope for liberation. The victory of justice being understood as one of faith over impiety, it could be achieved only by divine sanction and under a God-inspired leader. Thus rather naturally the majority believed that this leader, al-Mahdī, should be a man descended from the Prophet, or at least a member of his Family, the Ahl al-Bayt. At the same time it should be particularly noted that the Messianic idea did not imply a mere passive waiting for salvation or spiritual guidance,² since the concept of Jihād which required every believer to expose his life and property in the cause of religion did not allow for such an attitude.

The first 'Alid of the Husaynid line but not having legitimist rights,³ who rose against the tyranny (Zulm)

1. As against 'Adl (Justice). The terms 'Adl and Zulm are frequently used in Islamic literature. The first appearance of these terms is to be found in the treaty of Medina which Muhammad made between various groups, perhaps in the first or early in the second year of his migration to this city. From that time onwards these terms were constantly used by the Muslim Jurists, theologians and theorists. The basis of all Mahdī propaganda was intended, however, to establish the rule of 'Adl (Justice) against the reign of Zulm (tyranny).
2. A policy distinctly adopted by the legitimist line of the Imāms, i.e., Ja'far and his predecessors.
3. As did Muhammad al-Bāqir being the eldest son of Zayn al-'Abidīn and claimed the legitimist rights in his person and also, according to the Shī'ite sources, on the authority of Nass.

of the Umayyads, was Zayd b. Zayn al-‘Abidīn. After the death of Zayn al-‘Abidīn, when his eldest son al-Bāqir followed strictly his father's quiescent policy and restricted himself to the claims of religious leadership, Zayd proclaimed the principle of establishing good and prohibiting evil by force if necessary. He preached that if an Imām wanted to be recognised he should claim his rights sword in hand. It was, in fact, an expression of the deeply felt feelings not only of the Shī‘ites of Kufa, but also of the great majority of Medinese which Zayd understood only too well. Thus many followers of Zayn al-‘Abidīn left al-Bāqir and went over to Zayd. They were added to by a considerable number of those of the Shī‘ites who had previously upheld the Imāmate of Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya and Abū Hāshim, but the moderate views of these Shī‘ites could not be reconciled with the extremist doctrines of the Kaysānites. At the same time, Zayd, by adhering himself to Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’ and his doctrines, gained whole-hearted support of the Mu‘tazilites, and his acceptance of the legitimacy of the first two Caliphs earned him the full sympathy of the traditionist circles. These combinations reveal two fundamental points. Firstly, Zayd and his close followers rejected the ideas prevailing among other Shī‘ite sectarians. Zayd and his followers wanted no quiescent or hidden Imāms (like Bāqir and Ibn al-Ḥanafīyya respectively). The Imām, in their eyes, although he had to be a descendent of ‘Alī and Fāṭima, yet he could not claim allegiance unless he asserted his Imāmate publicly. Secondly, Zayd realised the fact that in order to run the Caliphate, he must have the main body

of Muslim opinion behind him, and must, therefore, accept the main body of Islamic traditions. Thus he expressed this attitude by accepting the Caliphate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar as legally elected Imāms. But to satisfy the Shī'ite feelings he propounded the theory that while 'Ali was superior, the "Imāmate of the inferior" (Mafdūl), that is of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, was permissible in order to secure certain temporary advantages.¹

After the death of al-Bāqir, Ja'far maintained his father's policy towards Zayd and his movement and remained rather a passive spectator. Being the uncle of Ja'far, Zayd had the superior position and Ja'far could not dare to deny his merits outwardly. It does not mean, however, that Ja'far did not have a close group of his own followers whom he inherited from his father and who survived the Zaydite propaganda. Moreover, the concession to non-Shī'ites given by Zayd, especially his emphasis on the rightfulness of the first two Caliphs, raised objections and ultimately caused many zealot Shī'ites to abandon him. They revoked their oath, and transferred their allegiance to Ja'far.²

According to a rather doubtful tradition Zayd said to the deserters: "You have abandoned me (ra'faḍ tu mūnī)", and zealous Shī'ites have since been called Rāfiḍa.³ A party of Kufan Shī'ites went to Medina and informed Ja'far

1. See Montgomery Watt, "Shī'ism Under the Umayyads", JRAS. 1960. p. 169.

2. Tab., II, 1700.

3. Tab., II, 1700. For the use and meaning of the word Rāfiḍī see Montgomery Watt, "The Rāfiḍites", Oriens, XVI, 1963. 116 ff.

of Zayd's ideas and activities. Ja'far did not raise any objections, but on the contrary he said that "Zayd was the best of us and our Lord".¹

Zayd's revolt, however, took place on the 1st Safar AH 122/ 26th December, 740 A.D., and was unsuccessful. Zayd himself was killed and many of his followers were massacred.² Hishām then commanded that all eminent Ṭālibites publicly dissociate themselves from the insurrection and condemn its leader.³ Among them were 'Abdullah b. Mu'āwiya and 'Abdullah al-Mahdī,⁴ but the name of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq is nowhere mentioned. It shows that Ja'far must have shown himself distinctly and categorically opposed to the activities of the other members of the family. It also takes us back to the time of Ja'far's grandfather, Zayn al-'Abidīn, in the reign of Yazīd when, after the suppression of the Medinan revolt led by Ibn al-Zubayr, all the Hāshimites were forced to swear allegiance declaring themselves slaves of the Caliph, but Zayn al-'Abidīn was exempted.⁵ Now Ja'far was spared in a similar situation which indicates the continuity of the same policy in the legitimist line.

Zayd's son Yahya, however, continued his father's activities and managed to reach Khurāsān in order to arouse

1. Ṭab., II, 1700.

2. Ṭab., II, 1709 ff. Abū'l Faraj, Maqātil, 103 f.

3. Jāhiz, Bayān, I, 311-312.

4. Ibid.

5. Mubarrad, Kāmil, I, 222. and also see chapter III, part A.

the sympathies of the Kufan Shī'ites, whom al-Ḥajjāj and other Umayyad Viceroys of Iraq had exiled to that distant province.¹ But after three years' futile efforts he met the same fate as his father.² In fact, Zayd's movement was unable to captivate the hearts of the fanatical groups because he did not claim to be the Mahdī - an idea so dear to the Shī'ite masses. Moreover, his moderate policy eventually deprived him of the popular support of the Shī'ites. Yet his revolt left a very deep mark upon the development of the whole Shī'ite movement. Numerous learned men of Kufa and other cities had supported or at least sympathised with his cause, among them the great lawyers Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān and Sufyān al-Thawrī, the traditionist al-A'mash, the Qāḍī of Madā'in Hilāl b. Hubāb and others.³

The movement of Zayd, however, though it ended in failure, paved the way for other claimants and offered ready ground for a more effective revolt. His and his son's death which created a vacuum for active leadership, enhanced the prospects of two of their relatives and hitherto rivals - Ja'far al-Sādiq and Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. Since the former adhered to the quiescent policy of his predecessors, as it appears from the reports at our disposal, he was not inclined to make a bid for the leadership of an active movement with political

1. Wellhausen, The Arab Kingdom, 499 ff.

2. In the year AH 125/742-743 A.D. See Tab., II, 1774. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 116.

3. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 107 ff.

implications. It would be better to keep in mind that the whole of Shī'ism at this stage was divided into three doctrinal groups. First, the extremist and Messianic group or groups originating from the Kaysānites; second, the moderate group which emerged from the teachings of Zayd and was backed by the Mu'tazilites and the traditionists of Medina and Kufa. The third group seems to have been under the personal influence of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq who is said to have been quietly propounding and expressing his own views and theories about the Imām and his function which had neither Messianic pretensions nor Zaydite reconciliatory moderation, as we shall see later.

Thus there remained only Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, from the House of the Prophet, who could attract both the Zaydites and the pro-Shī'ite Mu'tazilites as well as a number of extremists on account of his Messianic claims. Though the actual revolt of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, took place long after, in the sequence of events it would be in order to note that his Messianic movement in fact starts from this point.

Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya was designated for the role of al-Mahdī from his childhood, by his father 'Abdullah,¹ known as al-Mahdī, a grandson of al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib. When he reached manhood, however, he spared no efforts to extol the expected destiny of al-Nafs

1. 'Abdullah b. al-Hasan al-Muthanna b. al-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib, renowned as one of the most virtuous men of his time and famous for his religious learning and eloquence. See Jāhiz, Bayān, I, 353. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 219. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 129 f.

al-Zakiyya and it is very likely that the following Tradition, foisted upon 'Abdullah b. Mas'ūd, was in reality his invention: The Prophet said: "Even if there remain for the world but one single day, God will extend it until He sends a man from the people of my House, whose name will be the same as mine, and the name of his father will be that of my father. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it is filled with tyranny and oppression."¹ As this tradition could also be applied to Muhammad al-Mahdī the son of al-Manṣūr,² another tradition was produced to assure the role of the Deliverer to al-Nafs al-Zakiyya: "On the authority of Umm Salima, who reported: I heard the Apostle of God say, 'Al-Mahdī will be from the descent of Fātima.'"³

The candidature of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya to the position of the Messiah was supported not only by his close relatives, but also by the extremist al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī,⁴ a former disciple of al-Bāqir, and so it is also probable that the Tradition quoted above might have been an invention of Mughīra. It is important to note that Ja'far al-Ṣādiq repeatedly warned his followers not to accept al-Mughīra's traditions.⁵

Even after al-Mughīra was executed his followers *remained*

1. Abū Dā'ūd, Sunan, II, 135.
2. See Agh., XII, 85.
3. Abū Dā'ūd, Sunan, II, 135. Ibn Māja, Sunan, II, 269.
4. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 74, 77. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 59.
5. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 77. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 43.

faithful to al-Nafs al-Zakīyya.¹ Besides, a number of moderate traditionists as well as the Mu'tazilites, led by 'Amr b. 'Ubayd and Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā',² recognised the young 'Alid as the most suitable person to take the place vacated by Zayd and Yahya.³

After the death of al-Walīd b. Yazīd, however, when the Umayyad dynasty was apparently disintegrating,⁴ and the revolt of 'Abdullah b. Mu'āwiya had gained a certain success in Khurāsān, 'Abdullah al-Mahdī, along with other partisans of the 'Alid cause, decided to act.⁵ During a pilgrimage to Mecca, 'Abdullah al-Mahdī invited his relatives and followers to take the oath of allegiance to his son. That was done first in the Ḥaram of Mecca and again at al-Abwa, in the neighbourhood of Medina.⁶ According to Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī,⁷ among those who took the oath were the three 'Abbāsīd brothers Ibrahīm al-Imām, Abū'l-'Abbās al-Saffāh and Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr (b. Muhammad b.

1. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 52. Baghdādī, Farq, 36 ff. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 74.
2. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 202.
3. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 145 and 165.
4. Ibid., 176-179.
5. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 176-177. Tab., III, 143 ff.
6. Tab., III, 52. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 143 and 178. (for the place Abwa see Yāqūt, Mu'jam, I, 79.) According to another report, this homage was paid at Suwaqa. See Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 202 ff. Buhl, El (1) art. 'Muhammad b. 'Abdullah.'
7. Maqātil, 143 and 178.

'Ali b. 'Abdullah b. al-'Abbās) as well as other members of the 'Abbāsīd clan. There is no confirmation of this report that all these 'Abbāsīds took part in the ceremony at al-Abwa. Only the name of Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr is given by some other historians.¹ This latter report seems acceptable as al-Manṣūr in his youth was a Mu'tazilite² and a companion of 'Amr b. 'Ubayd,³ who probably induced him to pay homage to al-Nafs al-Zakiyya.

The only opposition from the Hāshimites to al-Nafs al-Zakiyya at al-Abwa is reported to have come from Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's side,⁴ for he considered himself the only rightful person to the function of the Imāmate, and was against any militant organisation.

However, in spite of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's popularity neither he nor his father acted with sufficient energy and they allowed the 'Abbāsīds to snatch the initiative. Both the father and the son were but passive spectators of the great upheaval and downfall of the Umayyad dynasty. Indeed all the necessary elements for a successful revolution were present and it was only a matter of strike and action. Whoever could strike first would gain the prize.

Ideas as to who should and who should not be regarded as the people of the House were utterly confused at this

1. See for example, Tab., III, 152. also, Mufīd, Irshād, 295-296.
2. Tab., III, 143 and 152. Buhl, EI (1) art. 'Muhammad b. 'Abdullah."
3. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 145.
4. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 144 f., 177. Buhl, EI (1) art. "Muhammad b. 'Abdullah."

time. Every pretender of the 'Alid House and their supporters and followers spread different theories to justify their own claims. One group of the Shī'ites held that after 'Ali only his sons through Fāṭima had the right to the heritage of the Prophet as the "family of the Prophet" and, among them, since Husayn succeeded Hasan by the latter's expressed will, all rights were transferred to him and his posterity to the exclusion of the Hasanids. This group, which came to be known as the legitimist faction of the Shī'ites, though never ceased to make its existence felt, was undoubtedly reduced at times to an insignificant minority. Others believed that any descendant of 'Ali and Fāṭima, whether Husaynid or Hasanid, was entitled to the leadership of the community. In this group come the followers of Zayd and al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. The third and major groups of the Shī'ites, namely Kaysānites, included also 'Ali's progeny by other women, in particular Muhammad b. al-Hanafīyya and after him his son Abū Hāshim. These distinctions were largely understood and observed by the more theoretical and legalistically minded people in Medina and Kufa. The mass of the people, however, full of hatred, discontentment, and the feeling of being suppressed by the Umayyad autocracy, were ready to swarm round any member of the Holy Clan of the Tālibites who could liberate them from their sufferings.

Swayed by these feelings, therefore, a large part of the local population of Kufa, especially of the lower classes, were prepared to range themselves with any anti-Umayyad movement. Such was the support given to the

dubious claims of 'Abdullah b. Mu'āwiya,¹ a great-grandson of 'Ali's elder brother Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib. Ṭabarī mentions that the majority of his supporters consisted of the slaves of Kufa and villagers from the Sawād.² After an unsuccessful rising in Kufa, Ibn Mu'āwiya managed to reach Persia and controlled a large area there until he was assassinated possibly by Abū Muslim.³ It might be accepted that Ibn Mu'āwiya connecting himself with the Kaysāniya by the claim that he was the emissary of Abū Hāshim, was responsible for his success in Persia. Ibn Mu'āwiya's propaganda in Iran, however, made the task easier for a more vigorous leader to organise a successful revolt.

After all the preceding movements and revolts, the time was now ripe for a successful rising, not for the 'Alids but for the house of 'Abbās who had for some time been plotting in the background and watching their opportunity. 'Ali b. 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib was the first person of the house to nourish political ambitions, but had nothing tangible to support them from a legal point of view. His grandfather al-'Abbās, the uncle of the Prophet, had never claimed the Caliphate

1. See Agh., XI, 73. Tab., II, 1879 and 1881, and see also Montgomery Watt, "Shī'ism Under the Umayyads", JRAS. 1960, p. 170.

2. Tab., II, 1881-1883-1887. عبيد الله الكوفي - غوغاء السيل - اهل السواد

3. See Montgomery Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads", JRAS. 1960, p. 170.

for himself. Moreover, his being a late convert to Islam and his opportunist policy¹ had marred his reputation among the Muslims. Ali's father 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās too, though renowned for his learning, had no political aspirations and always championed² the cause of 'Ali b. Abī Tālib. It is possible that 'Ali (the 'Abbāsīd) might have been inspired by certain rights based on old tribal customs. The Meccan clan of Priest-Sayyids included all the descendants of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and so, from the viewpoint of legitimism, their claims were better than those of the Banū Umayya, which were based mainly on political factors.³ Nevertheless, even if 'Abbās, once the custodian of Meccan Haram, and his progeny had as strong a claim to supreme leadership as 'Ali b. Abī Tālib, the 'Abbāsīds had neglected it for too long. Moreover, the fact that 'Ali was one of the earliest converts to Islam, while 'Abbās tarried until the conquest of Mecca, was detrimental to the position of the 'Abbāsīds in the Muslim community. Then, the Shī'ites had accustomed themselves to the idea that the rights to the Caliphate belonged to the 'Alids. Obviously, therefore, it was not possible for the 'Abbāsīds to claim the Caliphate directly.

1. See Watt, *El* (2) art. 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib."
2. Kash, *Rijāl*, 39-40. He was 'Ali's governor in Basra and also his personal representative attached to the arbiter Abū Mūsa al-Ash'arī. See Kash., *Rijāl*, 40 and Veccia Vaglieri, *El* (2) art. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās."
3. The Umayyads, on their part, endeavoured to prove that the whole clan of the Banū 'Abd Manāf were the ruling house of the Quraysh. See Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, I, 180.

'Ali b. 'Abdullah saw an opportunity in inducing Abū Hāshim, who had no son and was a lonely person under the detention of the Umayyads in Damascus, to bequeath to the 'Abbāsids his rights to the Imāmate. He instructed his youthful son Muhammad to gain the Imām's favour and confidence.¹ After some time, Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik allowed Abū Hāshim to return home. On his way to Hijāz, it is said that he was poisoned either at the instigation of the Caliph Sulaymān or by Muhammad on his own account.² He died at Humayma, the headquarters of the 'Abbāsids, where he stayed as the latter's guest. Before his death he made Muhammad b. 'Ali his legatee³ and gave him letters addressed to Shī'ite circles in Khurāsān. In this way Muhammad became Imām and was recognised by the majority of the Hāshimiyya sect and thus "The 'Abbāsids inherited the party and organisation of Abū Hāshim, along with his claims."⁴

Though the 'Abbāsid movement was first organised and directed from Kufa, nevertheless it seems that the 'Abbāsids were not very sure of the Kufans due to their pro-ʿAlid sympathies and so were afraid that the Iraqis would be unwilling to accept

1. Dhahabī, Ta'rīkh, IV, 21.
2. See Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 91. Kāmil, V, 32-39. S. Moscati, "Testamento di Abū Hāshim", RSO, XXVII, (1952) 24-28.
3. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 254. Abū'l-Faraj, loc.cit. Kāmil, loc.cit. S. Moscati, loc.cit. Bernard Lewis, El (2) art. "Hāshimiyya."
4. Bernard Lewis, El (2) arts. "Hāshimiyya" and "'Abbāsids."

would be unwilling to accept their claims to the Imāmate.¹ On the other hand, Khurāsān was still largely a virgin land, so far as sectarian conflicts were concerned. The majority of the so-called Shī'ites in that distant country were not so much interested in the difference between the various branches of the Ahl al-Bayt as they were ready to follow any leader from the House of the Prophet² against the Umayyads. Still, Abū Muslim, the chief organiser of the movement, though appointed by Ibrāhīm,³ the head of the 'Abbāsīd family, claimed to be acting on behalf of an Imām of the clan of Hāshim who had not yet been chosen or designated. In this way he gained the support of many who would not have been ready to support him had they known that the Imām from the clan of Hāshim

1. Although many of the Hāshimiyya sectarians recognised the validity of the 'Abbāsīd's claim, some refused to accept the transfer of the Imāmate from the 'Alids to another branch of the Ahl al-Bayt. This, in particular, was the attitude of the Kufans, whose pro-'Alid sympathies were very strong. Some Shī'ites believed that Abū Hāshim was not dead, but had concealed himself, and that he was al-Mahdī. Others admitted that he had died but appointed his brother 'Ali to the Imāmate which then passed from father to son in the same line. See Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 28-29. Nashwān al-Himyarī, Hurr al-'Ayn, 159-160.
2. For the readiness of the Khurāsānis to follow any branch of the Ahl al-Bayt see Ibn Qutayba, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, I, 204 and Yāqūt, Mu'jam, II, 352.
3. Abū Muslim was adopted by Ibrāhīm as a member of the Ahl al-Bayt, Tab., II, 1937 and 1949. For Abū Muslim see Ibn Khallikān, II, 100-108. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 254. Ibn Qutayba, Ma'ārif, 145. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 360ff. Tab., II, 1949 f. 1987 ff. and R.N. Frye, "The role of Abū Muslim", The Muslim World, January, 1947.

would in fact be from the family of al-'Abbās. The support given by the followers of al-Mukhtār strengthens this assumption.¹

However, Ibrāhīm was arrested by the Umayyads and died in prison² in Safar AH 132/October 749 A.D. According to his instructions, his brother Abū'l-'Abbās in the company of a third brother Abū Ja'far 'Abdullah and fourteen other members of the family, left al-Humayma and reached Kufa.³ In Kufa the local representative of the 'Abbāsids was Abū Salma Hafs. At this crucial moment Abū Salama is reported to have thought of breaking his allegiance⁴ to the 'Abbāsids since he felt bound by loyalty to Imām Ibrāhīm, but not to his brothers. He lodged the 'Abbāsīd fugitives in a house and tried to conceal their whereabouts from the Khurāsānite leaders⁵ in Kufa.

1. Watt, Integration, 108. A comprehensive account of the 'Abbāsīd propaganda in Iran is given in the 9th chapter of Wellhausen's "The Arab Kingdom and its Fall", 492-566. For Abū Muslim, see R.N.Frye, "The role of Abū Muslim", The Muslim World, XXXVII, No. 1, January, 1947. B. Lewis, El (2) art. "Abbasid", (early part).
2. He was arrested by the orders of Caliph Marwān b. Muhammad, brought to Damascus and subsequently dispatched to Harrān and confined in gaol, where he died either of plague or - as the 'Abbāsīds assert - was put to death at the Caliph's command. See Tab., III, 25 ff. and 42 ff. Dīnawarī, Akhbār, 357. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 259.
3. Tab., III, 27. Mas'ūdī, op.cit. 267 f.
4. Jahshiyārī, K. al-Wuzarā wa'l-Kuttāb, 83. Mas'ūdī, op.cit., 268. ff. Ibn Khallikān, I, 467-468. Tab., III, 27 f. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 86.
5. Mas'ūdī, loc.cit. Tab., III, 27 f. Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 544. S. Moscati, El (2) art. "Abū Salama."

Here we come across a very interesting but dubious report. It is said that when the news of the death of Ibrāhīm al-Imām reached Kufa, Abū Salama, as Jahshiyārī and Tabarī put it, "on the suggestion and advice of some other Shī'ites of Kufa, intended to establish the Imāmate of the 'Alids"¹ and accordingly he wrote letters to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, 'Abdullah al-Mahd and 'Umar b. 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidīn, asking each one of them in turn to come to Kufa in person and he would support their claims to the Imāmate. The messenger was ordered first to contact Ja'far, and only if he refused then to go to 'Abdullah and in case of his refusal then to 'Umar b. 'Ali. When the messenger, however, presented the letter first of all to Ja'far he called for a lamp, burnt the letter and said to the messenger, "tell your master what you have seen."² Mas'ūdī begins the story in a different colour saying: "When the 'Abbāsīd leader Ibrāhīm al-Imam was killed by Marwān II, Abū Salama feared that this would mean the failure of their undertaking, and he attempted therefore to induce Ja'far al-Ṣādiq³ to come to him in person, and to openly declare his claims to the Imāmate."⁴

Indeed the story appears to be of a highly dubious nature. Nevertheless, while it is very difficult to

1. Jahshiyārī, K. al-Wuzara wa'l Kuttāb, 86. Tab., III, 27.
2. Jahshiyārī, loc.cit. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 86. Ibn Tiqatīqa, al-Fakhrī, 109, de Goeje, Fragmenta, 196.
3. "In case he refuses then 'Abdullah and lastly 'Umar b. 'Ali."
4. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 228.

accept it as an authentic one, it is also not very easy to reject it outright. In both cases it would raise many unsolved questions since the reasons for acceptance and rejection seem to carry equal weight.¹ In any case Mas'ūdī's reason for Abū Salama's action is certainly not acceptable.

The same story asserts that 'Abdullah al-Mahdī accepted the offer and was only too delighted to receive the help of Abū Salama. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, in all the sources which have recorded this story, is reported to have severely warned 'Abdullah "not to indulge and endanger his and his son's life in this game of power and treachery as Abū Salama is not our Shī'a and the Khurāsānites are not our followers"; and 'Abdullah bitingly retorted saying, "You are jealous of me and my son."² If this conversation is true it would throw light on Ja'far's extremely cautious policy of keeping entirely out of politics. At the same time the possibility cannot be ruled

1. If we accept it we may well ask why Abū Salama who had been a chief supporter of the 'Abbāsīd cause, suddenly changed his allegiance and why he turned to Husaynid and Hasanid lines while a great follower of Abū Hāshim. In case we reject the story the question arises why he hid the 'Abbāsids and delayed so long in doing anything. It is a historical fact that he did delay and it was not Abū Salama but other Khurāsānite chiefs who installed Abū'l-'Abbās to Caliphate. Then comes the more serious question of his murder by the orders of Abū al-'Abbās almost immediately after the latter's accession to power. After comparing the reasons for and against this story, I am inclined to think that it should be given some consideration.

2. See Ya'qūbī, loc.cit. Mas'ūdī, loc.cit. Jahshiyārī, loc.cit.

out that the whole story was a later invention, firstly, to show Ja'far's¹ importance even at that early stage of his Imāmate, and secondly to emphasise his peaceful nature and withdrawal from politics. Nevertheless one thing cannot be completely ignored. As Moscati points out, in the wavering attitude of Abū Salama "one can perhaps see a consequence of the deliberate ambiguity about the rights of the 'house of the Prophet', put into circulation by the revolutionary propaganda."²

Whether Abū Salama wrote or not and whether 'Abdullah al-Mahdī accepted it or not, the events in Kufa moved quickly in favour of the 'Abbāsids. Their presence or concealment³ in Kufa was betrayed through one Abū Jahm to Abū Humayd who with other Khurāsānite chiefs encamped in the vicinity of Kufa, came and at once paid homage to Abū'l-'Abbās⁴ as the Imām and Caliph, compelling Abū Salama to comply.⁵

Immediately after, Abu'l-'Abbās together with his supporters went to the mosque where he made his inaugural speech. In this speech he named himself al-Saffāh (the Blood-Shedder) and identified the glory of God with his

1. Although Ja'far is not the only one approached.
2. S. Moscati, El (2) art. "Abū Salama."
3. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 87 gives the period of concealment as two months, and Ṭabarī, III, 27, makes it forty days. Other sources do not mention the precise period.
4. See B. Lewis, El (2) art. "'Abbāsīd."
5. Ṭab., III, 28 ff. Jahshiyārī, K. al-Wuzarā, 86 ff. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 87. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 270 f.

own interest and those of his house. He named "the 'Abbāsids as the Ahl al-Bayt from whom uncleanness was removed" and denied that the 'Alids were more worthy of the Caliphate.¹ Al-Saffāh's address was followed by his uncle, Daw'ūd b. 'Ali, who emphasised that the rights of the 'Abbāsids were legally inherited; and that there were but two legal Caliphs in Islam: 'Ali b. Abī Tālib and al-Saffāh. He added that the Caliphate would remain in the hands of the 'Abbāsids until they passed it over to 'Isa b. Maryam.²

The accession of Abū'l-Abbās was followed immediately by the first breach with the extremist Shī'ites.³ The testament of Abū Hāshim was of the utmost importance to the 'Abbāsids for at the outset of their propaganda, it allowed them to take over the sectarian circles in Persia, and so establish the nucleus of their own religious-political party. Once the aim was achieved, the 'Abbāsids on their accession to the Caliphate justified their rights by different arguments, without even mentioning Abū Hāshim's name.⁴ Now they found it necessary to

1. Tab., III, 29 ff. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 87 says Abū'l-Abbās did not speak at all because of fever. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 185, gives only a summary of the speech in two lines.
2. The speech of Dāw'ūd b. 'Alī is recorded by all, i.e., Tab., III, 31ff. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 87. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 270. The last named again summarises the speech with major points and does not give the text of it.
3. B. Lewis, El (2) art. 'Abbāsids."
4. See the speeches of al-Saffāh and Daw'ūd quoted above.

let the memory of the bequest pass into oblivion, for its connections with Shī'ite extremism were too strong and could be dangerous or embarrassing. The first task therefore, before al-Saffāh was to break the alliance with the extremists and to remove those who supported the cause basically on that sectarian ground. Thus the first who had to pay with his life was Abū Salama, either on account of his strong connections with the extremist Shī'ites or because of his alleged pro-Alid leanings and his offering support to them for the Caliphate. The second reason cannot be completely ignored as an "immediate cause of his assassination." There seems ^{no} difficulty in accepting that at first, knowing nothing about Abū Salama's recent pro-Alid activities, the Abbāsids called him with the title Wazīr Al Rasūl Allah,¹ but as soon as al-Saffāh came to know about his fickleness he successfully arranged for his assassination. This is what both al-Ṭabarī and Mas'ūdī² clearly describe as the reason for Abū Salama's assassination. Nevertheless, this immediate cause was coupled with al-Saffāh's policy to get rid of revolutionary sectarians of whom Abū Salama was the most powerful leader.

Al-Saffāh's rule lasted four years during which period the Alid in Medina "disorganised by the frustration of their hopes",³ kept quiet and affairs remained

1. See Tab., III, 60f. Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 89. Mas'ūdī, Murūj, III, 284 Ibn Khallikān, I, 468.

2. See Tab., III, 58 ff and Mas'ūdī, loc.cit. who says:

3. وكان في نفس أبي العباس منه شيء، لأنه كان حاول في رد الأمر عنهم إلى غيرهم،
B. Lewis, EI (2) art. "Abbāsids."

stationary.¹ But when al-Manṣūr assumed the Caliphate in AH 136/757 A.D., the 'Alids embittered by the usurpation of their rights by the House of 'Abbās, began to voice their complaints. On the other hand, except for the Shī'at Banū 'Abbās who regarded al-Saffāh as not only Caliph and Imām but also al-Mahdī,² the Shī'ite masses were also dissatisfied, and the popular dissatisfaction which became manifest even during al-Saffāh's rule,³ grew with the accession of al-Manṣūr. They felt that the expected Kingdom of Righteousness had not materialised. One evil rule had been replaced by another.

Thus at the accession of al-Manṣūr, Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya who had long been cherishing the role of al-Mahdī refused to take the oath of allegiance to him and started his Messianic propaganda. This angered al-Manṣūr and in AH 140/758 A.D., he decided to compel him and his brother Ibrāhīm to pay him homage. He ordered the arrest of 'Abdullah al-Mahdī and many other 'Alids.⁴ Some of them were cruelly scourged⁵ to make them disclose the hiding place of the fugitives, but in vain. It is important to note that though al-Nafs al-Zakiyya tried to arouse support in many parts⁶ of the Muslim population, it was

1. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 179.
2. See the verse of Ṣudayf in Agh., IV, 93.
3. See Tab., III, 75 f. and 85, Maqrizī, ah-Niza', 52.
4. Yaqūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 105. Mas'ūdi, Muruj, III, 221. Tab., III, 151 ff. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 128. Altogether thirteen persons were put under arrest. Also see, De Goeje, Fragmenta, 237.
5. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 128.
6. See Tab., III, 149 ff.

chiefly the people of Ḥijāz who enthusiastically responded to his appeal, and with few exceptions, swore the oath of allegiance¹ to him. The traditionist circles of Medina whole-heartedly supported and upheld his cause.² The Zaydites and Mu'tazilites of Kufa and Basra were also ready to help him.³ On 19th Ramadān AH 145, however, a fierce battle was engaged and resulted in the utter defeat of the Medinese and in the death of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya⁴ while fighting the 'Abbāsīd army.

Al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's abortive rising was followed by another by his brother Ibrāhīm in Basra where he was collecting supporters for the former. The Zaydite and Mu'tazilite circles of Kufa and Basra supported Ibrāhīm in a body.⁵ The jurists of Kufa; Abū Ḥanīfa, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Mas'ūd b. Kudam and many others - wrote letters to Ibrāhīm inviting him to their city or backed him by issuing legal decisions favouring his cause.⁶ Ibrāhīm, however, with a force of 15,000 left Basra for Kufa to

1. Tab., III, 199. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 183.
2. Mālīk b. Anas declared that the oath sworn to the 'Abbāsīds was no longer binding as it had been taken under compulsion, Tab., III, 200.
3. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 242 ff.
4. The experience and death of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya resulted in many spurious Traditions and prophecies, some of them attributed to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who was alleged to have foreseen the fate of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. Tab., III, 248, 252 and 254. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil 189. Shraṣṭānī, Milāl, I, 156.
5. Tab., III, 291-300. for the names and details see Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 215 ff and 242 ff. also 247, 248.
6. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 247 ff.

join his Kufan sympathisers, but was encountered by the 'Abbāsīd army at Bakhamra which resulted in Ibrāhīm's death.¹ This was the end of Alid risings of any consequence and of Messianic hopes aspired to by them or placed in them;² and also it was practically the end of the Medinese desire to establish a Caliphate of their own choice. The long cherished hopes of the Shī'ites, especially those of activists and extremists, were frustrated.

All these events and circumstances, however, form the background in which the Imāmate of Ja'far happened to fall. But before we try to examine his position and his standpoint in this religio-political setting there remains still another vital aspect to be fully elaborated.

We have seen that the great Hāshimite party of the Umayyad era was now split into 'Alids and 'Abbāsīds. So the struggle assumed a new form. It was no longer a deadly strife between 'a usurping dynasty' and a legitimist opposition, but between the two legitimist parties, each claiming legitimist rights for itself with the total exclusion of the other; the descendants of the Prophet's uncle and the descendants of the Prophet's cousin and daughter, 'Alī and Fātima.

1. Abū'l-Ḥaraj, Maqātil, 232 ff.
2. Some of al-Nafs al-Zakīyya's followers regarded him as Mahdī and refused to accept the fact of his death, asserting that only a devil in human form had been killed in his stead, while he was concealed in a mountain in Najd. Baghdādī, Farq, 36 ff. and 148. Sa'd Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 76.

The first 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Saffāh fully anticipated this situation and from the very first moment of his Caliphate started the task of justifying the rights of his house on legitimist grounds as it is evident from his inaugural speech.¹ In this way he laid down the foundation of his family's policy in the forthcoming struggle to repudiate the claims of the house of 'Alī. But, owing to the fact that during the short-lived reign of al-Saffāh the 'Alids themselves could not come out with any serious or visible opposition, things remained rather confused and stationary.² It was, however, al-Manṣūr who had to face the most threatening opposition from the 'Alids to the newly established authority. Thus in order to save, strengthen and consolidate his Caliphate, al-Manṣūr concentrated his efforts on two basic and fundamental objects. The first was to get the rights of his house justified on legal and religious grounds. This logically implies the repudiation of the claims of the 'Alids by legal argumentation. The second was to get his Caliphate accepted by the Muslim Jamā'a. This required the severance of all relations and connections with all revolutionary and extremist groups and organisations. Al-Manṣūr realised only too well that Kaysānite Shī'ism, Rāwandite³ extremism, revolutionaries

1. See the speech of al-Saffāh quoted above.
2. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 179. Al-Saffāh even made large gifts of money to 'Abdullah al-Mahd and granted him and his brother al-Hasan b. al-Hasan feudal estates. See de Goeje, Fragmenta, 232.
3. The name Rāwindiya is given to the sect who held that Abū Hāshim bequeathed the Imāmate to Muhammad b. 'Alī (the 'Abbāsīd). See B. Lewis, The Origins of Ismā'ilism, 28.

of Abū Muslim's following (who held beliefs which comprised a mixture of Kaysānite Shī'ism and Mazdakism) or the Shī'at of 'Abbāsiyya, could not serve as the religious basis of the Caliphate. Thus repudiating all of them he approached the traditionist circles (Ahl al-Hadīth) which he recognised as the representative section of the Muslim community and the exponents of the Jamā'a. It would be in order if we consider this aspect later and examine first his endeavour to vindicate the rights of the Caliphate in his house.

The best and probably the most authentic documentary evidence in this connection, however, is an exchange of letters between al-Manṣūr and the 'Alid claimant Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. In order to understand al-Manṣūr's way of argument and approach to the problem it is necessary to read first al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's letter to him, which runs: "Our father 'Ali was the 'Waṣī,' and the 'Imām'. How is it then that you appropriate his inheritance while we are still alive. You know that there is none amongst the Hāshimites who has the same points of excellence and prides himself on the like of our past and present, our descent and our cause ... We are the children of Fāṭima, the daughter of 'Amr, at the time of paganism, whereas you are not, and the children of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima, at the time of Islam, and you are not; and I happen to be the golden medium in the line of descent amongst Banū Hāshim, and the best of them all as regards parentage. No Persian did I have for a mother and no slave-girls¹ were on the maternal

1. Al-Manṣūr himself was a son of a slave-girl, and perhaps it was because of this that though he was older than al-Saffāh, Ibrāhīm al-Imām did not appoint him as his successor.

side of my ancestors I was twice born from the loins of Muhammad the Prophet.... amongst my grandfathers I have the highly esteemed in Paradise and the least tormented in Hell; so, I am the son of the best of the good people."

"As for the amnesty you have given me, may I ask what kind of amnesty it is. Is it the same that you gave to Ibn Hubayra or to your uncle 'Abdullah b. 'Ali or the one that was given to Abū Muslim?"¹

It is clear from this letter that first of all al-Nafs al-Zakiyya claims his rights on the fact that his ancestor 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib was 'Waṣī' and 'Imām', and then he strengthened this by emphasising the circumstance of his birth from both his father's and mother's sides - 'Sharaf' from the father's side and dignity from the mother's side. At the end he makes out the treacherous nature of the 'Abbāsids. It is interesting to note in passing that in spite of his reference to 'Ali as the 'Waṣī' and the 'Imām' and to the Fāṭimid descent,² the Ḥijāz was unanimous in supporting the cause of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya.

Now we are better able to see how al-Manṣūr rejects the claims of his 'Alid rival and how he justifies his own rights to the supreme leadership of the community. Thus al-Manṣūr replies in this way: "I received your letter. You know that our greatest honour in the times

1. Mubarrad, Kāmil, III, 1274 f. Ṭab., III, 209 ff.
Ibn Tiqtiga, al-Fakhrī, 225 ff.

2. Ṭab., III, 189.

of ignorance, namely the dispensing of water for the pilgrims, and the guardianship of the well of Zamzam, became 'Abbās's privilege, alone among all his brothers. Your father (i.e. 'Ali) litigated concerning this privilege with us, but 'Umar has given judgement in our favour, so that we have never ceased to be in possession of this honour in the times of al-Jāhiliyya as well as in those of Islam..."

"Most of your pride is in the women's¹ side which would only deceive the uncouth and the common; and God has not made the mothers (lit. women) like uncles, fathers, fathers-in-law and the responsible relatives... As for your claim that you are the son of the Apostle of God, Almighty God has rejected such a claim, when he said: 'Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of God and the 'Seal of the Prophets'.² But you are the children of the daughter. Verily it is a close relationship, but she is a woman who can inherit but cannot become an Imām, how on earth then could the Imāmate be inherited through her? ... You know that after the death of the Prophet no other son of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib remained alive (except al-'Abbās), and that 'Abbās inherited his rights as the uncle of the Prophet. Then more than

1. i.e. Fāṭima, the mother of Abū Ṭālib; Fāṭima, the mother of 'Ali, Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet; Fāṭima bint al-Husayn, the mother of 'Abdullah al-Mahd and finally Hind bint Abī 'Ubayda, a descendant of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the mother of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. See Abū'l-Farāj, Maqātil, 128 and 160. Al-Manṣūr belittled this "descent through women" being himself a son of a slave girl.

2. Qur'ān, XXXIII, 40.

one of the Banū Hāshim sought the Caliphate, but none attained it, except the descendants of 'Abbās, and so the Siqāya and the inheritance of the Prophet as well as the Caliphate belong to him and his progeny, and will remain in their possession. For 'Abbās was heir and legatee to every honour and virtue that ever existed in the times of al-Jāhiliyya and Islam."¹

This letter is a most important document for our understanding of the line of argument which al-Manṣūr adopted against his 'Alid rivals. If we analyse the contents of the letter the following points will be evident. Firstly he resorted to the customary law of the Arabs according to which when the father dies, the paternal uncle takes his place; secondly, he placed special stress on 'Umar's ruling in favour of 'Abbās, thus emphasising the second Caliph's authority in the same way as the Ashāb al-Hadīth; thirdly, according to the Sharī'a law, 'Abbās as the uncle had better claims to the heritage of the Prophet than 'Ali as a cousin and son-in-law; fourthly, the rejection of any claim through Fāṭima which was a great prerogative for commanding respect among the Shī'ites² in particular and among the Muslims in general; and, finally the 'Alids, due to the weakness of their legal claim coupled with their incompetence, successively failed in their attempts to procure

1. Tab., III, 211 ff. Mubarrad, Kāmil, III, 1275 ff.

2. We have seen that al-Hasan and al-Husayn had been respected more on the ground that they were the grandsons of the Prophet, rather than the sons of 'Ali. See Chapter II, parts A and B.

the Caliphate for themselves, while the progeny of 'Abbās attained it due to their better claims coupled with competence and ability.¹

It is, however, evident from the support given to the risings² of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya and his brother Ibrāhīm by the Ahl al-Hadīth (whether of Murjite brand or otherwise) that they were not impressed by the arguments of al-Manṣūr for the alleged rights of 'Abbās and they continued to assert that the only just candidates to the Imāmate were the 'Alids. We have pointed out that when al-Nafs al-Zakiyya rose in rebellion, Mālik b. Anas declared that the oath of allegiance taken by the inhabitants of Medina to the 'Abbāsids was unlawful being enforced under duress.³ Similarly, during the revolt of Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdullah, Abū Hanīfa, Sufyān al-Thawrī, al-A'mash and other Kufan jurists and Ahl al-Hadīth gave their most emphatic support and encouragement to those who wished to participate in insurrection.⁴

After the re-conquest of Medina and the suppression of the revolt of Ibrāhīm, al-Manṣūr therefore ordered Mālik b. Anas to be flogged, and looked upon Abū Hanīfa

1. It is very important to note that both al-Nafs al-Zakiyya and al-Manṣūr go back for their arguments of rights to the Jāhiliyya period and consider the prerogative of that time honourable and applicable to the Islamic era.
2. Which took place after this correspondence.
3. Tab., III, 200.
4. Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ta'rīkh al-Baghdād, XIII, 380. Abū'l-Faraj, Maqātil, 242, 244, 245, 246, 247.

as an enemy so dangerous that he imprisoned him until his death.¹ Apart from these few strong and rather irreconcilable personalities who actively opposed him and were to be severely punished, he did not attack the traditionists as such. On the contrary, he regarded them as the basic element on which he could establish the foundation of a theocratic state, headed by the 'Khalifat al-Allah',² the vice-regent of God, obedience to whom was an absolute religious duty (Farḍ).³ Thus, for example, when al-Manṣūr said in a sermon: "Only I am the Authority of Allah upon His earth,"⁴ he was not announcing himself merely as a defender of religion or its protector. He identified his interest with the faith of Islam, and treated the Will of God as synonymous with his own aims.

Gradually, however, whether because of the fact that no powerful member of the 'Alid house was ready to lead a rising, or due to al-Manṣūr's successful policy of blandishment or coercion, most of the Ahl al-Hadīth, and jurists of Medina and Kufa began to be reconciled with the Caliphate. Eventually, willingly or unwillingly, they abandoned the 'Alid cause and ranged themselves obediently under al-Manṣūr's orders.

1. Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ta'rīkh Baghdād, XIII, 422. Shahrastānī, Milāl, I, 158. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī asserts that Abū Hanīfa was poisoned at the orders of the Caliph. See, Maqātil, 247 and 248.
2. Arnold, The Caliphate, 51 cf. Tab., III, 426.
3. This was stressed by other 'Abbāsīd caliphs too. See, Tab., III, 1565.
4. Tab., III, 426.

Now, keeping in view this religio-political setting of events, we are better able to examine the Imāmate of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and the role played by him in the midst of these circumstances. By an analysis of all that has been brought out above, one major and fundamental point is certain. All the successive claimants of the 'Alid house base their claims on the principle that they are the rightful Imāms due to their virtues and circumstances of birth, and that the Imāmate and Caliphate cannot be separated. Therefore, it is exclusively their legitimist right as well as their religious duty to take the Caliphate back from the usurpers - Umayyads or 'Abbāsids. In other words they thought it the function of the rightful Imām to run the Caliphal administration which is meant to establish the rule of justice and equity and thus it is necessary for an Imām to be a Caliph. This principle was accepted by the representative groups of the Muslim Jamā'a - Mu'tazilites, Murjites, Ahl al-Hadīth and the jurists of Medina and Kufa - which is evident from the wholehearted support given by them to the 'Alid claimants and to their risings. On the other hand, the 'Abbāsids too held the same view that the Imāmate and Caliphate are inseparable and a rightful Imām alone has the right to command the Caliphal Authority. But at the same time they disputed and rejected the claims of the 'Alids to this 'Office' and asserted that only they themselves were the legitimist Imām-Caliph. Ultimately al-Manṣūr, however, succeeded in crushing the 'Alids and getting the submission of the representative groups of the Jamā'a.

This was practically the complete collapse and defeat of the 'Alid claims to the Imāmate since, as they held, it was bound up with the Caliphate which they failed to procure for themselves. This critical situation, however, required an absolutely new interpretation and a complete reorientation of the whole concept of an Imāmate. Here emerges the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq with his altogether different theory and a different interpretation of the function of the Imāmate. He differed categorically from the hitherto dominating view that an Imām should be a Caliph as well, and put forward the idea of dividing the Imāmate and Caliphate into two separate institutions, (until such time when God would make an Imām victorious). This Imām, who must be a descendant of the Prophet through 'Ali and Fāṭima, deriving his exclusive authority not by political claims but by Nass, explicit designation by the previous Imām, and he inherits the special knowledge of religion coming down in the family from generation to generation. Thus the sphere and domain of this Imām is chiefly religious leadership and the spiritual guidance of the community and not the temporal power. We shall see in detail in the following chapter, however, how Ja'far elaborated his theory of the Imāmate and the nature and function of an Imām. But let us make it clear here that Ja'far was by no means the originator of the basic theory of the Imāmate. We have already pointed out that the idea of a legitimist Imām inspired with special knowledge was, in its rudimentary form, started by Zayn al-'Abidīn, and then it was further

advanced by al-Bāqir. It was, however, the time and circumstances which provided Ja'far a most suitable and propitious opportunity to elaborate and explain the ideas propounded by his father and grand-father. This great opportunity therefore made Ja'far's Imāmate 'crucial'. Thus it was not so much Ja'far's genius or personal efforts as the circumstances of his time which contributed to the rise of Imāmate to such a prominence.

Before we close this chapter two more points are to be noted in passing. One is the question whether Ja'far, by presenting the theory pertaining to his own and his father's Imāmate, thought of establishing a sect, group or party of his own, separated from the rest of the Muslims, or whether he wanted his Imāmate with the above-mentioned prerogative to be accepted and acknowledged by the whole body of the Muslims. The audience of Ja'far and the wide range of people whom he addressed and tried to convince is a sufficient proof that Ja'far himself did not intend to found a separate sect who alone should follow his doctrine of the Imāmate. But in the event, only those who had already a background of Shī'ite inclination of one sort or the other accepted Ja'far's doctrine of the Imāmate and ultimately became a sect distinct from the rest of the Jamā'a.

The second point is that the doctrine of the Imāmate and the function of the Imām elaborated by Ja'far at this stage provided a basic authority for the later Imāmite theologians and theorists to explain and solve many problems of the pre-Ja'far period. This was done by applying

Ja'far's theory of the Imāmate to the actions of the Imāms of the House who came before him, for example, 'Ali's acceptance of the first three Caliphs, the abdication of Hasan, the inactive attitude of Husayn and the quiescent policies of Zayn al-'Abidīn and al-Bāqir. All these questions were solved in accordance with Ja'far's explanation that it is not necessary for a rightful Imām to combine the temporal power in his person or even claim the political authority, (the Caliphate), if the circumstances do not allow him to do so. On the other hand, it can also be said that Ja'far's theory of the Imāmate was in fact a natural corollary of his family's past history and experience.

A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMAMATE AS EXPOUNDED
BY THE IMAM JA'FAR AL-ŠADIQ

Before we try to elucidate the doctrine of the Imāmate which is said to have been expounded by Ja'far al-Šādiq, it is very important to make a brief scrutiny of the available source material and its apparently dubious nature. It is obvious that historical writings like that of Ṭabarī and others had little to say about the quiescent Imāmate devoid of political claims and activities. We see, for example, that Zayd, Yahyā, Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya and Ibrāhīm fill a considerable number of pages in Ṭabarī whereas Ja'far is not given more than a few lines. Ruling out the historical works therefore, we can divide our sources into three groups, namely (1) the Shī'ite Ḥadīth literature, (2) the Shī'ites' works on Rijāl, (3) heresiographical works of both the Shī'ite and the Sunnite writers.

The earliest and the most comprehensive work in the first group is al-Kāfī by Muhammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī (d. 328 AH) who devotes a full chapter entitled K.al-Hujja, on the Imāmate. Another important traditionist of the same century is Shaykh Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) who also records a great many traditions on the subject of the Imāmate in his several works.¹ The majority of these

1. Al-Ṣadūq's Risālat al-I'tiqādāt is an authoritative creed of the Shī'ites and his 'Man lā Yaḥdurhu'l-Faqīh' is one of the four 'Standard Books' of the Shī'ites. The other three are Kulaynī's Kāfī and Ṭūsī's (d.460) the Istibṣār and the Tahdhīb'l-Ahkām.

traditions have been related from the Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, and both al-Kulaynī and Shaykh Ṣadūq claim to have used as their source the treatises written by as many as four hundred people who heard Ja'far relating traditions.¹ While the number four hundred seems to be a later exaggeration it is possible to accept that some of Ja'far's followers would have committed to writing what they heard from him, as at that time the writing down of such subjects had become very popular.² But it is by no means certain that Ja'far really was the author of everything that reached early Shī'ite traditionists with the stamp of Ja'far's name. Many of these traditions appear to be of much later date and were attributed to Ja'far; and even those which originated in his time are, to a very large extent productions of the Extremists and Zealot Shī'ite circles in Kufa whereas

1. A comprehensive account of the majority of these 'four hundred treatises' with the titles and authors' names can be found in the al-Dharī'a ila Taṣānīf al-Shī'a by Aghā Buzurg al-Tihranī. This huge work is in sixteen volumes and the author gives the titles of the books in alphabetical order, and, therefore it would be too lengthy to quote here all volume numbers and pages where references to these treatises are made. Aghā Buzurg also claims that a few of these treatises are still preserved in some private libraries.
2. Indeed, that was the time when the writing down of such matters had become a very popular occupation. That was the time when Mālīk b. Anās was compiling his Muatṭa, Abū Mikhnaf was busy in writing historical accounts of Iraq, and Ibn Ishāq was occupied in writing his Sīrah of the Prophet. Thus, it is possible that some of Ja'far's close adherents and pupils had committed to writing his traditions.

the Imām himself lived in Medina. We shall examine, in the following part of this chapter, some of the important adherents of Ja'far like Jābir al-Ju'fī and others whose names¹ frequently appear in the Isnād of Ja'far's traditions, and who seem to have been responsible for the creation of many traditions which bear Ja'far's name. Furthermore, numerous Ahādīth, too, whether of his genuine authorship or of Kufan make, were subsequently amended to suit the Mu'tazilite views which the Shī'ite movement adopted in the fourth century of the Hijra. Moreover, the gap of 180 years between Ja'far and Kulaynī, in which many changes, adjustments and readjustments took place, is by itself sufficient to rouse our doubts in accepting what is recorded with Ja'far's name. This period of 180 years, however, can be reduced by about sixty years in the case of a very few traditions in Kāfī which correspond only in their spirit and meaning with those sayings of Ja'far which have been recorded by al-Ya'qūbī (d.284). But they are generally pithy sayings or proverbs and do not contribute much towards his theory of the Imāmate. Still, they reflect Ja'far's pacific policy and peaceful nature, which no doubt have some connection with his doctrine of the Imāmate.²

In the second group of the sources mentioned above, Kashshī's Ma'rifat Akhbār al-Rijāl is perhaps the most

1. I have already discussed some of the important traditionists who were attached to Bāqir and then became the adherents of Ja'far, like Abū Hamza al-Thumālī and Abū Baṣīr.

2. See, Ya'qūbī, Ta'rīkh, III, 115-117.

useful work, especially in connection with the accounts of Ja'far's close adherents and their divergent tendencies. The fact that he records many undesirable things about Ja'far's companions, and the fact that later Shī'ite traditionists like Tūsī, Najāshī and Allāma Hillī frequently warn the Shī'ites of the misrepresentation of many of the adherents of the Imām by Kashshī,¹ afford enough proof to give some weight to his accounts.

The third group consisting of heresiographical works from both the Sunnite and the Shī'ite are very important in that they help us in our understanding of the evolution of the doctrine of the Imāmate. It is noteworthy that the Shī'ites were the first to start this branch of writing as an independent subject for Firaq al-Shī'a of Nawbakhtī (d. about 300 AH) or more correctly² K. al-Maqālāt wa'l-Firaq of Sa'd al-Ash'arī (d. 301 AH) are the earliest works in this field. The earliest of the Sunnite works in this group, however, is Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn of al-Ash'arī (died about 325 AH). The great advantage of this heresiographical literature is that it enables us to know the cross-currents and intermingling

1. See the biographical comment on Kashshī at the end of his Rijāl, p. 379 where both Allāma Hillī and Najāshī are quoted as saying:

له كتاب الرجال كثير العلم إلا أن فيه أغلا ط كثيرة . وكان ثقة روى عن الضعفاء .

2. Abbās Eghāl, in his scholarly work Khāndān-e-Nawbakht, has convincingly proved that the Firaq al-Shī'a which has so far been known as Nawbakhtī's work is, in fact, the work of Sa'd b. 'Abdillāh Abī Khalaf al-Ash'arī. See Abbās Eghāl, Khāndān-e-Nawbakht. The work of Sa'd al-Ash'arī has recently been published from Teheran as Kitāb al-Maqālāt wa'l-Firaq, ed. by Muhammad Jawād Mashkūr. A comparison of the two texts, however, shows very little difference only in readings at some places.

of ideas between different groups or 'sects' (if we use this rather loose English rendering of the Arabic term 'Firq' which has a different connotation) at their evolutionary stages. But at the same time, the great danger of this literature is that the writers of these works present all those who differ from them as committed to pernicious errors and thus as heretics and heterodox.¹

Nevertheless, another very important aspect of this group of sources is that it gives us useful information about the teachings and ideas of a particular circle whom we may call the first scholastic philosophers of the Shī'ites, who gathered round Ja'far and later his son Mūsa. These speculative theologians who provided the intellectual element in the Imāmate of Ja'far stand out from the Shī'ite extremists even in the hostile presentation of some of the heresiographers. Al-Ash'arī takes much interest in them and clearly distinguishes them from the extremists. These Mutakallimūn of Ja'far's circle promulgated their theories of the Imāmate and Ja'far often appears to have approved of their expositions. However, with this brief survey of the sources we are better able to examine Ja'far's theory of the Imāmate.

We have examined in detail the circumstances and the claims of the more effective and more popular contenders of the 'Alid house against whom Ja'far had to struggle for his claim to the Imāmate. Thus, in order to justify

1. As is apparent from Friedlander's article "The Heterodoxies of the Shī'ites in the presentation of Ibn Hazm". JAOS. Vol. 28. pp.1-80.

his claims and establish himself as the sole rightful Imām, he put the utmost emphasis on two 'Fundamental Principles'.

The first principle was that of the Nass: that is the Imāmate is a prerogative bestowed by God upon a chosen person who before his death and with the guidance of God, transfers it to another by an explicit designation (Nass). By the authority of Nass, therefore, the Imāmate is restricted, through all political circumstances, to a definite individual among all the 'Alids whether he claims temporal rule for himself or not. Naturally such a claim of Nass Imāmate would be meaningless unless it could be traced back to the person of 'Ali who should have been entrusted with the office of the Imāmate by the Prophet himself. The Nass thus initiated by the prophet came down from 'Ali to Hasan and from Hasan to Husayn until it reached Ja'far. This theory, as we shall see presently, distinguished Ja'far's Imāmate from all other claimants who do not claim a Nass from any preceding Imām. Zayd clearly denied that there was an explicit Nass or designation of 'Ali by Muhammad,¹ or that there was any designation of the next Imām by the preceding one. Nor did Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya or his brother Ibrāhīm ever resort to the principle of Nass from any preceding authority. On the contrary, as al-Ash'arī² points out, the idea of Nass was the key trait of the

1. Ibn Hazm, in Friedlander, "Heterodoxies of the Shī'ites", JAOS, XXVIII, 1907. 74.

2. Maqālat, 16-17.

Rawāfiḍ as against the supporters of Zayd and later on of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. Al-Ash'arī's statement is in accordance with the reports given by al-Nawhakhtī, Sa'd al-Ash'arī and Kashshī of al-Bāqir's followers who upheld him against Zayd as the only legitimate 'Alid authority on the principle of Nass, though the doctrine of Nass was still vague.¹ But a comparison between the traditions related from al-Bāqir and that of Ja'far would show that Ja'far became increasingly clear and emphatic in his expositions of the doctrine of the Nass Imāmate. As a result, a further comparison between the attitudes of the followers of these two respective Imāms discloses a shift from vagueness to clarity in accepting Ja'far as the Imām largely on the principle of Nass. This is evident from the action of a group of the Kufan Shī'ites, who after the death of al-Bāqir for some time adhered to Zayd but soon after abandoned him and went over to Ja'far whom they regarded as representing al-Bāqir's claims.² Hodgson quotes Strothmann's suggestion, "that the story of the Kufan Shī'ites abandoning Zayd for Ja'far shows that they already accepted the idea of a line of Imāms by inheritance."³ The idea of the Nass Imāmate, however, became such a common instrument that

1. Though al-Bāqir claimed the Imāmate on the principle of Nass, the doctrine was not yet fully explained and elaborated as it came to be during Ja'far's Imāmate.
2. Tab., II, 1700.
3. Hodgson, "How did the early Shī'a become Sectarian?" JAOS, 1955, p.10cf. Strothmann, Staatsrecht, p.28.

not only Ja'far, but a number of ghulāt such as Bayān,¹ Abū Manṣūr² and Mughīra³ claimed inheritance from al-Bāqir achieved some, though shortlived, success. There are numerous references in our sources to the effect that Ja'far repeatedly condemned these fanatics and warned his followers not to accept their tradition.

The second fundamental principle embodied in the doctrine of the Imāmate as emphasised by Ja'far was that of 'Ilm'. This means that an Imām is a divinely inspired possessor of a special sum of knowledge of religion and which can only be passed on before his death to the following Imām. In this way the Imām of the time becomes the exclusively authoritative source of knowledge in religious matters and thus without his guidance no one can keep to the path of truth.⁴ This special knowledge includes both the external (Zāhir) and esoteric (Bāṭin) meanings of the Qur'ān.⁵ A close scrutiny of the traditions related from Ja'far on the subject of the Imāmate will show that they rotate round these two principles of

1. Nawhakhtī, Firaq, 25 and 30. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 33, 35 and 37 mentions Bayān as claiming the Imāmate as the legatee of Abū Hāshim not as that of al-Bāqir, also see part B. of this chapter.
2. Nawhakhtī, Firaq, 39. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 9f. Baghdādī, al-Farq, 234 f. Shahrastānī, Milāl, 1, 178f. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 46-47, also see part B. of this chapter.
3. Nawhakhtī, 52-55. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 44-45, Shahrastānī, Milāl, 1, 176 f. also see part B. of this chapter.
4. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 141.
5. Ibid., 139.

Nass and 'Ilm, which go side by side and it is rather difficult to separate one from the other. Hence, Nass in fact means transmission of that special knowledge of religion which had been exclusively and legitimately in the possession of the divinely favoured Imāms of the House of the Prophet thorough 'Ali, and which can only be transferred from an Imām to the following Imām as the legacy of the family. Thus for the adherents of Ja'far his claim was not just as an Imām who ought to be a member of the 'Alid family, but that he was a particular individual designated by his father and therefore inherently possessed of all the authority to guide believers in all religious matters.

As we shall see presently in the traditions of Ja'far, this emphasis on the aspect of 'special knowledge' having been possessed by the Imāms of the House of the Prophet, certainly showed a most realistic grasp of the situation and tendencies of the epoch. Hodgson¹ makes a very appropriate observation when he says: "This was the time of the rise of Hadīth and the attempt to construct total systems of the pious life- which eventually issued in the full Shari'a law. It was the time of Abū Hanīfa and Mālik, the Imāms. Ja'far was evidently looked on as an Imām like them concerned with working out the proper details of how the pious should solve the various cases in conscience that might arise. So he appears in Sunnī tradition to a degree. But in the case of Ja'far it was claimed that he had a Unique authority in these matters, by virtue of his position as Imām by Nass - that in some

1. Hodgson, "How did the early Shi'a become Sectarian", JAOS, 1955, p.11.

sense his was the final decision on earth in these matters; whereas the others, as was indeed admitted, had no more legal authority in principle than any of their followers."

"This claim was perhaps initially less a matter of the Knowledge he had (from his father) than of the authoritative use he could make of it - his hereditary authority to decide cases. Any sovereign must be empowered to make the final decisions in any legal matter; hence the Imām's very claim that sovereignty was justly his could readily entail a claim to final authority in legal (and in this case all religious) matters. Such a claim would be readily transmuted to one of supernatural knowledge in many minds. But in an Imāmate where the authority was not in actual fact the sovereign, and his 'Ilm remained on a theocritical level, that discernment, that 'Ilm which should guide his decisions, took on a special sacredness and became a unique gift inherited from Imām to Imām. Accordingly, as the exclusively authorised source of the knowledge of how to lead a holy life, the Imām had an all-important function whether he was ruler or not."

It is now no longer difficult to understand why Ja'far remained absolutely indifferent in all those struggles for power which took place in his lifetime. In his doctrine of the Imāmate it was not at all necessary for a divinely appointed Imām, as he lets himself believe, to rise in rebellion and try to become a ruler. To his mind his place was above that of a ruler, who should only carry out what an Imām decides as a supreme authority of religion. It is with this idea in mind that when Zayd appeared with his claims Ja'far raised no protest, and

even extolled Zayd's virtues before a delegation of Kufan Shī'ites. But at the same time he said to Fudayl b. Rassān that had Zayd become a King, he would have known how to act and fulfill his duties.¹ In this way he implied that Zayd had right to political rule only. He passed similar remarks when Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya rose to claim the Imāmate,² and he emphatically denied any share in the religious headship of the community for the descendants of al-Hasan,³ from whom Husayn inherited the Imāmate which then remained in the latter's progeny.

According to the traditions related in this connection, al-Bāqir designated Ja'far as his successor in many ways. He called him "the best of all mankind" and "the one in charge of the Family of Muhammad" (Qā'im Al Muhammad)⁴ and also entrusted him with the books and scrolls and the weapons of the Prophet, which were in his possession. These treasures were kept in two leather bags (Jafr),⁵ one white and the other red. In the White Bag (al-Jafr al-Abyad) were the Psalms of David (Zubūr),

1. Kash., Rijāl, 184.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 148.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 189-190.

5. See, T. Fahd, EI (2) art. "Djafr", which gives full description of it with many references. Also see Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., II, 761 and 766 f. who examined it critically. For the lists of the mysterious books attributed to Ja'far, see Brockelmann, 5,1,104.

the Scrolls of Ibrāhīm, the Tablets (Tawriyya) of Moses, the Gospel (Injīl) of Jesus, instructions pertaining to what is lawful and what is unlawful (al-Ḥalāl wa'l Ḥarām), and the book (Muṣḥaf) of Fāṭima. This Muṣḥaf Fāṭima contained the secret knowledge of all events until the Day of Resurrection. When Fāṭima was in despair after the death of the Prophet, in order to console her, God sent an angel, who told her everything about the future. The people heard a voice speaking to her, but could not understand the words. When she related what she had heard, it was put in writing, and so the Book of Fāṭima came into being. Another mysterious scripture Ja'far claimed to be in his possession, was al-Jāmi'a, a scroll seventy cubits (dharā') long. Al-Jāmi'a or the adjective Jāmi' contained the most detailed instructions concerning the Ḥalāl and Ḥarām, as well as other problems, even so minute as the blood price for a scratch (arsh fi al-Khadash). They were written by 'Alī under the Prophet's dictation.¹ In the red bag (al-Jafr al-Aḥmar) were the weapons of the Prophets which should only be taken out "for killing and bloodshed" when al-Mahdī arises.² These weapons and scriptures must only come into the possession of a true Imām. Thus by alleging that they were in his trust, Ja'far denied the rights of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, who asserted that he

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 146-147. Hamidullah, Saḥīfah Hammām Ibn Munabbih, p.31 f. cf. 'Abd al-Razzāq, Muṣannaf, MS. of Istanbul, Vol. II, Ch. "an-Nuḥba waṣṣan awa muḥdithan."
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 146-147 and 258. Mufīd, K. al-ʿIrshād, 280 and 292-3.

had the sword of the Prophet.¹

Whether these legendary possessions were really claimed by Ja'far himself or the claims were foisted on him by the later Shī'ites, is impossible to ascertain now. But the fact remains that he claimed the spiritual leadership of the community which he based on the same principles as al-Bāqir, namely on Nass which means divine appointment and inheritance of special knowledge and rights.

Ja'far explained that the Imāmate is bequeathed from father to son, but not necessarily to the eldest one, for "as David selected Solomon from among his progeny", so an Imām designates as his successor the son he considers really worthy of the "Office". Thus Ja'far could annul the appointment of Ismā'il, pass over the candidature of 'Abdullah and nominate Mūsa.²

The Imāmate is a "covenant" between God and mankind and recognition of the Imām is the absolute duty of every believer.³ Whosoever dies without having known and acknowledged the Imām of his time, dies an infidel.⁴ The Imāms are the proofs (Ḥujaj) of Allah on earth, their words are the words of Allah and their command is the command of Allah. Obedience to them is obedience to Allah and disobedience to them is disobedience to Allah. In all their decisions they are inspired by Allah,

1. Abū'l-Faraj Isfahānī, Maqātil, 188. Tab., III, 247.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 170.

3. Ibid.

4. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 267.

and they are in absolute authority.¹

It is to them that Allah has ordained obedience. Ja'far goes on to declare that the Imām of the time is the witness for the people and he is the gate (Bāb) of Allah and the road (Sabīl) to Him, and the guide (dalīl) thereto, and the repository² of His Knowledge and the interpreter of His revelations. The Imām of his time is a pillar of Allah's Unity (Tawhīd). The Imām is immune from sin (Khaṭā') and errors (ḍalāl). The Imāms are those from whom "Allah has removed all impurity and made them absolutely pure"; they are possessed of (the power of) miracles and of (irrefutable) arguments (dalā'il); and they are for the protection of the people of this earth just as the stars are for the inhabitation of the heavens. They may be likened, in this community, to the Ark of Noah; he who boards it obtained salvation or reaches the Gate of Repentance.³ In another tradition, "God delegated (fawwāḍa) to the Imāms spiritual rulership over the whole world, which must always have such a leader and guide. Even if only two men were left upon the face of the earth, one of them would be an Imām, so much is his guidance needed."

In fact, according to Ja'far's explanation, there are always two Imāms, the actual or "speaking" one

1. Reference to the Qur'ānic verse, IV, 62.
2. The Arabic word أخبأ 'ayba means a leather bag; metaphorically, it is used for a person who is a repository of one's secrets. See, Fyzee, A. Shī'ite Creed, 96 n.4. cf. Lane.
3. Reference to the Qur'ān, II, 55, VII, 161. For the traditions see Kulaynī, Kāfī, 162, 258 and 277. Sadūg, Risālat al-I'tiqādāt, trans. Fyzee, A Shī'ite Creed, 96.

(Nāṭiq) and his son-successor, who during the lifetime of his father is "silent" (Ṣāmit).¹ The Silent Imām does not know of his exalted position until his father's death, for only then is he entrusted with the scriptures and the secrets of religion. When the father expires, his son immediately steps into his place and becomes "the Proof" (al-Ḥujja) for mankind.² Thus the Shī'ites of Ja'far's time accepted the principle that the Imāmate must pass from father to son who should also be a father and not a child (min wālidin ila wālid).³ Hence arose the famous problem of Ja'far's succession when he nominated Mūsa after the death of Ismā'īl. It apparently contradicted the principle that the Imāmate which once passed from al-Hasan to al-Husayn can never again be inherited by a brother from a brother.⁴ But was justified under the principle of Nass that the Imām with the guidance of God chooses the best of his sons worthy of the office.

However, as we have pointed out above, in order to justify his claims to the Imāmate on the principle of Nass it was necessary for Ja'far to put the utmost emphasis first of all on 'Alī's rights to the spiritual leadership of the community (Imāmate) as the divinely favoured legatee of the Prophet. For this reason Ja'far quoted many verses of the Qur'ān which in his interpretation proved the appointment of 'Alī to the Imāmate. It was

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 103-168.
2. Kulaynī, Ibid.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 206-207. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 207.
4. See part B of this chapter.

also Ja'far who narrated the Tradition according to which the Prophet said: "Whosoever's master I am, 'Ali is his master." This important Ḥadīth is given by Kulaynī in a very simple form without all the details of the assembly at Ghadīr Khum, and this may indicate that the Shī'ites of Ja'far's time had not yet elaborated the details which, as Vaglieri suggests, were based on a historical event in which the Prophet showed some favour to 'Ali.¹

Like the Naṣṣ, the 'special knowledge' of religion which Ja'far claimed for himself should also be traced back to 'Ali which passed on from Imām to Imām until it came to his possession. Thus Ja'far said that the Prophet entrusted 'Ali with the greatest name of God, the Traditions pertaining to the knowledge of prophethood (athār al-Nubuwwa) and a thousand words in a thousand chapters, each a thousand other words and a thousand other chapters. Abū Baṣīr, reported Ja'far as saying that the Prophet had in the Sheath of his sword a small scroll, on which were letters (hurūf), each of them "opening a thousand other letters".²

Mu'adh b. Kathīr stated on the authority of Ja'far that the legacy (al-Waṣīyya) came from heaven, brought by Gabriel for the Prophet in the form of a sealed book (or

1. The event of Ghadīr Khum has so far been described by the western scholars of Islam as a complete forgery by the later Shī'ites. L.V. Vaglieri is, however, the first who emphatically suggests in her recent article in El.2, that the event described by al-Ya'qūbī at Ghadīr Khum in favour of 'Ali should be accepted as of some historical merits. See El.2, art. 'Ghadīr Khum' also see p.44, n.1, supra.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 147 and 269. Mufīd, K.al-Irshād, 282.

rather scroll) with the command that it should become the inheritance of 'Ali b. Abī Tālib and his progeny.¹ There were a number of seals on this scroll. When the Prophet handed it over to 'Ali, the latter took off the first of these seals, and conformed to the instructions which were thus made available to him. On his death the scroll was inherited by al-Hasan, who broke the second seal and read the further instructions. All the succeeding Imāms - Husayn, Zayn al-'Ābidīn, al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq, acted in the same way.²

Ja'far went beyond the simple assertion of the divine appointment of 'Ali and his successors. He developed the doctrine of 'Light', introduced in al-Bāqir's time, and upheld the supernatural origin of the Family of Muhammad. He maintained that God created Muhammad and 'Ali from his Light as one Spirit without body before the creation of the world, the heavens and the Throne. Then he divided this spirit into two, and again each of the two parts into a further two, and so they became Muhammad, 'Ali, Hasan and Husayn. Then God raised Fāṭima from the same light, a spirit without a body.³ Owing to this the Imāms and their descendants are made of Light. Their bodies, too, are formed from the Great Light, which is stored under the Throne, and made into a superior sort of clay.⁴

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 171.

2. Ibid, 172.

3. Ibid, 278.

4. Ibid, 246-247.

Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Muhammad b. 'Abdillah b. 'Umar b. 'Ali b. Abī Tālib gave a somewhat different version of Ja'far's views, namely that "God was when there was nothing", (Inna Allaha Kaṇa idha lā Kanā), and he created "to be" (Khalaqa Kanā), "the place" (al-Makān) "and the Light with which He set aflame other lights."¹ From this first Light He created Muhammad and 'Ali. They were in existence before all other beings. They remained one and did not become two lights until they were born pure from 'Abdullah b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and his brother Abū Tālib.²

Another tradition explaining the supernatural birth and status of the Imāms is related by Abū Ḥamza on the authority of Abū Baṣīr from Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Ja'far said that God created the Holy Spirit, which is greater than Gabriel, "for Gabriel is an angel and Rūḥ is greater than the angels."³ This Holy Spirit descends upon an Imām while he is still in the state of embryo after forty days in the womb of the mother.⁴ He visits, too, the Imām on the night of power (Laylat al-Qadr).⁵

Another interesting tradition related from Ja'far on the supernatural nature of the Imāms reads "An Imām is

1. This is perhaps the first trace of the Neo-platonic theory of emanation.
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 248.
3. Ibid, 168-245.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.125.

endowed with five spirits: the Holy Spirit (Rūh al-Quds), the spirit of Faith (Rūh al-Imān), the Spirit of Religious Belief (Rūh al-Madraj), the Spirit of Strength (Rūh al-Quwwa) and the Spirit of Desire (Rūh al-Shahwa).¹ Owing to the Holy Spirit they know everything "below the Throne of God and beneath the earth"; they are helped by the Spirit of Faith, owing to which they fear God and are just; the spirit of Religious Belief makes them hate sins which the other mortals commit; the Spirit of Strength gives them power and inspires them with supreme obedience to God, and the Spirit of Desire enables them to fulfill their bodily needs without sin.²

There is a great store of traditions of this kind recorded by al-Kulaynī and other Shī'ite traditionists as having been enunciated by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. We have quoted only a few of them just to show the nature and character of these traditions which speak for themselves. If we take Ja'far's authorship for granted we may wonder to what extent he believed in what he said about his supernatural wisdom and divine origin. It would be easy to condemn him as an unscrupulous impostor, who prayed upon the credulity of his votaries. First of all, as has already been pointed out, it is almost impossible to ascertain which traditions really came from his mouth, and which were produced by the circle of his adherents among whom were such fanatics as Jābir al-Ju'fī, al-Mufaddal b. 'Umar

1. Ibid., 166-167. Another Tradition mentions the Spirit of Life (Rūh al-Hayāt) instead of the Spirit of Desire. Kulaynī, Ibid.
2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 166, 167.

and Abu'l-Khattāb.¹ Even, it seems, Ja'far himself was aware of the fact that many false traditions were being manufactured by the Kufa circle of his followers and attributed to him so that he warned: "only these Traditions should be accepted which agree with the Qur'ān."² To prevent his own words from being perverted, he said "write them down, for you will not remember them unless you have committed them in writing".³

Yet, among all these traditions, whether genuine or false, there are certain common trends, which indicates that Ja'far was responsible for at least the nucleus of the theories which arose in his time. These general trends reveal his belief that he and the other Imāms, his predecessors, were incarnations of the Divine Light, acting under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thus everything that came to his mind he sincerely understood as an absolute truth supernaturally suggested by God. In such a mental state it was natural that the borderline between the real and the imaginary tended to become very hazy and he could have been quite sincerely convinced that many things were real although they existed solely in his mind. On the other hand, among Ja'far's frequent visitors we find Murji'ites, Qadarites, Mystics and fanatical Shī'ites extremists and even non-Muslim sectarians. It is then quite probable that ideas of a miscellaneous origin might

1. See part B of this chapter.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 146. This he said in connection with Mughīra b. Sa'īd whom he condemned and cursed for heresies.

3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 29.

have influenced Ja'far's theories regarding the Imāmate and other allied problems. Such extraneous ideas seem to be of Iranian brands of Gnosticism, namely Manicheism. The traditions which have been quoted above on the theory of the Imāmate clearly betray Gnostic elements, and though Ja'far's successors added certain points of their own, they did not change the essential structure.

As far as Ja'far's claims to the secret Books and Scrolls containing religious hidden knowledge are concerned,¹ it is easy to reject them outright, but still there are some avenues for the investigation of their possible origin. According to al-Wāqidī, at the time of the appearance of Islam, 'Ali was one of only those six or seven men among the Quraysh who could write. The Prophet himself is said to have been unable to write, but he had four secretaries who wrote the text of the Qur'ān, on whatever material was available at hand - branches of palms, bits of leather or dry bones. There are several traditions from both Sunnite and Shī'ite sources, that affirm that 'Ali used to write the revelations when Muhammad pronounced them.² At the same time, 'Ali is said to have annotated them according to conversations he held with Muhammad. We may accept that 'Ali made these additional notes on the margin of his Qur'ān and this is apparently all that 'Ali claimed to possess in the nature of revelation from the Prophet that others did not have.

1. See T. Fahd, *El* (2), art. "Djafr."

2. See Donaldson, *The Shī'ite Religion*, 46 f. Hamidullah, *Sahīfah Hammām Ibn Munabbih*, 30 f.

Moreover, in his chapter on 'ilm Bukhārī cites a tradition that referred originally to Abū Juhayfah who said, "I asked 'Ali, 'Is there any book with you?' He answered, No, none except the Book of God, or the Understanding which is given a man who is a Muslim, or what is in this writing", I said, 'what is in this writing?' He replied, 'Reason, and the separation of captives and not killing the one who submits in unbelief.'¹ Another tradition attributed to al-Taymiya is mentioned twice by al-Bukhārī, in which the father of al-Tamiya reported that 'Ali said in a speech "There is no book among us that we should read except the Book of God, the Most High, and what is in the writing." Then he said, "In it are instructions about the wounded, what to do with the older camels, and the extent of the sacred territory about Medina that lies between Ayr and Kadha."² Ahmad b. Hanbal in connection with the sacred territory, also gives this tradition frequently.³

If 'Ali was from ten to fifteen years of age at the time when he professed Islam, and if he was none of those who could write, and considering the testimony of the traditions, it does not seem improbable that he had a Qur'ān with marginal notes which he had made in his conversations with the Prophet. It is also possible that 'Ali

1. Bukhārī, Sahīh, III, 49. Ṭayālīsī, Musnad, No. 91. Also see many references cited by Hamidullah in his Sahīfah Hammām Ibn Munabbih, 31-33.
2. Bukhārī, Sahīh, ch. 58. sec.10 and 17 and see a number of references cited by Hasan al-Ṣadr, Tāsīs al-Shī'a li 'Ulūm al-Islam, 279. Also Hamidullah, loc.cit.
3. Muslim Musnad, II, 414.

might have written down some other notes from the Prophet apart from the Qur'ān.¹ If it is so, we may perhaps find the origin of the elaborated claim made by Ja'far or only attributed to him, for the secret book (Jafr) and scrolls in his possession. Ibn Khaldūn says that Ja'far did possess a book written on the skin of the bullock which Harūn b. Sa'īd, the Zaydite theologian, transmitted from him and called it jafr, which dialectically means "small skin", (Thawr/saghīr). In this book were Malāhim and prophecies about certain members of the Ahl al-Bayt.² Ibn Khaldūn goes in details of this book and explains how the Fāṭimid emissaries of later times made constant use of these prophecies, twisting their context to suit the conditions of the epoch.³

Another way to find some explanation of Ja'far's claims to these secret scrolls is to investigate his access to writings on occult sciences. In saying this, it is not meant that Ja'far really occupied himself in these studies and became a scholar in occult sciences, as it is generally claimed by the Shī'ites on the ground that he is an often quoted authority in the works which bear the name of Jābir b. Ḥayyān. First of all, Jābir

1. Ibn 'Asākir, Ta'rīkh, II, 4 ff. makes it clear that it was a widespread belief among the Muslims that 'Alī had writings other than the Qur'ān, bequeathed to him by the Prophet. see Ibid. Ibn Nāḍīm, Fihrist, 28. and also see many references cited by Ḥamidūllāh, loc.cit. Hasan al-Ṣadr, loc.cit.
2. Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., II, 766. Also see T. Fahd, El.(2) art. Djafr.
3. Ibid, 767.

b. Ḥayyān himself is a historical problem and it is by no means certain that the works attributed to him are really of his genuine authorship.¹ Secondly, the relationship between Jābir and his supposed teacher Ja'far is also not quite certain.² What we mean then by Ja'far's access to writings on occult sciences is a possibility of his getting hold of some of the Hermetic revelations through the Manichaens, and the Sabaians of Harrān. We know of Abū Shākir al-Daysānī with whom Ja'far held disputes. There were also other Zindīqs who visited the Imām. Many of his disciples, too, especially in Kufa were in constant contact with the Manichaens, large numbers of whom lived in that city. Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī in particular was known to be addicted to occult sciences, which presumably he learned from the Gnostics and the Jews.

However, we have gone far from our direct concern here in finding whether there was in reality any secret book or scroll in possession of Ja'far. What concerns us is that Ja'far did claim for himself a special knowledge in matters of religion and made it a unique source of authority for the Imāmate.

Another greatly relevant and rather difficult problem connected with Ja'far's claims to the Nasṣ and inheritance of special knowledge was the question of the scope

1. See J. Ruska, "The History of Jābir problems", Islamic culture, XI, January, 1937.
2. See J. Ruska, "Jābir Ibn Ḥayyān und Seine Beziehungen zum Imām Ġa'far al-Sādiq", Der Islam, XVI, 264-266.

and applicability of the term 'Ahl al-Bayt'. On the one hand, all the descendants of 'Ali, whether through Fāṭima or not, were claiming membership of the 'Sacred House'. On the other hand, the 'Abbāsids, being the descendants of Hāshim, also claimed the prerogative of the Ahl al-Bayt and were revered by their Shī'a as God's inspired Imāms and the Mahdī. This compelled Ja'far to circulate a tradition allegedly from the Prophet which would limit the inclusive meaning of the Qur'ānic verse referring to the people of the House 'from whom the abomination was removed' to 'Ali, Fāṭima and their progeny. Thus he narrated a tradition of a very similar pattern to that of the Hadīth al-Mubāhala related by Zayn al-'Abidīn, and known as the Hadīth, Aṣḥāb al-Kisā or Hadīth al-Kisā. The Hadīth runs: Muhammad made 'Ali, Fāṭima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn enter under his mantle (Kisā) in the house of Umm Salima, and then said: "Every prophet has his family (ahl) and his charge (thaqal); these are, O God, my family and my charge." When Umm Salima asked: "Am I not from the people of your House?" the Prophet replied, "No, may you be well, only these under the mantle are the people of my House and my charge."¹

The tradition is a long one. But perhaps the most important part of it is when Gabriel comes down to announce the verse of the Purification² for the 'Five of the Mantle,'³

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 176.

2. "For God only desireth to put away filthiness from you as Muhammad's Household, and with a cleansing to cleanse you." Qur'ān, XXXIII, 33.

3. See Tha'labī, Tafsīr, 402.

and Muhammad introduces them to the angel saying: "There is, in the mantle, Fāṭima, her husband 'Ali, and her two children Hasan and Husayn." One can see clearly that the point of gravity is laid here not on 'Ali but on Fāṭima with whose reference 'Ali, Hasan and Husayn are introduced. Though the reference to Fāṭima for a special claim in her own right was made before,¹ it was Ja'far who put extreme emphasis on this point. It had indeed an immense potential appeal for Ja'far's claims, especially when all other claimants of Fāṭimid descent had been killed. Eventually Fāṭima came to be regarded among the Shī'ites as one of the holiest of figures.

When we examine the Isnād of the version of Hadīth, Aṣḥāb al-Kisā, given above, we may take it as the earliest in existence, and we may regard it as having genuinely emanated from Ja'far. Later other variants were elaborated and new chains of transmission artificially constructed, projecting it to Ibn 'Abbās. In this way the designation of 'Ali and Fāṭima and their progeny as the sole true Ahl al-Bayt was put into the mouth of the ancestor of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty.

Thus Ja'far claimed for himself the sanctity of the Ahl al-Bayt as an inherited quality confined only to those of the children of Fāṭima who were ordained to be the Imāms and in this way rejected the claims of all other

1. See al-Nafs al-Zakiyya's letter to al-Manṣūr in chapter IV part B. The reference to Fāṭima was made essential even by the Zaydīs, who came to restrict the Imāmate to those 'Alids who were also Fāṭimids. But it was perhaps quite late as Nawhakhtī, p.15 quotes some Zaydīs who accepted any son of 'Ali, no matter of what womb.

Hāshimites - whether 'Abbāsids or 'Alids. But, at the same time, in order to inspire with enthusiasm some of his close friends, he introduced an honorary membership of the Ahl al-Bayt. The precedent was supplied by the Prophet himself. When ransoming Salmān al-Fārsī from slavery, he declared him to be from us, "the people of the House".¹ This was imitated later by Ibrāhīm al-Imām, when he proclaimed Abū Muslim to be the Mawlā of the Ahl al-Bayt and thus put him above the hierarchy of the other missionaries. Thus, Ja'far said to 'Umar b. Yazīd Bayān al-Sābirī,² a Mawlā of the Thaqīf, "You are, by God, from us, the Ahl al-Bayt." 'Umar apparently was so elated that he could not believe his ears, and asked, "May I be your ransom, am I from the family of Muhammad?" "Yes," answered Ja'far, "from among them." "From among them?" asked 'Umar, still not sure that he understood correctly. The Imām repeated, "Yes, by God, from among them, O 'Umar. Have you not read in the Book of God that the men closest to Ibrāhīm were those who followed him? Muhammad was also a Prophet and those who believed in him were also his closest relatives, and God is the friend of the Faithful."³ On another occasion Ja'far said of 'Isa

1. For Salmān see Massignon, Salmān Pāk, 16 ff.
2. He was a Kufite known also as al-Bazzāz, a seller of cloth, see Hā'irī, Muntaha, 234. Najāshī, Rijāl, 203.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 212-213. (The exact wording here is not quite clear in the text published from Bombay. I do not have any other edition of Kashshī to compare it. The sense seems to be that the true believers in Muhammad are like those of the believers who are close relatives of him.)

b. 'Abdullah al-Qummī: "He is from us when alive and when dead." And also: "He is from the people of the House, the noble ones."¹ 'Isa's brother, 'Imrān, was also similarly treated by the Imām.²

There remains another point to be considered here concerning a principle which was raised by Ja'far to the status of an absolute condition of Faith. Such a hereditary claim to the Imāmate based on Naṣṣ and Special Knowledge as that made by Ja'far and his father al-Bāqir, greatly exposed the claimants to the danger of persecution by the 'Abbāsids who also claimed spiritual leadership of the community. Thus Ja'far put extreme emphasis on the principal of Taqiyya. It is interesting to note that there is not a single tradition on Taqiyya from any Imām prior to al-Bāqir, which is a sufficient proof that the principle of Taqiyya was first introduced by al-Bāqir according to the needs of his time and was further elaborated by Ja'far. One may see that the theory of Taqiyya suits very well the theory of supernatural knowledge embodied in the Imāms, and which should be limited to a few selected people. Thus Ja'far said, "This affair (Amr, i.e. the Imāmate and the esoteric meaning of religion) is occult (Mastūr) and veiled (Muqanna) by a covenant (Mithāq), and whoever unveils it will be disgraced by God."³

In a conversation with Mu'alla b. Khunays, the

1. Kash., Rijāl, 213-214.
2. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 237-235.
3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 488.

extremist, Ja'far said: "Keep our affair (amr) secret, and do not divulge it publicly, for whoever keeps it secret and does not reveal it, God will exalt him in this world and put light between his eyes in the next, leading him to paradise. O Mu'alla, who divulges our affair publicly, and does not keep it secret, God will disgrace him in this world and will take away light from between his eyes in the next, and will decree for him darkness that will lead him into the Fire. O, Mu'alla, verily the Taqiyya is of my religion and of the religion of my father, and one who does not keep the Taqiyya has no religion. O Mu'alla, it is necessary to worship in secret as it is necessary to worship openly. O, Mu'alla, the one who reveals our affair is the one who denies it."¹

The esoteric mysteries of religion were Wilāyat Allah, which God entrusted to Gabriel, who brought them to Muhammad. The Prophet, in turn, handed them over to 'Ali, and they became the inheritance of the Imāms, who are bound to keep them secret.² The duty, therefore, incumbent on the Faithful is that they should not impart their tenets to outsiders. Ja'far accused the Kaysānites of betraying religion when they spread its secrets among the common people: "Our secret continued to be preserved until it came into the hands of the sons of Kaysān (Wuld Kaysān, i.e. his followers) and they spoke of it on the roads and in the villages of the Sawād."³

1. Ibid, 486.

2. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 487.

3. Ibid, 486.

It is certain that the basis of the principle was a necessity imposed by the danger of following certain religious or political views. Every pattern of behaviour, however, was then considered from the religious standpoint and so had to be justified by certain passages from the Qur'ān or Ḥadīth indicating a precedent. If no explicit verse in the Qur'ān or Tradition could be found, it was not difficult to justify it by the application of certain texts in the Qur'ān. Thus, according to Ja'far, both Joseph and Abraham practised Taqiyya, when they resorted to falsehood - the first by accusing his brothers of theft, and the second by asserting that he was ill.¹ Muhammad himself is alleged to have practised Taqiyya until the verse in which he was ordered to preach publicly was revealed.²

In al-Bāqir's period the principle of Taqiyya was established in Shī'ism, and we may attribute the rudiments of its theory to him, but it was Ja'far who gave it final form and made it an absolute condition of true Faith. "Fear for your religion and protect it (lit. veil it) with the Taqiyya, for there is no faith (Imān) in whom there is no Taqiyya."³ Ja'far made it clear to his followers that by

1. Ibid, 483.

2. "O thou, Apostle, publish the whole that has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; if thou doest it not, thou has not preached His message, and God will not defend thee from wicked men." Qur'ān, V, 67. Another verse was interpreted for 'Ammār b. Yāsir, "And who disbelieved in God after believing in Him, except under compulsion (man 'Ukriha), and whose heart is confident in faith..." Qur'ān, XVI, 106.

3. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 483.

resorting to the principle of Taqiyya, he might give different answers to the same question on various occasions. Once he asked a certain Abū 'Amr al-Kinānī, "O Abū 'Amr, what is your opinion, if I related to you a Tradition or issued a legal decision, and you come another time, asking the same question, and I gave you a different answer? Which of the two answers would you accept?" Abū 'Amr replied: "The first, and I would leave off the second." "You are right, O Abū 'Amr," confirmed Ja'far. "God has permitted us to worship Him only in secret. By God, if you do this, it is better for you and for me. God, glory and power unto Him, refuses to accept our worship except in the Taqiyya."¹

It is, however, hardly disputable that the principle of Taqiyya thus made by Ja'far as a necessary part of Faith ultimately served the Shī'ites as a very useful instrument in their sectarian organisation during all unfavourable political circumstances. This is also evident from another tradition from Ja'far quoted by al-Sadūq in his Creed where the Imām says, "Mix with the people (i.e. enemies) outwardly, but oppose them inwardly, so long as the Amirate (Imaratu) is a matter of opinion."² On another occasion, when Zakariya b. Ṣāḥiq enumerated

1. See Goldziher, "Das Prinzip der Taqiyya im Islam", ZDMG LX (1906) 213-220, who gives a history of the principle of Taqiyya and finds it practiced without being announced as a principle even by Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya. It was Ja'far who so elaborated Taqiyya as basic principle of the Shī'ite faith, out of the political needs of his time.
2. Sadūq, Risālat al-I'tiqādāt, trans. Fyzee, A Shī'ite Creed, 110.

the Imāms in the presence of Ja'far and reached the name of Muhammad al-Bāqir, he was interrupted by the exclamation: "That is enough for you. God has affirmed your tongue and guided your heart."¹ We may note that the principle of Taqiyya is equally recognised by the Ismā'ilites and many traditions on the subject are common between the Ismā'ilites and the Imāmis.

1. Compare the traditions mentioned above from the Imāmite sources with the traditions recorded by Qāḍī Nu'mān in his Da'a'im and Mukhtaṣaru'l-Athār Vol. II. "Kitab al-Ashāriba," quoted by A.A.Fyzee, A Shī'ite Creed, 110, n.1; for example

التقية ديني ودين آبائي في كل شيء إلا في تحريم المسكر
Also see Kalāmi Pir, a treatise on Ismā'īlī doctrine edited by W. Ivanow, 67-69.

B. THE CIRCLE OF JA'FAR AND THE EVOLUTION
OF THE IMAMITE DOGMAS

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We have pointed out that the majority of the Imāmite (as well as Ismā'ilite) traditions both in the sphere of theological principles ('Usūl) and in that of religious practice and legal institutions (Furū') are allegedly derived from Ja'far and so he is regarded by them as the father of both Shī'ite law and dogmas.¹ On the one hand, it is almost impossible to ascertain with any degree of certainty which tenets were really of Ja'far's own creation and which were produced by the circle of adherents of peculiar tendencies surrounding him. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the nuclei of the Imāmite dogmas owe their origin to the time of Ja'far. In this situation the only possible thing to do is to make a close examination of the important personalities in the circle of Ja'far on whose authority most of Ja'far's doctrines are related. A better understanding of Ja'far's close adherents will help us in our knowledge of the Imāmite dogmas, attributed mostly to Ja'far. We shall, therefore, consider the personalities and their ideas side by side.

In this connection, however, two important points are to be noted. First, that not all of Ja'far's followers were his own acquisition but were formerly attached to al-Bāqir and later became ardent followers of the son. It was this old group which made the nucleus of Ja'far's

1. Because of this reason the Imāmite Shī'a are called "Millat Jafariyya."

following and is largely responsible for the majority of the tenets circulated among the Shī'ites on his authority. The second and still more important point is, that while Ja'far himself resided in Medina, almost all of his important followers lived in Kufa, busy in their sectarian activities and only occasionally paying visits to the Imām. This fact introduces us to a very crucial problem.

Kufa had long been a centre of ghulāt speculations and activities. Whether 'Abdullah b. Sabā',¹ to whom the history of ghulāt is traced back was a real personality or not, the name al-Sabā'iyya² is often used as synonymous with those Shī'ites in Kufa who believed in the Godhead of 'Ali. According to heresiographers Ibn Sabā' was the first to preach the doctrine of Waqf (refuse to recognise the death of 'Ali), and condemnation of the Shaykhān in addition to 'Uthmān.³ Baghdādī says that al-Sabā'iyya, mostly consisting of the South Arabian Yamanites, survived all vicissitudes until the time of al-Mukhtār in AH64/684 A.D., and formed the nucleus of his "chair worshippers".⁴

This early group of ghulāt seems to have been absorbed by the Kaysānites who believed in Ibn al-Hanafiyya's

1. See El (2), art. "Abdullah b. Sabā'".
2. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 20. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 22. Baghdādī, Farq, 32
3. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 20. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 22.
4. Baghdādī, Farq, 32. Also see verse of 'Asha Hamadān in Tab., II, 704.

Mahdism and followed Abū Hāshim 'Abdullah. The death of Abū Hashim was the turning point in the history of the ghulāt, for it caused the split in consequence of which they separated into two distinct groups. One upheld the various successors¹ of Abū Hāshim, while the others turned towards Muhammad al-Bāqir. Among the later the first name to appear is that of Hamza b. 'Umāra al-Buraydi.² For some time he preached that he was a prophet and that Ibn al-Hanafīyya was God;³ but later he recognised al-Bāqir as the incarnation of God, and pretended to act in his name. He claimed that the Imām was paying him visits at night.⁴ When al-Bāqir denied this allegation and cursed him, Hamza declared himself the Imām.⁵

Bayān b. Sa'm'ān and Sa'id al-Nahdī, two associates of Hamza, formed the next link in the chain of the development of Shī'ite extremism. Of Sa'id we know very little, but Bayān, a straw dealer of the South

1. Some, Abū Hāshim's younger brother, others Ibn Mu'āwiya, and the majority Muhammad b. 'Ali, the 'Abbāsīd. See Ibn Khaldūn, Muq., II, 532 f.
2. His nisbah is given variously as al-Barbarī (Nawbakhtī; 25 and Sa'd al-Ash'arī, 32), al-Yazdī, al-Zubayrī and al-Zaydī (Kash., 188, 195, 196), al-Burayrī (Hā'irī, 122). The most likely version is al-Burayrī, (Kash-188). Hodgson, following Nawbakhtī, writes him al-Barbarī (JAOIS. 1955, 7).
3. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 25. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 32. Also see Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads," JRAS. 1960. 167.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 196.
5. He was called "one of the seven accursed", see Kash., Rijāl, 188-195. Hillī, Rijāl, 219.

Arabian tribe of Nahd, was to fulfill an important role in the history of ghulāt. Like Ḥamza, he recognised the Imāmate of Abū Hāshim, but after his death, went over to al-Bāqir.¹ Bayān held that the divine particle, incarnated in 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib, enabled him to know the unseen, to foretell the future, and to fight against the infidels.² The power of the invisible angelic world was in 'Ali like a lamp within a niche in a wall, and God's light was in him as the flame in the lamp. He propounded his anthropomorphic theories of the nature of God. At one moment he is said to have written to al-Bāqir summoning him to accept him, Bayān, as a prophet; at another moment he claimed that al-Bāqir had appointed him as emissary. Al-Bāqir is reported to have cursed him many times.³

Many teachings of the ghulāt are ascribed to a contemporary of Bayān, Abū 'Abdillāh Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī, who was also executed in Kufa for his heresies. He tried to establish connections with al-Bāqir, but after the latter's death turned to al-Nafs al-Zakiyya who also condemned him. His ideas were more or less the same as that of al-Bayān with many additions.⁴ Mughīra produced so

1. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 23. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 25. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 33.
2. Malātī, K. al-Tanbīh, 118. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 152.
3. See Kash., Rijāl, 194 f. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 68. Watt, "Shī'ism under the Umayyads", JRAS.1960. 167 f.
4. See Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 6-9. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 176. Kash., Rijāl, 148. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 52. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 43, 44, 50. Ibn Hajar, Lisān, VI, 75-76. Ibn Qutayha, Uyūn, II, 146, 149. also Tab., II, 1619. Agh., XIX, 58.

many false and imaginary Ahādīth and Malāhim that Ja'far al-Ṣādiq warned his disciples against accepting any of his traditions.¹

After Mughīra's execution in 119/737, another extremist Abū Manṣūr al-'Ijlī continued his co-tribesman's activities. He also claimed to have been appointed emissary by al-Bāqir, but after the Imām's death he claimed the Imāmate for himself. Some of his followers practised strangulation. They seem to have been the first to attach cosmic importance to "the family of Muhammad", since Abū Manṣūr asserted that 'Ali and his Husaynid descendants were heaven and their Shī'a were earth.² Yet he claimed something like prophetic inspiration for himself and even for his sons. The prophethood would continue, he said, in six of his successive descendants, of whom the last would be al-Qā'im.³ The Husaynid Imāms rejected his claims and al-Bāqir cursed him. Later Ja'far al-Ṣādiq said that Abū Manṣūr was inspired by a devil and had thus become an apostle of Iblīs.⁴

This is a very brief outline of the history of ghulāt movement in Kufa from the death of 'Ali till the Imāmate of Ja'far. These ghulāt may be divided into two main groups, both presumably sprouting from a common stem - that of al-Sabā'iyya. One of them, (al-Kaysāniyya, al-Hāshimiyya and al-'Abbāsiyya) transplanted to Iran towards

1. Ibn Ḥajar, Lisān, VI, 76-77.

2. Watt, loc.cit.

3. See Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 34, 54. Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 46. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, I, 9 f. Kash., Rijāl, 196. Shahrastānī, Milal, I, 178.

4. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 34. Kash., Rijāl, 196.

the end of the Umayyad period, came under the impact of Mazdakism, and grew into the Kharrāmite revolutionary movement. We are not now concerned, however, with this group. The other group overlapped the Kaysānite stage, remained in Kufa and was closely connected with the successive Husaynid Imāms of the twelve line. Though these ghulāt never formed a complete body, there was, nevertheless, a logical line of development in their views, and to a certain degree, also a continuity of leadership. The so-called "Founders" after whom the various extremist groups are usually named, were by no means the heads of independent, individual circles vanishing after their death without trace. Though the leaders were condemned, their ideas persisted in some form or other. Our interest, therefore, in these extremists of the second group is that they have, to a great extent, a direct impact on many tenets of some of the most conspicuous adherents of Ja'far in Kufa; and what sets off the condemned extremists from the semi-extremists, so to speak, of Ja'far's circle, is the presence in the latter of a unifying discipline and its absence from the former. This can easily be illustrated by comparing the cases of Jābir al-Ju'fī and Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb - the former's services were highly appreciated by the Imām, the latter was condemned and expelled.

Jābir b. Yazīd b. al-Hārith al-Ju'fī,¹ one of the most enthusiastic of al-Bāqir's associates, was the most

1. Abū 'Abdillāh Jābir b. Yazīd b. al-Hārith al-Ju'fī, from the South Arabian tribes of al-Ju'f, established in Kufa. Samā'ī Ansāb, fol. 113 b. Najashī, 93-94. Kash., Rijāl 126 ff. Hā'iri Muntaha, 73 ff.

striking personality in the closest circle of Ja'far. Opinions regarding him are greatly divergent and even contradictory. According to certain authorities, among them Sufyān al-Thawrī,¹ he was very trustful (Ṣaḍūq) and trustworthy (thiqa) as a traditionist,² but his transmitters 'Amr b. Shimr al-Ju'fī,³ Mufaḍḍal b. Ṣālih al-Asadī⁴ and Munakhkhal b. Jamāl al-Asadī,⁵ were liars and introduced many spurious Ḥadīths for which Jābir himself was not responsible.⁶ Yet much of what we know of him indicates that his critics were definitely right. For example, Abū Ḥanīfa is reported to have said, "I have never met a bigger liar than Jābir al-Ju'fi."⁷ Jābir might have been a learned man, but from the reports concerning him he appears as a pathological type, whom boasting carried beyond the limits of reason, and at least on certain occasions he could put no dividing line between reality and fantasy. He asserted that he knew 50,000 or even 70,000 Traditions, "which he could not relate to anyone," meaning that they contained esoteric secrets

1. Dhahabī, Mizān, 1, 153. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 129.
2. Samā'ni, Ansāb, 131 b. calls him a liar. Najashī Rijāl, 93-94 describes him as "weak". Hillī, Rijāl, 35, says he was Thiqa.
3. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 230. Tafrīshī, Naqd al-Rijāl, fol. 147 b.
4. A Mawlā of the Asad, (a slave dealer). See below.
5. A seller of slave girls. As a traditionist he was "weak" and accused of extremism. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 311. Tafrīshī, op.cit. fol. 208 a-b. Najashī, Rijāl, 298.
6. Hillī, Rijāl, 35.
7. Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb al-Tahādhīb, II, 48.

of religion.¹ Some people expressed impatience concerning the Hadīths related by Jābir or held him to be a madman.² Even Jābir himself confessed before al-Bāqir that the secrets which the Imām had imparted to him, stirred him sometimes so much that something like madness overwhelmed him.³ "When you feel like this," said al-Bāqir, "go to the mountains, dig a hole and put your head into it, and then say Muhammad b. 'Alī told me such and such."⁴ Thus the Imām put the emphasis on the necessity of keeping the knowledge strictly secret.

Jābir's reputation for madness, however, saved him from serious trouble for when Caliph Hīshām ordered him to be sent to Damascus for an inquiry into his activities, people testified before the Governor of Kufa that he was insane.⁵

Jābir is also reported to have been addicted to necromancy and to have practised sleight of hand, pretending that his simple tricks were miracles.⁶ There was, to be sure, no difference between his methods and those of al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd.

1. Kash., Rijāl, 128. Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, II, 49. Dhahabī, Mizān, I, 155. On the other hand Majlisī quotes a Tradition that al-Bāqir related to Jābir seventy secret Hadīths. Bihār, XI, 98.
2. Even Kulaynī records it, see Kāfī, 251. 'Amilī, A'yān, 213 ff.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 128.
4. Ibid.
5. Kash., Rijāl, 128. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 251.
6. Kash., Rijāl, 129-130.

Jābir's position among the Shī'ite traditionists was safeguarded by the way he extolled the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt and by his devotion to al-Bāqir and then Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, whom he called "the Trustees of the Trustees and the inheritors of the knowledge of the Prophets."¹ The fact that he pretended to have witnessed miracles worked by the Imāms,² was held as proof of his truthfulness, and he became recognised as the bāb (gate, i.e. spokesman) of the two Imāms. Despite his obvious extremist tendencies, he was not rejected as ghālī³ because instead of his extremist tendencies he remained faithful to a discipline under al-Bāqir and Ja'far. He held the opinion that Godhead was incarnated in the Imāms⁴ and believed in Haj'a.⁵ He also maintained that Dabbat al-Ard in the Qur'ān was 'Ali b. Abī Ṭālib. This belief is said to have been held by some Shī'ites even in the time of Husayn.⁶

With this knowledge of Jābir it is easy to understand the nature and character of the traditions related by him with the stamp of either al-Bāqir or al-Ṣādiq - the traditions which ultimately became part of the base of the Imāmite dogmas. It will suffice to quote here only one from a great number of traditions related by Jābir

1. Kash., Rijāl, 127.
2. See Kash., Rijāl, 129-130.
3. Hillī, Rijāl, 35.
4. 'Amilī, A'yān, XVI, 214.
5. Ibn Hajar, Tahdhīb, III, 49.
6. De Goeje, Balādhūrī's Ansāb, ZDMG. 1884.p. 391.

in connection with the Imāms and their supernatural character. Jābir related that al-Bāqir said, "O Jābir, the first beings that God created were Muhammad and his family, the Rightly guided ones, and the guides, and they were phantoms of light before God. " "I asked and what are the phantoms," said al-Bāqir. "Shadows of light, luminous bodies without spirits; they were strengthened by one spirit, the Holy Spirit (Rūḥ al-Quds) through which Muhammad and his family worshipped God. For that reason He created them forebearing, learned, endowed with filial piety and pure; they worship God by prayer, fasting, prostrating themselves, enumerating his name and ejaculating "God is great".¹

Perhaps no other companion of al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq dared to go as far in his assertions as Jābir. A great number of the traditions bearing the stamp of ghuluw are related from him and thus it can be said that he was, to a great extent, responsible for the step towards extremism which legitimist Shī'ism adopted during the Imāmate of al-Bāqir and which was developed under Ja'far.

Al-Ash'arī says² that Jābir al-Ju'fī sometimes claimed to be the legatee and successor of al-Mughīra b. Sa'id. Ibn Ḥazm goes still further and firmly states

1. Kulaynī, Kāfī, 279.

2. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 8. Also Baghdādī, Farq, 148. It should be particularly noted that this charge against Jābir is not mentioned by any Shī'ite source, not even by al-Kashshī, who often does not suppress unfavourable reports about the early Rijāl.

that Jābir was the first Khalīfa of Mughīra.¹ This is, however, highly improbable for Jābir throughout his career remained faithful to al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq in their quarrel with al-Mughīra whom he reviled and cursed.² On the other hand, there was but a small difference between their theological views, and later extremist groups accepted Jābir as their forerunner.³ This is indicated by the assertions of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb and his successors who claimed Jābir al-Ju'fī as their predecessor. Thus "Umm al-Kitāb" is said to contain the teachings of al-Bāqir, Jābir b. 'Abdullah al-Anṣārī and Jābir al-Ju'fī.⁴ Another religious writing, 'Risālat al-Ju'fī,' containing Ismā'ilite doctrines, is based mainly on the exposition of Jābir on the authority of al-Bāqir.⁵ Apparently neither the doctrine of "Umm al-Kitāb", nor that of Risālat al-Ju'fī, represent the views of al-Bāqir, and probably only little of what Jābir himself taught. It is nevertheless an important point that he was regarded as the spiritual forefather of the post-Khaṭṭābite sects. What Jābir really taught is now difficult to decide, but two points are evident. One is that the traditions attributed to him, as we have seen, are on the whole very strongly

1. Ibn Ḥazm, Fisāl, IV, 141.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 126-127. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 73.
3. Khasībī, Dīwān, fol. 43 a.
4. See Ivanow, "Notes Sur Ummu'l-Kitab". REI. 1932. p. 431 ff.
5. See E.E. Salisbury, "Translation of an unpublished Arabic Risālah". JAOS.vol. III, 1853. pp.167-193.

tinged with ghuluw, not far from Mughīra's doctrines, despite the fact that they were pruned by the later Imāmite traditionists such as al-Kulaynī, who wholeheartedly included them in his al-Kāfī. The second point is that despite his extremist tendencies he was throughout his life the chief representative of al-Bāqir and after al-Bāqir's death Jābir remained Ja'far's representative and chief spokesman in Kufa for about twelve years until he (Jābir) died in AH 128/745 A.D.¹ This was not the case with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb, however.

Muhammad b. Abī Zaynab Miqlās b. Abī al-Khaṭṭāb appears to be the most peculiar and striking figure of all the early adherents of Ja'far. A Kufite Mawlā of the Banū Asad, he bore the Kunya of Abū'Isma'īl but was more commonly known as Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb.² He was, it seems, a bold man of strong character and also most trusted and loyal to Ja'far, for after the death of Jābir al-Ju'fī, Ja'far selected him as the Wakīl in charge of the whole sectarian group in Kufa. Unfortunately our knowledge of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's theories is very imperfect. The extremely concise description found in the works of al-Ash'arī,³ al-Baghdādī,⁴ Shahrastānī,⁵ and some other heresiographers, give us only a partial picture of his teachings. Perhaps the clearest are the accounts of

1. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 73. Kāmil, V, 268. Najāshī, Rijāl, 94.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 187.
3. Maqālāt, I, 10 ff.
4. Farq, 150 ff.
5. Milal, I, 179 ff.

al-Nawbakhtī¹ and Sa'd al-Ash'arī,² but even these are fragmentary. In any case, it is not possible for us in this limited space to go into details of his teachings which in many points are not very different than those taught by the ghulāt before him. A brief summary of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's doctrines has been outlined by Prof. Lewis³ and is sufficient to give a general idea about his theories.

Our main interest in Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb is to point out that his excommunication by Ja'far, due to his uncompromising fanatical activities both in doctrinal and political fields, helped to maintain a more disciplinary atmosphere in the circle of the Imām. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's assertions regarding the Imāms were in many points the same as those of Jābir al-Ju'fī, but the former went a step further in divinishing the Imāms and thus broke the doctrinal discipline which both al-Bāqir and Ja'far wanted to establish. He was not content with the theory that the Divine Light was incarnated in the Imāms, but declared them gods - being residing upon the earth, but absolutely pure, endowed with the knowledge of the unknown and the gift of prophecy.⁴

These assertions, made so openly, frightened Ja'far, for they could get him into serious trouble. Ja'far found

1. Firaq, 37 ff and 58 ff.

2. Maqālāt, 50 ff. 81 ff.

3. The Origins of Ismā'ilism, 32 ff. Also see B. Lewis, El (2) art. "Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb."

4. Kash., Rijāl, 192. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 179 f. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 11.

it necessary to deny supernatural knowledge, and when asked: "Is it true that you know the number of the drops of rain and of the stars and of the leaves of the trees, and the weight of water in the sea?" Ja'far raised his head to heaven and exclaimed, "Subhān Allah ! Subhān Allah! No by God, nobody knows this except God."¹ These denials on the part of Ja'far which might have been expressed under the principle of Taqiyya and meant for public consumption, were perhaps too emphatic, and enraged the obstinate Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb so that instead of retracting, he still more vigorously reasserted his opinions. Eventually, as it is said, Ja'far disowned and excommunicated him on the grounds of his fanatical extremism.² He said that the fanatic was "worse than the Jews, the Christians, and those who give associates to God."³

In short, these and similar extreme views of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb on the nature of the Imām, and his divinization of Ja'far are usually believed to be the main cause of the quarrel and the break between them, which occurred probably sometime before AH 138/755-756 A.D.⁴ On a close examination, however, we find that they were an important part but not the whole of the contributory motives that led to Ja'far's repudiation of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb.

Indeed, Ja'far, like his father, did not want to be worshipped as God or given the status of the Prophet.

1. Kash., Rijāl, 193.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 190-191. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 179.

3. Kash., Rijāl, 194.

4. Kash., Rijāl, 191. also see B. Lewis, EI (2) art. "Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb."

Yet Ja'far's own theory of light and of the divine origin of the Imāms made it very difficult to draw a dividing line between his tenets and extremism. Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's assertions had to be denied, but this was not a sufficient motive for excommunication. Ja'far did not object when a certain Ja'far b. 'Uthmān al-Ṭāī' addressed him with the word 'Labbayka'.¹ He did not disown Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī, although the latter held the opinion that there is a God in heaven, and a demiurge on the earth in the person of the Imām.² Ja'far even said: "I put over you al-Mufaḍḍal, so look to him and take from him, for what he says about God is only true."³ Al-Mufaḍḍal was not far away from Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb when he asserted that the knowledge of the Imām was necessary to a believer, and at the same time it dispensed with the fulfillment of religious obligations.⁴ Also when entering the house of Ja'far, he greeted those present as prophets calling them such names as Ibrāhīm, Nūḥ or Yūnus.⁵

Thus, all those heretical assertions cited by al-Kashshī and others constitute only part of the cause of Ja'far's anger which resulted in his excommunication of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb. There seems to have been some deeper reason.

Ja'far had once excommunicated Zurāra allegedly on

1. Kash., Rijāl, 187. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 77.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 208.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 210.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 208.
5. Ibid.

account of a small doctrinal difference, but this was done to protect him from persecution.¹ Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb did not need such protection for he was himself inclined to be aggressive. Moreover, Ja'far's anger against him was sincere and not pretended. Thus another equally important factor which caused the break between them seems to be Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's political activities aiming at an armed Messianic uprising in the name of the eldest son of Ja'far, Ismā'il.² Kashshī quotes Ja'far saying in connection with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb's extremist views; "He frightened me while I was standing and while I was lying in bed."³ The real meaning of Ja'far's fear should not be sought in Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb's extremist views only, as by Kashshī, but also in his political activities. These conspiracies must have reached quite an advanced stage since they did not escape the attention of the 'Abbāsids and both Ja'far and Ismā'il found themselves in serious danger. They were ordered to appear before al-Manṣūr in al-Hāshimiyya. There Bassān b. 'Abdillāh al-Ṣayrafī, another participant in the plot, was slain in the presence of the Caliph. He was made the scapegoat, for Ja'far and Ismā'il were spared. When they were brought out, Ja'far gave vent to his fear and anger, shouting at his son, "You prevaricator, I give you tidings of the Fire."⁴

1. See below.

2. See B. Lewis, Origins of Ismā'ilism, 39 f.

3. Kash., Rijāl, 187.

4. Kash., Rijāl, 159. B. Lewis, loc.cit.

For some time, Ja'far was kept in Hira under the supervision of the Caliph. Allowed to return to Medina, he took steps to prevent the recurrence of any foolhardy action on the part of Ismā'il, and deprived him of the rights of succession on the pretext that he was addicted to drinking Nabīdh, and appointed Mūsa, then only a child, in his stead. Many people opposed this decision declaring that the Naṣṣ cannot be revoked. They, including Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb and Mufaddal b. 'Umar,¹ did not consider that Ismā'il had proved unfit to be an Imām because he drank Nabīdh. They said that in fact he drank it to indicate that the religious prohibitions and obligations should be understood in an allegorical sense. After Ismā'il's death, some of his supporters, among them Mufaddal b. 'Umar, recanted and became reconciled with Ja'far.

This leads us to two conclusions. First, Ja'far's policy was decidedly against any bid for power not only for himself but also for his successor. Second, the principle of Naṣṣ had by now got such firm hold that even Ja'far's own revocation of it from the eldest son to a younger one aroused much criticism; and when Ismā'il died some left Ja'far on the ground that he should not have named a man who was not to survive him. This indicates that a distinct idea of the supernatural character of the Naṣṣ was already present.

We can, however, conclude that in the expulsion of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb both reasons might have been equally weighty:

1. Kash., Rijāl, 206-207. Majlisī, Bihār, XI, 207.

(1) his political activities, which strengthens our view that Ja'far was against any political enterprise, and (2) his extremist teachings which crossed a certain 'limit'. This 'limit' is certainly a very vague term to be used, especially for that period. But it seems that al-Bāqir in his time did introduce a certain doctrinal discipline and anyone breaking that discipline could not enter the recognised sectarian circle. Such were the cases with Ḥamza, Bayān, Mughīra and Abū Maṣṣūr,¹ and finally in Ja'far's time with Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb after he was excommunicated by him. We must accept that a certain disciplining by way of doctrinal limitation was adopted or introduced by al-Bāqir and was maintained by Ja'far. Al-Kashshī quotes Ja'far who complains of Mughīra misrepresenting al-Bāqir, and adds that all the ghuluw ascribed to al-Bāqir is from Mughīra.²

On the other hand, in the doctrines of the early ghulāt we find the rudimentary ideas and nucleus of the Imāmite tenets and also the elements which helped develop their sectarian aspects. This can be well illustrated by a close comparison between the theories of the early ghulāt, who could not keep a borderline to discipline their speculations, and the dogmas of the Imāmites, attributed mainly to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who did maintain a certain limit. Thus, if we analyse the basic principles to which all ghulāt adhered in broad outline, they will be the following:

1. As we learn from the heresiographical works quoted above in connection with these extremists.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 146-147.

1) Hulūl or the "dissolving of the divine particle (al-Juz al-Ilāhiyya) in the person of the Imāms, who thus becomes an incarnation of God.

2) Raj'a - the Return of the Imām. When an Imām died, he was believed only to have "concealed" himself. His death was simulated, and his spirit returned in the body of another Imām. The last of the Imāms was expected to come from his concealment to initiate the rule of justice. The doctrine of Raj'a was also combined with that of Tanāsukh.

3) Tāwīl - the allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ānic prescriptions, which had two meanings: the outward (zāhir) as understood by the mass of the Muslims, and the esoteric (bāṭin) the key of which was held by the divine Imāms. Usually the various religious duties such as prayer and fast were explained as having the inner sense of knowledge represented by certain persons.

4) Rafd - the absolute rejection of the first three Caliphs as illegitimate rulers, demiurges of Satan and enemies of God-'Ali.

5) Tafwīd - the delegation of power. This principle, introduced towards the end of the first century of the Hijra, permitted the non-'Alid sectarian leaders to claim the Imāmate and godship, by asserting that they held their rank by delegation, as at some stage or the other Bayān, Mughīra and Abū Mansūr did.¹

1. For all these tenets of the ghulāt see Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 5-16. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 173-186. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, and Sa'd al-Ash'arī, see indexes.

Leaving aside very many other details, however, these five are the fundamental doctrinal principles common to all ghulāt till the time of Ja'far, including Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb. All these principles were in some ways recognised by the later Imāmite Shī'a, but with a "guiding limit". Thus the Imāmite said that (1) God's Light was incarnated in their Imāms, but they did not worship them as God; (2) they believed in the Raj'a, but did not deny the truth of the Imām's death, and completely repudiated the transmigration of soul (Tanāsukh). (3) They demanded an absolute obedience to the Imāms, but did not proclaim that it dispensed the Faithful from fulfilling their religious obligations. (4) They cursed the first three Caliphs, but did not look upon them as incarnations of the Devil. (5) Finally, they rejected the principle of delegation and held that only the descendants of 'Alī and Fāṭima could be an Imām.¹ With this brief comparison between the basic principles of the early ghulāt and the Imāmite dogmas, it is perhaps easy now to see the influence of the former on the latter, and the similarities of the two. This flow of extremist doctrines into the Imāmite creed was rather natural since, as had been pointed out, the circle closest to Ja'far was formed by men of at least semi-extremist tendencies. We have seen Jābir al-Ju'fī and Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī. There were many others like them. For example, Mu'adh b. Muslim al-Farrā'an-Nahvī,

1. For the Imāmite tenets see Shaykh Sadūq, Risālat al-I'tiqādāt, trans. Fyzee, A Shī'ite Creed. Hilli, with commentary by Miqdād-e-Fāḍil, Al-Bab al-Hādī 'Ashar, transt. Millar.

the grammarian and traditionist who, according to the Shī'ite's own sources, is said to have produced many Aḥādīth of Gnostic character with a marked tendency towards extremism.¹

Furthermore, among Ja'far's followers were simple men like 'Umar an-Nabātī who may have misunderstood much of what he said, and later repeated his words to others, adding a flavour of the miraculous or even distorting them for the sake of material gain.² Frightened by the tone of many of the traditions, Ja'far sometimes felt compelled to deny his supernatural powers and to discount the miracles.³ But then the principle of Taqiyya, to which he adhered, prevented the sober warnings from being taken seriously. His negation of the knowledge of hidden things was in conflict with the assertions that the Imāms possessed books of prophecy, and were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Thus the principle of Taqiyya involved the Imām in a vicious circle. Naturally, the ghulāt who thought themselves divinely inspired - such as Bayān and later Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb - attributed to Ja'far and other Imāms words which may have been based upon some real sayings, but largely and deliberately altered and exaggerated. They sometimes reacted quite violently when Ja'far refused to accept their exaggerated assertions. Once when Ja'far denied some tenets which Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb propounded as having emanated from him, the latter flew into a fury, and grabbed the Imām by the beard.⁴ The ghulāt's practice of attributing

1. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 2020, 203. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 1, 66.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 208.

3. Kash., Rijāl, 192-193.

4. Ibid, 190.

their views ~~to~~ Ja'far is further illustrated by a report given by al-Kashshī that once a follower of the Imām 'Alī al-Riḍa read before him certain Aḥādīth which he had copied from the notebooks of those in 'Irāq, who had taken down sayings of Ja'far and Bāqir. The Imām strongly rejected the authenticity of those traditions and declared that Abu'l-Khaṭṭāb and his followers had misrepresented Ja'far, and got their lies accepted in those notebooks.¹ Many traditions also are reported of Ja'far complaining of Mughīra misrepresenting al-Bāqir.² In the same sequence Kashshī records another tradition attributed to Ja'far which goes even further back. Ja'far said: "al-Hasan had a liar, who blasphemed against him... and there was a liar who blasphemed against Husayn...and there was al-Mukhtār, who blasphemed against 'Alī Zayn al-'Abidīn, and al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd, who lied against my father."³ As the transmitter who reported this tradition, Ḥabīb al-Khaṭṭāmī, remarked, "Ja'far did not give the names of the first two liars", the whole tradition must be dismissed as an expression of the idea that every successive Imām had a particular blasphemer.

We have so far been discussing the extremists and semi-extremists of Ja'far's circle and their impact on the legitimist Shī'ite dogmas. Not all of Ja'far's followers were fanatics, however. A considerable number of them were simply Shī'ites distinguished from the other Muslims only by the higher degrees of their devotion to

1. Ibid. 146-147 and see Hodgson, JAOS, 1955, 13.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 146-147.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 148.

the memory of 'Ali, and by their conviction that he was the best person after the Prophet for the combined office of the spiritual and temporal rulership of the community; and thus the Imāmate was his and his descendant's right which was ordained to them by God. The best example of this group is 'Abdullah b. Abī Ya'fūr, a resident of Kufa. He opposed his fellow-sectarians such as Mu'alla b. Khunays,¹ a Mawlā of Ja'far, who asserted that the Imāms were prophets. This was contradicted by Ibn Abī Ya'fūr saying that they were only pure, God-fearing, learned theologians.² Very strict in his religious practices, he was highly favoured and respected by Ja'far.³ He enjoyed the respect of the moderate traditionists circle, and when he died during the lifetime of Ja'far, many of the Ahl-al-Hadīth and pro-Shī'ite Murji'ites accompanied his bier.⁴

There was still another group among the followers of Ja'far. The members of this group were the people busy in the intellectual or Dialectical questions of the day, along the lines of the Mu'tazilites. It was a great source of strength for the Imāmate of Ja'far that he gathered round himself the men who could stand with remarkable vigour among those of the Muslims who were

1. See Kash., Rijāl, 239 ff.

2. Kash., Rijāl, 160.

3. See in Kashshī, 160 f, many traditions of Ja'far in his praise, though he was lax by Shī'ite standards for he drank nabīdh which he treated as a medicine. Ibid.

4. Kash., Rijāl, 161.

speculating on the philosophical problems of the time. Moreover, the attachment of this group to Ja'far¹ was a great advancement in the development of the sect in its own right. These speculative theologians of Ja'far's circle were later regarded as the elite of the Shī'ite Mutakallimūn.²

In this group, however, mention should first be made of Abu'l-Hasan b. A'yan b. Susan, better known by his Kunya al-Zurāra. He was a Mawlā of the Banū Shaybān of Kufa, and the grandson of an enslaved Greek monk who adopted Islam.³ Zurāra originally belonged to the supporters of Zayd b. 'Ali,⁴ for together with his brother Ḥurmān b. A'yan⁵ and al-Ṭayyār⁶ he was a disciple of al-Ḥakam b. 'Uṭayba,⁷ who was a great Zaydite and Mu'tazilite leader. Later they changed their allegiance and attached themselves to al-Bāqir, Ḥurmān being the first to take this step.⁸

1. We should not ignore the fact that al-Bāqir had already prepared the way for speculative theology among the legitimist Shī'ites.
2. Though before the science of Kalām became a definite branch of learning the early Shī'ite Mutakallimūn were speculative theologians, traditionists and lawyers all at the same time.
3. Tūsī, Fihrist, 141 ff. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 135-136. Hillī, Rijāl, 76.
4. This fact itself suggests that under Mu'tazilite influence Zurāra developed his interest in speculative theology.
5. Najāshī, Rijāl, 102.
6. Probably Hamza b. Muhammad b. 'Abdillāh al-Ṭayyār, see Hā'irī, Muntaha, 121 and 279.
7. Kash., Rijāl, 137.
8. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 120.

After the death of al-Bāqir, Zurāra belonged to the circle of the closest adherents of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who spoke of him with great appreciation: "Four men are the best beloved to me, whether alive or dead: Burayd b. Mu'āwiya al-'Ijlī,¹ Zurāra, Muhammad b. Muslim and al-Aḥwal."² Ibn Abī 'Umayr³ said that he and his contemporaries were beside Zurāra "like children around their teacher."⁴

It seems that because of his vehement activities in the cause of Ja'far, Zurāra met with some difficulties and even dangers. Thus to spare him hardships, Ja'far, resorting to the principle of Taqiyya, apparently disavowed him and even cursed him. Justifying this, he said that in order to save Zurāra, he had acted in the same way as the Prophet Khidr when he sank a ship to save it from being taken from its owners by a tyrannous King.⁵

Zurāra who only occasionally paid visits to Ja'far in Medina or met him in Mecca, but normally lived in Kufa,

1. Died in AH 150/767 A.D.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 89, 122, also see pp.113 and 114 with the name of Abū Baṣīr instead of al-Aḥwal. Tūsī, Fihrist, 146. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 136.
3. Abū Aḥmad Muhammad b. Abī 'Umayr Ziyād b. 'Isa, a descendant of a Mawlā of Muḥallab b. Abī Ṣufra or of the Banū Umayya; a traditionist and companion of Mūsā al-Kāzīm and 'Alī al-Rida; alleged author of four written works. See Najāshī, 228. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 254.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 89 and 103.
5. Kash., Rijāl, 92. For the reference to Khidr see the Qur'ān, XVIII, 71.

had there a numerous circle of his disciples which is described as the al-Zurāriya. Though Zurāra was also regarded as a traditionist, a lawyer and a theologian, he attained his great renown in the fields of the science of Tradition and in the Kalām. In fact, he was the founder of the Shī'ite School of speculative theology in the proper sense, and the first teacher of Kalām¹ from among the circle of Ja'far.

Among Zurāra's pupils who were all devoted followers of Ja'far, were his own sons al-Ḥasan,² al-Ḥusayn³ and 'Ubaydullah;⁴ his brother Ḥurmān, the grammarian and one of the foremost companions of al-Bāqir;⁵ Ḥamza the son of Ḥurmān;⁶ Bukayr b. 'Ayān⁷ and his son 'Abdullah;⁸ Muhammad b. al-Ḥakam;⁹ Ḥumayd b. Rabbah,¹⁰ Muhammad b.

1. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 1, 220. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 136.
2. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 93. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit.
3. Ḥā'irī, op.cit. 110. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit.
4. Ḥā'irī, op.cit. 99. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit. Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 202, calls him 'Ubayd b. Zurāra.
5. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit. Kash., Rijāl, 117 ff. Ja'far declared him among the people of paradise see, Ibid.
6. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 131. Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 117.
7. Kash., Rijāl, 120. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 68. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit.
8. Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 188. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 182. Ibn Nadīm, loc.cit.
9. A brother of Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 271.
10. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 43.

al-Nu'mān al-Aḥwal¹ and Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawāliqī.² This circle of Zurāra was usually known as al-Zurāriya or al-Tamīmiya³ and its intellectual activities in the field of scholastic theology greatly strengthened the cause of Ja'far and later that of Mūsa al-Kāzim.⁴

Together with other theological and scholastic problem,⁵ Zurāra and his disciples evolved their theory that the knowledge of God is an obligation on every believer and cannot be attained without an Imām, designated by God, and thus complete obedience to the Imām is a religious duty. The Imāms by necessity are endowed with special knowledge. Therefore, whatever other men can attain by discursive reason (nazar), an Imām always knows owing to his special knowledge, and also his power of reasoning is superior and unequalled.⁶ Yet, as we learn from the sources there was not always complete agreement between Ja'far and Zurāra on many other points

1. See below.

2. See below.

3. Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 28. calls al-Tamimiyya.

4. See a very detailed account of the activities of Zurāra and his circle, in Kash., Rijāl, 89-107.

5. Zurāra and his circle promulgated their views on almost every question of what we now call scholastic philosophy, such as the Attributes of God, His Essence and His actions, His Intention or Will, the human capacity, etc., etc. Detailed accounts can be found in al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, II, 36. Baghdādī, Farq, 43. Shahrastānī, Milāl, 1, 186.

6. Shahrastānī, Milāl, 1, 186.

for example, Capacity of man (Istitā'a)¹ etc.

Zurāra was a strict legitimist, and he supported the candidature of 'Abdullah b. Ja'far to the Imāmate, instead of Mūsa al-Kāẓim.² Thus, on the one hand, our sources report a tradition saying, on his death-bed Zurāra put the Qur'ān on his breast, exclaiming: "This is my Imām."³ In this way he indicated that he no longer recognised a living Imām, and only took guidance from the Book of God. On the other hand, there are many traditions which assert that after some hesitation he recognised Mūsa.⁴

However, the impression we get about Zurāra from the sources, especially al-Kashshī, is that he played a very important role in the legitimist Shī'ite sectarian hierarchy and contributed a great deal to the formation of the Imāmite Creed. He is one of the most frequently quoted authorities in all the four books (al-Kutub al-Arba'a) of the Shī'ites.

Abū Ja'far Muhammad b. Nu'mān al-Aḥwal was another striking personality among the speculative theologians of Kufa who linked the question of the Imāmate with other fundamental scholastic problems. A money changer by occupation, he had a shop in Kufa under the porch known as Ṭāq al-Maḥāmil, and on account of his cunning and skill

1. See Kash., Rijāl, 96 ff.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 102 f. Shahrastānī, loc.cit.
3. Kash., Rijāl, 104. Shahrastānī, loc.cit.
4. See. Baghdādī, Farq, 43. Shahrastānī, Milal, 1, 186. Majlisi, Bihār, XI, 206. All these sources give both versions. Also see Kash., Rijāl, 103-104.

in his trade, he was nicknamed Shayṭān al-Ṭāq (the Devil of the Porch), which later Shī'ites changed into Mu'min al-Ṭāq (the Believer of the Porch) or sometimes Ṣālih al-Ṭāq.¹ He distinguished himself among all the adherents of Ja'far for his expertness in dialectics and learning in theology as well as for the piquancy of his answers in disputes with his adversaries. An extremely zealous Shī'ite, al-Aḥwal, at first was one of the most devoted adherents of al-Bāqir whose claims he defended against Zayd. He later became an equally ardent supporter of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and finally of Mūsa al-Kāzim.² But the best part of his intellectual activities in promoting the Shī'ite cause was perhaps spent during the Imāmate of Ja'far. He is frequently reported to have held verbal battles with the great jurist Abū Ḥanīfa, the Imām, whom he despised for being a Murjite. On his part, Abū Ḥanīfa treated him with scorn and contempt.³ He is described as the most courageous and vociferous in his convictions regarding the rights of the legitimist Imāms on rational grounds.⁴

1. Kash., Rijāl, 122. Najāshī, Rijāl, 228. Tūsī, Fihrist, 223. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, 1, 176. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 295. Hillī, Rijāl, 138.
2. Kash., Rijāl, 122 and 182. He is counted by Sa'd al-Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 88, among the most prominent companions of Ja'far (min wujūh aṣḥāb al-Ja'far) who accepted Mūsa al-Kāzim as their Imām immediately after the former's death and without considering candidature of any other son of Ja'far.
3. Najāshī, Rijāl, 228. Kash., Rijāl, 123 f.
4. See Kash., Rijāl, 124 f. Ibn 'Abdih Rabbih, 'Iqd, II, 465.

His circle is described by the heresiologists as al-Nu'māniya or thus called by his opponents al-Shayṭāniya.¹ He was himself dominated by the anthropomorphic theories of the ghulāt al-Bayān and al-Mughīra.² As a zealous supporter of the legitimist Imāms, he upheld the dogma of the God - imposed duty of complete obedience to them, and of the supreme knowledge of the Imāms, necessary for the guidance of men. He is said to have been a prolific writer, and a number of his works are mentioned by various authorities. They include: Kitāb al-Imāmah, Kitāb al-Radd 'alal Mu'tazila fī imāmat al-Mafdūl and a number of other treatises, probably of a polemical nature.³ The titles of the books ascribed to him suggest that the question of the Imāmate was one of the main issues between the Mu'tazilite and the Shī'ite thinkers. Al-Kashshī records a number of controversial debates held by him in support of Ja'far's claim to the Imāmate, and also quotes Ja'far saying: "Al-Aḥwal is most beloved to me whether alive or dead."⁴

Another foremost supporter of Ja'far from this circle was Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawāliqī, who was brought in

1. Baghdādī, Farq, 44. Maqrizī, Mawā'iz, II, 353. Shahrastānī, Milāl, I, 186. II, 22. Al-Rāzī, 'Itiqādāt, 65.
2. See Shahrastānī, Milāl, I, 187.
3. See Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, I, 176. Najāshī, Rijāl, 228. Shahrastānī, Milāl, I, 187.
4. See Kash., Rijāl, 122 ff. Al-Kashshī also takes much pain to prove that the approbrious title Shayṭān al-Tāq was given to him by his opponents and the Imāms confirmed him as the Mu'min al-Tāq.

his childhood as a slave from Jurjān, and became a Mawlā of Bishr b. Marwān. He also lived in Kufa earning his living as a seller of fodder ('allāf).¹ Like al-Aḥwal, whose close friend he was, he led a large circle of disciples² and propounded his theories on all questions of the Nature and attributes of God.³

The greatest of all the Shī'ite thinkers of Ja'far's following were Abū Muhammad Hishām b. al-Ḥakam,⁴ and 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Maythamī.⁵ Hishām b. al-Ḥakam was originally a disciple of Jahm b. Safwān, the Jubrite, but later was converted to the Shī'ite doctrine and became a most devoted adherent of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.⁶

1. Kash., Rijāl, 181. Najāshī, Rijāl, 305. Tūsī, Fihrist, 354. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 323-324.
2. The group of Hishām b. Sālim bore the name of al-Ḥashimiya usually with the addition al-'Ula to distinguish them from the adherents of Hishām b. al-Ḥakam. See Ash'arī, Maqālāt, I, 34. Baghdādī, Farq, 139. Shahrastānī, Milāl, 184 f. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, I'tiqādāt, 64.
3. For his theories see Ash'arī, loc.cit. Shahrastānī, loc.cit. Baghdādī, loc.cit. Nawbakhtī, Firaq, 66. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, I, 177. Kulaynī, Kaḥfī, 37.
4. A Mawlā of Kinda, but often described as the client of the Banū Shaybān, because he attached himself to that tribe. See Kash., Rijāl, 166 ff. Tūsī, Fihrist, 353. Najāshī, Rijāl, 304. Ibn Nadīm, Fihrist, I, 175. Hā'irī, Muntaha, 322 ff.
5. A Mawlā of the Banū Asad, he lived in Basra, where he frequented the circles of the local Mu'tazilite Mutakallimūn. See Najāshī, 176. Hā'irī Muntaha, 207-208. Tūsī, Fihrist, 212.
6. He must have been quite young at that time for he lived till the Imāmate of al-Ridā and was one of his closest companions. See Kash., Rijāl, 166 ff.

The theories regarding God and other scholastic questions propounded by these five most important thinkers of Ja'far's period are too lengthy to be examined here. What mainly concerns us ~~at~~ present is their ideas or contribution to the doctrine of the Imāmate which they linked up with fundamental principles of a scholastic nature. A remarkable fact is that although these five thinkers often differ from each other on many questions, their teachings concerning the Imāmate are almost the same. The essence of their doctrine of the Imāmate is that 'the Prophet appointed 'Ali to the Imāmate by an explicit text, and after him, his sons Hasan and Husayn. This appointment was based on the principle that mankind needs ~~an~~ Imām to lead it on the right path as much as an individual man needs intelligence to co-ordinate the activities of his body and to guide him. Naturally, to guide mankind and preserve it from straying, an Imām who receives no revelation must be infallible. On the other hand, as he is the infallible guide appointed by God, obedience to him is synonymous with obedience to God, while disobedience is the same as infidelity.¹

While so many speculative theologians from among the followers of Ja'far were busy working out the scholastic problems of the time, there were a good many in his circle who concentrated their efforts mainly on legal

1. See Ash'arī, Maqālāt, 1, 48 and index. Shahrastānī, Milāl, 1, 184 ff and index. Hishām b. al-Hakam argued that even the Prophet can sin because he can be corrected by the revelation which he receives, but the Imāms who do not receive revelation must be infallible and sinless. See also Baghdādī, Farq, 42.

questions. Although the distinction between lawyers and traditionists at this stage, especially among the Shī'ites, is not very clear, nevertheless there was a difference in their respective interests. Some were more interested in the traditions of a dogmatic and doctrinal nature, others in the traditions concerning practical problems. Thus the names of Jābir al-Ju'fī and Abū Ḥamza al-Thumalī, for example, appear in Shī'ite works mostly as the transmitters of the traditions dealing with doctrinal questions like that of the Imāmate. On the other hand, the names we want to list here as the eminent lawyers of Ja'far's circle are those who are cited by all the writers of the 'Four Books',¹ of the Shī'ites as the six² most authoritative transmitters of the traditions on legal problems. They were: Ja'mīl b. Darrāj³, 'Abdullah b. Miskān,⁴ 'Abdullah b. Bukayr,⁵ Ḥammād

1. Kulayni's 'Kāfi' Ṣadūg's 'Man la yahduruh al-Faqīh', and Tūsī's 'Istibṣār' and 'Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām'.
2. From all the companions of Ja'far six persons are unanimously accepted by all Shī'ite writers as the most reliable authorities on legal traditions and most of the traditions on jurisprudence are ascribed to them. See al-Muzaffarī, al-Imām al-Ṣādiq. II, 146.
3. He was a disciple of Zurāra. See Kash., Rijāl, 163. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 82. Najāshī, Rijāl, 92. A companion of both Ja'far and Mūsa al-Kāẓim, died during the Imāmate of 'Ali al-Riḍā.
4. Kash., Rijāl, 243. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 192-193. Tafrīshī, fol. 122 a. A companion of Ja'far and Mūsa.
5. A nephew of Zurāra. Ḥā'irī, Muntaha, 182. Najāshī, Rijāl, 154. Tafrīshī, fol. 115 a. A Companion of al-Baqir and Ja'far. Kash., Rijāl, 204, and 221 does not give much information about him except one small tradition.

b. 'Uthmān,¹ Hammād b. 'Isa² and Abān b. 'Uthmān.³

Another very important and outstanding lawyer-traditionist was Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāh,⁴ formerly an associate of Zayn al-'Abidīn and al-Bāqir. When he died in AH 140 Ja'far is reported to have said, "I love to have my Shī'a like Abān b. Taghlib," and "his death grieved my heart."⁵ Abān's name, however, appears in a good number of traditions mostly of a practical nature. We may note with interest that almost all these lawyer-traditionists of Ja'far's circle were in continuous attachment to three or at least two generations of the legitimist Imāms⁶—either Zayn al-'Abidīn, al-Bāqir and Ja'far or al-Bāqir, Ja'far and Mūsa, while some others who came to the fold of Ja'far served the line of the Imāms till 'Ali al-Riḍā.

From this brief summary of the persons or groups of persons having an active interest in all the necessary

1. He lived till AH 190 and related traditions from Ja'far, Mūsa and 'Ali al-Riḍā. See Ḥa'irī, Muntāha, 118. Najāshī, Rijāl, 104. Tafrīshī, fol. 70 a.
2. From the tribe of Juhm, a Kufite Mawlā and companion of Ja'far, Mūsa and 'Ali al-Riḍā. See Ḥa'irī, Muntāha, 119. Tafrīshī, fol. 70 b.
3. al-Bijālī al-Kūfī known as al-Aḥmar, later settled down in Basra and earned his fame as a lawyer-traditionist. Kash., Rijāl, 225. Ḥa'irī, Muntāha, 17-18. Najāshī, Rijāl, 10. Tafrīshī, fol. 3 b. 4a.
4. Abū Sa'd Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāh al-Bakrī, died in AH 140/747 A.D. See Ḥa'irī, Muntāha, 17. Najāshī, Rijāl, 7-10. Tafrīshī, fol. 3b. Dhahabī, Mizān, 1. 4-5.
5. See Kash., Rijāl, 212.
6. It is evident from the biographies of all these persons as recorded by Kashshī and others.

branches of learning current at that time in Muslim society, we may deduce two results. First they provided enough material for the later Shī'ites to construct dogmas and the legal system of Imāmite Shī'ism allegedly derived from Ja'far through his followers. It was conveniently based on the argument that since all these people accepted Ja'far as their Imām, whatever they said had authoritative value in transmitting or conveying the Imām's ideas or at least his approval. Second, the gathering round Ja'far of so many persons working in various aspects of religious life with the acceptance of his Imāmate based on the principle of Nass set the legitimist Shi'ites well on the way to a sectarian organisation of their own - though it was still far from completion.

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