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CRISIS AND CONSOLIDATION
IN THE FORMATIVE PERIOD
OF SHI'ITE ISLAM

*Abū Ja'far ibn Qiba al-Rāzī
and His Contribution to Imāmite
Shī'ite Thought*

Hossein Modarressi



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Preface

THE YEARS 260-329/874-941, known among the Shī'ites as the period of Minor Occultation, comprised undoubtedly the most difficult and critical period in the history of Imāmite Shī'ism. It began with the death of the eleventh Imām, Ḥasan al-'Askari, of no apparent successor, thus creating a total doctrinal chaos in the Imāmite Shī'ite community, particularly in Mesopotamia. That resulted in turn in internal conflicts, many desertions and conversions, and the emergence of numerous splinter groups and subsects within the Imāmite community. The situation encouraged other groups such as the Mu'tazilites and Zaydites to criticize and attack more aggressively the traditional Imāmite doctrines, which were now more vulnerable than ever before. Continuation of the old internal disagreements and schisms in the Imāmite community itself over some of the main theoretical issues, such as the validity of reason, the nature of the Imām, and the scope of his authority, only further complicated the situation. Beyond these elements, political suppression of the Shī'ite community, which reached its peak during the reign of the Abbasid Mutawakkil (232-247/847-861) and continued throughout most parts of the period of Minor Occultation, added to the tension. The need for reconstruction of some of the fundamental principles of the doctrine, such as the question of why humanity should always need an Imām, was real and pressing.

The Imāmite theologians of that period thus had the difficult task of defending the doctrine against attack while trying to offer new interpretations of fundamental principles to accommodate new realities and developments. Gradually, in this period, which continued for most of one century, Imāmite Shī'ism developed into what later came to be known as Twelver Shī'ism with its special theological analyses and points of view. Abū Ja'far b. Qiba al-Rāzī, one of the most prominent and active Imāmite theologians of this period, had a major role in all of these reconstructions and developments.

The present work attempts to shed light on some aspects of the Imāmite doctrine during the period of Minor Occultation and on the contributions of Abū Ja'far b. Qiba to the formation of the developed Imāmite doctrine. The second part of this volume contains the texts of three short works of this scholar together with their English translation.

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PART ONE

Imāmite Shī'ism in the Late Third/Ninth Century

I

From Responsibilities to Rights

AFFECTION FOR THE household of the Prophet is an old phenomenon in Islam that dates back to the time of the Prophet himself. Among his companions some were especially devoted to his family. Historical accounts suggest that after the death of the Prophet, when succession to his position was contested, those companions upheld the priority of the House of the Prophet, represented at the time by 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, first cousin of the Prophet and husband of his beloved daughter, Fātima, and supported him as the most eligible candidate. This opinion failed, however, to get enough support as did the suggestion that the leadership of the Muslim community be divided between the Emigrants (*Muhājirūn*) and the Medineans (*Anṣār*). Instead, the Quraysh, the powerful tribe of the Prophet, managed to appoint one of their seniors from another clan to the position. 'Alī did eventually assume the caliphate twenty-five years later but for less than five years; he was assassinated in 40/661. With the failure of the brief rule of his son, Ḥasan al-Mujtabā, political leadership passed from the Prophet's family to the Umayyad clan, which had been among the most bitter enemies of the Prophet until the last years of his life. The circle of followers that gathered around 'Alī, especially from the time of 'Uthmān, the third caliph, expanded immensely during the short period of 'Alī's caliphate, which was marked by fervent religiosity. During the reign of Mu'āwiya (41-60/661-680), the followers of 'Alī comprised a distinct group within the larger Muslim community and were severely persecuted by the government. In the course of their involvement in subsequent issues, such as the rise and fall of Ḥusayn in 61/680, the revolt of the *Tawwābūn* (the Penitents) in 64-65/683-684, and the rise of Mukhtār al-Thaqafī in Kūfa in 66-67/686-687, they emerged as an active anti-Umayyad group that supported the 'Alīds as the legitimate rulers of the Muslim state.¹

1. See the letter of the caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik to his governor in Kūfa in Ṭabarī, 7:169; also Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya: 24.

The Shī'ite movement would eventually become one of the two main divisions of Islam. Until the end of the first century of the *Hijra*, however, it did not distinguish itself from the main body of the Muslim community except by the mentioned political tendency. As Islamic legal schools began to form early in the second/eighth century, Shī'ism gradually became a distinct legal school, most of whose members followed the teachings and legal opinions of the most learned member of the House of the Prophet at the time, Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Bāqir (d. 114/733).² Soon, during the explosion of theological debates in Islamic society and the emergence of different schools of *kalām*, the Shī'ite movement gradually began to take specific positions on various theological topics, mainly following the positions of Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir and his son, Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765). By the time of the Abbasid revolution in 132/749, the Shī'ite movement had thus grown into a complete and independent political, legal, and theological school.

After the death of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, his two sons by Fāṭima, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, became the focus of devotion for those who supported the claim of the House of the Prophet to leadership of the Muslim community. After the death of these two, the son of Ḥusayn, 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, came to be recognized by most of the community as the head of the Prophet's House. One radical splinter sect, the Shī'ites of Kūfa who supported Mukhtār al-Thaqafī in his revolt against the Umayyads, however, chose a third son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, as their spiritual

2. See Kashshī: 425 quoting Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq as saying: "Before Abū Ja'far [Muḥammad al-Bāqir] the Shī'ites did not know what they needed from among the lawful and unlawful except for what they had learned from the people [the overwhelmingly Sunnite community], until Abū Ja'far came along. He opened [the way] for them, explained [religion] to them, and taught them." See also 'Ayyāshī, 1:252–3, where a similar report says: "Before Abū Ja'far, the Shī'ites did not know the [right way to perform] the ceremonies for the pilgrimage to Mecca (*ḥajj*) nor what was lawful and unlawful until he emerged and performed the pilgrimage for them, explaining to them how to do it as well as to the lawful and unlawful until they no longer needed the people [the Sunnites] [for these things]. And whereas they had previously learned from the people, the people now learned from them."

leader. This group, which came to be known as the Kaysānites,³ did not survive beyond the second/eighth century. After 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, his son, Muḥammad al-Bāqir,⁴ and then Muḥammad's son, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, each enjoyed in turn wide public recognition as the head of the House of the Prophet.⁵ In the time of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, however, a further split divided the Shī'ite community into two camps, Zaydites and Ja'farites. The Ja'farites later came to be known as the Imāmites.

After Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, the majority of his followers continued to recognize, as a general rule, the most distinguished (usually the eldest) son of the previous Imām of his descendant as the next Imām. The common belief was that each Imām designated his successor from among his male descendants through testament (*waṣīyya*), sometimes also called explicit designation (*naṣṣ*). The list of the Imāms came, therefore, to be a chain of fathers and sons (except for the second and third Imāms, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, who were brothers) as follows:

1. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661)
2. Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Mujtabā (d. 49/669)
3. Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Shahīd (d. 61/680)
4. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-'Ābidīn (d. 95/713)
5. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Bāqir (d. 114/733)
6. Ja'far b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765)
7. Mūsā b. Ja'far al-Kāzīm (d. 183/799)
8. 'Alī b. Mūsā al-Ridā (d. 203/818)
9. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Jawād (d. 220/835)

3. See the article "Kaysāniyya" in *EP*, 4:836–8 (by W. Madelung).

4. This, of course, did not mean that all Shī'ites who gathered around Muḥammad al-Bāqir and followed him considered him to be an Imām in the same sense that the title later implied (see below, chapter 3).

5. These facts are well attested by the letter that the second Abbasid caliph, Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775) wrote to Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Nafs al-Zakiyya (d. 145/762) in which he said: "No one born from among you [the 'Alīds] after the death of the Prophet was more virtuous than 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn After him, no one among you was like his son, Muḥammad b. 'Alī . . . , nor like his [Muḥammad b. 'Alī's] son, Ja'far" (Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 5:82–3; Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, 4:119; Ṭabarī, 7:569–70).

10. 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Hādī (d. 254/868)
11. Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-'Askarī (d. 260/874)
12. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Mahdī al-Muntazar

* * * * *

Islamic legal and theological works describe the office of imāmate as the supreme leadership over the affairs of religion (*dīn*) and mundane life (*dunyā*). The *imām* was, thus, the head of the Muslim community, the successor to the Prophet, and the guardian of all Muslim religious and social affairs. The right to that position was publicly claimed for 'Alī against the incumbent caliph by his supporters during the reign of the third caliph, 'Uthmān. In subsequent ages, many Muslims, including many orthodox Sunnites,⁶ maintained that the 'Alīd Imāms possessed a legitimacy that the reigning caliphs lacked. The Shī'ites believed that when the time came, the true Imām would take up arms, expel the usurpers, and regain his proper place.⁷ Many Shī'ites hoped that when this occurred, they would be the reigning party and would finally be free from the persecution they had so long endured.⁸ On the other hand, it seems that by the late first/early eighth century, the belief was already well established in the Muslim community that at some future time, a revolutionary leader from the House of the Prophet would rise up, overthrow the unjust government, and establish the rule of justice and truth. This millenarian figure was called by the Shī'ites the *qā'im*, "the one who rises up."

In the early second century of the *Hijra*, as popular discontent with the Umayyads grew ever more pervasive, many hoped that

6. See, for instance, Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, 13:120, where he says that Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn and Muḥammad al-Bāqir were all well qualified for the position of caliph; Ja'far al-Ṣādiq had a greater right to the caliphate than his contemporary caliph, Manṣūr; and Mūsā al-Kāzīm had a greater right to it than Hārūn al-Rashīd who was the caliph in his time.
7. See Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya: 24.
8. See especially Nu'mānī: 287, 288, 295 (see also 266); also 'Ayyāshī, 2:218; Kulaynī, 1:369, 5:19, 8:81; Ibn Qūlawayh: 336.

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, would lead an insurrection.⁹ He did not do so. This stance surprised Shī'ites whose conceptions of the Imām of the House of the Prophet required him to take action when conditions were propitious. When asked why despite his many followers in Iraq he had not led the awaited rising, he excused himself by saying that he was not the awaited *qā'im* and that the *qā'im* would appear in the future when the time was right for such a step.¹⁰ Two decades later, however, his son, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, also failed to act at a time that many considered ideal for the Imām, if he had sincerely wished to do so. He did not act, and the disillusionment engendered led the Shī'ites to reexamine long-established beliefs.

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was the most respected member of the House of the Prophet¹¹ during the time of upheaval that saw the overthrow of the century-old Umayyad rule. Ja'far was an obvious candidate to succeed the Umayyads as leader of the Islamic state, and many expected him to step forward into the role.¹² Iraq was full of his followers. A passionate follower told him that "half of the world" supported his claim.¹³ The people of Kūfa waited only for his order to seize the city from its garrison.¹⁴ Even the Abbasids, who eventually took the reins of power, reportedly looked to him in the early days of their insurrection as their first choice for the spiritual leadership of their movement.¹⁵ His failure to take advantage of the situation led to various reactions: some of his followers even held that it was unlawful for him not to rise up;¹⁶ others simply showed disappointment that despite the new developments the promised golden age of the Shī'ites was no closer to its realization.¹⁷

9. Kulaynī, 8:80, 341; Khuṣaybī: 242–3
10. Kulaynī, 1:342, 536 (see also 1:368); Nu'mānī: 167–8, 169, 215, 216, 237; *Kamāl*: 325. See also Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 75; Mufīd, *al-Risāla al-khāmisa fi 'l-ghayba*: 400.
11. See Kulaynī, 8:160; Dhahabī, *Ibar*, 1:209.
12. Kulaynī, 1:307, 8:331; Kashshī: 158, 398; *Tabdhīb*, 7:2; *Manāqib*, 3:362.
13. Kulaynī, 2:242. See also *Manāqib*, 3:362.
14. Kulaynī, 8:331; Kashshī: 353–4.
15. *Manāqib*, 3:355–6 (quoting from earlier sources); Shahrastānī, 1:179. See also Kulaynī, 8:274.
16. Kulaynī, 2:242.
17. *Ibid.*, 1:368; Nu'mānī: 198, 288, 294, 330; *Ghayba*: 262, 263, 265.

The Imām, however, remained quiet and did not enter any political activity.¹⁸ He also forbade his followers to engage in any political activity¹⁹ or to join any armed group,²⁰ make Shī'ite propaganda,²¹ or recruit new members into the Shī'ite community.²² Possibly along the same line, he at times did not even like to be called the Imām.²³ He explicitly told his people that he was not the *qā'im*, and that there would be no change in the political status of the Shī'ite community during his generation.²⁴ Some Shī'ites thereupon turned to the more active and politically ambitious Ḥasanid branch of the House of the Prophet and joined the revolt of Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Nafs al-Zakiyya²⁵ who was widely believed to be the long awaited savior. The belief that the *qā'im* would imminently appear was by now so strongly held that people continued to look for him even after al-Nafs al-Zakiyya had been defeated and killed (145/762); according to some, the *qā'im* was to appear as soon as fifteen days after the killing of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya.²⁶ It did not come to pass.

Other groups of Shī'ites did not consider the principal role of the Imām to be political. They instead viewed him as the most learned man from among the descendants of the Prophet who was to teach people what was lawful and what was not and to exhort them to turn toward God.²⁷ He was the one to distinguish truth

18. See Ṭabarī, 7:603; Abu 'l-Faraj: 273; Kashshī: 362, 365. This, however, did not suffice to convince the caliph that he was not conspiring against him. See Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 3:224.

19. See Ibn Bābawayh, 'Uyūn, 1:310; Tūsī, *Amālī*, 2:280.

20. See Kashshī: 336, 383–4; Najāshī: 144–5.

21. Kulaynī, 2:221–6, 369–72. For an example of the Shī'ite propaganda in that time see Ṣaffār:244.

22. Barqī, 1:200, 201, 203; Kulaynī, 1:165–7.

23. See, for instance, Barqī, 1:288–9; 'Ayyāshī, 1:327; Kulaynī, 1:181, 189; Kashshī: 281, 349, 419, 421, 422–3, 427. A similar reaction is quoted from his son, Mūsā al-Kāzim. See Kashshī: 283.

24. *Ghayba*: 263.

25. On him see the article "Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Nafs al-Zakiyya" in *EP*, 3:665–6 (by Fr. Buhl).

26. *Kamāl*: 649; Sulamī: 116, 119. See also Ibn Abī Shayba, 8:679; Haytamī: 55; and Kulaynī, 1:534 (quoting a Shī'ite of the time who vowed to keep fasting until the *qā'im* appears), 8:310.

27. Kulaynī, 1:178, *Kamāl*: 223, 224, 229.

from falsity,²⁸ to protect the religion from being distorted and corrupted by the ignorant and misguided,²⁹ and to reestablish whatever truth suffered distortion or corruption at their hands.³⁰ He guarded the integrity of the religion: if the people added anything to it he would reject it, and if they omitted anything he would restore it.³¹ Society needed an Imām to whom they could refer problems they encountered in religious practice, an Imām who would act as the ultimate authority in explicating the law of God and the true meaning of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition so that differences of opinion among the believers could be removed by following his instructions in every question.³²

Even for those who emphasized the political role of the Imām, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's failure to assume an active political role resulted in a major reconsideration of the institution of Imāmate. The Imām was no longer the long-awaited savior; at least, this was no longer considered to be his major role. Now, for them like the others, the Imām was the head of religion. In this manner, the community changed the emphasis of the institution of Imāmate from political to religious authority. Hishām b. al-Ḥakam's theory of the Imām's divine protection against sin and error (*'isma*)³³ was a major contribution to further accommodate the shift. In their times, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq were each venerated by the entire Muslim community as profoundly learned men and indisputable authorities on the *sharī'a*. In the view of the followers of the Imāms, however, their knowledge was qualitatively different from that of other learned men for it was the knowledge of the House of the Prophet, which derived ultimately from the Prophet himself. It was, therefore, unquestionable truth and indisputable authority, representing in effect a part of the revelation that the Prophet had received from God.

While these changes were taking place, new opinions and ideas were put forward by a new extremist wing of the Imāmite tradition, which had links to the now-vanished Kaysānite movement

28. Kulaynī, 1:178.

29. *Kamāl*: 221, 281.

30. *Kamāl*: 221.

31. Ṣaffār: 331–2; Kulaynī, 1:178; *Kamāl*: 203, 205, 221, 223, 228.

32. Kulaynī, 1:170, 172.

33. See the article "*'isma*" in *EP*, 4:182–4 (by W. Madelung).

of the late first/seventh century. The extremists³⁴ emphasized the supernatural qualities of the Imām, maintaining that he was the centerpiece of the universe: "If the earth were left without an Imām for even one minute, its entire structure would collapse."³⁵ The result, nevertheless, was the same—a downgrading of the political aspect of the institution of Imāmate.

The old expectations were, however, renewed during the time of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's successor, Mūsā al-Kāzim. The circulation of a *ḥadīth* among the Shī'a of his time that suggested that the seventh Imām would be the *qā'im*³⁶ created widespread expectations within the Shī'ite community that it was Mūsā who would establish the rule of truth. The establishment of the institution of representation, which he initiated and which, as will be seen below, provided him with a chain of representatives across the Muslim world who systematically collected religious funds and donations on his behalf and sent them to him in Medina, made those expectations look more realistic than at any time before. He personally was a brave person, outspoken against the government³⁷ and daring to challenge the caliph in his presence.³⁸ Many people, later even some Sunnites,³⁹ considered him to be the legitimate caliph,⁴⁰ which was tantamount to declaring the Caliph of Baghdad illegitimate. The situation provoked the suspicion of his contemporary caliph, Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170-193/786-809). Mūsā was arrested in Medina and brought to Iraq, where he was imprisoned for several years before he was put to death in 183/799. Some of his partisans were also arrested and ruthlessly tortured.⁴¹ The announcement of his death in jail was a strong blow to the Shī'ites' hopes and expectations. For many

34. See Murtaḍā, *Shāfi*, 1:42.

35. Ṣaffār: 488-9; Kulaynī, 1:179; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 1:272; *Kamāl*: 201-4.

36. Muḥammad B. al-Muthannā al-Ḥaḍramī: 91; 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 147; Nawbakhtī: 92; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 91; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 180.; Kashshī: 373, 475; Mufīd, *Irsbād*, 302; Shahrastānī, 1:197, 198. See also Abū Ḥātīm al-Rāzī: 290; 'Ayyāshī, 2:250-1.

37. Kashshī: 441.

38. Ibn Qūlawayh: 18; 'Ayyāshī, 2:229-30; Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:167.

39. Nawbakhtī: 95; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 94.

40. Kulaynī, 1:486.

41. See, for instance, Kashshī: 591-2; Najāshī: 326, 424.

years thereafter,⁴² most refused to believe he had really died, hoping that someday he would reappear to inaugurate the rule of truth. The belief that he was the *qā'im*, based on a *ḥadīth* that was widely known in his time, could not so quickly disappear.

The political component of the Imāmate was once more renewed in 201/817 when the Abbasid Ma'mūn (r. 198-218/813-833) designated Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā as his heir apparent, but the Shī'ites' hopes were dashed once again by the death of 'Alī al-Riḍā in 203/818. The ninth and tenth Imāms succeeded their fathers when they were very young, which led to controversy in the Shī'ite community after the death of 'Alī al-Riḍā as to whether a child of seven years was legally qualified or knowledgeable enough to become an Imām. The solution that was offered⁴³ and that was widely and well received by the Imāmite community strengthened the extremists' ideas about the nature of the Imāmate and further downgraded the political aspect of the office. This solution involved the suggestion that the Imām became the Imām through divine grace and that knowledge or political status were mere contingent effects of the possession of the divine light and not essential elements of the Imāmate.

By this time, however, the Shī'ite community was already well established both socially and doctrinally. A vast body of theological and legal literature existed—quotations from the Imāms Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and, to a lesser extent, from Mūsā al-Kāzim compiled in books and collections by Shī'ite scholars—that made the Shī'ite community self-sufficient except in odd cases where a new question arose or reports conflicted or opinions regarding interpretation differed. The office of Imāmate now also regularly received the gifts, alms, and charitable donations and endowments that faithful Shī'ites regularly sent to the Holy Threshold⁴⁴ (*al-nābiya al-muqaddasa*), the house of the Imām. For the last few decades of the period of the "presence" of the Imāms and then to the end of the period of Minor Occultation this situation remained unchanged. The faithful Shī'ites in this period changed the balance of demand

42. In the beginning there was an idea that he would return within eight months (Kashshī: 406). The time limit was later modified.

43. See below, chapter 2.

44. For this term see Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 418. See also Kashshī: 532, 534; Najāshī: 344; *Ghayba*: 172.

and expectation to the benefit of the Imām. They no longer asked the Imām to rise against the political system. With the caliphs in firm control this would have been an unthinkable task. They faithfully fulfilled their duties toward the Imām and did not neglect his rights. The list of the payments made by the faithful to the Imām now included the *kbums*, a tax of 20 percent levied on the incomes of all Shī'ites. The Imāms Muḥammad al-Bāqir⁴⁵ and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq⁴⁶ had previously not collected this tax from their followers. The belief was widespread that this levy would be instituted by the *qā'im* when he came to establish his rule of justice.⁴⁷ The systematic collection⁴⁸ of the levy as a mandatory tax seems to have started in 220/835 when Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād ordered his financial representatives to collect the *kbums* on certain kinds of income.⁴⁹ In the same document, he emphasized that he was collecting the *kbums* in that one year, which happened to be the last year of his life, because of a certain reason he did not want to specify (perhaps the financial need of some members of the House of the Prophet at the time). As attested by historical reports, however, the collection of this tax by local representatives of the Imām became a quite well-established practice during the latter part of the incumbency of the next Imām, 'Alī al-Hādī.⁵⁰

The Imāms reportedly had received funds from their followers from the time of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.⁵¹ In the beginning, these consisted mainly of the obligatory alms (*zakāt*) that many Shī'ites chose to

45. Kulaynī, 1:544.

46. Ibid., 1:408; Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:138, 143, 144.

47. See Kulaynī, 1:408; Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:144. See also Nu'mānī: 237; Sulamī: 40.

48. Some reports suggest that Mūsā al-Kāzīm received *kbums* from one of his followers (Ibn Bābawayh, *'Uyūn*, 1:70) and that 'Alī al-Riḍā instructed his followers to pay this tax (Kulaynī, 1:547–8). The referred to document from Muḥammad al-Jawād, however, attests to the fact that the tax was not systematically collected before the date mentioned.

49. Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:141. See also *Manāqib*, 4:389.

50. See Ḥurr al-'Āmilī, 6: 348–9.

51. For Muḥammad al-Bāqir's refusal to accept religious funds see Nu'mānī: 237 (and Sulamī: 40). For Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's occasional acceptance of the same see Ṣaffār: 99; Kulaynī, 2:512; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 87; Rāwandī, 2:777.

give to the Imām,⁵² voluntary donations and endowments (*nadhr*, *waqf*, etc.), and gifts.⁵³ Shī'ites originally gave their donations to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq in person. In 147/765, the Abbasid caliph Manṣūr ordered Ja'far to come to court where he took him to task on a number of points, among them that the people of Iraq had chosen Ja'far as their Imām and paid their obligatory alms to him.⁵⁴ According to another report, the caliph also accused Ja'far of receiving *kharāj*, administrative taxes, from his followers.⁵⁵

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq does not, however, appear to have appointed representatives to collect taxes for him.⁵⁶ The system by which agents (*wukalā'*, sing. *wakīl*) of the Imāms collected religious funds—which had already grown into an elaborate and well-organized institution by the middle of the third/ninth century—was established by Ja'far's son, Mūsā al-Kāzīm. Mūsā's representatives served in all the major Shī'ite communities in Egypt,⁵⁷ Kūfa,⁵⁸

52. See Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:60, 91.

53. See Kulaynī, 1:537–8; Kashshī: 434; Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:91. For later periods see Kulaynī, 1:524, 548, 4:310, 7:38, 59; Khusaybī: 342; Ibn Bābawayh, *Faqīh*, 2:442, 4:232, 237; *Kamāl*, 498, 501, 522; Ḥasan al-Qummī: 279; Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:189, 195–6, 198, 210, 242; idem, *Istibṣār*, 4:123, 124, 126, 129, 133; *Ghayba*: 75, 91, 225; Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 247; Majlisī, 50:185, 51:29.

54. Ibn Ṭalḥa: 82. See also Kulaynī, 6:446.

55. See Majlisī, 47:187. The same charge was made against his son, Mūsā al-Kāzīm, during his Imāmate. See Kashshī: 265; Ibn Bābawayh, *'Uyūn*, 1:81.

56. *Ghayba*: 210, reports that Nasr b. Qābūs al-Lakhmī and 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥajjāj acted as financial representatives of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, but there is no evidence in the early Shī'ite literature to support this claim. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥajjāj was later an agent of Mūsā al-Kāzīm (Ḥimyarī: 191; Kashshī: 431. See also ibid.: 265, 269, where the Imām is said to have sent a message to another disciple of his through 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥajjāj). According to another report (Kulaynī, 6:446; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Muhaj al-da'awāt*: 198), Ja'far's servant, Mu'allā b. Khunays, also collected donations on the Imām's behalf. This obviously does not mean that he was a financial representative (*wakīl*) in the sense understood in the later history of the Imāmate administration.

57. Kashshī: 597–8; *Ghayba*: 43.

58. Kashshī: 459; Najāshī: 249.

Baghdad,⁵⁹ Medina⁶⁰ and elsewhere. At the time of his death, Mūsā's agents had large sums for him in their possession,⁶¹ from ten⁶² to thirty⁶³ and even seventy⁶⁴ thousand *dīnārs*. These funds came from a variety of levies, including the *zakāt*.⁶⁵ Imām 'Alī al-Ridā continued his father's initiatives, appointing his own representatives in various places.⁶⁶ The new financial institution continued to grow under later Imāms. It seems that Muḥammad al-Jawād periodically sent special envoys to the Shī'ite communities to collect the levies and donations,⁶⁷ including funds that had been gathered during the year by his numerous local representatives.⁶⁸

The Imāmate's financial administration was further developed into a very well-organized institution in the time of Imām 'Alī al-Hādī as attested by references in early sources about how the institution worked.⁶⁹ The Imām regularly sent letters to local Shī'ite communities and urged the faithful to fulfill their financial obligations toward the Imām by regular payment of his rights to his representatives.⁷⁰ This payment was "an obedience to God that guaranteed lawfulness and cleanliness for their wealth and the protection of God for their lives."⁷¹ The revenues of the office of the Imāmate had increased dramatically with the addition of the *kbums* tax, which the Imām's agents systematically collected from the faithful as his right.⁷² Because it was a new imposition, there were

59. Kashshī: 886–7.

60. Ibid.: 446.

61. Ibid.: 405, 459, 467, 468, 493, 598.

62. *Ghayba*: 44.

63. Kashshī: 405, 459, 493.

64. Ibid.: 467, 493.

65. Ibid.: 459.

66. Ibid.: 506; Najāshī: 197, 447; *Ghayba*: 210–11.

67. See Kashshī: 596 where Zakariyyā b. Ādam al-Ash'arī is quoted as reporting to the Imām a disagreement that came up between his two emissaries to Qum, Maymūn and Musāfir.

68. See, for instance, Kashshī: 549; Najāshī: 197.

69. See, for instance, Najāshī: 344.

70. Kashshī: 513–14.

71. Ibid.: 514.

72. See Kulaynī, 1:545, 548; Kashshī: 514, 577, 579, 580–81; Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:123, 138, 143.

questions about the scope of the "right." Three main representatives of 'Alī al-Hādī⁷³ reported to him that they had faced questions from the Shī'ite community about the right of the Imām that the representatives did not know how to answer.⁷⁴

In 233/848 Imām 'Alī al-Hādī was brought to the capital Sāmarrā' on orders of Caliph Mutawakkil and put under constant observation. His activities were severely restricted there, and for the rest of his life the Imām's financial representatives were the main channel through which he kept contact with his followers in other parts of the Shī'ite world.⁷⁵ The Shī'ite community experienced

73. They were Abū 'Alī b. Rāshid, who was appointed as the Imām's chief representative in Iraq in 232/846–847 (Kashshī: 513–14; see also Kulaynī, 7:59; Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:234) to replace 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Abd Rabbih, who had died three years before (Kashshī: 510); 'Alī b. Mahziyār, who followed 'Abd Allāh b. Jundub as chief representative in Ahwāz (ibid.: 549); and Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Hamadānī, the sole representative in Hamadān (ibid.: 608, 611–12; Najāshī: 344). The Imām, of course, had many other financial agents in other parts of the Shī'ite world (see, for instance, Kashshī: 512–14). It is worth noting that almost all Imāmite notables that were described by the last Imāms as trustworthy or reliable were financial representatives and agents (see, for instance, Kashshī: 557 where *al-Ghā'ib al-'alī* ['Alī b. Ja'far al-Humānī, 'Alī al-Hādī's principal agent; see Kashshī: 523, 527, 606–8; *Ghayba*: 212], Ayyūb b. Nūḥ b. Darrāj al-Nakha'ī [the Imām's financial representative in Kūfa; see Kashshī: 514, 525, 572, 612; Najāshī: 102; Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:195–96; idem, *Istibṣār*, 4:123; *Ghayba*: 212], Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Hamadānī [mentioned above, the Imām's representative in Hamadān] and Aḥmad b. Ishāq al-Ash'arī al-Qummī [the agent in charge of the endowments made for the Imāms in Qum; see Ḥasan al-Qummī: 211; *Ghayba*: 212] are described as *thiqa* [trustworthy]). Many of the Imām's agents were not scholars, a point certainly true with 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī and his son, Muḥammad (see below), who were described by 'Alī al-Hādī and Ḥasan al-'Askarī as reliable and trustworthy (*Ghayba*: 146–7, 215–20). The word *thiqa* in these cases means financial trustworthiness, *al-thiqa al-ma'mūn 'alā māli 'llāh* (ibid.: 216). The description was meant to direct the faithful to these agents for the payment of their donations and religious dues and not for doctrinal and legal questions and as sources of religious knowledge, as many Shī'ite scholars of the past (see, for instance, Ḥurr al-'Āmilī, 18:100) and modern scholars of the field (such as Kohlberg, "Imām and Community": 38–9) have thought.

74. Kulaynī, 1:547; Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:123.

75. See Kashshī: 509, 580–1.

severe persecution during Mutawakkil's reign. He purged Shī'ites from all administrative positions and ostracized them socially.⁷⁶ The shrine of Ḥusayn in Karbalā', a major center for Shī'ite gathering and pilgrimage, was razed to the ground.⁷⁷ Many Shī'ite notables, including some of the Imām's representatives, were imprisoned⁷⁸ or put to death.⁷⁹

The Zaydite branch of Shī'ism was by now a well-established school of thought and a major rival of Imāmite Shī'ism. In a treatise from that period entitled *al-Radd 'ala 'l-rawāfiḍ*, the Zaydite author who was a contemporary of Imām 'Alī al-Hādī criticized him for levying the *khums* on the general income of all Shī'ites, for appointing financial representatives in all towns to collect funds, and for, he claimed, "using the money for himself rather than distributing it to the needy."⁸⁰ Similar criticism was launched a few decades later by Abū Zayd al-'Alawī in his *Kitāb al-Ishbād*,⁸¹ among others, which was answered by the Imāmite authors.⁸²

The emphasis on the financial right of the Imām in the Shī'ite community continued through the incumbency of the next Imām, Ḥasan al-'Askarī, and into the period of the Minor Occultation. Some of the letters that Ḥasan al-'Askarī wrote to his local representatives are preserved as well.⁸³ In these letters, the Imām attaches major significance to the regular collection of religious funds, obviously because of the pressing needs of the office to meet the needs of Shī'ite society, which was passing through a very difficult time. In an untraditionally long letter that the Imām wrote to one of the notables in the Shī'ite community of Nīshāpūr,⁸⁴ he complained that the community there was not paying its dues to the Imām as properly as they had during the time of his father. He equated any negligence in payment of the Imām's rights to unbelief. In the same

76. See Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, 5:50–51.

77. Ṭabarī, 9:185; *Murūj*, 5:51.

78. Kashshī: 607–8.

79. Ibid.: 603 (cf. Ṭabarī, 9:200–201).

80. Pseudo Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm, *al-Radd 'ala 'l-rawāfiḍ*: 106b, 108a.

81. Abū Zayd al-'Alawī: para. 39.

82. See Ibn Qiba, *Naqḍ kitāb al-ishbād*: paras. 41–2.

83. See Kashshī: 577–81.

84. Ibid.: 575–80.

letter he noted that his correspondence with the Shī'ite community of Nīshāpūr in demand of his rights had been going on for a long time and that if it was not for the fact that he did not want them to become subject to God's punishment, he would not insist or contact them again. At the end of the letter he named several of his agents in different towns whom he praised for their good service and reliability. As might be expected, some of these local agents later misappropriated funds, and others who had not received authorization from the Imām claimed to be his representatives and fraudulently collected money from the people. Numerous associates of the Imām were excommunicated in this period for such transgressions, including one of those named and praised in the letter just mentioned.⁸⁵

'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī served as a financial agent first to Imām 'Alī al-Hādī (apparently from the time of the Imām's removal to Sāmarrā')⁸⁶ and then as the principal financial aide to Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī⁸⁷ during whose time 'Uthmān was in full control of the office.⁸⁸ 'Uthmān outlived both of his masters and remained head of the Imāmate administration after the death of Ḥasan al-'Askarī,

85. That was 'Urwa b. Yahyā al-Dihqān, the Imām's chief representative in Baghdad (Kashshī: 543, 579), who was later excommunicated by the Imām because he had embezzled the funds (ibid.: 536–7, 573–4). Another one of those named in the letter (Abū Ṭahīr Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Bilāl, known as *Bilālī*) was excommunicated later by the second agent of the Twelfth Imām (*Ghayba*: 245).

86. 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd started working in Imām 'Alī al-Hādī's house when he was 11 years old (Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 420); later he became one of the chief aides to the Imām (see, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:330; Kashshī: 526).

87. See Kulaynī, 1:330; *Ghayba*: 215. In a rescript that was sent from the Holy Threshold to the Imām's representative in Nīshāpūr, who was at the time in Sāmarrā', the representative was ordered not to leave the town until "you meet 'Amrī, God may be satisfied with him as a result of my satisfaction with him, and say hello to him and make yourself known to him, because he is the pure, the trustworthy, the chaste, and the [one] close to us and to our hearts. Whatever is brought to us from various regions eventually ends with him so that he passes it to us" (Kashshī: 580).

88. Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashara*: 355. See also Kashshī: 544 where the phrase implies that it was not even quite clear if he always acted under the instruction of the Imām.

continuing to receive religious funds on behalf of his son who had passed into occultation beyond the reach of ordinary Shī'ites. Upon 'Uthmān's death, his position was assumed by his son, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, and then by two others. This period of the Minor Occultation ended with the death of the last deputy, who had not named a successor, and thus began the Major Occultation when the Shī'ites lost all contact with the Imām.

II

Moderation or Shortcoming?

IT HAS BEEN insisted throughout the Qur'ān that God is the only one who creates all beings and provides them with their living¹ without anyone's help or support,² the only one who never dies whereas every other being dies,³ the only one who has knowledge of the unseen,⁴ and the only lawmaker in the universe.⁵ In numerous verses as well, the Qur'ān insists that the prophets were ordinary people who lived and died like everyone else.⁶ It especially speaks of Muḥammad as an ordinary person whose only difference from other people was that he received revelation from God in order to deliver it to mankind.⁷ Muḥammad was asked by God especially to emphasize this point to those who asked him to perform miracles and to prove that he was someone special.⁸

In spite of these cautions, the idea that the Prophet was a supernatural being started immediately after his death. It is reported that as soon as the news of his death spread, a certain Companion asserted that he did not die but disappeared from his people and would return and "cut off the hands and feet of those who alleged that he was dead,"⁹ an assertion that other Muslims rejected on the basis of a Qur'ānic verse that spoke of the Prophet's death in the future.¹⁰ A similar claim was heard after the assassination of 'Alī when some people maintained that he was still alive and that he would not die until he conquered the whole world and drove the

1. Qur'ān, e.g. 6:102, 27:64, 30:40, 35:3.

2. Ibid., e.g. 17:111, 34:22.

3. Ibid., 28:88.

4. Ibid., e.g. 27:65.

5. Ibid., e.g. 6:57, 12:40, 67, 39:3.

6. Ibid., e.g. 5:75, 14:38, 25:20.

7. Ibid., 18:110.

8. Ibid., 17:90-94.

9. Ibn Hishām, 4:305-6; Tabarī, 3:200-201.

10. Qur'ān, 3:144.

Arabs with his stick.¹¹ It was again heard after the death of his son, Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya in 81/700 when many of his followers claimed that he did not die but only concealed himself from the people and will reappear before the end of time "to fill the earth with justice as it was filled with injustice and despotism."¹² This idea was labeled by the mainstream of the Muslim community as *ghuluww*¹³ (exaggerations, conventionally translated as "extremism") and the people who supported it as *ghulāt* (exaggerators, conventionally "extremists").¹⁴

From the beginnings of the second century of the *Hijra*, numerous heretic persons and groups emerged who proclaimed one or another prominent figure of the House of the Prophet as God. This idea reportedly was begun in the previous century by a group that, sometime after 'Alī's death, claimed that he was God and that he concealed himself from the people as a sign of anger.¹⁵ Later sources even claim that this idea started in 'Alī's lifetime when during his caliphate some people, for unspecified reasons, maintained that he was their God, and he subsequently ordered them to be burned after they refused to repent and give up that idea.¹⁶ During the second/eighth century, however, the idea that one or the other Imām was God was normally the first half of a two-part claim; the second half was that the claimant himself was that god's messenger. This was the case with Ḥamza b. 'Umāra al-Barbarī¹⁷ who separated from his fellow Kaysānites by claiming that Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya was God and Ḥamza was his messenger.¹⁸ It was also the case with

11. Jāhiz, *al-Bayān wa 'l-tabyīn*, 3:81; Nawbakhtī: 40–44; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 19–20.

12. See Wadād al-Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 168ff.

13. See, for instance, *Kamāl*: 33 where the poet Al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (d. ca. 173/789) is quoted as describing his own state of belief before his alleged conversion to Imāmite Shī'ism as the time when he "adhered to *ghuluww* and believed in the occultation of Muhammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya." See also Nawbakhtī: 52.

14. See Wadād al-Qādī, "The Development of the Term *Ghulāt* in Muslim Literature": 295–300.

15. Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 21.

16. For sources and an evaluation of the authenticity of these reports see Wadād al-Qādī, "The Development . . .": 307.

17. On him see Wadād al-Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*, 206–8.

18. Nawbakhtī: 45; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 32.

the numerous groups that believed Ja'far al-Ṣādiq¹⁹ and the Imāms among his descendants²⁰ were God. All of these groups had their own special allegoristic and esoteric interpretations of the religious symbols; they subsequently abrogated the *sharī'a*, legalized unlawful acts, and, consequently, split from the Muslim community. The Imāms and their followers, however, consistently condemned and publicly disassociated themselves from these groups. This might have been partly in order to protect the Shī'ite community from possible discredit by the blasphemies of those groups whose leaders started as Shī'ites and claimed association with the Imāms, and the wild ideas of those groups could, therefore, be harmful to the image of Shī'ism.

Some time in the first decades of the second century of the *Hijra* during the time of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, another category of extremists emerged within the Imāmite community. This group inherited and adopted²¹ many of the points of view of the extremists in the defunct school of Kaysānite Shī'ism on the divine nature of the Imāms,²² namely, that the Imāms were supernatural beings who possessed limitless knowledge, including that of the unseen,²³ and had power of disposal over the universe. This new group of Shī'ite extremists did not proclaim the Prophet and the Imāms as God but believed that God had empowered them to create and provide for all beings and had vested in them the authority to legislate and abrogate the *sharī'a* as they decided. The Prophet and the Imāms were, thus, fulfilling nearly all the functions that God was supposed to do; the only difference was that His power was original and theirs subordinate. This idea soon came to be known in the Shī'ite tradition by the term *tafwīd* (delegation), after which the group came to be more specifically known among the Shī'a as the *Mufawwida*, just

19. See Nawbakhtī: 57–9; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 51–55; Qādī Nu'mān, 1:62.

20. See Kashshī: 480, 518–21, 555.

21. The extremists in question themselves regarded the Kaysānites as their predecessors as this statement that they ascribed to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq attests: "Our secret was undisclosed until it went into the hands of the descendants [*sic*] of Kaysān who disclosed it in the streets and amongst communities" (Kulaynī, 1:223).

22. See Wadād al-Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 238–61.

23. Nawbakhtī: 49, 51, 65; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 39, 41; Shahrastānī, 1:170.

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as the splinter heretic groups who defied the Imāms were sometimes more specifically called *Ghulāt Ṭayyāra*, or simply *Ṭayyāra*²⁴ (over-flyers).²⁵ In early Shī'ite biographical dictionaries the latter, who split from the community and established their own heretical sects on the basis of their esoteric interpretations, are sometimes distinguished by the term *fāsid al-madbbab* or *fāsid al-i'tiqād* (of corrupt doctrine)²⁶ or by stating that the scholarship of the person concerned

24. See Kashshī: 324, 363, 401, 407, 507; Maqdisī, 5:129; Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 515.

25. See for this translation Kashshī: 507–8 (para. 978, 981) where Saḫwān b. Yaḥyā al-Bajālī (d. 210/825–826), a prominent figure in the Shī'ite community of his time, is quoted as having said that Muḥammad b. Sinān, a well-known figure among the Mufawwiḍa, “was from the *Ṭayyāra* (or, according to another report, “repeatedly tried to fly”) but we clipped [his wings] until he settled with us.” The word was possibly related to the word *irtifā'*, which was used for the Mufawwiḍa—the latter had gone up a distance away from the truth, the radical extremists had flown far beyond it (see also Nu'mānī: 19). Cf. Maqdisī, 5:129 where it is said that the followers of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba' (see below, chapter 7) are called *Ṭayyāra* because they maintain that they do not die, rather their souls fly into the dark.

26. The list of the transmitters of *ḥadīth* who were described by those definitions includes the following:

—Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Sayyār, a transmitter of *ghuluww* and *takblīṭ* (Najāshī: 80; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 23), who believed in metempsychosis (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 1: 150)

—'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh al-Khadījī, author of a book that is described as *kitāb mal'un fī takblīṭ 'aẓīm* (Najāshī: 267);

—'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh al-Maymūnī (Najāshī: 268);

—'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Kūfī (Najāshī: 265), who later in his life became a member of the *bāṭinī* sect of the Mukhammisa (Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 485; idem, *Fibrīst*: 211; 'Umarī: 108);

—'Alī b. Ḥassān al-Hāshimī (Najāshī: 251), author of a book called *Tafsīr al-bāṭin*, which is described by Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 4: 176, as heretical;

—Dāwūd b. Kathīr al-Raqqī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 2: 190), whom the Ghulāt counted among their leaders (Kashshī: 408);

—Fāris b. Ḥātim b. Māhawayh al-Qazwīnī, who had *takblīṭ* in his works and beliefs (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5: 11);

—Ḥasan b. Asad al-Ṭufāwī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 2: 98);

—Ḥusayn b. Ḥamdān al-Khuṣaybī, the Nuṣayrite (Najāshī: 67; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 2: 172), whose works suffered from *takblīṭ* (Najāshī: 67);

—Ishāq b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abān al-Aḥmar (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 1: 197), the source of *takblīṭ* and author of works of *takblīṭ* (Najāshī: 73);

—Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. Mālik al-Fazārī (Najāshī: 122);

suffers from *takblīṭ* (confusion with esoteric, *bāṭinī*²⁷ teachings).²⁸ The Mufawwiḍa, on the other hand, are frequently distinguished by descriptions such as *abl al-irtifā'*,²⁹ *fī madbbabihī*³⁰ (or *fī ḥadīthihī*)

—Mufāḍḍal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī, the Khaṭṭābite (Najāshī: 416);

—Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Mihrān, the Khaṭṭābite (Najāshī: 350);

—Abū Sumayna Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ṣayrafi, *fāsid al-i'tiqād* (Najāshī: 332), whom Kashshī: 546 put in the same rank as Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb;

—Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Shammūn, a Wāqifite extremist with *takblīṭ* (Najāshī: 335);

—Muḥammad b. Jumhūr al-'Ammī (Najāshī: 337);

—Sahl b. Ziyād al-Ādamī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 3: 179);

—Ṭāhir b. Ḥātim b. Māhawayh al-Qazwīnī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 3: 228), whose beliefs and works suffered from *takblīṭ* (Najāshī: 208).

27. See the article “Bāṭiniyya” in *EP*, 1:1098–1100 (by M. G. S. Hodgson).

28. See, for instance, Najāshī: 67, 73, 80, 164, 208, 221, 226, 251, 270, 284, 332, 336, 350, 373, 396, 448; Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 211, 486; idem, *Fibrīst*: 23, 91–92, 143, 145, 146. The expression *mukballīṭ*, thus, can describe either a person who does not have a sound doctrinal base and who takes all sorts of odd ideas from anywhere and puts them together and holds to them (see, for instance, Abū Maṣūir al-Ṭabrisī, 2:74; also 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 20[2]: 175) or the work of the person concerned in the same sense as the expressions *fāsid al-ḥadīth* or *fāsid al-riwāya*, of corrupt transmission (Najāshī: 368, 421; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5:184; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 284). 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-'Aqīqī is, for instance, called *mukballīṭ* (Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 486) because his *ḥadīth* contained *manākīr*, bizarre ideas (idem, *Fibrīst*: 97). Kashshī: 476 states that Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. Abi 'l-Qāsim al-Asadī was not a *ghālī* himself but was *mukballīṭ*, that is, he transmitted *ghuluww* traditions. Compare with cases where a person is said to be *fāsid al-madbbab wa 'l-riwāya* (e.g., Najāshī: 122; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 3:179). This is, of course, the more specific sense of this term as used in the Imāmite *ḥadīth* literature. The term *mukballīṭ* is also used in the works on *ḥadīth* in the sense of careless transmitter who quotes and mixes all sorts of *ḥadīth*, whether sound or “weak.”

29. See Kashshī: 326 (describing three transmitters, one of whom, Ishāq b. Muḥammad al-Baṣrī, had [according to ibid.: 531] a special interest in transmitting Mufāḍḍal b. 'Umar's reports on the themes of *tafwīḍ*). See also Khuṣaybī: 431 where the word *murtafi'a* is used in the same sense.

30. See Najāshī: 24 (Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd al-Makfūf), 155 (Khaybarī b. 'Alī al-Ṭahḥān), 228 ('Abd Allāh b. Khidāsh al-Mahrī), 384 (Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Ruhnī, who was accused, according to Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 510 of supporting the idea of *tafwīḍ*); Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 1:37 (Ibrāhīm b. Ishāq al-Aḥmarī), 126 (Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Rāzī), 237 (Umayya b. 'Alī al-Qaysī), 2:42 (Ja'far

irtifā', *murtafi' al-qawl*³¹ or *fībi gbuluwu wa taraffu'*,³² all describing the doctrine of or the nature of the *ḥadīth* transmitted by the concerned person to be "elevated"³³ and exaggerated as they elevated the Imāms from human beings to supernatural beings by ascribing miracles and superhuman characters to them. Nevertheless, in general usage, the term *ghulāt* was also liberally and systematically used for both categories in Shī'ite circles as well as in the traditions and sources.³⁴ However, if the two terms *ghulāt* and *mufawwiḍa* are

b. Muḥammad b. Mālik al-Fazārī, 45 (Ja'far b. Ma'rūf al-Samarqandī), 124 (Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī 'Uthmān Sajjāda), 5:45 (Qāsīm b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Yaqtīn), 127 (Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Jāmūrānī), 162 (Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Ruhnī), 219 (Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Daylamī, *murtafi' fī madhbabih*), 264 (Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Ṣayrafī).

31. Kashshī: 571 (Abū Hāshim al-Ja'farī whose narration betrays *irtifā' fī 'l-qawl*); Najāshī: 406 (Mūsā b. Ja'far al-Kumaydhānī); Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 3:266 ('Abd Allāh b. Baḥr al-Kūfī), 268 ('Abd Allāh b. Bakr al-Arrijānī), 278 ('Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥakam al-Armanī), 284 ('Abd Allāh b. Sālim al-Ṣayrafī), 4:25 ('Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Aṣamm), 74 ('Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Nahīk al-Kūfī), 6:131 (Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī), 279 (Yūsuf b. al-Sukht al-Baṣrī), 289 (Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb al-Ju'fī).
32. Najāshī: 97 (Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Rāzī).
33. The expression was possibly taken from a then well-known statement attributed to the Prophet: "Do not exalt me above my actual rank [*la tarfa'ūni fawqa ḥaddī*]; God picked me up as a slave [of His] before He picked me up as a prophet" (Ḥimyarī: 181; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:201).
34. Ibn Dāwūd: 538–42 gives a list of 65 persons described in the Shī'ite biographies of the transmitters of *ḥadīth* as *ghulāt*, and Wadād al-Qādī, "Development . . .": 317–18, gives a list of 56 based on the information available in the biographical dictionaries of Kashshī, Najāshī, Ṭūsī and Ibn Shahrāshūb. She, however, missed these names: Ismā'il b. Mihrān (Kashshī: 589), Muḥammad b. al-Furāt (ibid.: 554), Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Numayrī (ibid.: 520–21), Muhammad b. Mūsā al-Shurayqī (ibid., 521: Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 436), Munakhkhal b. Jamīl al-Kūfī (Kashshī: 368; also Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 6:139), Muḥammad b. Ṣadaqa al-Baṣrī (Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 391), Muḥammad b. 'Isā b. 'Ubayd al-Yaqtīnī (idem, *Fibriṣt*: 311), Ḥasan b. Khurzādh (Najāshī: 44), and Ḥusayn b. Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Nawfalī (ibid.: 38). Other names can be found in Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 2:24 (Ja'far b. Ismā'il al-Minqarī), 272 (Khalaf b. Muḥammad al-Māwardī), 275 (Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Taḥḥān), 3:205 (Ṣāliḥ b. Sahl al-Hamadānī), 206 (Ṣāliḥ b. 'Uqba b. Qays b. Sam'ān), 4:204 ('Alī b. 'Abd Allāh al-Maymūnī), 5:45 (Qāsīm b. al-Rabī' al-Ṣaḥḥāf), 6:112 (Mu'allā b. Rāshid al-'Ammī), 156 (Mūsā b. Sa'dān al-Ḥannāt), 164 (Maysāh al-Madā'inī), 290 (Yūnus b. Bahman).

mentioned together, *ghulāt* definitely refers to those who deified the Imāms or, alternatively, considered them prophets or angels.³⁵

The doctrines of the Mufawwiḍa were more developed versions of those of the earlier extremists. The trend, it seems, was helped by the introduction of two ideas into the extremist doctrine some time around the beginning of the second/eighth century by the Kaysānite extremists.³⁶ First came the idea of incarnation of the divine spirit or light in the bodies of the Prophet and the Imāms. Earlier extremists had believed that the Prophet and the Imāms represented divinity itself.³⁷ According to this new idea, they possessed a part of the spirit of God or a spark of the divine light (but not necessarily the totality of God) which they had inherited from

Many of these *ghulāt* belonged to sectarian extremist groups, whereas others were from the Mufawwiḍa. Ṭūsī, for instance, describes Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Ruhnī as a *ghālī* in his *Fibriṣt*: 132 but as a *mufawwiḍ* in his *Rijāl*: 510, and Furāt b. al-Aḥnaf al-'Abdī as being attributed to *ghuluww* and *tafwīd* in his *Rijāl*: 99 (as quoted by Ibn Dāwūd: 492 who possessed the autograph of that work, although in the printed copy it appears as *ghuluww* and *tafwīf*, two concepts with opposite meanings). Sometimes, however, only the adherence to *tafwīd* is mentioned as in the case of Ādam b. Muḥammad al-Qalānisī al-Balkhī in Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 438.

35. See, for instance, Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:203 where a quotation from Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā states that the "Ghulāt are infidels and the Mufawwiḍa are polytheists" (naturally because the more radical extremists, referred to here as the Ghulāt, believed in a god other than Allāh, whereas the latter, the Mufawwiḍa, virtually added other acting gods to Him); ibid, 1:215 (and idem, *Khiṣāl*: 529; idem, *I'tiqādāt*: 100; *Ghayba*: 18) where it is said that the Ghulāt and Mufawwiḍa denied that the Imāms were actually killed or actually had died (Ṭūsī, in *Talkhīṣ al-shāfi'*, 4:198, says that the Mufawwiḍa doubted that Ḥusayn was actually killed, in the same way that the Ghulāt hesitated about 'Alī's death); idem, *Faqīh*, 1:359 where he says that "the Ghulāt and the Mufawwiḍa, may God curse them, deny the inadvertence of the Prophet"; Mufid, *Awā'il*: 38 where he states that the idea that the Imāms did not possess knowledge of the unseen is held by the entire Shī'ite community "except those who split away from them of the Mufawwiḍa or those who allege to belong to them [the Shī'ites] of the Ghulāt" (compare with other cases in that work, such as the beginning of the same page, where he speaks of "the Mufawwiḍa and others among the Ghulāt." See also Kashshī: 479).
36. See Wadād al-Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 246, 248, 250–53.
37. See 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20(1):13.

Adam through a line of prophets. The second was an interpretation that seems to have been offered first by the Kaysānite Bayān b. Sam'ān al-Nahdī (d. 119/737)³⁸ of a Qur'ānic verse that speaks of the God in Heaven and the God on earth.³⁹ He commented that this verse indicated that the one who is the god in heaven was different from the one who is the god on earth, although the one in heaven is greater and the one on earth lesser and obedient to him.⁴⁰ The two ideas were combined in the fourth decade of the second/eighth century by Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb Muḥammad b. Abī Zaynab al-Asadī (d. ca. 138/755-756),⁴¹ head of the Khaṭṭābite extremists,⁴² who maintained that the spirit of God descended to the earth, manifested in Ja'far al-Šādiq,⁴³ and that now he was the god on earth.⁴⁴ The doctrine of the Mufawwiḍa, who appeared about the same time and was championed by Mufaddal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī, the money changer⁴⁵ (d. before 179/795), a former disciple of Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb,⁴⁶ was clearly a further modification of that same idea.⁴⁷

38. On him see Wadād al-Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 239–47; the article “Bayān b. Sam'ān al-Tamīmi” in *EP*, 1:1116–17 (by M.G.S. Hodgson); William Tucker, “Bayān b. Sam'ān and the Bayāniyya,” in the *Muslim World*, 65, (1975): 241–53.

39. Qur'ān, 43:84: “and it is He who is God in heaven and God on earth.”

40. Kashshī: 304 (see also Nawbakhtī: 59).

41. On him see the article “Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb” in *EP*, 1:134 (by B. Lewis); Halm, *Die Islamisch Gnosis*, 199–206.

42. On them see the article “Khaṭṭābiyya” in *EP*, 4:1132–3 (by W. Madelung); Halm, *Die Islamische Gnosis*: 199–217.

43. Shahrastānī, 1:210–11.

44. Kashshī: 300. See also Nawbakhtī: 59 and Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 53 where some followers of Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb are quoted as describing his successor as “the god on earth who was obedient to the god of heaven and acknowledged his superiority and rank.”

45. On him see Halm, “Das Buch der Schatten,” in *Der Islam*, 55 (1978): 219–60.

46. Kashshī: 321, 324.

47. See *ibid.*, 324–5. Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:79, thus, classifies the Mufawwiḍa as a subset of the Khaṭṭābiyya whose only difference with the mainstream Khaṭṭābitēs was that they disassociated themselves from Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb after Ja'far al-Šādiq anathematized him, but they remained faithful to Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb's teachings.

The Mufawwiḍa maintained that the Prophet and the Imāms were the first and only beings to be directly created by God⁴⁸ from a substance different from that of the rest of humanity.⁴⁹ God then gave them authority and responsibility for all affairs of the world, whatever movement and action takes place in the universe.⁵⁰ They, as noted above, actually perform whatever functions are normally and conventionally ascribed to God, such as creation, providence, death, and so forth.⁵¹ They make the *sharī'a* and abrogate it, make things lawful or unlawful.⁵² They have knowledge of everything, seen or unseen.⁵³ (At least some upheld that the Imāms received

48. Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 60–61; Mufīd, *Taṣṣīb*: 112. To be more precise, the first and only direct creature was a single entity, a single perfect being. This perfect being was then manifested in the world in various shapes, first as the Prophet and then as 'Alī, Fāṭima, and the Imāms from their descendants (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 60–61). Bursī: 258 names a certain Jālūt (?) al-Qummī who held that the Imām was “the perfect man” and as such the manifestation of God. The idea was that the first creature had all qualities of God save His exclusive quality of being self-existing. The first creature was, thus, the manifestation of all names and attributes of God except for His name *qayyūm* (self-subsisting) because God is the only being whose existence does not depend on anyone or anything else. Thus, in the hierarchy of existence, the Prophets, his daughter Fāṭima and the Imāms (or, as the Mufawwiḍa called them, *silsilat al-muḥammadiyyīn*) occupy the highest rank save that of God. Some described their rank to be the rank of *mashīyya* (God's will), which is God's first manifestation and action. They thus represent the will of God, that is, whatever they do is the manifestation of what God wants (see, *inter alia*, 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20(1):13; Bursī, 32–8, 45–7).

49. 'Ayyāshī, 1:374; Šaffār: 14–20; Kulaynī, 1:387; Khuṣaybī: 354; Ibn Bābawayh, *Khiṣāl*: 428; Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, 1:315. See further Kohlberg, “Imām and Community”: 31.

50. See Šaffār: 152; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 61; 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20(1): 13.

51. Šaffār: 61–6; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 61; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:86, 2:239; Kashshī: 332; Khuṣaybī: 431; Ibn Bābawayh, 'Uyūn, 1:124; 2:202–3; *idem*, *I'tiqādāt*: 100–101; 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20(2):175; *Ghayba*: 178; Abū Maṣ'ūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:288–9; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs*: 107; Bursī: 257–8.

52. Šaffār: 378–87; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:88; Kulaynī, 1:265–6, 441. See also Namāzī, 8:319–26 for other references.

53. Šaffār: 122–30; Kulaynī, 1:260–62; Kashshī: 540; Ḥasan b. Sulaymān: 2; Majlisī, 26:18–200. See further Kohlberg, “Imām and Community”: 26–30.

direct revelation.)⁵⁴ They knew not only all the languages of mankind but also those of the birds and animals.⁵⁵ They were omnipotent, omniscient, omniefficient, and omnipresent.⁵⁶

The first spokesman for this tendency, in fact the first person who is known for supporting these views⁵⁷ in the Imāmite community,⁵⁸ was, as noted above Mufaḍḍal al-Ju'fī, who was then followed by⁵⁹ Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Sinān al-Zāhirī (d. 220/835)⁶⁰ and found significant support in the Imāmite Shī'ite community of that time. A few decades later in the middle of the third/ninth century, Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Numayrī,⁶¹ a prominent scholar from Basra⁶² and a follower of Mufaḍḍal and Muḥammad b. Sinān, developed their doctrine by adding much *bāṭinī* material to their teachings. This brought the tendency back to the original fully extremist Khaṭṭābite theories of metempsychosis and incarnation. He enjoyed the support of Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. al-Ḥasan b.

54. Kashshī: 540; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:88.

55. Ṣaffār: 335–54; Kashshī: 540.

56. See on these points Ṣaffār, passim; Kulaynī, 1:168–439. Many of the Mufawwiḍa further denied that the Imāms were actually killed or died and held that, as in the case of Jesus as mentioned in the Qur'ān 4:157, they simply ascended to God. See Ibn Bābawayh, *I'tiqādāt*: 100; idem, *Khiṣāl*: 529; idem, 'Uyūn, 1:215; Tūsī, *Ghayba*: 18; idem, *Talkhīṣ al-sbāfi*, 4:198.

57. See Kashshī: 323, 326, 380, 531. See also Ṣaffār: 24; Kulaynī, 8:232.

58. See Pseudo Mufaḍḍal, *Kitāb al-Haft*: 31 where Mufaḍḍal is described as *asī kull riwāya bāṭina* (see also Kashshī: 531). Cf. Ibn Bābawayh, *I'tiqādāt*: 101 where Zurāra b. A'yan is quoted as reporting to Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq that "a man from the descendants [*sic*] of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba'" upheld the idea of *tafwīḍ*. The Imām asked what the term meant. Zurara explained that the man maintained that God created Muḥammad and 'Alī and then delegated the authority to them, so they created, provided, and gave life and death.

59. See Kashshī: 508–9.

60. On him see Halm, *Die Islamische Gnosis*: 242–3.

61. On him see Nawbakhtī: 102–3; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 100–101; Kashshī: 520–21; Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 149; Khuṣaybī: 323, 338, 367, 395.

62. Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 6:62–3 where it is said that Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr was *min afdal abl al-basra 'ilman*.

al-Furāt,⁶³ a member of the influential Shī'ite family of high-ranking government officials of Banu 'l-Furāt,⁶⁴ and managed to establish his own splinter group, the Nuṣayriyya.⁶⁵ The movement was further consolidated by the works of one of its next heads,⁶⁶ Ḥusayn b. Ḥamdān al-Khuṣaybī (d. 346/958 or 358/969)⁶⁷ and lived henceforth within the Islamic community as a heretic sect that now has several million followers in Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey.⁶⁸ The bulk of the Mufawwiḍa, however, remained in the mainstream of the Imāmite community until the end of the time of the Imāms.

From the time that extremist ideas started to gain some following in the Imāmite community many Imāmites opposed the idea of any supernaturality of the Imāms and insisted that they were simply virtuous learned men ('*ulamā' abrār*). The followers of this tendency, however, firmly believed that absolute obedience to the Imāms was required, as the Prophet, according to the Shī'ite analysis and conclusion, instructed the people to follow them as the true interpreters of the Book of God and heirs to the Prophetic knowledge. This doctrine of the necessity of absolute obedience to the Imām distinguished the supporters of this Shī'ite trend from the many Sunnites of the time who also favored those Imāms whose authority was widely accepted, such as Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Those Sunnites attended the circles of the Imāms, studied with them, cared about their opinions on various legal questions

63. Nawbakhtī: 103; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 100; Kashshī: 521. See also Khuṣaybī: 338 where Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Furāt al-Kātib is mentioned among the associates of Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr. On the family's connection to the Ghulāt see further Kashshī: 303, 554; Khuṣaybī: 323; ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 148; Pseudo Mufaḍḍal, *Kitāb al-Haft*: 20–21; Bursī: 258.

64. On them see the article "Ibn al-Furāt" in *EP*, 3:767–8 (by D. Sourdel). Muḥammad b. Mūsā was father of Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Furāt (d. 312/924), the vizier of the Abbasid Muḥtadir (r. 295–320/908–932).

65. See Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 149; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 6:63; *Manāqib*, 1:265; Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd, 8:122; Bursī: 257. See also Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:86 where they are called Numayriyya instead (possibly, however, a misspelling of Nuṣayriyya).

66. See the table in Halm, *Die Islamische Gnosis*: 296.

67. On him see especially Ziriklī, 2:255; Sezgin, 1:584 and the sources mentioned in these two works.

68. On them see the article "Nuṣayriyya" in *EP*, 3:963–7 (by L. Massignon).

and transmitted *ḥadīth* from them but only as some of the many religious authorities of the time, or even as some of the most, or the most, learned among them. Unlike the Shī'ites, those Sunnites, however, did not consider following the Imāms to be religiously binding by Prophetic designation. The followers of that Shī'ite trend denied and rejected any idea or report that would attribute any supernaturality to the Imāms, including claims about their knowledge of the unseen.

In the first decades of the second/eighth century, the most distinguished figure in this latter tendency was a profound Shī'ite scholar of Kūfa,⁶⁹ Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Ya'fūr al-'Abdī (d. 131/748-749)⁷⁰ who was a very close associate of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.⁷¹ He was an especially devoted and faithful follower of the Imām⁷² and was praised by him as the only⁷³ or one of only two⁷⁴ disciples of his who were the most obedient to him and with whom he was totally satisfied. In numerous statements from the Imām, 'Abd Allāh is praised with unusual and unprecedented complimentary phrases where he is said, for instance, to be living in Paradise in a house between the houses of the Prophet and 'Alī.⁷⁵ He maintained, however, that the Imāms were merely righteous and pious learned men (*'ulamā' abrār atqiyā'*).⁷⁶ He once had a debate

69. See Kashshī: 162, 427; Najāshī: 213.

70. According to Kashshī: 246, he died in the year of the plague during the time of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. That was the year 131/748-749 (Ibn Sa'd, 5:355, 7[2]: 21, 60 [see also 7(2):11, 13, 17]; Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, 2:603; Mubarrad, *Ta'āzīr*: 212; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*: 470 [also 471, 601]; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam*, 7: 287-8; Dhahabī, *Ta'rikh al-Islām*, 5:199; Ibn Taghrībirdī, 1:313. Cf. Ṭabarī, 7:401; Ibn al-Athīr, 5:393 who dated the plague to 130/747-748).

71. Kashshī: 10. See also Kulaynī, 6:464.

72. Kashshī: 249 (para. 462). See also Durust b. Abī Maṣṣūr: 162; 'Ayyāshī, 1:327; Pseudo Mufīd, *Iktihās*: 190.

73. Kashshī: 246, 249, 250 (paras. 453, 463, 464).

74. Ibid.: 180.

75. Ibid.: 249.

76. Ibid.: 247. See also Abān b. Taghlib's definition of the Shī'a (quoted in Najāshī: 12) as "those who follow the opinion of 'Alī when quotations from the Prophet are contradictory, and the opinion of Ja'far b. Muḥammad [al-Ṣādiq] when quotations from 'Alī are contradictory."

on this issue with Mu'allā b. Khunays,⁷⁷ a servant of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who ranked the Imāms as prophets. The Imām reportedly confirmed Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and strongly denounced Mu'allā's idea.⁷⁸ Ibn Abī Ya'fūr's ideas clearly had wide support in that period. At the time of his death a huge crowd of those who supported his anti-extremist ideas attended his funeral.⁷⁹ Some Muslim heresiographers, the first of them Ibn al-Muq'ad⁸⁰ in the time of the Abbasid Mahdī (r. 158-169/775-785), mentioned a Shī'ite sect as Ya'fūriyya, clearly denoting the followers of Ibn Abī Ya'fūr, who maintained moderate positions on various theological and sectarian questions. They, for instance, did not allow wrangling in religious matters and, unlike the extremists,⁸¹ did not consider the acknowledgment of the Imām to be an essential component of Islam.⁸²

The extremists were working actively against Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and his supporters during his lifetime and after.⁸³ In his lifetime, they tried to discredit him even in the presence of the Imām who always supported him and condemned his opponents.⁸⁴ They labeled the big crowd that attended his funeral as the *murji'at al-shī'a*,⁸⁵ the Shī'ite Murji'ites, obviously trying to accuse his supporters of Sunnite inclinations in their doctrinal views as they considered the Imāms human beings, not acting gods. The situation created considerable tension and exchanges of verbal attacks between the two factions during the period of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq⁸⁶ but reportedly became

77. On him see Kashshī: 376-82; Najāshī: 417; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 6:110.

78. Kashshī: 247 (para. 456); *Manāqib*, 3:354.

79. Ibid.: 247 (para. 458).

80. Ibid.: 265-6.

81. See, for instance, Nawbakhtī: 65; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 69.

82. Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:122. The sect was, thus, obviously different from an extremist subject with the same name that allegedly followed a certain Muḥammad b. Ya'fūr (Khawārmī: 50). On Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and his ideas, see further Kulaynī, 1:277, 3:133; Kashshī: 305, 307; Majlisī, 23:53.

83. In general, the extremists detested the prominent and learned disciples of the Imāms who were regarded by the community as most authentically representing the views of the Imāms. See Kashshī: 138, 148.

84. Kashshī: 246.

85. Ibid.: 247.

86. See Kulaynī, 8:78, 223, 285.

much worse and more bitter after him.⁸⁷ Even the learned mainstream disciples of Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim were divided on the issues concerning the position of the Imāmate, and the difference of opinion on those issues caused heated debates, and, in some cases, permanent breakdowns of friendship⁸⁸ between them.

The turning point for the Mufawwiḍa came with the death of Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā, who left a seven-year-old son as his only descendant. This led, as noted above, to controversy in the Imāmite community as to whether a child of seven years was legally qualified or knowledgeable enough to become an Imām. The mainstream of the Imāmite community eventually accepted him as the Imām but disagreed in their interpretations and the solution offered. One group held that the meaning of his being an Imām was that he was the Imām to be, that is, that the Imāmate was his right. When he reached his age of maturity and obtained the knowledge necessary for the holder of the position, he would then be the Imām. This knowledge he would obtain not through revelation, as the Prophet was the last to receive it and there would be no revelation after him, nor through any supernatural means, but through reading the books of his forefathers and acquainting himself properly with the principles of religious law. This solution could not, of course, solve the problems entirely because the Imām later had inevitably to decide what the law was in many instances which might not be specifically mentioned in the books of his forefathers. Therefore, some of the supporters of that opinion suggested that he might arrive at his legal conclusions about those cases through rational reasoning.⁸⁹ This mode of reasoning was not recognized by most early authorities of the Imāmite doctrine to be valid in law because one could not guarantee the absence of errors in one's argument that could eventually lead to wrong conclusions and to ascribing things to religion that were not parts of it. This rationale, however,

87. *Manāqib*, 4:250.

88. See Kulaynī, 1:410.

89. The word used here in the sources is *qiyās*, which in the Shī'ite terminology of the time implied any sort of rational argument, not only analogical reasoning which the word more specifically implied in the Sunnite tradition. See my *An Introduction to Shī'ī Law*: 29–30; also al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī, *Ma'ārij*: 187.

would not be true in the case of the Imām, who was protected by God against error in religion. Thus his rational argument would always lead him to truth.⁹⁰ Others held that one could be given the perfect knowledge of the *sharī'a* and be appointed by God as the Imām even as a child in much the same way that Christ and John the Baptist were, according to the Qur'ān,⁹¹ prophets from their childhood.⁹² This second interpretation and idea eventually received the most support in the community and contributed greatly to the popularization of extremist ideas about the cosmic position of the Imāms, the belief that they were superhuman beings possessed of a divine light, and that it was this divine light, not any mere knowledge or specific political right, that was the true essence of the Imāmate. The Imām became the Imām through divine grace; knowledge or political status were mere contingent effects of the Imāmate.

From this point on,⁹³ the Mufawwiḍa intensified their efforts to spread their literature, a vast body of material quoted by Mufaḍḍal al-Ju'fī and his colleagues on the authority of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq,

90. Nawbakhtī: 98–99; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 96–98. See also Ṣaffār: 387–90. According to Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 96, this view was supported by the prominent Imāmite scholar and theologian of the time Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qummī (on him see below, chapter 4).

91. Qur'ān, 19:12, 29–30.

92. Ṣaffār: 238; Nawbakhtī: 99; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 95–96, 99; Kulaynī, 1:321, 322, 383–4; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:105; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Bal-khī: 181–2; Mufīd, *Irsbād*: 317, 319; idem, *Majālis*, 2:96; Majlisī, 50:20, 21, 24, 34, 35 (quoting other sources). Nāshī': 25 quotes a similar controversy among earlier Shī'ites on the Imāmate of 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn who, according to some reports, had not yet reached the age of puberty when his father was killed. According to Nāshī', a group of the Shī'ites offered the same analysis cited above to support the truth of the Imāmate of 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, arguing that Christ and John the Baptist became prophets when they were still children. The group was headed by Abū Khālid al-Kābulī, an early Shī'ite that the extremists greatly admired and considered as one of their pioneers (see Pseudo Mufaḍḍal, *Kitāb al-Haft*: 20–21; also Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 148). For similar ideas among the Shī'ites in the beginning of the second/eighth century, see Nawbakhtī: 68–9; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 72; Nāshī': 43.

93. On the split in the Imāmite community in the early third/ninth century on the nature of the Imāms, see Kulaynī, 1:441.

in addition to that already produced by radical extremists such as Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb and others.⁹⁴ The Mufawwiḍa also added extensively to that literature.⁹⁵ In line with a statement attributed to the Imāms that permitted the attribution of whatever supernatural quality or miracle one wanted to the Imāms as long as one did not identify them with God,⁹⁶ the Mufawwiḍa offered much material quoted on the authority of the Imāms on the divine aspect of their nature, as well as many stories of miracles performed by any one of the Imāms and narratives that traced their signs and effects to the antediluvian world. The whole of the third/ninth century was, thus, a period in which the extremists' literature in general and the Mufawwiḍa's in particular greatly flourished. Much of the material in those genres that is preserved in the later works was contributed by the Mufawwiḍa of this period. To further consolidate their own position, they also quoted many complimentary remarks and praises of Mufaḍḍal and their other notables on the authority of the Imāms.⁹⁷ By the middle of the third/ninth century they had properly established themselves as a group within the mainstream Imāmite community, and they were struggling to overwhelm the moderates.

The Imāmite scholars and transmitters of *ḥadīth* in Qum, which was by now the main Imāmite center of learning, reacted very harshly to the Mufawwiḍa's expansionism. They tried to contain the flow of extremist literature that was spreading fast. The scholars of Qum began to declare anyone who attributed any sign of superhumanity to the Prophet or the Imāms an extremist⁹⁸ and to expel such people from their town. Many of the transmitters of *ḥadīth* were banished from Qum for transmitting reports that contained that genre of material during the first half of the third/ninth cen-

94. See Kashshī: 224–5.

95. See, for instance, Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 6:131 where he commented about Mufaḍḍal that "much additional material has been added to him and the extremists have loaded a big load in his reports."

96. Ḥimyarī, *Dalā'il* (quoted in Irbilī, 2:409); Ṣaffār: 241; Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Astarābādī: 44; Khuṣaybī: 432; Ibn Bābawayh, *Khiṣāl*: 614; Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:233; Ḥasan b. Sulaymān: 59.

97. See, for examples, Ṣaffār: 237; Kashshī: 321, 322–3, 365, 402, 508–9.

98. See Majlisī, 52:89.

tury.⁹⁹ This was, of course, the punishment for merely transmitting reports of that genre. The actual belief in the supernaturality of the Imāms was another matter; it was a grave heresy that could be punished by death. There is, in fact, a report that the people of Qum once tried to kill a scholar of their town who was accused of holding such opinions because they thought he was an unbeliever, but they stopped when they found him praying.¹⁰⁰ This response indicates that the Imāmite community of Qum did not differentiate between the two concepts of *ghuluww* and *tafwīḍ*¹⁰¹ and regarded

99. Kashshī: 512 (see also Najāshī: 38, 77). They included famous Imāmite transmitters of *ḥadīth* such as Sahl b. Ziyād al-Ādamī al-Rāzī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 3:179; Najāshī: 185), Abū Sumayna Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Qurashī (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5:264; Najāshī: 332), Ḥusayn b. 'Ubayd Allāh al-Muḥarrir (Kashshī: 512), as well as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālīd al-Barqī, author of *Kitāb al-Maḥāsīn*, who was expelled from the town because he was not careful and quoted inauthentic material (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 2:138).

100. Najāshī: 329; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5:160. The man was Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ūrama al-Qummī, a *ḥadīth* transmitter of the mid-third/ninth century. Among his numerous works mentioned in Najāshī: 329–30 was a book against the Ghulāt. There was, however, some *bā'imī* material in a book attributed to him, which generated suspicions about him. He was, therefore, at most one of the Mufawwiḍa and not of the radical extremist splinter groups.

101. The sectarian Ghulāt, as said before, normally abrogated the *sharī'a* and did not consider themselves bound by religious obligations, including prayer. They regarded such obligations as duties imposed on those like the Muqassira (see below), whose minds, unlike those of the Ghulāt, were not developed enough and blessed enough to know the secrets of the Universe and the true rank of the Imāms (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 61), and they maintained that the recognition of the true status of the Imām would make them unneeded of prayer and other religious obligations (ibid.: 39; Kashshī: 325). This is why in the early centuries people thought that they could ascertain whether someone was from the Ghulāt by watching him in the time of prayer, because if he was an extremist he would not pray (Kashshī: 530). In a statement reported from Mufaḍḍal he also downgraded the value of prayer in contrast to serving the Imām (ibid.: 327). Another report suggests that in a pilgrimage to Karbalā' he personally failed to say his prayers (ibid.: 325), a report that presumably attempts to prove that he was actually a full-force extremist. An opposite example is a statement quoted from a mid-third/ninth century transmitter of *ḥadīth* who denied

anyone who attributed supernaturality to the Imāms to be a heretic, virtually a nonbeliever, whether he deified them or not. The Mufawwiḍa counterattacked by calling the scholars of Qum and other moderates *muqaṣṣira*, the shortcomers, suggesting that the moderates fell short of recognizing the true nature of the Imām.¹⁰² At times they even accused them of having Sunnite inclinations.¹⁰³ The term *taqṣīr* subsequently assumed a new sense in the post second/eighth century Imāmīte usage¹⁰⁴ as the opposite of *tafwīd*,¹⁰⁵

that Muḥammad b. Sinān was a *ghālī* on the basis that he was the one who taught that transmitter how to perform ritual purity (Ibn Tāwūs, *Falāḥ al-sā'il*: 11). This explains why the people of Qum who wanted to kill Muḥammad b. Ūrama stopped when they found him praying, because, in their minds, if he were a *ghālī*, he would not pray and, therefore, in their judgment his praying proved that he was innocent of that accusation, not knowing that the Mufawwiḍa branch of the Ghulāt did not differ from the mainstream of the Muslims in respect to the *sharī'a* and that they fulfilled the Islamic religious obligations.

102. In a statement attributed in an anonymous work of the Mufawwiḍa to the Prophet, the Muqaṣṣira are defined as “those who fell short in the recognition of the Imāms . . . to know that God delegated His authority to those whom He blessed with His grace: to create by His permission and to resurrect by His permission and to know what is in the mind of the people and the past and the future until the day of resurrection” (Majlisī, 26:14–15; see also Khuṣaybī: 431; Mufīd, *Awā'il*: 45).
103. See the quotation from the above-mentioned anonymous work of the Mufawwiḍa in Majlisī, 26:9 where a reference is made to *al-nāṣiba al-malā'in wa 'l-qadariyya al-muqaṣṣirīn*, and 26:6 where it is said that whoever hesitated about the divine nature of the Imām—that he is the “face of God, the eye of God and the tongue of God”—is a *muqaṣṣir* and a *nāṣibī* (anti-'Alīd).
104. The most common sense of the term *taqṣīr* was, of course, negligence of one's religious duties. It was, however, freely used in the general Islamic usage to refer to shortcomings in recognition of religious facts and truths (e.g., Kulaynī, 2:19, 8:394; Kashshī: 424; Mufīd, *Awā'il*: 48).
105. The contrast already existed between the two terms of *taqṣīr* and *ghuluww* in the Shī'ite (see, for instance, Ṣaffār: 529; Kulaynī, 1:198, 8:128; Khuṣaybī: 419, 431, 432; Ibn Bābawayh, *Khiṣāl*: 627; Majlisī, 26:1, 5, 6, 9, 14, 16) as well as in the general Islamic usage (see, for instance, Rāghīb al-Iṣfahānī, *Muqaddama fi 'l-tafsīr*: 120, where he quotes some earlier scholars as describing the opinions of those who restricted the right of the interpretation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet and those who allowed it for anyone who had good command of Arabic as falling into the two

each referring to one extreme within the mainstream of the Imāmīte community.¹⁰⁶

extremes of *ghuluww* and *taqṣīr*; Jishumī, *Risālat iblīs*: 96). A well-circulated anecdote suggested that both *ghuluww* and *taqṣīr* in religion were disapproved (Majd al-Dīn b. al-Athīr, *Nihāya*, 5:119; see also Nāṣir Khusruw: 410, 436). In the usage of the early pro-'Alid groups it referred to the disrespectful statement and accusations that the pro-Umayyad and anti-'Alid elements used to make against 'Alī (see, for instance, Ibn al-Iskāfī: 31 where it is said: “*afrata fīhi* [i.e. 'Alī] *qawmun fa-'abadūhu wa qaṣṣara fīhi qawmun fa-shatamūhu wa qadbaḥūb*”; see also 32, 33). In the more general Shī'ite usage, however, it referred to the shortcoming of the non-Shī'ites who did not acknowledge the right of the 'Alīd Imāms in the succession to the Prophet in the leadership of the Muslim community. A statement quoted on the authority of Imām 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn, therefore, speaks of those who denied the right of the House of the Prophet as those “who came short in our matter” (Irbilī, 2:311 quoting Ibn al-Akhḍar; also Sunnite sources mentioned in Ibn 'Ayyāsh, introduction to the edition: 17). Another statement attributed to Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq asserted that “the *ghālī* comes back to us but we do not accept him, but the *muqaṣṣir* joins us and we accept him . . . [because] the *ghālī* develops a habit [of neglecting his religious obligations], it would be impossible for him to give up the habit and obey God, whereas the *muqaṣṣir* will fulfill [his obligations] and obey [God] if he comes to know [the true path]” (Ṭūsī, *Amālī*: 2:264; an abridged version of this statement is ascribed to Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir in 'Ayyāshī, 1:63). The reference is clearly to an outsider; a *muqaṣṣir* is someone who currently does not follow the Imām and is not a member of the Shī'ite community. The term clearly retained this meaning until the time of Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā (see Ibn Bābawayh, 'Uyūn, 1:304), although the trend to label the non-extremist Imāmītes as the *muqaṣṣira* had already reportedly started in the second/eighth century when some early Ghulāt are quoted as calling the mainstream Imāmītes who opposed them *muqaṣṣira* (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 55).

106. Shahrastānī is obviously using the term in its general sense of shortcoming when he states that “the Shī'a fell into *ghuluww* in connection with the Imāms as they made them similar to God and into *taqṣīr* through making God similar to man” (*Milal*, 1:105) and that some of the Ghulāt brought God down to the level of man and others elevated man to the status of God, so they are at the two ends of *ghuluww* and *taqṣīr* (ibid., 1:203). Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī clearly did the same when he interpreted a statement from an early 'Alīd who said “the extravagant in love for us is like the extravagant in spite of us” as referring to the point that, in affection for the House of the Prophet, both *ghuluww* and *taqṣīr* are disapproved (*al-Shajara al-mubāraka*: 121). This is not, however, true with the editor's footnote

The rank and file Imāmites and many of their transmitters of *ḥadīth*, however, stood somewhere between the two extremes. They seem to have maintained that the Imāms possessed a divine blessing that had been bestowed on the family of the Prophet, and, thus, they believed in some sort of supernaturality for the Imāms, although not to the extent upheld by the Mufawwiḍa. The Imāms up to the middle of the third/ninth century are reported in the Imāmite *ḥadīth* as condemning the extremists and denouncing the attribution of supernaturality to themselves. "The Ghulāt are infidels and the Mufawwiḍa are polytheists"; whoever maintains any sort of contact or friendship with them is cutting his ties with God, the Prophet and his House, said Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā.¹⁰⁷ A similar statement from Imām Ja'far al-Sādiq warned the Shī'ites to be extra careful and not to let their youth be misled by the extremists. The extremists, he said, are the most wicked among the creatures of God, worse than any other category of infidels, because they try to desecrate God.¹⁰⁸ Many other similarly harsh statements are quoted from the Imāms in condemnation of the extremists.¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, as noted above, the situation of the office of Imāmate in the third/ninth century helped the extremist ideas to gain more ground within the Shī'ite community, although not necessarily among the circle of the close associates of the Imāms and certainly not in the principal Imāmite center of learning at Qum.

By the time of Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī the heated debates on the nature of the Imāms had already split the Imāmite community in some places into two hostile camps.¹¹⁰ In Nīshāpūr, for instance, the community was divided, and each group was excommunicating the other. One group supported the Mufawwiḍa's opinion on the supernatural knowledge of the Imāms, and so they believed that the Imāms knew the languages of all humans and birds and animals as well as whatever was happening in the world. They believed that the divine revelation did not stop with the death of the Prophet but continued, and the Imāms still received it when they needed

it. Another group headed by the prominent Shī'ite scholar of that century, Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Naysābūrī (d. 260/873), denied all of these claims and maintained that the Imām was a man who had a thorough knowledge of the *sharī'a* and of the correct interpretation of the Qur'ān.¹¹¹ A few months before Faḍl b. Shādhān's death,¹¹² however, the emissary of the Imām's office to Nīshāpūr for the collection of the community's donations chose to stay with the first group. That caused great difficulty. The moderates discredited the emissary and abstained from paying their dues to him. The matter was reported to the Imām, who sent a letter to the community in which he condemned the beliefs of the Mufawwiḍa¹¹³ but at the same time complained about Faḍl b. Shādhān, who had prevented the people from paying their religious dues to the Imām's agent.¹¹⁴ Kashshī, who has quoted this letter, suggests that the letter perhaps had been sent by 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī,¹¹⁵ the Imām's chief agent, who by that time controlled the financial affairs of the office. The whole episode, however, signifies a noticeable change in the practical position of the office to satisfy the entire community. (The change had obviously become necessary by the difficult political and social conditions of the Shī'ite community in those years.) In another instance, two disputing groups, the Mufawwiḍa and the Muḥaṣṣira, of an unspecified region (possibly of Sāmarrā' itself) are said to have

111. Kashshī: 539–41. See also his own *Kitāb al-Īdāh*: 461; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:20; Najāshī: 325, 328.

112. As Kashshī quoted, the Imām's letter concerning the event in question was sent, or at least received, two months after Faḍl b. Shādhān's death in the *Hijrī* year 260. Because the Imām himself died early in the third month of that year, the event should have happened mostly in the year before, and Ibn Shādhān's death must have occurred quite early in 260. The fact that Ibn Shādhān died very early in the year is also verified by another quotation in Kashshī: 538 that reports that a Shi'ite from Khurāsān met the Imām on his way back from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and later came to know that Ibn Shādhān had died around the same time that he met the Imām. If one considers the distance between Mecca and Sāmarrā' and the time of annual pilgrimage, the meeting must have taken place sometime in Muḥarram, the first month of the *Hijrī* year, by any account.

113. *Ibid.*, 540.

114. *Ibid.*: 542–3.

115. *Ibid.*: 544.

in *Kamāl*: 470 where the term *muḥaṣṣira* is misinterpreted as those who cut their hair in the pilgrimage to Mecca (a required act in the pilgrimage that marks the end of the ceremonies, which is mentioned in the Qur'ān, 48: 27).

107. Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:203; *idem*, *Tawḥīd*: 364.

108. Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, 2:264.

109. See, for instance, Ḥimyarī: 31, 61; Kashshī: 297–302, 306–8; Ibn

sent a representative to the Imām to ask for his instructions. According to the report, the Imām denounced the Mufawwiḍa by name and called them liars.¹¹⁶

The internal disputes and splits in the Imāmīte community continued to the period of Minor Occultation.¹¹⁷ The case was referred several times to the agents of the vanished Imām to ask for the Imām's judgment. In a rescript received from the Holy Threshold,¹¹⁸ the Imām complained about the "ignorants and idiots" among the Shī'ite who attributed the knowledge of the unseen or any supernatural power to them or exalted them above their actual rank.¹¹⁹ In another rescript sent by the second agent, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān al-'Amrī, the Mufawwiḍa standpoints that attributed the creation of and providing for all beings to the Imāms were rejected, although the special grace that God had bestowed on the Imāms was confirmed.¹²⁰ This seems to be an attempt to bring the official position closer to the prevailing view among the rank and file who, as noted above, stood somewhere between the two extremes. An old and well-circulated anecdote that condemned both *ghuluww* and *taqṣīr* (in their general Islamic senses) in religion¹²¹ would be now taken by many as confirming this middle position against those two concepts in their new and more specific Shī'ite senses. Because the extremists had been condemned by the Imāms and the Shī'ite community for a very long time, this and similar quotations would actually be used to discredit the moderates and to suggest that they, too, had gone

116. Khuṣaybī: 359, who mentioned the Mufawwiḍa as the *mu'minūn* (the faithful); *Ghayba*: 148–9.

117. See *Ghayba*: 178, 238.

118. Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:288–9 (quoted also in Majlisī, 25: 266–8). The rescript was issued to Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Hilāl al-Karkhī who was ordered at the end of rescript to show it to others until all the Shī'ites come to know its content and learn about it.

119. Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:289.

120. *Ghayba*: 178.

121. See above, n. 105. Clearly referring to the same general meanings of the two terms, a statement from Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī also maintained that the right path is always the middle path, that stands between the two scales, lower than *ghuluww* but higher than *taqṣīr* (Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Astarābādī: 44; Ibn Bābawayh, *Ma'ānī al-akbbār*: 33).

too far in denying the divine qualifications of the Imāms.¹²² The position of scholars such as Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī of the first half of the fourth/tenth century, who complained that groups of the Shī'ites went beyond the line of truth by either exaggeration or shortcoming,¹²³ is in the same line of thought.¹²⁴

The moderate tendency, however, remained strong throughout these periods to the last decades of the fourth/tenth century. In a report, clearly authored by a pro-Mufawwiḍa transmitter, he suggests that of thirty Shī'ite pilgrims who were present at the grand mosque of Mecca on the sixth day of Dhu 'l-Hijja, 293/23 September 906, only one was "purely faithful" (*mukblis*) and the rest were *muqasṣira*.¹²⁵ In another report from the post-Occultation period, an imaginary dialogue between Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128/745–746) and Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, it is said that the majority of the Shī'ites are *muqasṣira*¹²⁶ who fell short of recognizing the true nature of the Imām: that he is the one who creates and provides with the authority given to him by God and that by this grace he is omniscient and omnipotent.¹²⁷ The scholars of Qum, who were the highest authority of religious knowledge in this

122. See, for instance, Bursī: 240 where the attempt is made to present the Mufawwiḍa as those who followed the middle path; also Goldziher: 229 where it is quoted that the Nuṣayriyya identify the common Shī'ites as *muqasṣira*.

123. Nu'mānī: 19. See also Mufīd, *Awā'il*: 45.

124. Some of the Imāmīte scholars of the third and fourth/ninth and tenth centuries wrote books against the Ghulāt and Mufawwiḍa. One such work was written by Ibn Bābawayh; another by Ḥusayn b. 'Ubayd Allāh al-Ghaḍā'irī (d. 411/1020) as mentioned by Najāshī: 69. The work by Ibn Bābawayh was entitled *Kitāb Ibtāl al-ghuluww wa 'l-tafwīḍ* as mentioned by the author himself in his other work, *Uyūn akbbār al-riḍā*, 2: 204. The title, however, appears in Najāshī: 392 as *Kitāb Ibtāl al-ghuluww wa 'l-taqṣīr*, possibly a mistake caused by an oversight which, in turn, may have been caused by the change of emphasis in the mentality of the Imāmīte community of Iraq from condemnation of *tafwīḍ* to that of *taqṣīr*.

125. *Kamāl*: 470, 473. See also al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 298–300; *Ghayba*, 156, in both the reference to the Muqasṣira is omitted but the sentence that states that only one of thirty was a "pure faithful" stands.

126. Majlisī, 26:15.

127. *Ibid.*, 26:14–15.

period,¹²⁸ remained firmly anti-Mufawwiḍa until the end of the fourth/tenth century, opposing and rejecting any idea that attributed any supernatural quality to the Prophet and the Imāms. They held that whoever believed that the Prophet or the Imāms were immune to inadvertence (*sabw*) was an extremist.¹²⁹ They continued to discredit the transmitters who related reports that attributed any supernatural quality to the Imāms¹³⁰ and considered the transmission of that genre of material to be unlawful. A group of the scholars of Qum even held that the Imāms did not know many laws of the *sharī'a* and had to rely on personal judgment and *ijtihād* to derive the appropriate laws.¹³¹ The Mufawwiḍa consistently endeavored to discredit the scholars of Qum, derogatorily calling them *muqaṣṣira*. This denigration angered Ibn Bābawayh, the most prominent representative of the school of Qum in the middle and second half of the fourth/tenth century.¹³² In his work on the Shī'ite creed, after reemphasizing that to the Shī'ites the Ghulāt and Mufawwiḍa are infidels, more wicked than all other infidels and wrong thinkers, he asserted that "the sign to know the Mufawwiḍa and Ghulāt and their like is that they accuse the masters and scholars of Qum of shortcoming."¹³³

The period of the Minor Occultation was especially marked by the tireless efforts of the Mufawwiḍa to establish themselves as the true representatives of Shī'ism and their doctrine as the middle path between extremism and shortcoming. To this end, they missed no opportunity and failed no chance. They continued assiduously to spread countless quotations on the authority of the Imāms, some of which, despite all efforts of the masters and scholars of Qum,

128. This fact is well verified by the fact that Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī (d. 326/938), the third chief agent of the vanished Imām, sent a book of doubtful authority to the scholars of Qum and asked them to look at it and see if anything in it contradicted their views (*Ghayba*: 240).

129. Ibn Bābawayh, *Faqīh*, 1:359–60. See also my *An Introduction to Shī'ī Law*: 40.

130. See, for instance, Majlisī, 25:347.

131. Mufīd, *Taṣḥīḥ*: 66.

132. See Ṭūsī, *Fihrist*: 157.

133. Ibn Bābawayh, *I'tiqādāt*: 101 (read *mashāyikh qum* [as in Mufīd, *Taṣḥīḥ al-i'tiqād*: 65 and manuscripts of the work itself] for *mashāyikhbihim*).

penetrated the Shī'ite *ḥadīth*. Tampering with the material in books written by reliable authors and inserting new material into them had been done successfully by heretics in the periods of the two Imāms, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq,¹³⁴ and the option was still available to all conflicting groups. The transmission system of *ḥadīth* could not always prevent these forgeries. Like their predecessors in the time of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, the Mufawwiḍa continued their effort to discredit their opponents by accusing them of weak faith,¹³⁵ of debasing the glorious position of the Imāmate, of opposing the authority of the Imāms and knowingly denying their qualifications, and of being influenced by the Sunnite doctrines.

To counter a widely reported statement from the Imāms that gave a much more favorable status to the Muqaṣṣira than to the extremists,¹³⁶ the extremists came forward with their own interpretation of that statement by construing the term *muqaṣṣira* to refer to other groups of the Shī'a and not the moderates.¹³⁷ Then the extremists ascribed to the Imāms their own similarly phrased statements, which favored the extremists against the Muqaṣṣira.¹³⁸ One of the Mufawwiḍa's contributions¹³⁹ in this period which later became a popular Shī'ite practice,¹⁴⁰ in spite of the opposition of

134. See Kashshī: 224–5. These activities brought the condition of the Shī'ite *ḥadīth* to a situation that Zurāra b. A'yan, the most prominent Shī'ite scholar of the first half of the second/eighth century, wished he could "make a fire and burn all of it" (Majlisī, 25:282).

135. See, for instance, Khuṣaybī: 385 where he accuses the "Muqaṣṣira and weak faithful among the Shī'a" of growing doubt about Imām 'Alī al-Hādī after his elder son Muḥammad, who was reportedly his successor designate, died during 'Alī al-Hādī's lifetime.

136. 'Ayyāshī, 1:63; Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, 2:264.

137. Khuṣaybī: 431.

138. Ibid.: 432.

139. See Ibn Bābawayh, *Faqīh*, 1:290–91, who after quoting the traditional formula of *adbān* said: "This is the correct *adbān*, nothing should be added to or omitted from it. The Mufawwiḍa, may God curse them, have fabricated reports and added in *adbān* . . . 'I witness that 'Alī is the friend of God' . . . I mentioned this in order that those suspected of being among the Mufawwiḍa but who have mixed themselves with us be distinguished [from us]."

140. This was not a common practice among the Shī'a until 907/1501–1502 when the Safavid Ismā'il I (r. 906–930/1501–1524) issued a decree that

generations of Shī'ite jurists who regarded it a legally unwarranted innovation,¹⁴¹ was the addition of testimony to the spiritual authority (*wilāya*) of 'Alī in the call to prayer (*adhān*). Some of their ideas also gained the acceptance of Imāmite theologians of that and later periods. The Nawbakhtīs, for instance, adopted their theory of the Imām's perfect knowledge of all languages and arts,¹⁴² as well as the theory that his Imāmate is a necessary conclusion of his inborn merits.¹⁴³ However, they opposed the Mufawwiḍa on other questions such as the Imām's power to perform miracles,¹⁴⁴ his receiving of divine revelation,¹⁴⁵ his ability to hear the voices of the angels,¹⁴⁶

the formula *ashbadu anna 'aliyyan waliyyu 'llāh* be added to the *adhān*. At that time, it was suggested that it was a Shī'ite practice that had been abandoned for more than five centuries (Rūmlū, 12: 61). By early next century (eleventh/seventeenth) it had already become such a popular practice in most Shī'ite towns that if someone did not say it in the *adhān* he was accused of having become a Sunnite. Therefore, although the jurists regarded it as an unauthorized addition, they could not publicly denounce it, so they considered it to be a case wherein they had to practice precautionary secrecy (Majlisī I, *Lawāmi'*, 1: 82). However, in the middle of the following century (twelfth/eighteenth) many Shī'ites still refrained from adding that formula to the *adhān* (Muḥammad Mu'min al-Ḥusaynī: 43–4; Muḥammad Naṣīr b. Muḥammad Ma'ṣūm: 2–3). The Prominent Imāmite jurist, Ja'far b. Khidr al-Najafī, Kāshif al-Ghiṭā' (d. 1228/1813) sent a petition to the Qājār king of his time, Faṭḥ 'Alī Shāh (r. 1212–1250/1797–1834) and asked him to ban this unwarranted innovation (Akhbārī, *Risāla dar shabādat bar wilāyat*: 181–3). Later in that century the Shī'ite 'ulamā' in India, too, tried to encourage the community to abandon the practice but failed (Muḥsin al-Amīn, 2:205; Mudarris Tabrīzī, 4: 229). It is now an almost universal Imāmite practice (see, for instance, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, 5: 545).

141. See, for instance, Ṭūsī, *Nihāya*: 69; 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī: 97; al-Muḥaqqiq al-Hillī, *Mu'tabar*, 2:141; Ibn al-Muṭahhar, *Tadhkirā*, 1:105; al-Shahīd al-Awwal, *Dhikrā*: 170; idem, *Lum'a*: 12; al-Shahīd al-Thānī, *Rawḍ*: 242; idem, *Rawḍa*, 1:240; Ardabilī, *Majma'*, 2:181; Majlisī I, *Lawāmi'*, 1:182; Sabzawārī, *Dhakhīra*: 254; Fayḍ, *Mafātīḥ*, 1:118; Kāshif al-Ghiṭā': 227–28.

142. Mufīd, *Awā'il*: 37–8.

143. Ibid.: 32–5.

144. Ibid.: 40.

145. Ibid.: 39–40.

146. Ibid.: 41.

and, after his death, the voices of visitors to his shrine¹⁴⁷ and to know their conditions, and his knowledge of the unseen.¹⁴⁸ Other Imāmite theologians such as Mufīd disagreed with the Nawbakhtīs on their two pro-Mufawwiḍa ideas.¹⁴⁹ Mufīd, however, agreed with the Mufawwiḍa on the basis of what he thought to be “sound reports”¹⁵⁰ that the Imām could perform miracles and hear the voices of the angels and the pilgrims to his shrine. These are the reports that the transmitters of Qum¹⁵¹ and many other early Imāmite authorities¹⁵² rejected as unauthentic and apocryphal accounts fabricated by the extremists, including the Mufawwiḍa. As will be seen below, Abū Ja'far b. Qiba also maintained the possibility that God “may manifest miracles by the hand of the Imām”¹⁵³ although he,

147. Ibid.: 45.

148. Ibid.: 38.

149. Ibid.: 33, 35, 38.

150. Ibid.: 40, 41, 45. Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī 2:125 noted the division in the Imāmite community of his time over the possibility of miracles from the Imām, where “groups” of the Rāfiḍites (in his words) supported this possibility.

151. See, for instance, Najāshī: 329 (also Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 143), also 348 where a long list is given of the transmitters whose reports were rejected by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Walīd (d. 343/954–955), head of the school of Qum in his time (ibid.: 383).

152. Faḍl b. Shādhān al-Naysābūrī, for instance, considered it unlawful to quote the reports ascribed by Muḥammad b. Sinān to the Imāms (Kashshī: 507). 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Faḍḍāl, a prominent Imāmite scholar of the early third/ninth century, had the same opinion about whatever was reported by Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī, who was an extremist and a liar (ibid.: 443), in spite of the fact that he had formerly studied with Baṭā'inī and heard many *ḥadīths* from him and copied his entire commentary on the Qur'ān from beginning to end (ibid.: 404, 552). Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Ziyād al-Washshā', another prominent Imāmite *ḥadīth* transmitter in the beginning of the third/ninth century, refused to transmit to his students a pro-Mufawwiḍa *ḥadīth* that was in a book that he was reading with his student ('Ayyāshī, 1:374). The expression *lā yuktabu ḥadīthubu* (or *lā yajūzu an yuktaba ḥadīthubu*) repeatedly occurs in the early Imāmite biographical works in reference to the *ḥadīth* transmitters of the Mufawwiḍa (see, for instance, Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5:184 [on Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Jumhūr al-'Ammī], 6:131 [on Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī]; see further Najāshī: 122).

153. See his *Mas'ala fi 'l-imāma*, paras. 5–7.

too, categorically rejected other ideas of the Mufawwiḍa such as the Imām's knowledge of the unseen¹⁵⁴ or the Imām as anything more than a pious scholar.¹⁵⁵

154. See his *Naqḍ kitāb al-ishbād*, paras. 34, 55. The idea that the Imām had such knowledge was, as noted, originally put forward by the Kaysānite extremists and then followed by other heretic groups (see, for instance, Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:77; Kashshī: 291, 292, 298–9, Abu 'l-Faraj, *Aghānī*, 23:243; Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd, 5:119) and the Mufawwiḍa. The pro-Mufawwiḍa elements among the Twelver Imāmites have since continued to support this idea, whereas the anti-Mufawwiḍa have always strongly rejected it; in fact some (such as Ibn Qiba in his *Naqḍ kitāb al-ishbād*, para. 55) considered the attribution of such knowledge to anybody other than God to be tantamount to infidelity (see *inter alia* and apart from those mentioned above, Kashshī: 541 [see also 326, 443]; Ibn Bābawayh, *Khiṣāl*: 428; idem, *Ma'ānī*: 102; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 1:73; idem, *Awā'il*: 38; idem, *al-Masā'il al-'ukbariyya* [quoted in Majlisī, 42:257–8]; Murtaḍā, *Dhakhīra*: 436; idem, *Intiṣār*: 243; Ṭūsī, *Tibyān*, 4: 152; idem, *Talkhīṣ al-shāfi'*, 1:252, 4:182–8; idem, *Tambīd*: 365–6; Ṭabrisī, *Majma'*, 6:230–31, 7: 230–1, 12: 238–9; Abu 'l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī, 5:347; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*, 1:211; 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī: 286; Ibn Maytham, 3:209; Faḥ Allāh al-Kāshānī, 1:418; Nūr Allāh al-Tustarī, *al-As'ila al-yūsufiyya*: passim; Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Najafī, 1:182 and many other sources mentioned in Najafābādī: 464–5 and Qalmdārān: 166–185). Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:117, noted the division between the Imāmite community of his time on this issue. Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 176 attributed to the Imāmites the opinion that the Imām knew everything related to the religious law. Other opponents of the Imāmites, however, accused all of them of believing in the Imām's knowledge of the unseen (Pseudo Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm: 104b; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Fawā'id al-qur'ān*, quoted in Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Sa'd al-su'ūd*: 184). Among the Imāmites themselves Mufīd (*Awā'il*: 38) and Ṭabrisī (*Majma'*, 6:230–1, 7:230–1, 12: 238–9) categorically denied that any of the Imāmites in their time held such an opinion (the first asserted that only the Ghulāt and Mufawwiḍa held it), whereas 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī: 286 referred to a small group of the Imāmite *ḥashwiyya* (traditionists) who still quietly existed within the Imāmite community of his time (see my *An Introduction to Shī'ī Law*: 34; also Muntabaj al-Dīn: 161 where the title of a work written by the head of the Imāmite community of Qazwīn in the early or mid-sixth/twelfth century, Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥamdānī, *al-Fuṣūl fī dhamm a'dā' al-uṣūl*, may be taken as a further testimony to the existence of some of the Imāmite *ḥashwiyya* in those days) and who advocated the idea of the Imām's knowledge of the unseen. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Sa'd al-su'ūd*: 185, also acknowledged the division among the Imāmites on the issue.

155. See his *Naqḍ kitāb al-ishbād*, para. 34. See also al-Shahīd al-Thānī, *Haqā'iq*

As can be gathered from the above, parts of the Mufawwiḍa's literature had begun to gain some sort of recognition in Imāmite scholarship by the later decades of the fourth/tenth century. They had already found their way into the collections of Imāmite *ḥadīth*, such as Kulaynī's *Kitāb al-Kāfī*, a work that reportedly contains 9,485 reports of doubtful and inauthentic origin,¹⁵⁶ two-thirds of its total contents of 16,199 reports.¹⁵⁷ Further material from works of the Mufawwiḍa, and even from the writings of heretical authors such as Husayn b. Ḥamdān al-Khuṣaybī, were later introduced into the Imāmite literature by populist authors who tended to put together and offer whatever report in their judgment could strengthen the faith of the people in the Imāms although the authors themselves could never guarantee the authenticity of many reports or many of the sources they quoted.¹⁵⁸ A cultural situation existed in which

al-imām: 150–51, who attributes this opinion to "many" of the early Imāmite authorities. He also asserts that many of the early Imāmites did not believe in the Imāms' *'isma*, that is, that they were divinely protected against sin and error (see also Baḥr al-'Ulūm, 3:220, where the opinion is attributed to the majority of the early Imāmites; also Abū 'Alī: 45, 346). In the time of Mufīd, however, only a minority of the Imāmites denied the Imāms' *'isma* (*Awā'il*: 35).

There were, of course, other points on which the two divisions of the Imāmite community, the pro-Mufawwiḍa and the anti-Mufawwiḍa, disagreed. Many Imāmites, for instance, denied the concept of *raj'a*, that the Imāms and some others would physically return to the world before the Day of Judgment (see Ṭabrisī, *Majma'*, 20:252). Numerous monographs are exchanged between the supporters and rejecters of this concept, many of them published. They differed also on the question of whether the non-Imāmite Muslims, including the Sunnites, will be saved and live in Paradise in the hereafter as suggested by numerous reports from the Imāms (see, for instance, Barqī: 287; Kulaynī, 2:19; Ibn Bābawayh, *Khiṣāl*: 408; *Manāqib* [quoted by Majlisī, 8:139]. See also Ṭabāṭabā'ī's footnote in Majlisī, 3:8).

156. See Yūsuf al-Bahrānī: 395; Khwānsārī, 6:116; Āghā Buzurg, 17:245.
 157. On the number of the *ḥadīths* of the *Kāfī* see the introduction to its most recent edition: 28 and the sources cited therein.
 158. These include books such as al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī's *Dalā'il al-imāma* and *Musnad fātima*, Husayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāh's *Uyūn al-mu'jizāt*, Furāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī's *Tafsīr*, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Shādhān's *al-Rawḍa fī 'l-fadā'il* or *Mi'at manqaba*, 'Imād al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's *Thāqib al-manāqib*, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī's *al-Kharā'ij wa 'l-jarā'ih*, and numerous other works.

collecting and preserving as many *ḥadīths* as possible was a feature of quality and pride for the collector, a mentality that prevailed in the entire community of Muslim traditionists from all schools during the early and middle Islamic ages. Much of the material contained in different versions of the earlier books¹⁵⁹ as well as in works attributed to early authors (at times famous ones), even though there was no evidence to verify these attributions,¹⁶⁰ was quoted in later works by non-Mufawwiḍa authors who themselves did not believe in the content and could not guarantee the authenticity of their sources. In more recent centuries the preoccupation of some Shī'ite authors with preserving whatever early Shī'ite material has survived has spread the material from the works of heretic authors. Some authors even tried to rehabilitate those heretics and criticized the early Shī'ite authorities who "accused" them of heresy and corruption of faith. The result of this centuries-long process is manifest in the monumental collection of *Bihār al-anwār* of Muhammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1110/1699),¹⁶¹ which includes most of the remains of the scholarship of the extremists of the early centuries that found their way into Imāmite works through the channels mentioned.¹⁶²

The history of these two trends of Imāmite thought, the conflict of which comprised a major chapter in the history of the Imāmite community in the periods following the period of Minor Occultation, is outside the topic of the present work. In brief, although the Mufawwiḍa came to be regarded in theory as a heretical splinter group¹⁶³ and their ideas were rejected unanimously¹⁶⁴ by the Imāmite

159. These differences sometimes made two books of a single book as was the case with Ṣaffār's *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt* (see its editor's introduction: 4–5).

160. These include books such as the present version of *Kitāb sulaym b. qays al-bilālī*, Pseudo Mas'ūdī's *Ithbāt al-waṣīyya*, Pseudo Mufīd's *al-Ikhtisās* and other similar works (see further Najāshī: 129, 258; Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, 5:160).

161. This work is available in two editions, the old lithograph in 25 large volumes and the new edition in 110 volumes.

162. See especially volumes 23–27 of its new edition and the section on the miracles under each Imām's biography in volumes 35–53.

163. See, for instance, *Ghayba*: 254 where a former Shī'ite is said to have been converted to the doctrine of the Mufawwiḍa and that "the Shī'a did not know him except for a short time."

164. Shubbar, *Maṣābīḥ al-anwār*, 1:369. See also Majlisī, 2:175, footnote.

community, many of their teachings (although not their fundamental ideas on cosmological matters) that were put in the form of *ḥadīth*, especially on the scope of knowledge of the Imām, found supporters among later Imāmites. Heretical persons and sects appeared in the Imāmite community who even supported the cosmological theories of the Mufawwiḍa, including authors such as Rajab al-Bursī (d. after 813/1410)¹⁶⁵ and the splinter group of the Shaykhiyya (founded in the thirteenth/nineteenth century), all of whom were anathematized by the Imāmite mainstream as extremists. Many Shī'ite Sufis, too, supported those opinions, and, thus, the accession of the Sufi Safavids to power in Iran in the beginning of the tenth/sixteenth century contributed greatly to the spread and popularization of those ideas.

The introduction of Sufi ideas and interpretations into Islamic philosophy in the Safavid period brought about a new Shī'ite school of Islamic philosophy in the eleventh/seventeenth century and helped the Sufi cosmological theories of Ibn al-'Arabī to become established in Shī'ite philosophical thought. Some of the adherents of this philosophical school put forward a theory of the Imām's "existential authority" (*al-wilāya al-takwīniyya*) that was virtually the same as the Mufawwiḍa's cosmological theory on the authority of the "first creature" or the "perfect man" in the creation and supervision of the world. Although many of the followers of that Sufi philosophical school have not supported that concept of the Imām's existential authority to its full logical conclusion, others have done so. Those that have must be regarded as the true heirs to the Mufawwiḍa (even though they strongly deny it, at least verbally) because their doctrines are identical. Although always a very small minority, some of their ideas, which were in line with the pro-Mufawwiḍa reports in the collections of *ḥadīth*, as well as their terminology, have gained some degree of support in the community.

165. On him see especially 'Abd al-Husayn al-Amīnī, 7:33–68. He was identified during his life (see his *Mashāriq anwār al-yaqīn*: 14–16, 219, 272) and after (see, for instance, Majlisī, 1:10; Ḥurr al-'Āmilī, *Amal*, 2:117; Afandī, p. 37; 2:307; Muḥsin al-Amīn, 6:466; 'Abd al-Husayn al-Amīnī, 7: 34) as an extremist and certainly adhered to the school of the Mufawwiḍa as is well attested by his above-mentioned work.

For the past few centuries, therefore, the Shī'ite scholastic community has been once again divided between supporters and rejecters of the supernaturalism of the Imāms. The absolute majority of the rank and file and many of the scholars stand somewhere between the two trends, as was the case during the time of the Imāms. The relation between the two trends has remained as it was during the early centuries: calm and quiet at times, bitter and problematic at others, depending on whether something or someone provoked hostilities between them. The last outbreak of violent conflict between the two trends which started in Iran and soon spread to other Shī'ite communities, followed the publication of a book late in 1970 by a member of the Shī'ite seminary of Qum on one of the most popular Shī'ite themes, the rise and fall of Ḥusayn. The analysis offered in this book was very much in line with that of the early Shī'ite scholars such as Mufīd and the Sharīf al-Murtadā, namely that the Imām did not know that his rising was not going to succeed and that he later tried all possible honorable ways to prevent bloodshed. The book received the written or verbal endorsement and support of other scholars of that seminary as well as of other members of the Shī'ite religious establishment in different towns.¹⁶⁶ The unmistakable implication that the whole episode was a failed personal initiative, however, provoked extremely hostile reactions from those who believed in the perfect knowledge of the Imām and in the authenticity of some related reports recorded in the collections of *ḥadīth* that the author ignored. Some twenty books were published against that book. Using the same familiar and thirteen-century-old tactics, the supporters of the perfect knowledge and limitless power of the Imāms, who now called themselves *wilāyatī* (the supporters of the absolute authority of the Imāms) accused their opponents of lack of faith in the Shī'ite doctrine and in the Imāms and of having Sunnite inclinations, and labeled them *wahbābī*, or *nāṣibī* (anti-'Alīd). The popular preachers, most of whom were in the *wilāyatī* camp, managed to provoke many of the common people against the so-called *wahbābīs* and to prevail against them. The so-called *wahbābī* group included almost all of those

166. See further Enayat: 190–91.

who later led the Islamic Revolution, save the leader, and came to power in Iran. The *wilāyatīs* continued their thoroughgoing and harsh attacks on their opponents for several years and did not let the case rest. The situation got out of hand, very ugly and violent in some towns in Iran. In Iṣfahān in central Iran, it led to unfortunate bloodshed; an old religious scholar, who was among the opponents of the book, was murdered. Actually, if it had not been for the Revolution, which brought the suppressed group to power and prevailed over all other social questions, many more lives would have been lost.

Many works have been exchanged between the two lines of thought during almost thirteen centuries. Many more are written by the supporters of each trend to elaborate their own lines of thought.¹⁶⁷ The standpoints of each group on the nature of the Imāmate inevitably affected their views on every other subject, particularly toward the rest of the Muslim community and on sectarian topics. Outsiders who face different interpretations and opposite views on those sorts of questions from Shī'ite authors become puzzled and have some difficulty deciding which one represents the true Shī'ite position. At times the moderate views of some Shī'ite writers on sectarian issues have led outsiders to suspect or presume that they are insincere, that they have exercised precautionary secrecy, or that they have attempted to offer a more moderate and presentable (or else reconciliatory) version of the Shī'ite doctrine because completely different judgments on the same subjects are given by otherwise similarly authoritative Shī'ite writers. What these outsiders fail to note is that each of the two groups is sincere in expressing its own mind but that each represents a totally different trend with different visions of some important dogmatic questions, although all agree on the basic and fundamental question on which the whole Shī'ite doctrine is built—that the Imāms of the House of the Prophet are the ultimate source and authority of religious knowledge, of the true interpretation of the Qur'ān, and of the sound tradition of the Prophet.

167. One of the most recent examples is a book called *Umarā'-i bastī* (in Persian), on the comprehensive authority of the Prophet and Imāms over the universe, written by a certain Abu 'l-Faḍl Nabawī (Tehran, 1345 sh/1966–1967). It was refuted by a book entitled *Rāb-i nijāt az sharr-i ghulāt* by Ḥaydar 'Alī Qalamdārān (Qum, [1974]).

III

The Crisis of Succession

IN THE FIRST half of the second/eighth century, the overwhelming majority of the Shī'ites, as noted, followed Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who was widely recognized as the head of the House of the Prophet in his time. During his time, however, the radical wing of the Shī'ite community first joined the revolt of Zayd b. 'Alī in 122/740 and then turned to the Ḥasanid branch of the 'Alīds.¹ At this time the Ḥasanids were represented by 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan, known as 'Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ (d. 145/762), who was the most senior in age among the living members of the House of the Prophet² and considered himself to be the head of the House.³ The radical elements eventually followed 'Abd Allāh's son, Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, in his open revolt in 145/762. They controlled Medina for a short time before their defeat, and during this period gave Ja'far al-Ṣādiq a difficult time for failing to support their insurrection.⁴ The disputes between the Ḥasanid and Ḥusaynid branches of the 'Alīds incited some members of the Shī'ite community to say that although the right to leadership of the Muslim community lay with the House of the Prophet, it was not known who the actual Imām was because there was disagreement on this issue within the House itself. The Imām, they maintained, would be the individual

1. See Ṣaffār: 66; Kulaynī, 1:349, 7:376; Kashshī: 427; *Manāqib*, 3:349. See also Nawbakhtī: 68; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 73.
2. 'Umarī: 37; Ibn 'Inaba, *'Umda*: 101; idem, *Fuṣūl*: 101. See also Kulaynī, 1:358.
3. See his debates with Ja'far al-Ṣādiq on this matter in Kulaynī, 1:358, 8:363–4 (see also 2:155, 3:507, 7:21, 376; Ṣaffār: 156, 160; 'Ayyāshī, 1:368, 2:208–9; Irbilī, 2:384).
4. Kulaynī, 1:363.

who was accepted by the consensus of all members of the House of the Prophet.⁵ Nevertheless, all Imāmites⁶ accepted the authority of Ja'far al-Šādiq⁷ and from that time on came to be known as Ja'fariyya.⁸

The first major crisis of leadership in the Imāmite community occurred after the death of Ja'far al-Šādiq when his followers divided on the question of succession. One group, which included some of his distinguished disciples,⁹ did not recognize anyone after him as Imām. This group apparently consisted of those who followed Ja'far al-Šādiq as *primus inter pares*, the most distinguished scholar of the

5. Nu'mānī: 133–5.
6. They were those Shī'ites who maintained the father-to-son succession of the Imāmate, the believers in the *nizām al-imāma* as termed by Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:88, 93, or *aṣḥāb al-nasaq* as called by Nāshī': 23, 26 (or *al-qā'ilūn bi-nasaq al-imāma*, *ibid.*: 24, 25, 46, 48) and Ma'sūdī, *Tanbih*: 232. The derogatory term of *rāfiḍa* or *rawāfiḍ* (sing. *rāfiḍī* = rejector) in Sunnite usage refers to the same group. According to the Sunnite authors, this term was first used by Zayd b. 'Alī for those of his followers who deserted him after he allegedly refused to condemn Abū Bakr and 'Umar as illegitimate rulers (see Friedlaender, "The Heterodoxies of the Shī'ites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm": 137–59; Kohlberg, "The Term *Rāfiḍa* in Imāmī Shī'ī Usage": 677–9). The Shī'ites themselves in the third/ninth century thought that the heresiarch Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-Bajalī (d. ca. 119/737) who started as a Shī'ite and then separated and established his own special group (see the article *al-Mughbiriyya* in *EP*, 7:347–8 [by W. Madelung]) invented this term against them (see Nawbakhtī: 75; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 77; Ṭabarī, 7:181; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 179; Qādī Nu'mān, 1:62).
7. Kashshī: 473. It seems, however, that some of the senior disciples of his father, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, did not completely submit to him. He is quoted as having said: "O God, give Your mercy to the disciples of my father, for I know that some of them consider me inferior in rank" (Ḥimyarī: 101).
8. See Kulaynī, 2:77; Kashshī: 255; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 179, 180, 181 (see also Ḥimyarī: 276). The term *tajā'fur*, in the sense of following Ja'far al-Šādiq, apparently came into existence in this period also. It appears in a poem attributed to the Sayyid, Ismā'il b. Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī, the well-known poet of that period (see his *Dīwān*: 202), and in later sources as well (e.g., Jishumī, *Jalā' al-abṣār*: 128. See also Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 331–37).
9. They included Abān b. 'Uthmān al-Aḥmar (Kashshī: 352), who was one of the six most learned among the younger generation of Ja'far's disciples (*ibid.*: 375), Sa'd b. Ṭarīf al-Iskāf (*ibid.*: 215) and 'Anbasa b. Muṣ'ab

sharī'a or the most learned and distinguished among the members of the House of the Prophet, but not as an Imām in the Imāmite Shī'ite sense.¹⁰ In their judgment, therefore, it was not necessary for an Imām always to be succeeded by another, let alone that the successor should be from among the descendants of the deceased Imām. They probably simply did not consider any of those who claimed his successorship to be knowledgeable enough to be recognized as a teacher and a religious authority.¹¹ The Muslim heresiog-

(*ibid.*: 365). There is some doubt about whether Abān belonged to this group because the phrase *kān min al-nāwūsiyya* in Kashshī: 352 is said to appear in some manuscripts of that work as *kān min al-qāḍisiyya*, and it is argued that this may be the right version because the man is said by Najāshī: 13 and Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 18 to be from Kūfa to which Qāḍisiyya belonged (Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustarī, *Qāmūs al-rījāl*, 1:114, 116). Kashshī, however, asserts that Abān was from Baṣra although he was living in Kūfa, so the expression *wa kān min al-qāḍisiyya* would not fit in his sentence because it is against what the author has said previously in the same line. There is no other evidence to suggest that the man was from Qāḍisiyya, whereas there is a point to support that he actually "stopped" with Ja'far al-Šādiq. Contrary to what Najāshī: 13 and Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 7 asserted, he seems to have never quoted from Ja'far's successor, Mūsā (Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustarī, 1:115), in spite of the fact that he lived during the latter's period of Imāmate. (The date of Abān's death is not known. However, that he lived until well into the second half of the second/eighth century is well verified by the fact that many of the transmitters of *ḥadīth* who started their careers in the last decades of that century studied with him. See a list of them in Khu'ī, 1:164. See also Ibn Ḥajar, *Lisān*, 1:24.)

10. A prolific Imāmite scholar of the fourth/tenth century, Abū Ṭālib 'Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Anbārī (d. 356/966–967), is also reported to have been among the Nāwūsiyya (Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 103; compare with Ibn al-Nadīm: 247 where he is said to have been from the "Bābūshiyya." However, the point that this scholar had Wāqifite tendencies in "stopping" with a certain Imām is also attested to by Najāshī: 232).
11. See, for instance, 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 198 where the Prophet is quoted as predicting that upon the passing away of his two grandsons, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Šādiq, the chapter of knowledge will categorically close.

raphers,¹² however, made a special sect out of this group, saying that its members held that Ja'far al-Šādiq had not actually died but was alive and would come back someday to the world as the *qā'im*.¹³ The heresiographers named the group the Nāwūsiyya, allegedly because the head of the group was a man of Baṣra called Nāwūs.¹⁴ Two completely different accounts are given of the reason why these people "stopped" with Ja'far and thought that he must be alive.¹⁵

12. Nawbakhtī: 78; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 79; Nāshī': 46; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 286; Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:100; Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 179 (misspelled as *bārūsiyya* in this edition); Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:88; 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*: 273 (misspelled as *ya'ūsīyya* in this edition); idem, *Farq*: 61; Isfarā'īnī: 37; Ibn Ḥazm, 5:36; Shahrastānī, 1:195; Nashwān: 162; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mubāṣṣal*: 354; idem, *I'tiqādāt*: 64 (appears in the edition as *nāmūsiyya*); Maqrīzī, 2:351; Sam'ānī, 13:19 (who erroneously ascribed to them that they doubted that Muḥammad al-Bāqir had actually died and awaited the return of Ja'far al-Šādiq, too!). See also Ibn Qiba, *Naqd kitāb al-ishbād*: paras. 14, 23; *Kamāl*: 37; Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashara*: 373; *Ghayba*: 18, 119.
13. A variant version of this account quotes them as saying that Ja'far did die, but there would be no Imām after him and he would return to the world in a future time. See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mubāṣṣal*: 354.
14. Nawbakhtī: 78 who calls him *fulān* b. *fulān* al-Nāwūs from Baṣra; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 80 (*fulān* b. al-Nāwūs); Kashshī: 365 (*fulān* b. *fulān* al-Nāwūs); Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 286 (Ibn al-Nāwūs); Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 180 (*fulān* b. Nāwūs [printed *yāwūs*]); Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:100 ('Ijlān [obviously a misreading of *fulān*] b. Nāwūs); Khwārazmī :50 ('Abd Allāh b. Nāwūs); Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:88 ('Abd Allāh b. al-Nāwūs); Ṭabrisī, *I'lām al-warā'*: 295 ('Abd Allāh b. al-Nāwūs); Ibn Ḥazm, 5:36 (Ibn Nāwūs al-Baṣrī [in the edition: al-Miṣrī]); Nashwān: 162 (Ibn Nāwūs, a notable among the people of Baṣra). Consider also these variations: the leader of the group was a man called Māwūs or Ibn Nāwūs (above-mentioned sources) or was from a village called Nāwūsā (Shahrastānī, 1:195) or Nāwūsī (Nashwān: 162) [Yāqūt, 5:254 mentions a Nāwūsā near Baghdad and a Nāwūs al-Zābya near Hamadān], or was attributed to a *nāwūs* (Christian cemetery) in Baṣra (*Farq*: 61; Isfarā'īnī: 37).
15. Compare Nawbakhtī: 78; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 79–80; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:88; Shahrastānī, 1:195 with Kashshī: 414. One of the two quotations given as the basis for this opinion in the first account is also mentioned as one of the main arguments of those who later denied that Mūsā al-Kāzim died. Compare Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 286; Shahrastānī, 1:195; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mubāṣṣal*: 354 with Abū Ḥātim: 290; Nawbakhtī: 90; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 89–90.

It is very difficult, however, to imagine that anyone could have maintained such a belief in someone like Ja'far who had consistently and openly insisted that he was not the *qā'im*.¹⁶ Unlike his son Mūsā, he was a totally apolitical person. There were no political expectations in him to continue after his death, and he did not die in prison. People could not have questioned his actually passing away. Furthermore, unlike the case of Mūsā, in whose case the people for many years¹⁷ argued with his son, asking him to prove that his father had actually died, there is no report that anyone ever challenged the authority of Ja'far's successors or even raised a doubt based on the possibility that Ja'far might still be alive. It is, therefore, very possible that all accounts on the existence of an idea about the occultation of Ja'far that are based on the narrations of Shī'ite authorities represent an understanding of the Imāmite Shī'ite mentality that an Imām from the House of the Prophet must always exist and that followers of Ja'far should have shared this doctrine. To that mentality, "stopping" with Ja'far, or, in other words, believing in no further Imām after him would mean belief in his occultation.¹⁸

16. See above, chapter 1. According to a report recorded by Kulaynī, 1:307 and Khuṣaybī: 243, even 'Anbasa b. Muṣ'ab, one of the future so-called *Nāwūsīs*, himself quoted that he once asked Ja'far al-Šādiq whether he was the *qā'im*, to which question the Imām replied that he was *qā'im* in the sense that he was the one to rise to the position of Imāmate after his father.
17. See especially Kashshī: 426, 450, 458, 463, 473–4, 475 (dated 193/905, which was ten years after Mūsā's death), 477, 614.
18. Among the Muslim authors Mufīd was the only one who doubted if any group ever existed that denied the death of Ja'far al-Šādiq and maintained that he was the *qā'im* (*Majālis*, 2:90). Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 285 also emphasized that there was no one in his time who held such an opinion. It should also be noted that some Sunnite sources describe the Nāwūsiyya as a sect of the Ghulāt who, according to different accounts, either awaited the return of 'Alī with no reference at all to Ja'far (Shahrastānī, 1:195 [quoting Abū Ḥāmid al-Zawzanī]; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Talbīs iblīs*: 22) or were later joined and influenced by a group of Saba'iyya and held exaggerated opinions about Ja'far (*Farq*: 61; Isfarā'īnī: 37. See also Sam'ānī, 13:19), whereas the Shī'ite sources only attribute to them the opinion that Ja'far al-Šādiq did not die and that he would return to the world as the *qā'im*. It can be suggested with some confidence that the Sunnite sources mixed the Shī'ite material on the Nāwūsiyya with material about another sect whose name was spelled somehow similarly in Arabic script and ascribed

A second group comprised the disciples of Ismā'il, a son of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq who had predeceased his father by one or two years. Ismā'il had been the eldest son and his father's favorite, and it had been widely believed that he would be the next Imām.¹⁹ There were even rumors within the Shi'ite community that Ismā'il's father had explicitly designated him as his successor.²⁰ Ismā'il's unexpected death thus created a doctrinal problem for those among the Imāmites who believed that the order of the Imāms was prefixed and that each Imām appointed his successor according to that order as revealed to him by God or delegated by the Prophet or the previous Imāms. It also created a problem for those who thought that the Imāms possessed knowledge of the future. This quandary led to the introduction of the early Kaysānite concept of *badā'* into Imāmite thought, a concept originally understood as a change in the divine decision but later reinterpreted by Imāmite theologians as referring to an unexpected divine decision, that is, that people came to realize that the divine decision had been different from what they had thought it was.²¹ Others among the disciples of Ismā'il maintained either that Ismā'il had not really died and had succeeded his father as a living but vanished Imām or that his right to the succession had been transferred to his son, Muḥammad, who was to be followed as the Imām after the death of his grandfather, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. The latter was the position of the followers of Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb who

the beliefs of the second group to the first. It is, therefore, plausible to think that the name *bābūshiyya* mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm: 247 as the name of a Shi'ite sect to which 'Ubayd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Anbārī belonged is not a misspelling of the name Nāwūsiyya; rather, it is the name of a later little-known splinter group of the Ghulāt with certain ideas that the Sunnite sources attributed to the Nāwūsiyya, because they thought they were the same. If this was the case, the Shi'ite scholar Ṭūsī should have fallen victim to that same confusion when he described that scholar as a *Nāwūsī*, when he actually belonged to a fourth/tenth century sect of the Ghulāt, the Bābūshiyya.

19. See 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 210; Nawbakhtī: 79; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 80; Kashshī: 473-4; Mufīd, *Irshād*: 284; Irbilī, 2:392.
20. Nawbakhtī: 79; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 78, 80; *Kamāl*: 69. See also Kulaynī, 2:92; Ibn Qūlawayh: 302.
21. See especially the article "badā'" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 3:354-5 (by W. Madelung).

accepted Muḥammad b. Ismā'il as the true Imām after the execution of Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb left them without a leader.²² The Ismā'īliyya branch of Shi'ism thus came into existence; it has survived into the present.

The overwhelming majority of the Imāmites,²³ however, accepted 'Abd Allāh, the eldest of the remaining sons of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, as the true successor to his father. He lived only seventy days²⁴ after his father and died without a son. Most of his followers then transferred their allegiance to Mūsā, the next eldest son of Ja'far, who had already built his own circle of followers among close associates of his father²⁵ but had not openly challenged his brother while 'Abd Allāh still lived.²⁶ 'Abd Allāh's followers divided after his death with some deciding that they had been wrong to believe he was the true Imām. The main arguments against his truth were his inadequate knowledge of the *sharī'a* and his reported earlier Sunnite inclinations although many also argued that if he had been the true

22. Nāshī: 47; Nawbakhtī: 82; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 81, 83-4; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 289; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 180; Kashshī: 321; Mufīd, *Irshād*: 285. They were also reputedly joined later by a branch of the Faḥītes (see below), who were also bereft of guidance when their leader died with no son and without appointing a successor. See Abū Zayd al-'Alawī, para. 15; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jambara*: 53. See also Madelung, "Bemerkungen zur imāmischen Firaq-Literatur": 39.
23. Nawbakhtī: 88; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 87; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 287; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181; Kashshī: 154, 254, 282; *Kamāl*: 74.
24. As cited by most sources. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 179, however, states that 'Abd Allāh outlived his father by one month only.
25. According to Ṣaffār: 250-51 and Kashshī: 282-4, this group was headed by two well-known Imāmite *mutakallims*, Hishām b. Sālim al-Jaqwāliqī and Abū Ja'far al-Aḥwal Ṣāhib al-Ṭāq, who reportedly tested 'Abd Allāh by putting some legal questions to him and concluded that he was not knowledgeable in the matters of the *sharī'a* and so was unqualified for the Imāmate (see also Nawbakhtī: 89; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 88; 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 209-10; Kulaynī, 1:351). Others such as Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:103; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jambara*, 53; Shahrastānī, 1:218 attributed this testing to Zurāra b. A'yan, which is incorrect (see Kashshī: 154-6). Ibn Ḥazm's account here is particularly confused as he first identifies 'Abd Allāh al-Abṭaḥ (*sic*), head of the Abṭaḥiyya (*sic*, possibly a later misspelling in both cases), as son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir and then as son of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.
26. Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 88; Kashshī: 255; *Manāqib*, 3:351.

Imām he would not have died without issue. Mūsā was, thus, the true successor to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. This group later formed the mainstream of the Imāmite community. Another group was of the opinion that 'Abd Allāh had been a true Imām and was the legitimate successor to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, and Mūsā was the successor to 'Abd Allāh. This group remained within Imāmite Shī'ism until the late third/ninth century and produced some of the most distinguished Imāmite scholars.²⁷ Agreeing with the mainstream Imāmites on the chain of succession from Mūsā al-Kāzīm on, they differed only on the addition of the name of 'Abd Allāh.²⁸ This group was known as the Faṭḥites after 'Abd Allāh, who bore the epithet *aftah* (the flatfooted). Their belief that succession to the Imāmate need not necessarily be from father to son later contributed, as will be seen below, to another split in the Imāmite community after the death of the eleventh Imām.

The death of Mūsā al-Kāzīm in 183/799 led to another major succession crisis. A number of the most distinguished among his close associates and regional representatives maintained that Mūsā had actually not died but had gone into hiding until he would return to the world as the *qā'im*. Many of the Imāmites, probably the majority of them in the beginning when there was a rumor that the Imām would reappear in eight months,²⁹ supported this claim. This group came to be known as the Wāqifites, later called the Mamṭūra by their opponents,³⁰ and, like the Faṭḥites, included and

27. See Kashshī: 345, 385, 530, 562, 563, 565, 570, 612. For a list of the Faṭḥite scholars mentioned in the early Imāmite sources see Ibn Dāwūd: 532–33.

28. See Kashshī: 530, 565.

29. Ibid.: 406.

30. The word can mean either “wet by rain” or “the recipients of rain.” There are two completely different accounts about why these Shī'ites were called the Mamṭūra. According to one account, they once in a year of drought went out of the town and prayed for rain. That was after everybody else had gone and prayed with no result. It rained when they prayed and so they became known as the Mamṭūra, those for whom the rain came ('Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 20 [2]:182. See also Pseudo Mas'ūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣīyya*: 187). According to the other, the reason they were called Mamṭūra was that once one of their opponents argued with them and said to them: “you

produced many distinguished scholars.³¹ Unlike what some Shī'ite scholars of the fifth/eleventh century thought that the supporters of this sect had disappeared,³² the sect seems to have survived for quite a long time, at least until the mid-sixth/twelfth century.³³

are wet dogs” or “In my eyes you are inferior to wet dogs.” (The dog is considered unclean in Islamic law. It is worse when it is wet because it contaminates other things it contacts.) The opponent who made this statement is variously identified as 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Maythamī (Nawbakhtī: 92; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 290; Shahrastānī, 1:198), Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 92; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:103; *Farg*: 64) or Zurāra b. A'yan (Isfarā'īnī: 39; in actual terms, Zurāra had already died more than thirty years before Mūsā al-Kāzīm died and this sect came into existence) or an unidentified “group” (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *I'tiqādār*: 66). The first account, however, does not seem accurate because the name Mamṭūra was considered a derogatory title that their opponents used to call them (see Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181. See also Kashshī: 460–61; Najāshī: 393 for examples of the derogatory use of that title), whereas it had to be a compliment if the basis for this naming was that story.

31. See a list of them in Ibn Dāwūd: 528–32 and Riyād Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Nāṣirī's monograph on this sect, 1:211–19, 261 ff.
32. See, for instance, Murtaḍā, *Dhakhīra*: 503; idem, *Risāla fī ghaybat al-ḥujja*: 295 (in his *Shāfi*, 3:148, however, he was more accurate as he confirmed that a few of the supporters of this opinion still existed); Ṭūsī, *Ghayba*: 42.
33. See Madelung, “Some Notes on Non-Isma'īlī Shī'ism in the Maghrib”: 87–97. According to Madelung, “Ibn Ḥawqal, writing ca. 378/988, mentions that the people of the extreme Sūs in the western Maghrib were partly Mālikī Sunnīs and partly Mūsawī Shī'īs who cut the line of Imāms after Mūsā (al-Kāzīm) b. Ja'far and belonged to the followers of 'Alī b. Warsand (Ibn Ḥawqal, *K. Ṣūrat al-ard*, ed. K. H. Kramers, pp. 91f.) . . . al-Idrīsī, writing ca. 548/1154, mentions that the people of the capital of Sūs, Tārūdānt, were Mālikīs while the people of the second major town, Tiyūwīn, located a day's trip from Tārūdānt, adhered to the *madhhab* of Mūsā b. Ja'far (al-Idrīsī, *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale et sabarienne*, ed. H. Pérès, Algiers, 1957, p. 39).” The sect was known in Maghrib as Bajaliyya after its head, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Warsand al-Bajalī, the Shī'ite author of the early third/ninth century. For this scholar and the sect of Bajaliyya see the same article of Madelung and his article on Ibn Warsand in *EP*², supplement: 402. See also al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, *Khaṣā'is al-A'imma*, p. 37.

Imāmite sources have tried to find an economic basis for this split in the Shī'ite community. They suggest that at the time of Mūsā al-Kāzīm's death, large sums of money had accumulated with his representatives in different towns, which they had not forwarded to the Imām because he was in prison for several years. To keep the funds for themselves and not send them to his successor, they denied Mūsā's death and claimed that he would return to the scene.³⁴ This actually may have been one of the factors that contributed to the emergence of that doctrine; in fact there are numerous reports concerning distinguished members of the group who held assets that they did not want to surrender to a new Imām.³⁵ It does not, however, tell the whole story. As noted in chapter 1, even during his lifetime, people had expected Mūsā to lead a rising as the *qā'im*, and it was, thus, quite natural that many could not accept that he was actually dead, specially because he had died in prison and none of his followers had witnessed his death.

In due course, however, most of the Imāmites accepted 'Alī al-Riḍā as the true Imām. They came to be known as the *Qaṭ'iyya* (people of certitude),³⁶ allegedly because they were convinced that Mūsā al-Kāzīm was categorically dead.³⁷ Theoretical problems arose, as noted, when 'Alī al-Riḍā died leaving a son, Muḥammad al-Jawād, who was in his seventh year. During the lifetime of 'Alī

34. See 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 213–14; Kashshī: 405, 459–60, 467; Ibn Bābawayh, *ʿUlal*, 1: 225; idem, *ʿUyūn*, 1:22, 113–14; *Ghayba*: 42–4; Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 314.

35. Kashshī: 405, 459, 467, 468, 598, 599; Najāshī: 300.

36. See, for instance, Pseudo Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm: 104a; Abū Zayd al-'Alawī, para. 24; Nāshī: 47; Nawbakhtī: 90; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 89; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 287, 291, 293; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:90, 103, 104; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 176, 180, 182; Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, 4:28; idem, *Tanbīh*: 231, 232; *Kamāl*: 84; Khwārazmī: 50, 51; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:98; Ibn Ḥazm, 5:38; *Farq*: 64, 70, 71; Shahrastānī, 1:198–9; Nashwān: 166; Isfārā'īnī: 39; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal*: 355. See also Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 4:150.

37. There are statements which confirm that allegation. See, for instance, Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 101; Kashshī: 612; *Ghayba*: 41; Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 364. Malaṭī: 38 (hence Maqrīzī, 2:351) erroneously identified the *Qaṭ'iyya* as those who "stopped" with 'Alī al-Riḍā and did not believe in the Imāmate of his descendants, so they were called *Qaṭ'iyya* because they cut the order of Imāmate after him (see also 'Umarī: 157). Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *I'tiqādāt*:

al-Riḍā, rumors circulated to the effect that Muḥammad was his adopted, not his natural, son.³⁸ That uncertainty was compounded by questions about his youth and the state of his knowledge when he succeeded his father as Imām. Despite this, the fact that no other clear alternative existed made the transition relatively painless. Hardly anybody could challenge the succession of the only³⁹ son of a venerated head of the House of the Prophet who had died at the peak of his popularity. Adequate solutions were also found to the questions about the qualifications of a child Imām. Therefore, after

66 identified them as those who believed wholeheartedly and most faithfully (from *qaṭa'a*, believed with certainty) in the Imāmate of Mūsā al-Kāzīm. Both of these latter assertions are obviously wrong. There is, however, a quotation in Kashshī: 374 in which the expression *qaṭa'ū 'alayb* is used by the transmitter of the report in the sense that he categorically determined, after 'Alī al-Riḍā explained to him that his father was not the *qā'im*, that 'Alī al-Riḍā was the true Imām. See also Nawbakhtī: 95 and Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 94, who spoke of a group of the Wāqifites who later followed 'Alī al-Riḍā and *qaṭa'ū 'alā imāmatib* but after his death returned to their former doctrine.

38. Kulaynī, 1:322–3; al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 201; Khuṣaybī: 295–6; *Manāqib*, 4:387. The reason for the doubt is said to be the fact that Muḥammad al-Jawād was extremely dark skinned (Kulaynī, 1:322; Khuṣaybī: 290; *Manāqib*, 4:387), which encouraged many people, including the close relatives of the Imām, to suspect that Muḥammad might have been a son of Sayf or Lu'lu', the two black slaves of 'Alī al-Riḍā (Khuṣaybī: 295) and that the Imām might have adopted him. The assertion of 'Umarī: 128 that 'Alī al-Riḍā himself was *aswad al-lawṇ* (very dark skinned) seems thus to be unfounded. Both 'Alī al-Riḍā and Muḥammad al-Jawād were reportedly born of Nubian mothers. The tenth (Kulaynī, 7:463–4) and the eleventh (Kashshī: 574) Imāms were also very dark skinned.

39. Ḥimyarī, *Dalā'il* (quoted in Irbilī, 3:92); Kashshī: 596; al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 184; Ibn Bābawayh, *ʿUyūn*, 2:250; Mufīd, *Irbhād*: 316; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 118; Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 344; idem, *Tāj*: 51; *Manāqib*, 4:367; 'Alī b. Yūsuf b. al-Muṭahhar: 294 (quoting *Kitāb al-Durr*). Others name a second son for 'Alī al-Riḍā as 'Alī (Ibn Ḥazm, *Jambara*: 55) or Mūsā (Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 109; Ḥasan al-Qummī: 200; 'Umarī: 128 [quoting Naṣr b. 'Alī al-Jahdamī in his *Mawālīd al-a'imma*]; Ibn Ṭāwūs, *Mubaj al-Da'awāt*: 378; 'Alī b. Yūsuf b. al-Muṭahhar: 294). Others added yet three more sons (Ibn al-Khashshāb: 193–4; Ibn Ṭalḥa: 87; Irbilī, 3:57 [quoting 'Abd al-'Azīz b. al-Akhḍar], 74; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī: 202). Both of these latter assertions are clearly wrong.

a short period of uncertainty that the community experienced,⁴⁰ the Imāmate of Muḥammad al-Jawād was accepted by almost⁴¹ the entire mainstream of the Imāmite community.

With this precedent, the transfer of authority went even more smoothly when it passed in turn from Muḥammad al-Jawād to his son, 'Alī al-Hādī (who, like Muḥammad, was a child of only seven years when he succeeded to the Imāmate). According to a report, a servant of Muḥammad al-Jawād, Khayrān al-Khādīm, testified that Muḥammad had named 'Alī al-Hādī as his successor, and the leaders of the Shī'ite community, who gathered on the day of Muḥammad al-Jawād's death to decide the issue of the succession, eventually accepted his word. One notable who had been present at the Imām's deathbed, the influential chief of the Shī'ite town of Qum, Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Īsā al-Ash'arī, did contest Khayrān al-Khādīm's story, but the situation was quickly brought under control by other close associates of the late Imām.⁴² This episode, if it can be substantiated, however, clearly indicates that even in this late phase of the history of the Imāmate, mere descent or seniority among the descendants of the deceased Imām was not considered sufficient for succession. The Shī'ite community had to be convinced that the new Imām had actually been appointed by his predecessor.⁴³

40. Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:105; al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 204; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 119–20.

41. According to Nawbakhtī: 95, 97; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 93, 95; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181; and Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:95, a group of the followers of 'Alī al-Riḍā followed, after his death, his brother Aḥmad, who had earlier, too, been followed by some Imāmites as the legitimate successor to his father Mūsā al-Kāzīm (Kashshī: 472; Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181), and another group held that 'Alī al-Riḍā's death without leaving a qualified successor indicated that he was not a true Imām; they thus joined the Wāqifites and held that the Imām was Mūsā al-Kāzīm who was still alive in occultation and was to reappear in the future as the *qā'im*. According to another report (Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 3:28) a third group "stopped" with 'Alī al-Riḍā and did not believe in any Imām after him. These groups must have been very small. None of the Imāmite notables or transmitters of *ḥadīth* are reported to have been among these groups.

42. Kulaynī, 1:324.

43. See also Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 106.

Special problems appeared again toward the end of the incumbency of 'Alī al-Hādī with the death of his eldest son, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad. A well-mannered young man,⁴⁴ Muḥammad had been adored by his father and by the Shī'ite community as a whole. He was the obvious choice to succeed his father, and this was the widespread expectation. Some reports even suggest that his father had explicitly singled out Muḥammad from among his sons to succeed to the Imāmate.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Muḥammad died three years before his father,⁴⁶ and 'Alī al-Hādī named as his successor his next son, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan, later known as Ḥasan al-'Askarī. The Imāmite community thus experienced once more the "unexpected divine decision" encountered first at the death of Ismā'il, the eldest son of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.⁴⁷ The overwhelming majority⁴⁸ of the Imāmites accepted Ḥasan al-'Askarī as the Imām after the death of 'Alī al-Hādī in 255/869 although the circumstances seem to have led many to question his authority, which led in turn to an unprecedented lack of faith in and lack of deference toward the new Imām.⁴⁹ In one report, Ḥasan al-'Askarī is quoted as complaining that none of his forefathers had been as much doubted by the Imāmites as he was.⁵⁰ On another occasion he asked a visitor from the town of Qum about the state of the Imāmite community there "when the people [presumably referring to the Imāmites of Iraq] were in doubt and suspicion."⁵¹ Numerous references in the early sources cite the widespread disagreement among the Imāmite community of the time about his Imāmate.⁵² The lack of faith among the community was so great that for the first time ever in the history of the Imāmate one hears that some Shī'ites doubted

44. See Nawbakhtī: 111; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 109; 'Umarī: 131.

45. Khūṣaybī: 385; *Ghayba*: 55–6, 120–21.

46. Mufīd, *Irshād*: 337.

47. Ibid.: 336–7; *Ghayba*: 55, 120–21, 122.

48. Khūṣaybī: 384–5.

49. Ibid.: 385.

50. *Kamāl*: 222.

51. Ibid.

52. See, for instance, Ḥimyarī, *Dalā'il* (quoted in Irbilī, 3: 206–7); Ibn Shu'ba: 361; Rāwandī, 1: 440, 448–50; Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 239, 243.

the chastity of the Imām and accused him of wrongdoing in secret.⁵³ Some of the Imāmites of the time claimed that they had tested the Imām and concluded that his knowledge of the *sharī'a* was not up to the perfect standard required for an Imām.⁵⁴

Throughout the period of his Imāmate, in fact from the very first day of his tenure, Ḥasan al-'Askarī faced the criticism of his followers, who complained occasionally about what they called his untraditional and unprecedented actions. In the funeral procession for his father, for example, he rent his collar. This was a well-known and familiar expression of grief in the Arab tradition, but no previous Imām had ever done it, and so he was criticized for the action. He responded to his detractors by reminding them of how "Moses rent his collar in grief for the death of his brother, Aaron."⁵⁵ Later, he was criticized for dressing in what some considered to be a sumptuous fashion.⁵⁶ In a letter sent to the people of Nīshāpūr, he complained that the prominent Imāmite scholar of that town, Faḍl b. Shādhān, "draws away our followers from us . . . and whenever we write a letter to them he criticizes us for that."⁵⁷ Some Shī'ites even argued that the Imām was making grammatical mistakes in his letters.⁵⁸ There were also complaints about the excessive spending of one of the Imām's financial agents, 'Alī b. Ja'far al-Humānī,⁵⁹ on a pilgrimage to Mecca; complaints that the Imām rejected as infringements on his authority. It had been his own decision, the Imām stated,

53. See Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 292; Shahrastānī, 1:201. See also Nawbakhtī: 110–11; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 109.

54. Abū Ḥātim: 291; Shahrastānī, 1: 200.

55. Kashshī: 572 (see also 574); Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 234. Cf. Khuṣaybī, 249–50 where Jacob and Joseph are mentioned instead (note that Ḥasan is quoted as having rent his collar on the death of his brother Muḥammad, too. See Kulaynī, 1:327).

56. *Ghayba*: 148.

57. Kashshī: 541. Ibn Shādhān's criticisms of the Imām and the Imām's unhappiness with him seem to have been well known in the Shī'ite community of Khurāsān at that time. See Kashshī: 538.

58. Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 244.

59. On him, see Kashshī: 606–8 (also 523, 527, 557); Najāshī: 280; *Ghayba*: 212.

to grant his financial aide 100,000 *dīnārs* and then to double that for him later.⁶⁰ Naturally, the common people could not understand the divine interest behind the Imām's decisions.⁶¹ There were also doubts about how much he was in actual control of the office of Imāmate. The financial affairs of the office, as noted above, were entirely administered by his close associate, 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī, who was reportedly also writing and sending rescripts out in the name of the Imām.⁶² The community was not, therefore, sure about the authority of the orders and statements they received in the name of the Imām.⁶³ This was apparently the reason that the

60. *Ghayba*: 130, 212; *Manāqib*, 4:424–5.

61. See Ṣaffār: 386 where a report ascribed to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq says: if you see the *qā'im* gives one hundred thousand to a man but only one *dirham* to another do not feel uncomfortable because he is given the full authority to do what he decides (*fa-inna 'l-amra mufawwadun ilayh*).

62. Kashshī: 544.

63. The Imāmite community of Baghdad, therefore, doubted the authenticity of a rescript they received in his name about a well-known and prominent Imāmite scholar of that town, Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-'Abartā'ī (on him see Kashshī: 535; *Kamāl*: 76; Najāshī: 83; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 36) whom the rescript anathematized on the basis that he embezzled the Imām's property without his permission. The community asked the Imām again, and a new rescript was issued confirming the former one (Kashshī: 535–7). According to both Kashshī and Najāshī: 83, his anathematization was in the period of Ḥasan al-'Askarī (although this does not seem to be the case with *Kamāl*: 489; *Ghayba*: 214). A contemporary Shī'ite author (Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustarī, 1:675) has cast doubt on this on the basis of a reference in the first rescript to Ibn Hilāl's death, while his date of death is given by Najāshī: 83 and Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 36 as 267/880–881. He also argues that Ṭūsī (in his *Ghayba*: 245) mentioned that the man contested the authority of the second agent of the vanished Imām, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, and that consequently (according to *Ghayba*: 245, 254) he was anathematized by a rescript of the Imām by the hand of his third agent, Ḥusayn b. Rūh al-Nawbakhtī. The second argument is certainly wrong. The one who contested the authority of the second agent was another disciple of Ḥasan al-'Askarī, Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-Karkhī, whose anathematization was because of this challenge, not the embezzlement of the Imām's property, which was the case with 'Abartā'ī. This is explicitly mentioned in the rescript (Kashshī: 536). This author, like many others (such as Māmaqānī, 1:100; Khu'ī, 2:357), has failed to notice that Ṭūsī mentioned the two Ibn Hilāls in two different parts of his work, the 'Abartā'ī in the section on the "rebuked agents" of

Imām's representative in Qum, Aḥmad b. Ishāq al-Ash'arī, asked the Imām to write a line for him so that he could always recognize his handwriting whenever he received a rescript in his name.⁶⁴

There were, indeed, some new practices that set Ḥasan al-'Askari's period of Imāmate apart from former periods. For obvious political reasons, he, unlike his forefathers, regularly attended the court, usually every Monday and Thursday during the caliph's public audience,⁶⁵ as one of the dignitaries of rank.⁶⁶ He also occasionally visited other court dignitaries during their public audiences.⁶⁷ He had vicious and rude enemies among the common people who shouted disrespectful words at him whenever he came out to go to the court⁶⁸ despite the great respect and reverence that the community and the government held for him.⁶⁹ Owing to the ever-increasing financial needs of the members of the House of the Prophet,

the former Imāms until the time of Ḥasan al-'Askari, and the Karkhī in the section on the rebuked agents of the Twelfth Imām. These authors also failed to note that Ṭūsī said that the Karkhī was anathematized in a rescript to Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ "together with others," a point which is true in his case (see the rescript in *Ghayba*: 254; see also 228), not the 'Abartā'ī who was anathematized with two *ad hoc* rescripts (Kashshī: 535–7) addressed to 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī (*Ghayba*: 214). The first argument of that contemporary author, however, has some truth in it. If one assumes that the date given for the 'Abartā'ī's death is authentic, there will actually be a conflict between Kashshī and Najāshī's accounts on the one hand and the related rescript on the other. The document, however, seems to be much more authoritative than the date, which may well be inaccurate, possibly by ten years. The man, thus, must have actually died before the death of Ḥasan al-'Askari in 260/874.

64. Kulaynī, 1:513; *Manāqib*, 4:434.

65. Kulaynī, 1:511; *Ghayba*: 123, 129. See also Khuṣaybī: 337; Rāwandī, 1:426, 439, 445, 446, 447; *Manāqib*, 4:431; Irbilī, 3:302, 305; Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 243. For the days of the caliphs' public audiences see, *inter alia*, *Manāqib*, 4:368.

66. See *Ghayba*: 129.

67. Kulaynī, 1:503–4; *Kamāl*: 40–41, both quoting his visit to the vizier 'Ubayd Allāh b. Yaḥyā b. Khāqān (d. 263/877).

68. *Ghayba*: 123; *Manāqib*, 4:430.

69. See Kulaynī, 1:503–5; *Kamāl*: 40–43.

for whom the generosity of the Imām was always available,⁷⁰ he reportedly had to use his discretionary authority at times and deviate from the practices of his forefathers. It was a common phenomenon in the Shī'ite community of the third/ninth century that many of its members willed all their belongings to the Imām. According to Shī'ite law, however, a man could will only one-third of his belongings, and the remainder would go as inheritance to his heirs. The previous Imāms used to return to the heirs two thirds of any inheritance that was willed completely to them.⁷¹ There is, however, a report that Ḥasan al-'Askari ordered the executor of the will of a deceased Shī'ite who had willed his entire property for the Imām, to sell it and send the entire value to him in spite of the fact that the executor explained in his letter to the Imām that the deceased man had left two nieces.⁷² The language that the Imām used against his criticizers was unusually tough. In response to a Shī'ite who criticized the Imām's rending of his collar in his father's funeral procession, the Imām called him an idiot and predicted that he would die both an infidel and mad.⁷³ Clearly for the purpose of preparing the community for the situation it was going to experience in the imminent future, his style in answering legal questions was also significantly different from that of previous Imāms and much

70. See, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:506–10; Mufid, *Irshād*, 1: 341–4; Rāwandī: 426–7, 434–6; *Manāqib*, 4:431–2; Irbilī, 3:202–4. For the Imām's extraordinary moral support of the descendants of the Prophet see Ḥasan al-Qummī: 211–12.

71. See, for Muḥammad al-Jawād, Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:189, 198, 242; idem, *Istibṣār*, 4:124, 125–6, 129, and for 'Alī al-Hādī, Kulaynī, 7:60.

72. Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:195; idem, *Istibṣār*, 4:123. This author thought that there were similar cases during the time of the two previous Imāms, but in the cases that he cited the legator or the executor had satisfied and obtained the consent of the heirs to the will. One of the author's own interpretations is that the will to the Imām is an exception to the general rule and that the limitation of one-third is for wills made for other charitable purposes, not for donations to the Imāms. The Imāms have the right to take the entire property willed into their possession; if they return any part of it to the heirs, it is their special favor and generosity, not a legal obligation. After all, the law is what they do; we have to obey and submit without asking about its legal basis (*Tabdhīb*, 9:196).

73. Kashshī: 573–4. (See also 541 for another example.)

closer to the way an ordinary juriconsult would issue a *fatwā* (legal opinion) on a given matter.⁷⁴ This fact may have been behind the very unusual request of a disciple of his who, in a letter to the Imām concerning a legal matter, asked him to “consult the jurists” around him and return an answer with the right opinion.⁷⁵ The community asked the Imām to write for them a book of religious practice that could be used as a code of conduct. The book that he gave them⁷⁶ was later found to be a copy of an earlier work called *Kitāb Yaum wa layla* or *Kitāb al-Ta’dīb*⁷⁷ by Abū Ja’far Aḥmad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Mihrān, known as Ibn Khānabih.⁷⁸ The discovery was, thus, a great tribute to the book because it had gained the Imām’s complete approval. When viewed from a distance, the history of the Imāmate from the ascension of Hasan al-‘Askarī through the Minor Occultation seems to have been a period of preparation for the future transformation, an intermediary stage in which the Imāmite community evolved procedures for solving its doctrinal and legal problems without the authority of a present Imām. It did this by using its own well-established cultural resources.

Another problem that added to the difficulties of this period, and contributed greatly to the turmoil that followed the death of Ḥasan al-‘Askarī was the claim of his brother, Ja’far b. ‘Alī—later

74. See Kulaynī, 4:124, 5:118, 239, 293, 307, 310, 6:35, 7:37, 45–7, 150, 402; Ibn Bābawayh, *Faqīh*, 1:114, 2:153, 444, 3:67, 173, 242–3, 296, 304, 488, 508, 4:208–9, 227, 269; Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 1:431, 4:139, 6:192, 196, 7:35, 75, 90, 138, 150–51, 277, 9:129, 132, 161, 185, 214–15, 317; idem, *Istibṣār*, 1:195, 383, 2:108, 4:100, 113, 118, 167. See also his letter to the people of Qum in *Manāqib*, 4:425, in which he argued with the statement of a former Imām (*li-qawli ‘l-‘ālim salāmu ‘llāhi ‘alayh*).

75. Ṭūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 9:161–2; idem, *Istibṣār*, 4:113.

76. This seems to be the same as the *Risālat al-Muqni‘a*, a compendium of religious laws that he issued to his followers in the year 255/869. A description of its material given in *Manāqib*, 4:424, shows that it was in the form of a collection of narratives that the Imām quoted from his father, ‘Alī al-Hādī (cf. Najāshī: 166 where Rajā’ b. Yahyā b. Sāmān al-‘Abartā’ī al-Kātib, a transmitter from ‘Alī al-Hādī, is said to have transmitted a treatise called *Risālat al-Muqni‘a fi abwāb al-sharī‘a*, obviously from that Imām).

77. Najāshī: 346.

78. On him, see Kashshī: 566; Najāshī: 91; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 26.

to become known among the Shī‘ites as Ja’far the Liar—to the position of Imām. The problem stemmed ultimately from the introduction of the Imām’s financial representation system; its proximate origin lay in the time of Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī in, or shortly before, 248/862⁷⁹ when one of the Imām’s chief agents in Sāmarrā’, Fāris b. Ḥātim b. Māhawayh al-Qazwīnī,⁸⁰ became embroiled in a dispute with another aide, the aforementioned ‘Alī b. Ja’far al-Humānī. This dispute led eventually to bitter quarrels and mutual vituperation,⁸¹ which led in turn to uneasiness within the Shī‘ite community⁸² and the unwillingness of some to pay their financial obligations to the Imām.⁸³ Furthermore, local representatives of the Imām who had previously forwarded their collections to the Imām through these two aides no longer knew which one they could trust.⁸⁴ The Imām sided with ‘Alī b. Ja’far against Fāris and ordered his representatives to stop using the latter for their business with the Imām; at the same time, however, he asked his representatives to keep silent about his decision and to avoid provoking Fāris.⁸⁵ The Imām did this because Fāris was an influential man. He was the main intermediary between the Imām and the Shī‘ites of Jibāl, the central and western parts of Iran, who normally sent their religious obligations to the Imām through him.⁸⁶ Fāris continued to receive funds from that region despite the Imām’s instructions to the contrary

79. Kashshī: 527.

80. The man is said to have held some exaggerated and heretical views (Kashshī: 522), a fact attested by the title of one of his works, *Kitāb ‘Adad al-‘imma min ḥisāb al-jumal* (Najāshī: 310). Two of his brothers also were among the disciples of ‘Alī al-Hādī, Ṭāhir, who, too, later deviated from the mainstream Imāmism (Najāshī: 208; Ibn al-Ghaḍā’irī, 3:228; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 86; idem, *Rijāl*: 379, 477; see also Kulaynī 1:86) and Aḥmad (Kashshī: 4–5). On Fāris’s close association with ‘Alī al-Hādī see also Khuṣaybī: 317, 318.

81. Kashshī: 523, 527.

82. Ibid.: 527, 528.

83. Ibid.: 527.

84. See the letter of the representative in Hamadān to the Imām in 248/862–863 in Kashshī: 523, 527, and that of the representative in Baghdad (ibid.: 543, 579) in the same source: 528.

85. Kashshī: 522, 528.

86. Ibid.: 526.

and no longer forwarded them to his putative master.⁸⁷ At this juncture the Imām decided to make the matter public and asked his representatives to announce to the Shī'ite community that Fāris was no longer associated with him and should not be given funds meant for the Imām.⁸⁸ He then formally anathematized Fāris in two letters,⁸⁹ one dated Tuesday, 9 of Rabī' I, 250/April 20, 864.⁹⁰ Fāris thereupon began an open campaign against the Imām. The sources provide no details about his activities other than to say that he became a major troublemaker, calling people to *bid'a* and seeking to win them over to his own faction.⁹¹ In a message sent to some of his followers who had come to Sāmarrā' from central Iran,⁹² the Imām charged Fāris with having made "a wicked utterance."⁹³ The gravity of the situation is seen in the Imām's next move, an extraordinary, although not totally unprecedented,⁹⁴ call by the Imām for the assassination of his rogue agent. The order was carried out by one of the Imām's followers.⁹⁵

87. Ibid.: 525.

88. Ibid.: 525, 526.

89. Ibid.: 525–6; *Ghayba*: 213–14.

90. This letter was addressed to 'Alī b. 'Umar al-Qazwīnī (*Ghayba*: 213), who seems to be the same as 'Alī b. 'Amr (*sic*) al-Qazwīnī al-'Aṭṭār mentioned by Kashshī: 526, who came to Sāmarrā' from Qazwīn carrying religious funds for the Imām and stayed with Fāris. A messenger was immediately sent by 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī to inform the man that the Imām had disavowed Fāris and that the funds should be forwarded to 'Amrī. The Qazwīnī followed the instruction, and, then, the Imām pronounced a formal curse on Fāris (Kashshī: 526). This is apparently a reference to the same letter recorded in *Ghayba*: 213.

91. Kashshī: 524.

92. Ibid.: 557.

93. Ibid.: 527.

94. See Kashshī: 529 where Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād is quoted as instructing one of his followers to assassinate two deceitful fellows who pretended to be followers and propagandists of the Imām and managed to attract people to themselves and presumably made money by collecting funds that were to be paid to the Imām.

95. Ibid.: 524. The assassin continued to receive a payment from Ḥasan al-'Askarī until his death in 260/874 shortly after the death of Ḥasan (Kulaynī, 1:524).

Fāris had been very much attached to Muḥammad,⁹⁶ the son of 'Alī al-Hādī who died one year or two⁹⁷ after the assassination of Fāris, presumably on the expectation that he would serve as the chief agent of the next Imām. After the death of 'Alī al-Hādī, the followers of Fāris remained loyal to Muḥammad and maintained that he was the true Imām in spite of the fact that he died before his father.⁹⁸ This was, perhaps, partly an act of defiance directed against 'Alī al-Hādī, who had named Ḥasan as his successor, and partly against Ḥasan himself who, unlike 'Alī al-Hādī's third son, Ja'far, had supported his father's actions against Fāris. The followers of Fāris, thus, formed their own splinter group within the Imāmite community against Ḥasan's followers and held that Muḥammad had appointed his younger brother, Ja'far, as his successor and that Ja'far was the true Imām after 'Alī al-Hādī.⁹⁹ There were claims that before his death Muḥammad had received the sacred paraphernalia of the Imāmate from his father as the designated successor and had given them to his servant Nafīs who, in turn, passed them on to Ja'far.¹⁰⁰ It should be noted that a few others claimed that 'Alī

96. Khuṣaybī: 385. See also 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20 (2):182, quoting from Nawbakhtī.

97. According to Khuṣaybī: 385, he died four years and ten months before his father's death, which occurred on 25 Jumādā II/21 June (Khuṣaybī: 313; Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 86; Ibn al-Khashshāb: 197; Khaṭīb, 12:57), or 26 Jumādā II/22 June (Ṭabarī, 9:381; Kulaynī, 1:497; Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, 5: 81–2) or 3 Rajab/28 June (Nawbakhtī: 101; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 99–100; Ṭabrisī, *Tāj al-mawālīd*: 132; *Manāqib*, 4:401 [quoting Ibn 'Ayyāsh]—Everyone, however, seems to agree that it was on a Monday) of the year 254/868. This will set Muḥammad's death at around the beginning of Ramaḍān 249/mid-September 863, which cannot be correct as it is before even the public anathematization of Fāris by 'Alī al-Hādī and naturally is before Fāris's assassination, whereas Muḥammad's death, as noted above, occurred after Fāris's assassination (see also 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20 [2]:182 quoting from Nawbakhtī). Another report in Kulaynī, 1:327 sets Ḥasan's age at the time of Muḥammad's death at around twenty or a little more. This sets the date of the latter's death at around 252/866, which agrees with the above reference.

98. Ibn Qiba, *Naqḍ kitāb al-ishbād*: para. 27.

99. Nawbakhtī: 95; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291; Khuṣaybī: 384–5, 388; 'Abd al-Jabbār, 20 (2): 182; Shahrastānī, 1:199.

100. Nawbakhtī: 114–15; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 112–14.

al-Hādī himself had appointed Ja'far, rather than Ḥasan, as his successor.¹⁰¹

Ja'far had thus assembled a small following, mainly from among the followers of Fāris, during the incumbency of his brother Ḥasan al-'Askarī.¹⁰² Some of Ja'far's followers were quite outspoken in their opposition to Ḥasan and his followers,¹⁰³ denying that he possessed the level of learning required of an Imām and even calling his followers the "Party of the Jackass" (*Himāriyya*).¹⁰⁴ Some went so far as to call Ḥasan and his followers infidels.¹⁰⁵ The leader of these schismatics was a sister of Fāris who never accepted Ḥasan as a legitimate Imām and was a major and influential supporter of Ja'far in his campaign for the Imāmate after the death of Ḥasan.¹⁰⁶ In return, Ja'far praised Fāris as a pious and virtuous man,¹⁰⁷ openly rejecting his father's and brother's pronouncements on the case. The whole episode led to bitter animosity between Ja'far and his brother, whose associates accused Ja'far of being morally corrupt and openly committing such sins as drinking wine.¹⁰⁸ Later, they also accused

101. Nawbakhtī: 104–5, 108–9 (with several errors in the latter case); Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 101, 110–11. See also Khusaybī: 320, which claims that disagreement on whether the successor to the Imāmate will be Ḥasan or Ja'far had already started during the lifetime of 'Alī al-Hādī.
102. Khusaybī: 388. See further Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī: 116; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:97; Shahrastānī, 1:199.
103. Nawbakhtī: 115, Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 113; Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī: 291.
104. Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī: 291, 292; Shahrastānī, 1:200. The account of *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b that assigns this name to those Imāmites who recognized Ja'far as Ḥasan's successor seems, thus, to be inaccurate.
105. Nawbakhtī: 115; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 113.
106. Nawbakhtī: 108; Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī: 291. See also Shahrastānī 1:199 where Fāris himself is mentioned instead.
107. Ibn Qiba, *Naqd ibn bashshār*, para. 10.
108. Nawbakhtī: 110–11; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 109; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 2:114; Kulaynī, 1:504, 509; Khusaybī, 249, 382; *Kamāl*: 42, 475, 477; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:103; *Ghayba*: 7, 133, 137, 175; 'Imād al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī: 609. Some sources even mention that Ja'far was popularly nicknamed *ziqq al-khamr* (wineskin) because of his well-known love for wine (see Khusaybī: 248; 'Umarī: 131; Ṭabrisī, *Tāj al-mawālīd*: 56; Ibn Shadqam: 61, 65). These sources also scorn him for having ordered his servants to carry candles in front of him wherever he went in town, even during daylight ('Umarī: 131; Ibn Shadqam: 61, 65). It was noted above that the Shī'a commonly

him of having skipped his daily prayers for forty days in a row, during which time he was occupied learning the art of juggling.¹⁰⁹ Although it is difficult to believe that people could accept as their Imām a man so notoriously irreligious, it seems that there is some truth in these reports, especially those concerning the time when Ja'far was young. In their refutation of the charges against Ja'far, some of his supporters made a point of saying that he had "distanced himself from the characteristics of his youth, and given up improper deeds."¹¹⁰

Ja'far and Ḥasan remained at odds with each other until Ḥasan's death, and never spoke to each other again.¹¹¹ As long as Ḥasan was alive, Ja'far was a continual source of trouble for him.¹¹² The counteraccusations, hatred, and animosity between Ja'far and the associates of Ḥasan reached their peak, and the matter became very violent. The unfortunate Nafīs, who was claimed to have passed the sacred paraphernalia from Muhammad to Ja'far, was found drowned in a pool.¹¹³ Two members of the Imāmite community of Sāmarrā' who had openly supported the claim of Ja'far were chased, according to a report by the order of Ḥasan. They had to escape for their lives to Kūfa and stay there until he died.¹¹⁴ Taking all these and similar facts into account, the death of Ḥasan without a son and with no brother besides Ja'far¹¹⁵ would pose a terrible problem

know him as Ja'far the Liar. His descendants and followers, however, normally mention his name with the epithet *al-zakī*, the pure (see, for instance, 'Arashī: 51; Husameddin, 1: 20).

109. *Ghayba*: 175.

110. See 'Umarī: 136, quoting his teacher Shaykh al-Sharaf al-'Ubaydalī (d. 435–437/1043–1046), in a treatise that he wrote in support of Ja'far called *al-Raḍawiyya fi nuṣrat ja'far b. 'alī*.

111. Nawbakhtī: 107; Ibn Qiba, *Naqd ibn bashshār*: para. 5. See also 'Umarī: 132, which traces these unhappy relations back to earlier stages in their lives when they were still young children.

112. Nawbakhtī: 107. See also Khusaybī: 382.

113. Nawbakhtī: 115; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 114.

114. Khusaybī: 385.

115. Ya'qūbī, 2:503; Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 111; 'Umarī: 130. See also Ibn Qiba, *Naqd ibn bashshār*, paras. 4–5. It should be noted that some sources (al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 217; Khusaybī: 313; Ḥasan al-Qummī: 203; Mufīd, *Irsbād*: 334; Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 366; idem, *Tāj al-mawālīd*: 56; *Manāqib*, 4:402)

for the Imām's close associates, who were now in control of the Imāmate administration,¹¹⁶ for they were absolutely unwilling to turn it over to Ja'far.¹¹⁷ It would also plunge the entire Imāmite community into the most difficult doctrinal turmoil it had ever experienced.¹¹⁸ Fortunately, that situation did not come up and the

name a fourth son for 'Alī al-Hādī (besides Ḥasan, Ja'far and Muḥammad) as Ḥusayn. Some mentioned that this son also died in his father's lifetime in Sāmarrā' (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 78). Others mentioned that the voice of the Twelfth Imām was very much like this uncle of his. They argued with a report in Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, 1:294, in which, according to them, an Imāmite is said to have heard the Twelfth Imām, whose voice he described as resembling the voice of Ḥusayn, son of Imām 'Alī al-Hādī (see, for instance, Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustarī, *Tawārīkh al-nabī wa 'l-āl*: 66). However, the one named in that report is Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Ja'far, Ibn al-Riḍā, clearly a great-grandson of 'Alī al-Hādī via his son Ja'far. The Imāmite who claimed he had seen the Twelfth Imām and described his voice, Abu 'l-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Bū Ṭayr, was a grandson of a servant of 'Alī al-Hādī (Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, 1:305–6), clearly a contemporary of 'Alī al-Hādī's above-mentioned great-grandson and not of a son of his. The actual existence of such a son is, therefore, extremely doubtful. At any rate, at the moment of 'Alī al-Hādī's death, Ḥasan and Ja'far were his only surviving male descendants (Ibn Qiba, *Naqḍ ibn bashshār*, paras. 4–5. See also Mufīd, *Irsbād*: 351).

116. See *Ghayba*: 76. They included 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī, his son Muḥammad, Abū Ḥāshim Dāwūd b. al-Qāsim al-Ja'farī, the most senior in his time among the Ṭālibids (Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, 5:62), and a few others. See Abu 'l-Ṣalāḥ al-Ḥalabī: 185–6.
117. That would be especially unfavorable to 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī, who was instrumental in the anathematization of Fāris. See Kashshī: 526.
118. Furthermore, there was a technical problem too because lateral succession to Imāmate was disallowed (except for the second and third Imāms) according to a well-known report originating from the sectarian debates between the Faḥrites and mainstream Imāmites in the middle of the second/eighth century (see Nawbakhtī: 80; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 102, 103; Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 92; 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 179, 188–9, 191; Kulaynī, 1: 285–6; *Kamāl*: 414–17, 426; *Ghayba*: 136, 176). Nevertheless, had the situation been different and Ja'far been qualified to be the next Imām, his could have been another case of the *badā'*. Indeed, some of his followers used that concept for this purpose (see Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 110) as did Ja'far himself (Kulaynī, 1: 391; see also *Kamāl*: 488) and some other Shī'ite groups of the time (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 108) for similar purposes.

Twelfth Imām was born, although until his father's death, the news about his birth and existence was not publicized.¹¹⁹

Immediately after the abrupt death of Imām Ḥasan al-'Askarī in 260/874, his close associates,¹²⁰ headed by 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī, made it public that the Imām had a son who was the legitimate successor to the Imāmate. The son, according to 'Amrī, was in hiding because he feared he would be captured and killed by the government.¹²¹ The mere fact that this possibility was suggested and accepted by many indicates that many feared the government had run out of patience with the Shī'ites in general and their leaders in particular.¹²² There were, however, disagreements about the age of the son, for his birthdate is given differently in different sources.¹²³ Some Shī'ites even held that he was still *in utero* when his father died.¹²⁴

119. Nawbakhtī: 105 (*wa lam yu'raf labu waladun zābir*); Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 102 (*wa lam yura labu khalaf...*).
120. Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 92–3; Abu 'l-Ṣalāḥ al-Ḥalabī: 185, who points out that the birth of the Twelfth Imām and the fact that his father appointed him as his successor were both attested to and reported by this group of his father's associates. Their *naṣṣ* (explicit designation, an Imāmite requirement for the establishment of the Imāmate of any Imām), therefore, substituted for the *naṣṣ* of his father.
121. *Ghayba*: 199.
122. See also Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 105; Kulaynī, 1:504; *Kamāl*: 44.
123. His birthdate is variously given as 1 Ramaḍān 254/24 August 868 (*Kamāl*: 473, 474), 8 Sha'bān 255/23 July 869 (Ḥasan al-Qummī: 204; *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b), 15 Sha'bān 255/15 July 869 (Kulaynī, 1:514; *Kamāl*: 430; see also *Ghayba*: 141 on the basis of a report from Ḥakīma, daughter of Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād, but the same report appears without that date in *Kamāl*: 424 and with a different date in Khuṣaybī: 355), 8 Sha'bān 256/11 July 870 (*Kamāl*: 432; *Ghayba*: 241–2; see also Kulaynī, 1:329; *Kamāl*: 430; *Ghayba*: 164, 258 [the latter three mentioning the *Hijrī* year 256 without specifying the day and month]), 8 Sha'bān 257/24 June 871 (al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 270–71, 272; Khuṣaybī: 334, 355, 387), 15 Sha'bān 257/1 July 871 (al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 271), 19 Rabī' I, 258/3 February 872 (Ibn Khallikān, 4: 176 [quoting Ibn al-Azraq in his *Tawārīkh mayyāfāriqīm*]), 23 Ramaḍān 258/3 July 872 (Ibn Ṭalḥa: 89; Irbilī, 3:227; see also Kulaynī, 1:515; *Kamāl*: 436; Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 88; Ḥasan al-Qummī: 204); and 259 (Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 88, editor's footnote quoting a manuscript of Khuṣaybī [MS 2973, Mar'ashī Library, Qum]).
124. Nawbakhtī: 112, 113; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 114, 115; Kulaynī, 1:337; Nu'mānī: 166; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:98–9; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jambara*: 55.

This latter assertion was, however, put forward by Ḥasan's mother,¹²⁵ Ḥudayth, for a different purpose. She was the one named in Ḥasan's will, with no mention of a son or anyone else.¹²⁶ She was in Medina when Ḥasan died, but she came to Sāmarrā' immediately when she heard the news¹²⁷ to try to stop Ja'far from seizing her son's inheritance. According to the Sunnite law of inheritance followed by the caliphate, if Ḥasan had died without a son, his inheritance would be divided between his mother and Ja'far. Shī'ite law, however, would give it all to her, because it did not allow siblings to inherit while a parent still lived. To prevent Ja'far from getting any part of her son's inheritance, she told the government officials that one of Ḥasan's slave girls¹²⁸ was pregnant by him. Considering this to be a total fabrication designed with no other aim in mind than to exclude him from his brother's inheritance, Ja'far denounced Ḥudayth to the government.¹²⁹ This was another

125. *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b. Other sources attribute this to one of Ḥasan's slave girls who claimed that she herself (*Kamāl*: 474, 476) or another slave girl (Kulaynī, 1:505; *Kamāl*: 43) was pregnant.
126. Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashbara*: 348, 357; *Ghayba*: 75, 138. See also Kulaynī, 1:505; *Kamāl*: 43. She was also the one considered by many Imāmites as the caretaker of the office in the absence of her vanished grandson. See *Kamāl*: 507; Khuṣaybī: 366 where Ḥakīma (or Khadīja), the aunt of Ḥasan al-'Askarī, refers a wandering follower of his in the year 262/875–876 to the "Jaddab (grandmother), mother of Abū Muḥammad (al-Ḥasan)." The same report appears with the date 282/895–896 in *Kamāl*: 501, which is an obvious error.
127. *Kamāl*: 474, 476.
128. According to Khuṣaybī: 248, he had two slave girls, Narjis (same as Ṣaqīl [*Ghayba*: 241; 'Umarī: 132] mentioned in other sources as the mother of the Twelfth Imām; see, for instance, *Kamāl*: 475), and Wardās, who is described as *kitābiyya*, a non-Muslim from the People of the Scripture, undoubtedly a Christian. They are apparently the same as Nasīm and Māriya mentioned in Khuṣaybī: 357 (Nasīm is also mentioned in *Kamāl*: 441). According to a report in *Kamāl*: 419–423 Narjis was also originally a Christian-Roman slave girl, in fact a member of the Byzantine royal family who was captured by the Muslims in a war and brought to *Dār al-islām*. Having Roman slave girls was a common phenomenon in the Islamic community of those ages. Imām 'Alī al-Riḍā also reportedly had a Christian slave girl (see Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 1:399).
129. *Kamāl*, 474, 476; *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b. See also Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashbara*: 348, 354–5, 356.

of Ja'far's departures from Shī'ite tradition, which prohibited recourse to an "unjust" judicial system, whether one's claim was true or false.¹³⁰ The slave girl was put in the house of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Ḥamza al-'Alawī, a respected scholar from the 'Alīd family,¹³¹ under government surveillance until it became clear that she was not pregnant. She was then released and lived for many years in Baghdad, at least for a while in the house of a member of the influential Shī'ite family of Banū Nawbakht, Ḥasan b. Ja'far al-Kātib. Later, she was seized once again by the government and put under surveillance until she died around the turn of the century.¹³² Meanwhile, after seven years of struggle, the inheritance of Ḥasan had been divided between Ḥudayth and Ja'far.¹³³

'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī continued as caretaker of the office of Imāmate in the absence of Ḥasan's son.¹³⁴ Although some harbored deep doubts about the actual existence of such a son,¹³⁵ most of the

130. See 'Ayyāshī, 1:254; Kulaynī, 1:67, 7:411–12; Qāḍī Nu'mān, 2:530; Ibn Bābawayh, *Faqīh*, 3:2–4; Tūsī, *Tabdhīb*, 6:301–3.
131. Najāshī: 347–8. See also *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b where it is said that she was put under the care of an 'Alīd for four years because it was claimed that she was pregnant. Some reports suggest that she was imprisoned in the house of the caliph (*Kamāl*: 474) or put under the care of the chief judge (*ibid.*: 476). The detention or surveillance continued for two years (Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 90; Ibn Ḥazm: 4:158. See also *Kamāl*: 43 where the figure "two years or more" is given in a report, but the same report in Kulaynī, 1:505, does not mention that figure. This latter report does not specify her whereabouts during that period. See further Khuṣaybī: 248, 320; Mufīd, *Fuṣūl*: 348, 354–5, 356).
132. Ibn Ḥazm, 4:158.
133. *Ibid.* See also Nawbakhtī: 105; Sa'īd b. 'Abd Allāh: 102.
134. A report even suggests that Ḥasan al-'Askarī instructed his followers to obey 'Amrī after his own death because he would be the deputy of the Imām and the affairs (of the Imāmate) would be entrusted with him (*Ghayba*: 217). The report seems to be a later contribution.
135. See Kulaynī, 1:318; *Kamāl*: 485, 487; *Ghayba*, 146, 218. See also Kulaynī, 1:329 (quoted also in *Ghayba*: 146, 218) where it is quoted that Aḥmad b. Ishāq al-Ash'arī, Ḥasan al-'Askarī's representative in Qum (*Kashshī*: 557–8; al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 272; Khuṣaybī: 372, 383), urged someone to ask 'Amrī if he had personally seen the son. The name of Aḥmad b. Ishāq himself is, however, included in the list of those who had personally seen

local representatives publicly acknowledged his existence. Those who did so were confirmed in their posts and were authorized to collect funds from the Imāmite community on behalf of the hidden Imām.¹³⁶ Most Shī'ites in various towns of Iran and especially Qum, which was the main center of Shī'ite scholarship in this age, accepted the new situation and continued to pay their taxes to the local representatives, who were now the agents of 'Amrī.¹³⁷ In Iraq, however, the situation was different. Kūfa had been a Shī'ite town for two centuries and was, by reason of its proximity to Sāmarrā', closely attuned to movements and disputes within the inner core of the Imāmate and always rife with unorthodox tendencies. The sources name many different sects that emerged after the death of Ḥasan al-'Askarī within the Imāmite community,¹³⁸ presumably basically referring to the community in Kūfa and other towns of Iraq. Many members of that community were puzzled by the situation and did not know how to react.¹³⁹ Many left the community

the son (*Kamāl*: 442; see also Tūsī, *Fibrīst*: 26), apparently on the basis of a story that is included in *Kamāl*: 454–65. He had also reportedly received a letter from Ḥasan al-'Askarī when the son was born, in which the Imām gave him the news of the birth of his son (*ibid.*: 433–4).

136. Kulaynī, 1:518. In a somewhat similar case those Ṭālibids of Medina who maintained good relations with the Imāms and acknowledged them used to receive an allowance from the house of the Imām in Sāmarrā'. After the death of Ḥasan those who acknowledged the existence and Imāmate of the son continued to receive their payment but for those who did not the payment was discontinued (Kulaynī, 1:518–19; Khuṣaybī: 370).
137. See *Kamāl*: 478–9, 501–3, 509, 516, 518.
138. Nawbakhtī: 105–119 (14 sects); Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 102–116 (15 sects); Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, 292 (11 sects); Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*: 5:108 (20 sects); Mufīd, *Majālis*: 2:97–9 (14 sects); Shahrastānī, 1:200–202 (11 sects); *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b (15 sects). See also Iqbāl: 160–65.
139. *Kamāl*: 408; Khazzāz: 290. For examples of the uncertainties and doubts among the Shī'ites immediately after the death of Ḥasan, see *Kamāl*: 426, 429, 487; *Ghayba*: 138, 172; also Abū Ghālib al-Zurārī: 141 who reports that in 260/874 the Shī'ite community sent an emissary to Medina to investigate the existence of the son, clearly because it was claimed that the son had been sent by his father to that town (*Kulaynī*, 1:328; see also 340).

for other Islamic sects.¹⁴⁰ A large number,¹⁴¹ possibly even the majority,¹⁴² recognized Ja'far as the Imām.¹⁴³ The Faḥites, who maintained that the succession need not necessarily pass from father to son and that two brothers could both become Imāms, did not face a doctrinal problem and followed Ja'far as Imām after Ḥasan.¹⁴⁴ Hasan b. 'Alī b. Faḍḍāl,¹⁴⁵ the most prominent jurisconsult in the Imāmite community of Kūfa,¹⁴⁶ and 'Alī al-Ṭāhin, a Kūfan *mutakallim* and prominent member of the Faḥite community,¹⁴⁷ were among the Faḥites who followed Ja'far. It is obviously for this reason that Ja'far was described by some as "the Imām of the second [generation of the] Faḥites" (*imām al-faḥīyya al-thāniya*).¹⁴⁸ Ja'far's following was more diverse than this, however. In addition to the Faḥites, it included those who counted him as successor to 'Alī al-Hādī or to his other brother, Muḥammad.¹⁴⁹ Some of these were originally followers of Ḥasan who had lost faith in him when he died with no apparent

140. *Kamāl*: 408. For examples of that see Kulaynī, 1:520; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Taḥbīt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, 2:390; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 146.
141. See the report narrated in *Kamāl*: 320, 321; *Ghayba*: 136; Irbilī, 3:246, according to which Imām 'Alī al-Hādī predicted at Ja'far's birth that he would mislead "a large number of people."
142. Abū Ṭālib: 210.
143. Nawbakhtī: 107–9, 115; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 110–14; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī, 1:116; *Kamāl*: 408; Khazzāz: 290; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2: 98–99, 103; *Ghayba*: 55, 57, 133, 135; Ibn Ḥazm, 4: 158; 'Umarī: 135; *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b; Shahrastānī, 1:199–200; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *I'tiqādār*: 68; *idem*, *Muḥaṣṣal*: 356.
144. Nawbakhtī: 107–8, 119; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 110, 111–12; *Ghayba*: 55, 57, 135.
145. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291; Khuṣaybī: 382, 389; Shahrastānī, 1:200.
146. Najāshī: 257.
147. Nawbakhtī: 108; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291; Shahrastānī, 1:199. He is 'Alī b. Ṭāhī al-Khazzāz in Nawbakhtī, but 'Alī b. *fulān* al-Ṭāhin in the latter two works. According to Nawbakhtī, he was among the followers of Ḥasan and joined Ja'far's campaign after Ḥasan's death, but according to the other two sources, he joined Ja'far immediately after the death of 'Alī al-Hādī.
148. Ibn Bābawayh, *Ma'ānī*: 65.
149. Nawbakhtī: 108–9, 114–15; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 110–11, 112–14; Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī: 116; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:97, 98; Shahrastānī, 1:199–200.

son.¹⁵⁰ The majority, however, simply considered Ja'far to be another name on the list of Imāms after Ḥasan. For some he was the twelfth Imām, whereas for the Faḥītes, who had already added to their list the name of 'Abd Allāh, son of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, he was the thirteenth. The followers of Ja'far became known in this period as the *Ja'fariyya*,¹⁵¹ a title coined in the previous century for the followers of Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Their opponents, who believed in the Imāmate of the vanished son of Ḥasan, used to call them *Tāḥiniyya* after the head of the movement and its main apologist in Kūfa, 'Alī al-Tāḥin.¹⁵² Heated sectarian debates flared between the two groups,¹⁵³ and tracts and treatises were exchanged.¹⁵⁴

These disputes raged for quite some time. The house of the Imāmate was divided. The mother of Ḥasan, Ḥudayth, and his aunt, Ḥakīma, the daughter of Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād,¹⁵⁵ supported the existence and Imāmate of the son,¹⁵⁶ whereas Ḥasan's only

150. Nawbakhtī: 108–9; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 110–11; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:97; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal*: 356.
151. Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 101; Ibn Qiba, *Naqḍ ibn bashshār*: para. 5; Fakhr al-dīn al-Rāzī, *I'tiqādāt*: 68. See also the title of Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh's polemic against them in Najāshī: 177 (see below, n. 154).
152. Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī: 291.
153. For examples of that see *Kamāl*: 511. See also *Ghayba*: 175.
154. These include the tract in support of Ja'far written by Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. Bashshār and the refutation of it by Ibn Qiba (both texts follow in the second part of the present work); also the treatise by Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Khalaf al-Ash'arī al-Qummī (d. 299–301/912–914) against the followers of Ja'far entitled *Kitāb al-Diyā' fi 'l-radd 'ala 'l-muḥammadiyya wa 'l-ja'fariyya* (Najāshī: 177). This latter treatise was extant at least until the late fifth/eleventh century as evidenced by a quotation from it in a work of that period, *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 344b.
155. See Khuṣaybī: 334, 355–7; *Kamāl*: 418, 423, 424–30; *Ghayba*: 138 (where it is Khadīja instead of Ḥakīma, also in Khuṣaybī: 366), 141–144; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 138–41; 'Umarī: 128, 130, 132; *Manāqib*, 4:394, Ibn Tawūs, *Mubaj*: 44.
156. The account of the son's birth is quoted on the authority of this aunt of Ḥasan al-'Askarī, who was present at the birth (*Kamāl*: 424–30). In a different report, however, she is quoted as telling that she had not herself seen the son; she rather came to know it through a note that Ḥasan had sent his mother when the son was born, giving her the news of the birth (*ibid.*: 501, 507).

sister,¹⁵⁷ the only other surviving descendant of 'Alī al-Hādī¹⁵⁸ besides Ja'far, supported the claim of Ja'far.¹⁵⁹ High-ranking Shī'ite officials were also divided; some supported Ja'far and others Ḥasan's mother.¹⁶⁰ Ja'far did not live long.¹⁶¹ His followers then turned to his son, Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī,¹⁶² although some held that he shared

157. The name of this sister is variously given as Fātima (Abū Ḥatīm al-Rāzī: 292; Shahrastānī, 1:200), Dalāla (al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 217), 'Aliyya (Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 366; *Manāqib*, 4:402) and 'Ā'isha (Mufīd, *Irshād*: 334; Ṭabrisī, *Tāj*: 56; Ibn al-Muṭahhar, *Mustajād*: 225.) Some genealogists, therefore, have thought that 'Alī al-Hādī had three daughters, Fātima, 'Ā'isha, and Burayha. (See, for instance, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 78.) It can confidently be suggested that the first name (Fātima) was the real one and one or both of the next two (Dalāla and 'Aliyya) the nicknames. The name 'Ā'isha is presumably the misspelled form of 'Aliyya.
158. See Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 12:121, quoting Ibn Ḥazm in his *Fiṣal*, that the inheritance of Ḥasan was seized by his brother Ja'far and a sister of his (read *ukhtun labu* for *akhun labu*). The reference does not, however, appear in the edited copy of Ibn Ḥazm's *Fiṣal*, 4:158.
159. This fact is attested to by the point maintained by many followers of Ja'far that she was one of his two successors after his death (see below, n. 163).
160. See Ibn Ḥazm, 4:158; Subkī, *Fatāwā*, 2:568; Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 13:121. See also 'Umarī: 130.
161. 'Umarī: 135 gave the date of his death as 271/884–885, but added that he was forty-five years old when he died. This sets the birth of Ja'far in 226/840–841, which clearly cannot be correct because Ja'far was younger than his brother Ḥasan (Kulaynī, 1:326, 328; Khuṣaybī: 386), and Ḥasan was born in 231/845 (Khaṭīb, 7:366; Irbilī, 3:271–3; Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 134; Ibn Abī 'l-Thalj: 87; Ibn al-Khashshāb: 198–9; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntazam*, 12:158; Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī: 362) or 232/846 (Ḥimyarī, *Dalā'il* [quoted in Irbilī, 3:308]; Kulaynī, 1:503; Mufīd, *Irshād*: 335; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:274) [the year 233/847 given by Khuṣaybī: 327 (see also al-Ṭabarī al-Shī'ī: 223) is most likely wrong]. In the editor's introduction to the first volume of the Qur'ānic commentary of Ja'far's descendant, Seyyid Ahmed Husameddin, Ja'far's birth date appears as 849 (Husameddin, 1:20), that is, 235–236 *Hijrī* era, which seems to be correct. So if he was forty-five years old when he died, he must have died in 281/894–895.
162. He is described in some of the sources as the chief syndic of the Ṭālibids (*sayyid al-nuqabā'*) of Baghdad (Marwazī: 9; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 79, 80. See also Ibn Funduq, 2:692). His descendants later were notable people in Baghdad (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 80) and several of them served as syndics of the Ṭālibids (*naqīb*) in different towns (Najāshī: 269; 'Umarī: 135; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 80; Kammūna, 1:143, 2:3).

the Imāmate with Fāṭima, the sister of Ja'far.¹⁶³ After 'Alī and Fāṭima, they carried the same claim to other descendants of Ja'far.¹⁶⁴ At the turn of the century, the Iraqī Imāmites were divided into two opposing camps; those who adhered to the son of Ḥasan and those who championed Ja'far's descendants.¹⁶⁵

It is not quite clear how much longer the supporters of Ja'far and his descendants existed as a separate sect in the Shī'ite community. By 373/983-984 when Mufīd was writing the chapter on various Imāmite sects in his *Kitāb al-Majālis*, he did not know anyone who believed in Ja'far as the Imām.¹⁶⁶ By 410/1019-1020 when he was writing his main book on the Occultation,¹⁶⁷ many of the descendants of Ja'far had already converted to mainstream Twelver Shī'ism; in fact, Mufīd did not know any descendant of Ja'far who disagreed with the Twelvers on the question of the Imāmate of Ḥasan al-'Askarī's son.¹⁶⁸ Ṭūsī emphasized the same point in his book on the Occultation written in 447/1055-1056;¹⁶⁹ by then this sect had completely disappeared and none of its followers remained.¹⁷⁰

A descendant of his, Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza b. 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. 'Alī b. Ja'far ('Arashī: 51, presumably with missing names of additional intermediate persons in this genealogical table), a prolific Zaydite scholar (on him see Ḥibshī: 67-78; Ziriklī, 9:175 and the sources mentioned in these two works), emerged in 729/1328-1329 in Yemen and called people to himself as the *imām* al-Mu'ayyad bi 'llāh. He was recognized and accepted as *imām* by many people until his death in 749/1344-1349. A descendant of this scholar, Sharaf al-Dīn b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 1307/1890), assumed the imāmate of a part of Yemen as the *imām* al-Hādī li-Dīn Allāh from 1295/1878 until his death ('Arashī: 79). The family has produced other notables and scholars up to the present (see the editor's introduction to Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza's *Tasfiyat al-qulūb*: 5).

163. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 292; Shahrastānī, 1:200.

164. Abū Zayd al-'Alawī: para. 24; 'Umarī: 135; Shahrastānī, 1:200.

165. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 293.

166. Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:99.

167. This is his *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashara fi 'l-ghayba*. See its date of compilation in pp. 349 and 366 of the book.

168. Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-'ashara*: 356.

169. *Ghayba*: 218.

170. *Ibid.*: 133, 137.

These accounts seem to be reliable for the area within the traditional boundaries of Shī'ite land, from Medina to Khurāsān. Many of Ja'far's descendants, however, emigrated to Egypt,¹⁷¹ India,¹⁷² and other areas which at that time were far from the Imāmite homeland. Many of those who emigrated as well as those who remained in Iraq became notables¹⁷³ in their various societies. Some became spiritual mentors of Sufi orders.¹⁷⁴ One of those orders, whose sequence of leadership is based on a father-to-son succession, is presently stationed in Turkey. In their publication they name

171. 'Umarī: 135. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 80-81; Marwazī: 9; Ibn 'Inaba: 200-201.

172. The large clan of Naqawī *sayyids* in the Indian subcontinent traces its genealogical ancestry back to Ja'far. See also Marwazī: 8, 219 (read *naqawī* for *taqawī* in both cases as also suggested in the footnote in the second case).

173. Among his many sons apart from 'Alī, his eldest son and successor, some were respected notables. One of them, 'Īsā (d. 334/965) was a respected public figure in Baghdad and a transmitter of *ḥadīth* (Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 480; Ibn Ḥazm *Jambara*: 55). Another, Muḥsin (or Muḥassan) was killed during the time of the Abbasid Muqtadir (r. 295-320/908-932) on the accusation that he called a rebellion against the government (Abu 'l-Faraj, *Maqātil*: 703; *Jambara*: 55). Another, Yaḥyā al-Šūfī (d. 354/965), was syndic of the Ṭālibids in Baghdad (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 79) and moved to Qum later in his life (Ḥasan al-Qummī: 216-17; on him see also *Jambara*: 53). Another, Mūsā, is said to have become a Sunnite, frequenting regularly the circles of the Sunnite traditionists (*Jambara*: 55-6; possibly the same one mentioned in Šūlī: 98 as having died in 326/937). Among his descendants, who formed a very large clan, were many holders of official positions, such as syndics of the Ṭālibids in different towns (in addition to those mentioned above among the descendants of his son, 'Alī, see 'Umarī: 135; Marwazī: 9, 219, 39; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Shajara*: 79-80; Ibn 'Inaba: 200-201; Kammūna, 1:116, 2:156-7), emissaries from the caliphs (Šarīfīnī: 256) and the like, scholars and transmitters of *ḥadīth* (see, for instance, 'Umarī: 135; *Jambara*, 56 [which mentions as a great-grandson of Ja'far, a Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ja'far, a learned *muḥaddith* who died in Mecca in 341/951-2 at the age of 100. Unless the correct date is 441/1049-50, this man, obviously, cannot be a great-grandson of Ja'far b. 'Alī]; Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārīkh*, the biography of 'Alī, 2:253; Ibn 'Inaba: 200; Ibn Shadqam: 61-2).

174. See, for instance, Sha'rānī, 1:181 (the biography of the Sufi *shaykh*, Ibrāhīm b. Abi 'l-Majd al-Dusūqī [d. 676/1277-8], who descends from Ja'far as a twelfth-generation descendant of his).

their spiritual leaders back to Ja'far, whom they call Ja'far al-Mahdī.¹⁷⁵ One of their most recent heads, Seyyid Ahmed Husameddin (d. 1343/1925), author of a partly published commentary on the Qur'an,¹⁷⁶ was in the twenty-ninth generation from Ja'far.¹⁷⁷ In an indirect reference in the introduction to his Qur'anic commentary, he unmistakably refers to himself as the "heir to the Prophet and the Imām of the age."¹⁷⁸

For the mainstream of the Imāmites who maintained the Imāmate of the vanished son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī the puzzlement and uncertainties continued and increased in the course of time. In the first days when that idea was put forward and accepted by the community, nobody, obviously except for 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī and his close associates, had ever imagined that it was going to be such an unusually long occultation. The Shi'ites clearly expected the son to become manifest in a short time and the office of the Imāmate and the order of the Imāms to continue their normal and natural courses.¹⁷⁹ A contemporaneous rumor suggested that he

175. A group of supporters of Ja'far in the late third/ninth century maintained that he was the *qā'im*, a concept which by then had become equivalent to the concept of *mahdī*. See Nawbakhtī: 115; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 113.

176. *Kur'an'in 20.asra gore anlami*, ed. M. Kāzım Öztürk, vol. 1: *Fatıha ve Amme cuzu okunusu tercumesi ve aciklamasi* (Izmir, 1974), vol. 2: *Tebareke cuzu. Okunusu tercumesi ve aciklamasi* (Izmir, 1976). They are numbers 4 and 5 from a series of his works published by the same editor, who is the son of the author, under the general title of *Seyyid Ahmed Husameddin Kulliyatından*. According to the editor's introduction to the mentioned Qur'anic commentary, 1:25, other works by Husameddin edited in that series include *Thamarat al-ṭūbā min aghşān al-'abā*, *Mawālīd abl al-bayt*, *Maqāşid al-sālikīn* and *Zubdat al-marātib*, which are published in a single volume, and *Wajizat al-ḥurūf 'alā manātiq al-şuwar*, which is published together with its Turkish translation as *Esrar-i Ceberut-ül A'la*. The editor has also translated the *Mawālīd abl al-bayt* into Turkish, which was published in Ankara in 1969 as *Islam Felsefesine Isik veren Seyyidler*.

177. See his Qur'anic commentary, 1:20–21. According to the genealogical table that appears there, he was the nineteenth-generation from the above-mentioned Sufi *shaykh*, Ibrāhīm b. Abi 'l-Majd al-Dusūqī. However, the names in the genealogical table here vary from those in Sha'rānī, 1:181, in minor ways.

178. See *ibid.*, 1:27–28.

179. See Nawbakhtī: 116, 118; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 102, 106. See also Ibn Qiba, *Mas'ala fi 'l-imāma*, para. 5 where it is said that when the vanished

would have to remain in hiding for either six days or six months with a maximum possibility of six years before circumstances would allow him to emerge without fear of harm.¹⁸⁰ It did not, however, take long before the community started to identify the case with the concept of Occultation, whose occurrence some time in the future was forecast in reports that had already been in circulation among the Shi'ites for almost one century. The reports predicted that the *qā'im* would first disappear from the public scene to emerge later and establish the rule of truth.¹⁸¹ One report even predicted two periods of concealment for the *qā'im*; after the first short one he was to reappear and then go into a longer period of occultation during which most of his followers would lose their faith and leave the true doctrine.¹⁸² A different version of this report predicted that the first period of Occultation would be longer and the second period would be shorter.¹⁸³ The Wāqifites used to quote these reports in support of their idea that Mūsā al-Kāzım was the *qā'im*,¹⁸⁴ identifying the two Occultations with his two periods of imprisonment.

son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī reappears, the truth of his claim to be the vanished son will have to be confirmed by his associates, that is, those who had previously seen him and can identify him. Clearly, the author expected the son to reappear while those witnesses were still alive.

180. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 146; Kulaynī, 1:338; *Kamāl*: 323 (In Nu'mānī: 61, who quoted the report from Kulaynī, the phrase "six days, six months or six years" is changed to "a period of time." *Ghayba*: 204 omitted the part of the report that mentioned the duration of the Occultation altogether.)

181. See, for instance, *Ghayba*: 38, 40, 41 quoting 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-'Alawī al-Mūsawī in his book in support of the Wāqifite doctrine; Ṭabrisī, *I'lām*: 444 quoting Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb al-Sarrād (d. 224/839) in his *Kitāb al-Mashyakba*.

182. *Kamāl*: 323.

183. Nu'mānī: 170.

184. Numerous works were compiled during the late second/eighth and early third/ninth centuries by the Wāqifite scholars and their opponents as *Kitāb al-Ghayba*, obviously all discussing the concept of the alleged occultation of Mūsā al-Kāzım as suggested by the Wāqifites (see the article *al-Mahdī* in *EP*, 5:1230–38 [by W. Medelung]: 1236). These include works by the Wāqifites Ibrāhīm b. Şāliḥ al-Anmāṭī (Najāshī: 15, 24), Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī (*ibid.*: 37); Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Samā'a (Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 52), 'Abd Allāh b. Jabala (Najāshī: 216), 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭatarī (*ibid.*: 255), 'Alī b. 'Umar al-A'raj (*ibid.*: 256), and 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Umar b. Rabāḥ al-Qallā' (*ibid.*: 260) and non-

It was also true that most of those who supported the Wāqifite idea about Mūsā al-Kāzīm later rejected it as "predicted" in those reports and recognized 'Alī al-Riḍā as the next Imām.¹⁸⁵

The general idea of the occultation of a future Imām who would be the *qā'im* was, thus, a well-established concept in the Shī'ite mentality.¹⁸⁶ This fact is well evidenced by the views of those who denied the death of 'Alī and awaited his return and those of the Kaysānites and other early heretic movements on the living and future return of their respected leaders. After the death of Ḥasan al-'Askarī, too, some of his followers are quoted as suggesting that he actually went into his first concealment from which he would emerge in a short time as the *qā'im*.¹⁸⁷ By around 290/903 when the prominent Imāmite theologian Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī finished his *Kitāb al-Tanbīh*,¹⁸⁸ it was already known, apparently for many years, that the vanished son of Ḥasan was the one to emerge as the *qā'im* to establish the rule of truth.¹⁸⁹ Otherwise, one could hardly imagine any reason why he was so afraid for his life if he were to live calm and quiet as his forefathers had done.¹⁹⁰ The time period of the Occultation was not yet long enough for one to assert that it was impossible for someone to still be in hiding.¹⁹¹ It was not

Wāqifites 'Abbās b. Hishām al-Nāshirī (ibid.: 280), and 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Faḍḍāl (ibid.: 258). As noted, the latter author lived into the period of Minor Occultation but did not believe in the occultation of the son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī and was a follower of Ja'far. So his book was most likely in the same Wāqifite-non-Wāqifite line of polemics.

185. See above, chapter 1.

186. Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 94.

187. Nawbakhtī: 106–7; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 106–7; Mufīd, *Majālis*, 2:98; Shahrastānī, 1:200.

188. Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 90 (where it is said that some thirty years had already lapsed by the time the work was being written since the son went into hiding, that is, from 260/874), 93 (where in the last paragraph of the book it is said that more than one hundred and five years [read *mi'a wa khams* for *mi'a wa khamsīn*] had passed since the death of Mūsā al-Kāzīm, that is, from 183/799).

189. Ibid.: 94. See also Ibn Qiba, *Naqd ibn bashshār*: para. 5; also Nawbakhtī: 118; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 105.

190. On this point see also 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 20(1): 196.

191. For the mentality behind this judgment see Kashshī: 458 where Imām

like the alleged occultation of Mūsā al-Kāzīm which, as Abū Sahl stated, more than one hundred and five¹⁹² years had passed since his death (or concealment as the Wāqifites claimed) and the duration of his alleged occultation had already exceeded the maximum normal duration.¹⁹³

A short time later, the concept of *mahdī*, "the rightly guided one," thus far essentially a non-Imāmite concept,¹⁹⁴ was also introduced into the case.¹⁹⁵ This concept was based on a statement reported from the Prophet that predicted that before the end of time a descendant of his would emerge who would restore the religion

'Alī al-Riḍā is quoted as saying that if God were to prolong someone's life because society needed him, He would have prolonged the life of the Prophet.

192. Read *mi'a wa khams* for *mi'a wa khamsīn*, as noted.

193. Ibid.: 93–4.

194. See the article "al-Mahdī" in *EI*², 5:1230–38 [by W. Madelung]. The Prophetic statement about the *mahdī* does not seem to have been recorded by the Imāmite authors until the post-Occultation period. The assertion of some Sunnite authors of the past and present who accused the Imāmites of fabricating the reports about the *mahdī* is, thus, totally misplaced. The statement, however, is widely quoted in the post-Occultation Imāmite literature, especially in the reports where the Prophet and previous Imāms are quoted as miraculously predicting the exact number and names of the twelve Imāms where the vanished son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī is said to be the *mahdī* who is to "fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice" (see Kulaynī, 1:338, 525, 534; Nu'mānī: 58–60, 86, 93). There are a few cases in the supposedly pre-Occultation Imāmite literature where the concept of *mahdī* is mentioned (see, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:281, 372; Nu'mānī: 60, 189, 212–15, 231, 247, 264). Most of these, however, seem to have been subject to later rewordings. Compare, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:372, report no. 6 in which the word *mahdī* is used with 1:372–3, reports nos. 2, 4, 5, and 7 (also Nu'mānī: 200, 329, 330, 331) where the words *qā'im*, *muntazar* and *ṣāhib bādha 'l-amr* are used in other versions of the same statement; also Nu'mānī: 283–4 where a statement is quoted with the word *qā'im* in one version and with *mahdī* in the other.

195. This is, of course, the chronological order of how the community came to know the fact. This certainly does not exclude that the fact was already revealed by God to the Prophet and via him to the Imāms and that they had already informed their reliable associates, as verified by many Imāmite and even non-Imāmite reports.

and “fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice.” The rank and file of the Imāmites tended to identify this savior of the earth with the *qā'im* who would establish the rule of truth.¹⁹⁶ The link between the two concepts had already been reportedly advocated by some splinter groups who “stopped” with certain Imāms on the assumption that they were the *qā'im* and the *mabdī*.¹⁹⁷ This identification presented some technical problems because, according to widespread reports, the *mabdī* was to be a namesake of the Prophet.¹⁹⁸ Many Imāmites, however, expected any of the Imāms to be the *qā'im*, whereas the names of most of the Imāms did not satisfy that condition.¹⁹⁹ This problem did not exist in the case of the Twelfth Imām, whose name was first unknown

196. See, for instance, the reports that suggest that the *qā'im* must be a namesake of the Prophet (Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 43; Nu'mānī: 230) or that the *qā'im* or *ṣāḥib bādha 'l-amr* will fill the earth with justice (Kulaynī, 1:341).

197. This assertion is quoted from those who allegedly “stopped” with Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (Nāshī': 46; Nawbakhtī: 78; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 79; *Farg*: 61; Isfarā'īnī: 79; Shahrastānī, 1:195), Mūsā al-Kāzīm (Nāshī': 48; Nawbakhtī: 90, 92; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 89, 91), and Ḥasan al-'Askarī (Nawbakhtī: 106, 108; *Kamāl*: 40). Some non-Imāmite Shī'ite groups are also quoted as having considered their leaders to be *al-qā'im al-mabdī* (Nawbakhtī: 52, 74; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 43, 76). Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was asked by one of his disciples whether he was the *qā'im* and the *mabdī* or not (Kulaynī, 1:536). The combination of *al-qā'im al-mabdī* or the connection between the two appears in some other reports, too (see, for instance, Nu'mānī: 235, 237–8).

198. See, for instance, Ahmad, 3:376, 377, 448; Tirmidhī, 9:74–75; Ṭabarānī, 2:148. See also Sulamī: 27–32; Ṣāfi: 182–4 who refers to forty-eight *ḥadīths* to that effect, some quoted in several sources. See also al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī: 49, 183 for the common belief about that. According to another report, the father of the *mabdī* was also to be a namesake of the Prophet's father (see Ibn Abī Shayba, 8: 678; Abū Dāwūd, 4: 106–7; Hākīm, 4: 442; Khaṭīb, 1: 370; Baghawī, 3: 492; Sulamī: 27, 29, 30). This report, which was in wide circulation in the middle of the second/eighth century, encouraged many people to consider Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Nafs al-Zakiyya as the long awaited *mabdī* see, for instance, Nawbakhtī: 74; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 43; Nu'mānī: 230; Abu 'l-Faraj, *Maqātil*: 244; Ibn Zuhra: 20. See also Qādī, *Kaysāniyya*: 227).

199. There were other technical problems too. The *mabdī* was to emerge close to the end of the time, according to some reports right before the day of judgment. According to a report, he was to come after an interval during which there would be no Imām at all, just as the Prophet came in a time when the sequence of the prophets had been cut for a long period of time

even to the most prominent Imāmite persona of the time who asked his first deputy about it.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, a report circulating in this period among the Shī'ite community quoted Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād telling a disciple, who was wondering whether the *mabdī* was the same as the *qā'im* or different, that both concepts referred to the same person.²⁰¹ Thus while the reference to the concept of *mabdī* in connection to the vanished son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī is absent in the Imāmite works written in the last decades of the third/ninth century, even in those that describe him as the *qā'im*, by the first decades of the following century when Kulaynī finished his *Kitāb al-Kāfī*²⁰² and 'Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī wrote his *Kitāb al-Imāma wa 'l-taḥṣira min al-ḥayra*²⁰³ the vanished Imām was already the one who was to reappear to “fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice.”²⁰⁴

(Kulaynī, 1:341). This was against the Imāmite's main principle that the earth would never remain without an Imām (Ṣaffār: 484–9; 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 157–62; Kulaynī, 1:168, 177–80). It, however, contributed to the emergence of one of the several groups that rose after the death of Ḥasan al-'Askarī as some of his followers held that there was no Imām after him, and the sequence of the Imāms was cut until God appoints the next Imām. During this period of vacuum the Shī'ites were to follow the already well-established teachings and principles of their own school (see Nawbakhtī: 113–14; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh: 107–8; Mufid, *Majālis*, 2:99).

200. See Kulaynī, 1:328, 330, 331; Nu'mānī: 288; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 1:67; *Kamāl*: 331, 338, 369, 370, 378, 380–81, 403, 442, 482–3; *Ghayba*: 147, 215, 219, 222.

201. See *Kamāl*: 377.

202. The compilation of this book took twenty years (Najāshī: 377). The author died in 329/940–941.

203. According to the author, the age of the vanished Imām at the time the book was compiled had already reached the maximum of the normal life of people of that time (*ibid.*: 149), presumably referring to age seventy. The book must, therefore, have been written in or shortly after 325/937 when, according to the most supported view on his birth date (the year 255/869) the Imām had passed his seventieth birthday. The author died in 329/940–41.

204. See Kulaynī, 1:338 (where the vanished Imām is explicitly called the *mabdī*), 341, 525, 534; 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 147. However, the vanished Imām is already Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan in Ibn Qiba, *Mas'ala fi 'l-imāma*, para. 5, a name that was apparently determined by the introduction of the concept of *mabdī* into this case.

'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī moved to Baghdad and continued as the caretaker of the office of Imāmate until the end of his life. He insisted that he had direct contact with the son of Ḥasan and received the correspondence sent to the son by the community as well as the religious funds in the same way that he had during the time of Ḥasan. It is said that the entire community agreed to recognize his claim to be the deputy of the Imām.²⁰⁵ Some reports, however, suggest that rather serious doubts existed about his authority to receive the religious funds.²⁰⁶ As noted above, some doubted the scope of his credibility even during the time of Ḥasan and whether he was always acting at the Imām's instruction and wish.²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, there was no doubt that he was the closest associate of the Imām. His position was further strengthened at the Imām's death when he was the one who performed the funeral and burial ceremonies,²⁰⁸ an extremely important privilege in the Imāmite tradition, reserved, according to popular opinion, for the successor to the deceased Imām.²⁰⁹

'Amrī was succeeded by his son, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, also a well-known agent who had previously served in the office of Ḥasan al-'Askarī in the company of his own father and later as the chief aide to his father when he was the caretaker for the vanished Imām. Muḥammad carried on in this job for a long time despite more open challenges to his authority as the caretaker of the office raised by some prominent members of the community who had not contested his father's claim.²¹⁰ Before his death in 305/917, he appointed one

205. *Ghayba*: 216, 221.

206. See Kulaynī, 1:517.

207. See Kashshī: 544 where, after quoting the text of a letter that Ḥasan al-'Askarī's representative in Nīshāpūr received from the Imām that included harsh words against the prominent Imāmite scholar of the time, Faḍl b. Shādhān, the author expressed doubt on the credibility of the latter on the basis that "it has been mentioned that that letter as well as all other instructions that [the representative in Nīshāpūr] received were sent by 'Amrī." The hesitation in this statement about 'Amrī's credibility and authority is unmistakable.

208. *Ghayba*: 216.

209. See 'Ayyāshī, 2:281; Kulaynī, 1:384–5, 459; *Kamāl*: 71; 'Uyūn, 1:106, 2:246, 248; Ḥasan b. Sulaymān al-Ḥillī: 13; Majlisī, 27:288.

210. They included Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Bilāl (*Ghayba*: 245–6),

of his junior aides,²¹¹ Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī, as his successor. The latter continued in that office, meeting the same sort of challenge and doubt from some members of the community,²¹² until 326/937 when he died, leaving 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Samarī, presumably an aide of his, as his successor. The latter held that position for only three years and died in 329/941 without naming anyone as his successor. The office was, thus, formally closed.

During the period between the deaths of Ḥasan al-'Askarī and the fourth agent, later termed the Minor Occultation, the chief agent used to receive the correspondence to the vanished Imām from the community and the religious funds and donations for the Imām. The agents occasionally issued written statements to the community and instructions to the local agents as rescripts of the vanished Imām.²¹³ Until the time of the second agent, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, they were all written in the same handwriting that the community received from the office of Imāmate during the time of Ḥasan and later during the incumbency of Muḥammad's father,²¹⁴ which suggests that all were copied by Muḥammad himself at the instruction of the Imām. The rescripts were mostly instructions to

a respected scholar and *ḥadīth* transmitter (Kashshī: 564, 566; *Kamāl*: 499; Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*: 435; *Ghayba*: 238), and formerly an agent of Ḥasan al-'Askarī who praised him in a letter as a "reliable and trustworthy man who knows his duties very well" (Kashshī: 579; see also *Kamāl*: 442; incidentally he was the one who complained to Ḥasan about the excessive spending of his agent 'Alī b. Ja'far al-Humānī, quoted above); Aḥmad b. Hilāl al-Karkhī (*Ghayba*: 245), also a companion of Ḥasan al-'Askarī (and possibly the uncle of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Hilāl al-Karkhī, a later recipient of a rescript from the vanished Imām [Abū Manṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:288–9]), who had accepted 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd as the agent of the vanished Imām but disputed the authority of Muḥammad; and Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Numayrī, head of the Nuṣayrites (*Ghayba*: 244).

211. See *Ghayba*: 225 (cf. *ibid.*: 227).

212. *Ibid.*: 192.

213. Cf. Ḥusayn b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb: 143 where it is said that the Shī'ite community agreed that the rescripts of the Twelfth Imām were coming out to the community in Iraq for a while after his disappearance at the hand of 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd al-'Amrī. There is no mention there of any rescript by the hands of later agents.

214. *Ghayba*: 220, 221, 223.

the local agents or receipts for the donation made to the Imām and, occasionally, answers to legal questions asked by the community. For this last point, however, the community was ordered in a rescript to refer to the Imāmite jurists.²¹⁵ Sometime around 280-285/893-898 the correspondence from the Holy Threshold stopped, and no more rescripts were issued. The situation continued at least until around 290/903. This was taken by the community to mean the beginning of the second and greater occultation during which the Shī'ites were supposed to lose their contact with the Imām.²¹⁶ The correspondence seems to have resumed during the term of office of the third agent when some rescripts were issued to anathematize those who challenged the authority of the agent.²¹⁷ The legal questions were now forwarded by the agent to some Imāmite jurists to answer,²¹⁸ jurists to whom the agent also turned with his own questions.²¹⁹ The rescripts were now in the handwriting of an agent's secretary and dictated by the agent himself.²²⁰

215. *Kamāl*: 484.

216. See Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī: 93.

217. *Ghayba*: 228, 252-4. There were also quasi rescripts in the form of answers given to legal questions. Some Shī'ites used to put their questions in scrolls to the agent, which he would return with short answers on the back of the paper (*Ghayba*: 228, 229) or in the space between the questions (Najāshī: 355). See, for instance, the four examples of this kind of rescript sent by the Imāmite scholar of Qum, Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far al-Ḥimyarī (on him see Najāshī: 354-5; Ṭūsī, *Fibrīst*: 156; Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Ma'ālim*: 111; Āghā Buzurg, 1:241) in Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:301-318 (the first two also in *Ghayba*: 229-236) including one dated 307/919-920 (*ibid.*, 2:306-9) and another dated 308/920-921 (*ibid.*, 2:309-15).

218. See, for instance, *Ghayba*: 181, 228. Some people apparently knew this fact as may be verified by their asking the agent to "ask the jurists that he trusts" and return an answer (*Ghayba*: 230, 231, 232. It is, however, probable that the Imām himself was meant by that expression). Others were in doubt (*ibid.*: 228). The answers sometimes clearly demonstrated that they were given by an Imāmite jurist and not by the Imām, as they referred to the conflict of the reports and that one could choose whichever he wanted (*ibid.*: 232) or, alternatively, argued with consensus (Abū Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:307) or the reports from the former Imāms (*ibid.*: 308, 311, 314).

219. *Ghayba*: 240.

220. *ibid.*: 228, 229.

There seems to have been a widespread expectation in the Imāmite community that the vanished Imām would reappear before his fortieth birthday, which was to occur before the turn of the century. This idea originated from suggestions in a number of reports that the *qā'im* had to be an energetic young man²²¹ of either thirty or thirty-one years, with a maximum age of forty,²²² and that anyone who exceeded the age of forty would not be the *qā'im*.²²³ When the expectation did not come true, it was first suggested that the limit mentioned was to mislead the unjust rulers who were gathering their whole power to crush such a rise of the *qā'im*.²²⁴ Later, it was decided that the reports meant that whenever the *qā'im* appears, regardless of whatever number of years that he lives and even if he lives for thousands of years, he will look like a young

221. Kulaynī, 1:536.

222. See also Sulamī: 35-6, 38; Haytamī: 43.

223. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 146; *Ghayba*: 258; *Dustūr al-munajjimīn*: 345b; Shahrastānī, 1:202. See also Khuṣaybī: 242-3. It may have been because of these reports that some of the Imāmites in this period thought that the son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī might have died in hiding and been succeeded by his own son. They seem to have come to this conclusion by a juxtaposition of several facts, that (1) the existence of the son of Ḥasan was proved by reports, that (2) he was in occultation because he was to be the *qā'im*, otherwise there would be no reason for him to hide because the time was not more difficult than that of his forefathers, and that (3) the *qā'im* was not to have passed his fortieth birthday. Because the son of Ḥasan had not reappeared although he was no more to be the *qā'im* as he had already passed his fortieth birthday, this had to be a sign that he had passed away while in hiding. Because the next Imām had to be his descendant he must, thus, have left a son who was the current Imām. Because this one was also unseen, one had to determine that he was now the one who would rise to establish the just rule. The application of the principle of *badā'* could facilitate this transition of the task. The opinion is attributed by Ibn al-Nadīm: 225 (also quoted by Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 15:328) to Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī. His own statements in his *Kitāb al-Tanbīh* (quoted above), however, do not support this view though the book was written before the fortieth birthday of the vanished Imām when the above theoretical problems arose. Should he have held such an opinion, he should have started it some years after the completion of that work. The attribution is not, however, supported by any other source and seems to be unfounded (see also *Ghayba*: 240).

224. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 146-7.

man of thirty odd years.²²⁵ There was some background for this mode of interpretation. A clearly Wāqifite report on the authority of Ja'far al-Šādiq had suggested that the *qā'im* would live for 120 years but emerge as a thirty-two-year-old man.²²⁶ Before this stage, however, in the first days of the Occultation the Zaydites used to criticize the Imāmites for the belief in the Imāmate of a child. They argued that the Imām was needed for the administration of the Islamic state and the protection of the Muslim homeland from enemies, which required the ability to fight and to lead the Muslim army, functions that could not normally be performed by a young child.²²⁷ The Imāmites used to answer these criticisms by saying that if such a situation arose, God would immediately turn the child Imām into a well-grown man, powerful and strong enough to lead such a fight.²²⁸ Some quoted a report that suggested that the son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī was growing as much in one month as normal babies grew during one year.²²⁹

Nevertheless, the failure of the old expectations and justifications created an atmosphere of severe doubt and uncertainty. At the turn of the century, the Zaydite Imāms had already established their independent rules in Yemen and the northern part of Iran. The political situation started to change dramatically in the first decades of the fourth/tenth century; the pro-Shī'ite Būyid dynasty came to power and extended their power over the caliphate of Baghdad for quite a long time. During the Būyid time, the better part of the fourth/tenth century, the situation changed everywhere to the benefit of the Shī'ite community. It was now believed that the Imām could safely become manifest should he, as was upheld by his chief agent in the first days of his occultation, have vanished because of a threat to his life and that if he managed to gather as many as 313 loyal supporters around him he would rise up.²³⁰ This

225. Mufid, *Majālis*, 2:98; *Ghayba*: 259.

226. Nu'mānī: 189; *Ghayba*: 259.

227. *Kamāl*: 78.

228. *Ibid.*: 79 describing it as the answer given by an Imāmite scholar to Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī.

229. *Ibid.*: 429.

230. *Kamāl*: 378. Mufid wrote a treatise in support of this idea published as *al-Risāla al-tbālītha fi 'l-ghayba*.

rationalization was, however, modified by a rescript²³¹ issued by the second agent; the real reason given for the Imām's hiding was that he had tried to avoid committing himself to allegiance to any of the unjust rulers of his time so that when he rose up he would not violate the term of allegiance—considered a capital sin in the Islamic tradition. If he had been manifest, he would have had to pledge allegiance to the government as all members of the Muslim community in those ages, including his forefathers,²³² had had to do and continued to do.

By the third decade of the century, therefore, when 'Alī b. Bābawayh was writing his book on the Occultation, many of the Imāmites were in a state of severe doubt and uncertainty.²³³ By the end of the fourth decade when Muḥammad b. Ibrahīm al-Nu'mānī wrote his work on the topic,²³⁴ the absolute majority of the Imāmites in the western parts of the Shī'ite homeland (in fact, the whole community with very few exceptions)²³⁵ were in a similar state of fierce doubt and one way or another rejected the existence of a vanished Imām. The situation was not much better in the eastern

231. *Kamāl*: 485. Some reports attributed to the earlier Imāms also mention the same reason for the hiding of the *qā'im* in the future (Nu'mānī: 171, 191; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 1:273; *Kamāl*: 479–80), including one with a small chronological problem in the chain of transmission because a transmitter from an earlier generation appears in it quoting from one of the later generation (see Nu'mānī: 171, n. 1). The idea is, however, based on an ultraorthodox, pro-Umayyad and anti-Shī'ite view that regarded the unjust rulers who forcefully seized political power as legitimate and allegiance to them as binding, even if paid under duress and in fear. It is apparently for this reason that neither Mufid in his treatise on the reason for the Occultation (published as *al-Risāla al-rābi'a fi 'l-ghayba*) nor Ṭūsī in his *Kitāb al-Ghayba* mentioned any of these reports but insisted that the reason for the Imām's occultation was only his fear for his life (see Mufid, *al-Risāla al-rābi'a*: 395–8; *Ghayba*: 199–201).

232. *Kamāl*: 485.

233. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 142.

234. The book was written when some eighty-odd years had already passed since the birthdate of the Twelfth Imām (p. 157) and before Dhu 'l-Ḥijja, 342/April 954 when the book was read with the author by his student (p. 18, n. 2). These references put the date of compilation at around 340/951–952 (see also pp. 161, 173–4).

235. Nu'mānī: 21, 157, 160, 165, 170, 172, 186.

region either; a decade or two later Ibn Bābawayh found most of the Shī'ites he met in Khurāsān, even respected scholars of the Imāmite community, extremely doubtful about the vanished Imām.²³⁶ Numerous references in the reports that circulated in the Shī'ite community during these periods attest to a universal uncertainty about this question²³⁷ and to widespread conversions from the "True Doctrine."²³⁸ Some reports even suggest that the greater portion of the community converted during these periods of uncertainty, as they quote earlier Imāms as predicting that the majority²³⁹ (according to some, up to two-thirds)²⁴⁰ of those who followed the truth would turn to other doctrines.²⁴¹ The reports also speak of severe hostility and mistrust among the Shī'ites, some of whom called others liars, cursed each other, and spat into each other's faces,²⁴² as well as similar sorts of violent behavior.²⁴³

236. *Kamāl*: 2–3 (see also 16).

237. See, for instance, Nu'mānī: 185, 186, 190; *Kamāl*: 258, 286, 287, 302, 304, 330; Majlisī, 51:109, 118, 142, 158 where these reports are quoted from other early sources (see also Khuṣaybī: 357–8; Ibn Abi 'l-Thalj: 116; *Alqāb al-rasūl*: 287). Reference to this state of doubt, traditionally referred to as *ḥayra* (uncertainty), can also be found in the names of several books that were written on the question of Occultation in this period, including the above-mentioned work by 'Alī b. Bābawayh (*Kitāb al-Imāma wa 'l-taḥṣīra min al-ḥayra*), another one by Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ṣafwānī (Najāshī: 393), another by Salāma b. Muḥammad al-Arzanī (ibid.: 192), and a fourth by 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far al-Ḥimyarī (ibid.: 219). The full title of Ibn Bābawayh's *Kamāl* (which appears at the end of its first volume: 332 as well as in his *Khiṣāl*: 187 and *Uyūn*, 1:54, 69) also refers to it: *Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni'ma fi iḥbāt al-ghayba wa kashf al-ḥayra*.

238. Nu'mānī: 22, 25, 61, 154, 170, 172, 186, 190, 207–8; *Kamāl*: 16, 17, 253, 286, 287, 304, 317, 356, 360, 408; *Ghayba*: 41, 204, 206; Ibn 'Ayyāsh: 23; Mufid, *al-Risāla al-khāmisa*: 400; Ibn Bābawayh, *Nuṣūṣ* (quoted by Ḥāshim al-Baḥrānī: 335).

239. Nu'mānī: 165, 172, 186; *Kamāl*: 323–4, 378; *Ghayba*: 206.

240. *Kamāl*, 656 (read *thuluthay* for *thuluth*); *Ghayba*: 206.

241. Many of these Imāmites converted to other branches of Shī'ism, including Ismā'ilism (see, for instance, 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tatbhūt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, 2:390). They included even some Imāmite jurists and notables (see, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:520). Others turned to other non-Shī'ite heretical sects (see, for instance, Tanūkhī, 8:70).

242. Kulaynī, 1:340; Nu'mānī: 159, 210, 260; *Kamāl*: 317, 348, 361.

243. Abū Zayd al-'Alawī, para. 24; *Kamāl*: 317, 361; Ibn 'Ayyāsh: 23. Obviously

It was thanks mainly to the tireless efforts of the Imāmite transmitters of *ḥadīth* that this situation gradually changed. The turning point apparently came around the turn of the third/ninth century²⁴⁴ after the earlier hopes for the appearance of the Imām before his fortieth birthday were dashed. It was made possible by the application of a quotation from the Prophet about the number of the Imāms.

There was a well-known statement attributed to the Prophet by the Sunnite transmitters of *ḥadīth* according to which he predicted that there would be twelve caliphs²⁴⁵ after him, all from his tribe, the Quraysh.²⁴⁶ One version of the statement spoke of twelve caliphs during whose reign the Islamic community would be united.²⁴⁷ In other versions, it was also predicted that anarchy would prevail after the reign of those twelve. It is almost certain that the statement was in circulation in the time of Walīd II (r. 125-126/743-744) when the first signs of the anti-Umayyad revolution had already emerged, and the rebel forces, joined by Yazīd b. al-Walīd and the Qadarites, were threatening the long-established Umayyad orthodoxy. It might even have started to circulate in the final years of the reign of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik (r. 105-125/724-743), the ninth Umayyad ruler to whom the Muslims universally submitted as they had done to the first three *Rāshidūn*, the years that were already clouded by troubles concerning the succession. The state-

for the same reason Abū Ghālib al-Zurārī: 131 speaks of this period as the time of "al-fitna allatī umtuḥinat biba 'l-shī'a."

244. This dating is based on the fact that the argument with the Prophet's prediction of the exact number of the Imāms is absent from the works of Nawbakhtī, Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh, Ibn Qiba, and Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī, the last of which was compiled around the year 290/903, but is already used by 'Alī b. Bābawayh, writing shortly after 325/937.

245. Variations of the report mention twelve *amīrs* or *qayyims*, (guardians).

246. Ṭayālīsī: 105, 180; Nu'aym b. Ḥammād: 20b–21a, 26b; Aḥmad, 1:398, 5:86–108; Bukhārī, 4:407; Muslim, 3:1452–3; Abū Dāwūd, 4:106; Tirmidhī, 9:67; Ṭabarānī, 2:213–18, 227–9, 236, 238, 241, 248, 251, 258, 268, 277, 282–6; Abū 'Awāna, 4:394–6, 398–9; Ḥākim, 3:617–18; Khaṭīb, 2:126, 14:353; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh*, the biography of 'Uthmān: 173–4.

247. Abū Dāwūd, 4:106.

ment had thus been in circulation long before the beginning of the occultation of the Twelfth Imām in 260/874. It was already on record as early as the middle of the second/eighth century in, for instance, the *Amālī* of the Egyptian scholar Layth b. Sa'd (d. 175/792),²⁴⁸ later in the *Musnad* of Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī (d. 204/819-820) and in others. No one can, therefore, claim that the statement was in any way authored by the Imāmites in the post-Occultation period. In fact, there is no evidence in any work written before the last decades of the third/ninth century that suggests that this statement had ever attracted the attention of the Shī'ite traditionists or that anyone in the Shī'ite community had ever thought that it might concern them. The Imāmite scholar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār (d. 290/903), for instance, does not refer to that statement in his book, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, which is a collection of *ḥadīths* on the virtues of the Imāms.²⁴⁹ Other scholars, such as the two Nawbakhtīs, Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ash'arī and Ibn Qiba, all from the latter part of the third/ninth century, also failed to refer to that statement in any of their surviving works.²⁵⁰ The only exception²⁵¹

248. See Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mutashābih al-qur'ān*, 2:56.

249. Kohlberg, "From Imāmiyya to Ithnā'ashariyya": 522-3.

250. That includes the surviving section of Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī's *al-Tanbīh fi 'l-imāma*, the related part of Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī's *Firaq al-shī'a*, the corresponding part of Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh's *al-Maqālāt wa 'l-firaq* as well as the abridged version of his *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, and all three works of Ibn Qiba which are reproduced in the second part of the present work.

251. Another exception is suggested by Etan Kohlberg: "Al-Barqī [d. 274/887 or 280/893] quotes a well-known Imāmī tradition, in which al-Khiḍr meets 'Alī and his son al-Ḥasan and reveals to them the names of the Imāms [Barqī: 332f]; but in the version cited by al-Barqī, unlike other . . . versions of this tradition, al-Khiḍr mentions by name only 'Alī, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn; the tradition adds: and he counted every last one of them,' . . . but the names or the number of Imāms who are to follow al-Ḥusayn are not specified. In the *Tafsīr* by 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. 307/919), the Khidr tradition appears already with the names of the twelve Imāms ['Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, 2:45]" ("From Imāmiyya to Ithnā'ashariyya": 523). It should, however, be noted that the version of this *Tafsīr* now available was compiled by 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm's pupil, Abu 'l-Faḍl 'Abbās b. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim b. Ḥamza (Āghā Buzurg, 4:303-8), presumably sometime during the first decades of the fourth/tenth century, by which time the complete version of the Khidr tradition was already

was an anti-Sunnite polemic, apparently from the first decades of the second/eighth century, which was attributed to a certain Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilālī, allegedly a disciple of 'Alī. In that book,²⁵² the Prophet was quoted as saying to 'Alī that he, that is, 'Alī, and twelve of his descendants (thirteen all together)²⁵³ are the leaders of truth.²⁵⁴ The book seems to use widely accepted principles of the Sunnite community to support the Shī'ite points of view, a characteristic preserved in the present fourth/tenth-century version of the book, which is presumably modeled after the original one and seems to have preserved parts of its contents. The quotation, therefore, possibly reflects the understanding of the Shī'ite author of the book of that widespread statement rather than the existence of a Shī'ite version of it.²⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the reference obviously never attracted the attention of the Imāmites until the late third/ninth century. As noted before, the Imāmite community in the first decades of the Occultation still expected that the order of the Imāms would continue its normal path in the descendants of Ḥasan al-'Askarī until the end of time. It was, possibly, not until after 295/908, when

in full circulation (see Kulaynī, 1:525; Nu'mānī: 58-60; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 1:67; *Kamāl*: 213-15).

252. Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh*: 231; Najāshī: 440.

253. Abū Naṣr Hibat Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Kātib, a late fourth/tenth-century Imāmite scholar who was also a maternal grandson of the second agent of the Twelfth Imām (Najāshī: 440; *Ghayba*: 216, 220, 221, 227, 238, 246, 248), wrote a book on the Imāmate for a Zaydite patron of his. Arguing with this report in *Kitāb sulaym b. qays*, he suggested that the Imāms were thirteen: the twelve plus Zayd b. 'Alī (Najāshī: 440).

254. In the printed copy of the book, which is apparently an early fourth/tenth-century contribution, the number appears as eleven (see pp. 62, 201 [also 94, 109, 125, 151, 167, 168]; see also Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustarī, *al-Akbbār al-dakbīla*: 1-10).

255. Two similar reports that quoted the Prophet as predicting twelve noble chiefs "from among his descendants," the last of them being the *qā'im* who would fill the earth with equity and justice, appeared in a collection of *ḥadīths* ascribed to the Kūfan Zaydite transmitter of *ḥadīth*, 'Abbād b. Ya'qūb al-Rawājīnī (d. ca. 250/864) (Kulaynī, 1:534). However, in the edited version of Rawājīnī's work (entitled *Aṣl abī sa'īd 'abbād al-'usfurī*): 15, the number appears as eleven. Both reports were quoted from Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir.

the community started to realize that the situation was more unusual than they had originally thought and that possibly there would not be a manifest Imām for the foreseeable future, that the question of the number of the Imāms came under serious consideration,²⁵⁶ although many may have guessed and some reports may have started to circulate before that date.

The two prominent Shī'ite traditionists of the early fourth/tenth century, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī and 'Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī, both of whom died in the late third decade of that century, are the first among those Imāmite authors whose works have survived to put forward the idea. In the introduction to his *al-Imāma wa 'l-tabṣira*, 'Alī b. Bābawayh mentions that because he found many Imāmites of his time in doubt about the truth of the doctrine because the Occultation had continued for such a long period, he wrote that book and collected some *ḥadīths* that specified the exact number of the Imāms so that the community would know that it was following the right doctrine.²⁵⁷ There is a chapter in Kulaynī's *Kitāb al-Kāfī* on the *ḥadīths* which set the number of the Imāms at twelve²⁵⁸ although the chapter is not in its most proper place and very much looks like a later supplement, possibly added by the author later in his life.²⁵⁹ Later scholars managed to find many more *ḥadīths* of this genre, so numerous that they formed the basis for later sizable monographs on the subject. According to these *ḥadīths* the Prophet and the earlier Imāms had not only predicted the exact number of the Imāms but had even disclosed the full list of their names, including the vanished one that was the last on the list.

256. According to Najāshī: 310, Fāris b. Ḥātīm wrote a book on the number of the Imāms on the basis of chronogrammatic calculation (*Kitāb 'Adad al-a'imma min ḥisāb al-jumal*). This work, however, clearly was not related to our discussion and most likely did not come to the same conclusion that the Imāmite community later reached on the exact number of the Imāms either.

257. 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 142, 151.

258. Kulaynī, 1:525–35.

259. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nu'mānī was a pupil and close associate of Kulaynī and personally copied his above-mentioned work (see Maḥfūz: 19). In the chapter of his *Kitāb al-Ghayba* that deals with the question of the exact number of the Imāms (pp. 57–111), Nu'mānī tried his best to collect

Many, however, questioned the originality and authenticity of these *ḥadīths*.²⁶⁰ Their main argument was that if these *ḥadīths* were correct and original and the names of the Imāms were already determined and well known from the time of the Prophet, in fact, from antediluvian time,²⁶¹ then why had all of those disagreements on the question of succession occurred among the Shī'ites, and why had all the many sects been formed, each following a different claimant to the Imāmate? Moreover, many of the authorities on

all reports he could find on that matter. After the completion of the book he found yet two more reports and he added them to the chapter (pp. 97–101) as attested by a note that the principal transmitter of the book, Abu 'l-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shujā'ī (Najāshī: 383), added before those two reports (p. 97). The work, as noted, was compiled some ten years after the death of Kulaynī. Nu'mānī, however, failed to quote sixteen of the total of twenty reports included in that chapter of the *Kāfī*, though he quoted some of those reports from other Shī'ite authorities of *ḥadīth*. This clearly indicates that in his copy of the *Kāfī* those sixteen reports, especially those that he quoted on other authorities, did not exist, particularly if one notes Nu'mānī's special preference for what is reported by Kulaynī. This is well attested by the fact that in one case in which he received one of those reports recorded in the *Kāfī* through a different source too, he quoted that on the authority of Kulaynī and merely referred to some additional words in a different transmission of it that was narrated by "some others" (pp. 94–95). Apart from four reports that Nu'mānī quoted from the above-mentioned chapter of the *Kāfī*, he quoted also a fifth report on the authority of Kulaynī that he quoted from 'Alī in the chapter of the Occultation of the *Kāfī*, but major differences exist between Nu'mānī's quotation from Kulaynī and what is in the present version of the *Kāfī*. In the *Kāfī*, 1:338, the duration of the Occultation is, as noted before, given as "six days, six months or six years." In Nu'mānī: 61 this phrase is recorded as "a period of time." In the *Kāfī* the *mabḏī* is said to be the eleventh (or the twelfth according to another variation of the *ḥadīth*; see Nu'mānī, 61, n. 3; also Khuṣaybī: 262; Khazzāz: 316; and *Ghayba*: 204, depending on whether the phrase is *min zaḥrī*, *al-ḥādī'ashar min wuldī* or *min zaḥr al-ḥādī'ashar min wuldī*; in 'Umarī: 134 it is, however, *al-'āshir min wuld al-thānī*) generation from the descendants of 'Alī; the reference is missing in Nu'mānī (the Twelvers' *mabḏī* is, in fact, the tenth generation from 'Alī).

260. See Khazzāz: 289.

261. See 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 145.

whose authority those *ḥadīths* are quoted belonged to other groups.²⁶² Why should one follow a false doctrine when he himself had heard and, more importantly, had quoted the true doctrine from the Prophet or the Imām? The most prominent Imāmīte scholar of the second/eighth century, Zurāra b. A'yan, reportedly did not know who the successor to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was. According to numerous reports, when the news of the Imām's death reached Kūfa, Zurāra immediately sent his son to Medina to find out who the new Imām was. However, before the son returned, Zurāra became ill to the point of death. To fulfill the obligation that requires any Shī'ite to know his Imām at any given time he reportedly took a copy of the Qur'an and said, "my Imām is the one whose Imāmate is determined in [or, variantly, 'established by'] this Book."²⁶³ Clearly, if Zurāra had heard the name of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq's successor from him, as suggested by a report,²⁶⁴ he would hardly have needed to resort to that option. Similarly, if the most learned of the disciples of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq did not know the Imām's successor, how then can one imagine that a new convert such as the poet al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī knew the full list of the Imāms so as to be able to include it in a poem ascribed to him?²⁶⁵

The Imāmīte scholars rejected these criticisms. The fact that many of those on whose authority those reports were quoted did not admit the truth of their own words did not prove that the reports were not authentic. Those authorities may well have been driven by their worldly desires away from truth, while they actually knew what the truth was. The point made that such a prominent scholar as Zurāra did not know the new Imām was not true. He

262. That included persons such as the Companion Abū Hurayra (Ibn Bābawayh, *Nuṣūṣ* [quoted by Hāshim al-Baḥrānī: 210–12]) and 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan (Hāshim al-Baḥrānī: 125–6), none known to have had any pro-Imāmīte tendency.

263. Kashshī: 154–5; *Kamāl*: 74–6. See also Abū Ghālib al-Zurārī: 114.

264. Nu'mānī: 327–8.

265. See his *Dīwān*: 357–69. According to a report quoted in *Kamāl*: 33, he had also told a friend that the *qā'im* would be the sixth generation from Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. See also Mufīd, *al-Risāla al-khāmisa fi 'l-gbayba*: 400–401; Hāshim al-Baḥrānī: 193.

knew who the successor to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was; he did not disclose it because he was not sure whether it was permissible for him to publicize it. It was then a matter of precautionary secrecy that he did not make it public.²⁶⁶ After all, in some of these *ḥadīths*, the Imām or the first transmitter of the *ḥadīth* is quoted as advising the one who heard it from him to keep it a secret and not to disclose it to the wrong people.²⁶⁷

These *ḥadīths* henceforth became the central point in the Imāmītes' argument on the Occultation and in support of the truth of the Twelver Shī'ism doctrine. They were extremely instrumental in gradually removing the doubts and uncertainties of the Imāmīte community and persuading the Imāmītes of the truth of their doctrine. This entire success was made possible by the hard work and tireless efforts of the Imāmīte transmitters of *ḥadīth* during the last decades of the Minor Occultation up to the middle of the fourth/tenth century. The Twelver Shī'ism doctrine and the Imāmīte community owe a great deal to those faithful and courageous men.²⁶⁸

266. *Kamāl*: 75. See also 'Alī b. Bābawayh: 148.

267. Kulaynī, 1:528; Nu'mānī: 66; Ibn Bābawayh, *'Uyūn*, 1:45, 46; *Kamāl*: 311, 313.

268. A statement quoted from Imām 'Alī al-Hādī reportedly predicted this situation. It asserted that "if it were not for the learned men who exist in the community after the occultation of the *qā'im*, which learned men call [others] to him and instruct people about him, protect the doctrine with the divine proofs, and save the weak among the servants of God [the Shī'ites] from the nets of Satan and his followers and from the traps of the anti-Shī'ites, nobody would remain who had not converted from the religion of God. But they, the learned men, will take the reins of the hearts of the weak among the Shī'a in the same way that the pilot controls the rudder of the ship. Those [learned men] are the best people before God, the mighty, the exalted" (Abū Maṣ'ūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:260).