

NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI[®]

Doctrine of Imamate in Twelver Shi'ism

Traditional, Theological, Philosophical and Mystical Perspectives

Hamid Mavani
Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University
Montreal

April 2005

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in
partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy.

© Hamid Mavani, 2005



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file *Votre référence*
ISBN: 0-494-12905-0
Our file *Notre référence*
ISBN: 0-494-12905-0

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

ABSTRACT

Author: Hamid Mavani
Title: Doctrine of Imamate in Twelver Shi'ism: Traditional,
Theological, Philosophical and Mystical Perspectives
Degree: Ph.D.
Department: Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University

The doctrine of imamate – that is, the rule of a particular individual over the community – is a central and pivotal concept in Islam generally, and in Shi'ism specifically. Scholars who have studied this concept have tended to emphasize one aspect of the doctrine of imamate to the exclusion of all others. At one end of the spectrum, scholars ascribe to the imamate a strictly esoteric dimension, and at the other end, they view it primarily as a political institution. Dr. Mohammad Amir-Moezzi is a proponent of the former, while the late Ayatullah Khumaynī is a proponent of the latter. Both polarized views prevent us from appreciating the coherence and integrity of the Shi'ite tradition and the richness of the doctrine of imamate, whose central and primary function is to provide guidance such that humanity can attain success and prosperity in this life, and salvation in the afterlife. The diverse approaches adopted in the study of this doctrine – from the perspectives of the Qur'an and ḥadīth, theology, philosophy and mysticism – along with the linkages and commonalities established between them on the basis of the revelatory sources, are indicative of the foundational role played by this doctrine in the development of these various disciplines. It has informed all aspects of the Shi'ite religious sciences and world view. This is best reflected in the works of Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 699/1299), who is perhaps the first Imamite scholar to embrace these traditionally mutually exclusive approaches in his treatment of the doctrine of imamate, and who is the subject of study of the last chapter of this thesis.

RÉSUMÉ

Auteur: Hamid Mavani
Titre: La Doctrine de l'Imamat dans le Shi'isme duodécimain: les perspectives traditionnelle, théologique, philosophique et mystique
Degré: Doctorat
Département: Institut d'Etudes Islamiques, Université McGill

La doctrine de l'Imamat - c'est-à-dire l'autorité d'un individu particulier sur la communauté – est un concept clef au coeur de l'Islam en général, et du Shi'isme plus spécifiquement. Les érudits qui se sont penchés sur ce concept ont eu tendance à mettre en relief un aspect de la doctrine de l'Imamat et à exclure tous les autres. D'une part, les penseurs érudits attribuent à l'Imamat une dimension strictement ésotérique, et à l'autre extrême, ils le considèrent avant tout comme une institution politique. Le Dr. Mohammad Amir-Moezzi appartient au premier groupe, tandis que feu Ayatullah Khumaynī préconise le second point de vue. Le durcissement de ces conceptions nous empêche d'apprécier la cohérence et l'intégralité de la tradition Shi'ite, ainsi que la richesse de la doctrine de l'Imamat dont la fonction centrale et première est de fournir un guide tel que l'humanité puisse jouir du succès et de la prospérité dans cette vie-ci, et du salut dans l'après-vie. Les maintes approches empruntées pour l'étude de cette doctrine – selon les perspectives du Qur'an et des ḥadīths, de la théologie, de la philosophie et du mysticisme, ainsi que les liens et les points communs établis entre eux à partir des sources révélatrices, indiquent le rôle fondamental joué par cette doctrine dans le développement de ces diverses disciplines. Celle-ci a informé tous les aspects de la religion Shi'ite et de sa vision du monde. Les oeuvres de Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 699/1299) reflètent admirablement bien cette unité sous-jacente. En effet, dans son traitement de la doctrine de l'Imamat, al-Baḥrānī est le premier érudit à épouser des approches traditionnellement considérées comme mutuellement exclusives. Le dernier chapitre de notre thèse sera entièrement dévoué à son oeuvre.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iv
Notes on Transliteration	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose and Rationale	18
CHAPTER 1: Three Principal Subjects in the Discourse of Imamate: <i>Mawaddah</i> (<i>maḥabbah</i> , <i>ḥubb</i> , <i>walāyah</i>), <i>Khilāfah</i> & <i>Wilāyah</i>	
(i) <i>Mawaddah/maḥabbah/ḥubb/walāyah</i>	27
(ii) <i>Khilāfah</i>	32
(iii) <i>al-Wilāyah al-Muṭlaqah</i> (<i>Tashrīʿ</i> and <i>Takwīnī</i>) - Legislative and Universal Creative Authority	36
1. The luminous realities (<i>al-ḥaqīqah al-nūriyyah</i>)	39
2. The first creation of God (<i>awwal mā khalaqa Allāh</i>)	41
3. Most beautiful names (<i>al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā</i>)	43
4. Intercession (<i>shafāʾah</i>)	46
5. <i>al-ʿilm al-ladunnī</i>	48
6. <i>Muḥaddath</i>	49
7. <i>al-Imāmah al-bāṭiniyyah</i>	50
8. Miracles and charismata (<i>muʿjizāt</i> and <i>karāmāt</i>)	51
9. Primordial covenant	51
10. Presentation of deeds of the faithful to the Prophet and his progeny (<i>ʿarḍ al-aʿmāl</i>)	53
11. Infallible guides are witnesses over the deeds of the community	53
12. Status of the infallible leaders	54
13. Status of infallible leaders on the day of judgment	54
14. Relationship of divine guides with God, prophets and other existents before and after creation of universe	55
CHAPTER 2: Qurʾan (<i>tafsīr</i> and <i>taʾwīl</i>) and Ḥadīth Approaches	58
(a) Explanation of the Approach	58
(b) Sources: Qurʾan, ḥadīth reports and historical narratives	58
(c) Discourse on the Subject	59
<i>Tafsīr</i> Approach: Analysis of Qurʾanic verses on <i>Mawaddah</i> , <i>Khilāfah</i> and <i>Wilāyah</i>	60
Elaborate Analysis of the Verse on <i>Khilāfah</i>	63
Applying the Principles of <i>Istiṣḥāb</i> and <i>Ijmāʿ</i> on the Qurʾanic verse 5:55	65
Other Qurʾanic Verses Cited on <i>Mawaddah</i> , <i>Khilāfah</i> and <i>Wilāyah</i>	68

<i>Ta'wīl</i>	79
Definition of <i>Ta'wīl</i>	79
Qur'anic Usage of <i>Ta'wīl</i>	81
Ḥadīth Usage of <i>Ta'wīl</i>	81
Authoritative Expositors of <i>Ta'wīl</i>	82
Specimen Works on <i>Ta'wīl</i>	83
<i>Ta'wīl: Mir'āt al-anwār</i> and <i>al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān</i>	84
Major Topics of Discussion in <i>Mir'āt al-anwār</i>	84
Method of Analysis	86
Example 1: Life (<i>al-Ḥayāt</i>) and Death (<i>al-Mawt</i>)	86
Example 2: Water	88
Example 3: <i>Rabb</i>	89
Chronological Bibliography: Qur'an	92
Ḥadīth Approach	94
Analysis of Ḥadīth al-Ghadīr	102
Analysis of Ḥadīth al-Ghadīr by 'Allāmah Amīnī	107
Chronological Bibliography: Ḥadīth	111
CHAPTER 3: Theological Approach to Imamate	116
(a) Definition	116
(b) Sources	118
(c) Method of Discussion and Analysis in Books of <i>Kalām</i> on Imamate	119
<i>MĀ al-Imāmah</i>	123
<i>HAL yajibu naṣb al-Imām?</i>	126
i. Obligation on <i>God</i> to appoint an imām based on <i>rational proofs</i>	126
Benevolence Principle (<i>Qā'idat al-lutf</i>)	127
Critical Analysis of the Benevolence Principle	129
ii. Obligation on <i>God</i> to appoint an imām based on <i>revelatory proofs</i>	131
iii. Mandatory for <i>people</i> to appoint an imām based on <i>reason</i>	132
iv. Mandatory for <i>people</i> to appoint an imām based on <i>revelatory proofs</i>	134
<i>LIM yajibu wujūd al-imām</i>	136
<i>KAYF al-imām</i>	137
<i>'iṣmah</i>	137
<i>afdāl</i>	141
The Obligatory Nature of Explicit Designation (<i>wujūb al-naṣṣ</i>)	144
1. <i>'iṣmah</i>	144
2. <i>sīrat al-nabī</i>	147
3. <i>I'jāz</i> or <i>Mu'jizah</i>	148
<i>MAN al-Imām?</i>	150
Designation of 'Alī	150
Sample Qur'anic Verses	151
Sample Ḥadīth Reports	152
Virtues (<i>faḍā'il</i>)	155
Designation of the other eleven imams	160
Negation of the claims for imamate of other contenders and demonstration of their incompetence (<i>ghayr al-ṣalāḥiyyah</i>)	163
Sects (<i>fīraq</i>) of the Shi'ites	165
Judgment on those who oppose the imamate of the divine guides	167

Chronological Bibliography: Theology	172
CHAPTER 4: Philosophical Approach to Imamate	175
Imamate and <i>Wilāyah</i> in Theoretical Philosophy	175
Causality	177
Three Views on the Acts (<i>af'āl</i>) of God	178
<i>Sinkhiyyah</i> (Homogeneity of Cause and Effect)	180
Supreme Station of the Divine Guides	181
Examples of this Method	183
Additional Philosophical Principles	190
Practical Philosophy	193
Syllogisms and other Methods in the Discourse on Imamate	197
<i>Ṭahlīlī</i>	203
<i>Tarkībī</i>	204
Chronological Bibliography: Philosophy	206
CHAPTER 5: Mystical Approach to Imamate and <i>Wilāyah</i>	208
Introduction	208
Sources	211
Method of Analysis	212
Definition of <i>Wilāyah</i> and <i>Walāyah</i>	212
Example	213
Ayatullah Khumaynī's Opinion on <i>Wilāyah</i> and the	
Rightly Guided Caliphs	215
Chronological Bibliography: Mysticism	219
CHAPTER 6: Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. 'Alī b. Maytham al-Baḥrānī:	
Multiple Approaches to the Study of Imamate	221
Birth and Death	221
Maytham's Mentors and Disciples	223
Mentor-Disciple Relationship: Maytham and Naṣīr al-Dīn	
al-Ṭūsī	224
Alliance with the Rulers	225
Major Extant Works of Maytham	226
Parallel between Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd & Maytham	231
General Approaches of Discourse in the Works of Maytham	233
Conclusion	246
Bibliography	249
Appendix	264

Acknowledgments

I am infinitely grateful to my advisor, Prof. Robert Wisnovsky for his authoritative and compassionate guidance along with moral support and encouragement. I am also greatly indebted to Prof. Hermann Landolt for his scholarly guidance in drafting the dissertation proposal and underlining the need for precision, clarity and depth in one's research work. To my professor in Qum, Shaykh Aḥmad Amīnī Najafī, I extend my profound gratitude for his guidance at every step of my research, and for his impeccable hospitality and kindness. He is a personification of the exemplary scholar imbued with knowledge and great humility. I was also privileged to have received guidance from other scholars in Iran, whose names have been mentioned towards the end of my introduction. To all of them, my sincere appreciation and thanks.

I acknowledge my gratitude to the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University for providing financial assistance this academic year so that I could focus on completion of this dissertation. In this regard, the Director, Prof. Eric Ormsby and Ann Yaxley, were most helpful in expeditiously approving my request for financial aid for a portion of my expenses. The rest was all taken care of by Mr. Sadik Alloo with grace and elegance that are exceptional and unique to the "task master." It is no exaggeration to say that without his help, I would not have been able to complete the dissertation for the Spring 2005 convocation. I delightfully acknowledge with humility and gratitude a generous grant that was awarded to me by my dear friend and colleague, Mr. Jawad Khaki. I am thankful for the generosity and kindness (in alphabetical order) of Mr. Jaffer Abdulhussein, Dr. Syed Ijaz Ali, Mr. Shabbir R. Bata, Mr. Ahmed B. Dato, Dr. Bashir A. Dato, Mr. Mujtaba Dato, Mr. Dilawer H. Dinani, Mr. Gulamabbas Jaffer, Dr. Mohsin Jaffer, Dr. Sajad Janmohamed, Dr. Naushad Khimji and Mr. Ali Zareh. The laptop computer on which I wrote most of this dissertation was gifted to me by Dr. Ahmed Bahai and Mr. Mohsen Mahbubian. I also was

fortunate to receive financial assistance in previous years during the directorship of Prof. A. Üner Turgay. My warm thanks to him and to the Institute.

Special thanks are due to my colleagues and friends. Dr. Ali al-Oraibi was generous with his time and expertise. He read the complete dissertation and offered valuable and incisive critical comments. His recommendations have been incorporated in the final product. Many thanks are due to Mohammad Ghassemi-Zavieh who read parts of the dissertation and offered helpful suggestions. His wife, Simin Kargari, painstakingly undertook the task of checking the transliteration with care and diligence. To both of them, my sincere gratitude. Dr. Mohammed Amīnī provided help to me in better understanding certain aspects of the *rijāl* literature, and I extend my thanks to him.

The office staff at the Institute, Ann Yaxley, Kirsty McKinnon and Sandra Ewart have been most helpful. So also have the library staff, particularly Salwa Ferahian, Steve Miller, Wayne St. Thomas and Heather Empey

My dear parents, brothers and sister have offered unstinting support and encouragement throughout my studies. And lastly, the person who most deserves my heartfelt thanks and appreciation is my wife, Mahbubeh Etehadī, who has been a source of solace and comfort, and has patiently and gracefully tolerated my irregular schedule and limited help in raising our two young children, Ehsaan and Sarah. Consequently, I dedicate this thesis to her.

Note on Transliteration and Dates

The system of transliteration of Arabic terms and phrases follows the style adopted by the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University with the following exceptions: The transliteration of the feminine ending *tā marbūṭa* is rendered as {ah} where it not pronounced, in words such as *wilāyah*, and {at} when it appears in a construct (*iḍāfah*) formation, like in the case of *wilāyat al-faqīh*. The *alif maqṣūrah* is written as {ā}. The respective *hijrī* and Christian dates are separated by an oblique. If only one date is mentioned, it refers to the common era. The translations from the Qur'an have been taken, for the most part, from *The Qu'ran*, translated by M. H. Shakir (Elmhurst, New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., 1993), with minor modification where warranted.

INTRODUCTION

The doctrine of Imamate, that is, rule of a particular individual over the community occupies a central place in the Muslim belief system.¹ However, the doctrinal controversy surrounding the nature and extent of authority has been the prime factor in the proliferation of many sects and splinter groups. There is general consensus on the necessity of a leader (imām)² to provide guidance after the demise of the Prophet; however, disagreement revolves around the qualifications of such a leader, the scope and nature of his authority and the mode of selection. The Shi'ites insist that imamate is one of the fundamentals of Islam and that, as such, it is as important as prophethood (*nubuwwah*) of which it is a necessary continuation. In their exposition of the creed, for instance, Shi'ite scholars divide the principles of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*) into five tenets with imamate at the centre, the others being divine unity (*tawḥīd*), divine justice (*'adl*), prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and the Day of Resurrection (*qiyāmah* or *ma'ād*).³ By contrast, imamate is not even considered a principle (*aṣl*) by the

¹ Although this doctrine is of crucial importance in Twelver Shi'ism, its significance is also recognized in Sunnite works. For instance, Ibn Ḥanbal relates: "He who dies without an imām shall die in ignorance." Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, ed. A. M. Shākir (Cairo, 1949), 4:96. The title of supreme leadership, *al-imāmah al-kubrā/uzmā*, was bestowed on a person who was at the helm of the entire Muslim community, the *ummah*. See Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 17.

² On the various definitions and significance of the term "imām" in Sunnite Islam and the ancient schools of Islamic Law, see Norman Calder, "The Structure of Authority in Imāmī Shī'i Jurisprudence," Ph.D. dissertation (London: SOAS, 1980), pp. 1-23 and Muhammad Rafii Yunus, "The Necessity of Imāmah According to Twelver-Shī'ism: With Special Reference to *Tajrīd al-I'tiqād* of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī," M.A. Thesis (Montreal: McGill University, 1976), pp. 8-26.

³ The father of 'Allāmah Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Muḥammad Taqī, regards dissociation (*barā'ah*) from the Sunnites as part of *uṣūl al-dīn*. See, *Lawāmi'*, 8 volumes (Qum: Maṭbū'at Ismā'īliyyān, 1994), 4:400.

Sunnites.⁴ The unique position of the imām with respect to his cumulative, inherited knowledge, and his role as the infallible, inerrant guide and leader, imply that he is the ultimate authority in expounding law, doctrine and practice, as well as spiritual mentorship. The imam's authority is viewed as an extension of the apostolic authority of Muḥammad with the difference that the imām is not a recipient of revelation. However, the imāms are described as *muhaddath* (spoken to by the celestial being by way of sounds in their ears {*naqr fi al-asmā'*}) or *mufahham* (instructed by angels; caused to understand) to describe the mode of transmission of knowledge known as *ilhām* (inspiration).⁵ Thus, the function of revelation is continued, in a different form, in the divine guides.

The importance of the doctrine of the imamate is demonstrated by the fact that major differences and disputes in the Muslim community have arisen as a consequence of this issue: "The greatest dispute, indeed, in the community has been that over the imāmate; for no sword has ever been drawn in Islam on a religious question as it has been drawn at all times on the question of the imāmate."⁶ Numerous works by both Shi'ite and Sunnite scholars have been written in defense of or in opposition to this concept. As a case in point, al-Qāḍī al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/1286) asserts that "imamate is one of the most crucial

⁴ For a discussion on the progressive shift and modification in the conception of imamate from the time of Shāfi'i to Bāqillānī, see N. Calder, "The Structure of Authority in Imāmī Shī'i Jurisprudence," pp. 34-40. The imām's duties were confined to the executive domain and the *ummah* was promoted as the custodian, guarantor and exponent of Islam.

⁵ Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-kāfi*, 3 volumes [Arabic with Persian commentary and translation], ed. and transl. S. Jawād Muṣṭafawī (Tehran: Daftar-e nashr-e farhang-e ahl-e bayt, n.d.), (4th volume, ed. and transl. Hāshim Rasūlī, Tehran: Intishārāt-e masjid-e chahārdah ma'sūm, 1966), 2:13-15 {*K. al-ḥujjab, Bāb anna al-a'imma muḥaddathūn mufahhamūn*}. This version of *al-Kāfi* is used for all the references unless specified otherwise.

⁶ Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa al-nihal*, tr. A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn (London: Kegan Paul International, 1984), p. 19.

issues dealing with the fundamentals of religion. Dispute or disagreement on this matter would entail disbelief (*kufir*) and innovation (*bid'ah*).⁷ Likewise, Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd Asrūshanī (d. 1234 or 35), a Ḥanafite scholar, writes that anyone who does not accept the imamate of Abū Bakr should be viewed as an unbeliever (*kāfir*).⁸ Shaykh Mufīd (d. 413/1022) is of the view that it is prohibited to provide funeral rites to Sunnites because they have rejected the *wilāyah* of the divine guides, that is, the unique status of the divine guides that mandates unconditional love, loyalty and obedience; moreover, if one is forced to do so on account of precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyyah*), then one should not pray for their forgiveness but instead lay a curse (*la'n*) on the deceased after the recitation of the fourth glorification (*takbīr*) in the ritual prayer for the deceased (*ṣalāt al-mayyit*).⁹ According to him, the Sunnites fall into the category of unbelievers gone astray (*kāfir ḍāll*) and deserve to dwell in hell-fire for eternity (*mustahaqq li al-khulūd fi al-nār*) for they failed to affirm the *wilāyah* of the divine guides.¹⁰ However, this opinion of Shaykh Mufīd and other Shi'ite scholars does not tally with the ḥadīth reports attributed to the divine guides in which

⁷ Aḥmad Amīnī Najafī, *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (comprises *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Kashf al-Murād* by 'Allāmah Ḥillī and *Tawḍīḥ al-Murād* by Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī on the section of imamate only—volume 6), p. 37 quoting from *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*.

⁸ Ibid. The name of his book is *Fuṣūl al-Asrūshanī*.

⁹ Shaykh Mufīd, "*al-Muqni'ah*" in *Muṣannafāt Shaykh al-Mufīd*, 14 volumes, (Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1992), 14:85. A similar view is expressed by Abū al-Ṣalāḥ al-Ḥalabī (d. 447/1055) in *al-Kāfi fi al-fiqh* (Isfahan: Maktabat al-imām amīr al-mu'minīn 'Alī, 1400/1980), p. 157. For further discussion on different views with regards to the Sunnites, see the section on "Judgment on those who oppose the imamate of the divine guides" towards the end of Chapter 3.

¹⁰ Shaykh Mufīd, "*al-Muqni'ah*," 4:44. He asserts that the same decree applies to one who denies even one of the divine guides based on consensus of the Imamite scholars: "*ittafaqat al-imāmiyyah*," Ibid; *Bihār*, 8:366.

they classify people into three categories: *mu'min*, *kāfir* and *mustaḍ'af*.¹¹ The last category applies to those who have not acknowledged the *wilāyah* of the divine guides due to ignorance rather than on account of animosity towards them.¹² The destiny of these “weaklings” or “people of weak perception” (*mustaḍ'af*) is to be determined by God on the Day of Judgment in accordance with His Will, and no one has a right to interfere in this divine judgment.¹³ The intense debate and hostility surrounding the concept of imamate and *wilāyah* has been well documented in historical accounts. For instance, Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'i (d. 1416/1996) recounts edicts and capital sentences issued as a result of bitter disagreement over the issue of the imamate.¹⁴

¹¹ *Kāfi*, 4:226-30 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bāb al-mustaḍ'af*}. For a brief discussion on the usage of the terms *mustaḍ'afūn*, *aytām* and *masākīn* in Twelver Shi'ite texts, see Etan Kohlberg, “Imam and Community in the Pre-Ghayba Period,” in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, ed. S. A. Arjomand (New York: SUNY, 1988), pp. 41-44.

¹² “*marfū' 'an-hum al-qalam*,” (exonerated from responsibility), *Kāfi*, 4:126, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bab al-mustaḍ'af*}.

¹³ The sixth Shi'ite imām reprimands Ṣāḥib al-Barīd for labeling people as '*kāfir*' and categorizes this behavior as a characteristic of the Kharijites. *Kāfi*, 4:120-2, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bāb al-dalāl*}. In ḥadīth no. 2, the fifth Shi'ite imām castigates Zurārah for being too eager to categorize people as unbelievers for failing to endorse the *wilāyah* of the divine guides, 4:122-5, ḥadīth no. 2.

¹⁴ Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'i, “Mawqif al-Shi'ah min ḥajamāt al-khuṣūm wa khulāṣah 'an kitāb *'Abaqāt al-anwār*,” in *Turāthunā*, issue no. 23, pp. 32-61. A contemporary Shi'ite jurist in Lebanon, Ayatullah Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlullāh has been the target of severe censure and rebuke from some of the religious authorities at the Qum seminary (*hawzah*) for challenging issues such as the doctrine of infallibility (*iṣmah*) of the divine guides, interpretation of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr, *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah* and the historical incident in which Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet, is reported to have suffered a miscarriage as a result of 'Umar's storming of the front door to her house. Shaykh Mīrzā Jawād Tabrizī has even issued the edict that Ayatullah Faḍlullāh should be viewed as having departed from the true and chosen sect (*al-madhhab al-ḥaqiq*), i.e. Twelver Shi'ism. Ayatullah Waḥīd Khurāsānī accuses Ayatullah Faḍlullāh of introducing strife and sedition into the fold of the Shi'ites and demands that he seek repentance, otherwise, he will be categorized as one who is going astray and the cause of leading others astray (*al-dāll al-muḍill*) from the true path. Copies of their edicts are attached in the Appendix to this thesis. Several books have also been written to refute the views of Ayatullah Faḍlullāh such as Sayyid Ja'far Murtaḍā al-'Āmilī, *Khalfiyyāt kitāb mā' sā't al-Zahrā'*, 2 vols. 5th print (Beirut: Dār al-sīrah, 1422/2001), Muḥammad 'Alī al-Hāshimī al-Mashhadī, *al-Ḥawzah al-'ilmīyyah tudīn al-inḥirāf*, 3rd print (Beirut: Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī, 1422/2001), Sayyid Hāshim al-Hāshimī, *Ḥiwār ma'a Faḍlullāh ḥawl al-Zahrā'*, 2nd print (Lebanon: Dār al-hudā, 1422/2001).

In the discourse on religious authority, a logical starting point is the Qur'anic verse on authority: "O believers, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority (*ulū al-amr*) among you..."¹⁵ The term *ulū al-amr* is nowhere defined in the Qur'an and, consequently the Sunnite conception of authority consider the Caliphs and their designated appointees as the referents of the term.¹⁶ In contrast, the Shi'ites confine this authority to the infallible divine guides by virtue of the divinely sanctioned designation (*naṣṣ*) and divine knowledge (*ilm*). These distinctive features have no counterpart in the Sunnite theory of Caliphate and form the basis for the perpetuation of the Muḥammadan charismatic authority in the Shi'ite theory of authority.¹⁷ The status of 'Alī was not on par with Muḥammad since he was not a recipient of revelation or a Scripture; however, the former was distinguished above the other eminent prophets for possessing the seal of the universal *wilāyah* in his person and by virtue of his explicit designation (*al-naṣṣ al-jalī*) as successor to the Prophet by way of divine dispensation. In this sense, he was a charismatic leader who exercised "the authority of the extraordinary and personal *gift of grace* (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in

¹⁵ Qur'an, 4:59.

¹⁶ Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds argue that in the first two centuries after the demise of the Prophet, the Caliphs functioned as religious authorities and as focal points for resolving both state-related issues and questions of law and doctrine. Thus, the bifurcation of the Sunni caliph as the political leader and the Shi'ite imām as the religious leader is a much later phenomenon. See Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 2, p. 34, pp. 80-82.

¹⁷ Hamid Dabashi, *Authority in Islam: From the Rise of Muhammad to the Establishment of the Umayyads* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989), pp. 97-99. The author uses a Weberian framework and typology to situate traditional Arab authority, Muḥammad's charismatic authority (*al-risālah al-Muḥammadiyyah*), and Sunnite, Shi'ite and Kharijite authority. See also William Tucker, "Charismatic Leadership and Shi'ite Sectarianism," in *Islamic and Middle Eastern Societies*, ed. Robert Olson (Brattleboro: Amana Books, 1987), pp. 29-40.

revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership.”¹⁸ Since the Shi‘ite theory of authority conceives of imamate as a continuation of *nubuwwah*, the scope of the authority and the claim to absolute legitimate obedience enjoyed by the divine guides is identical with that of Muḥammad and encompasses both the *zāhir* (apparent, manifest, exterior) and *bāṭin* (hidden, interior) aspects of Islam.¹⁹ Thus, in the Shi‘ite conception of imamate, the charismatic authority of the Prophet is not segmented into different domains, but, instead, inheres in the person of the inerrant divine guide in perpetuation of the Muḥammadan charismatic legacy that is not subject to routinization. The continuity and permanence of this legacy was guaranteed with the concept of the occultation of the twelfth divine guide, who will reappear at the end of time to usher in an era of global peace, justice and equity. This continuity of the Muḥammadan charismatic legacy led Henry Corbin to remark that “Shi‘ism is the only religion that has permanently preserved the relationship of divine guidance between God and humanity forever, and continuously perpetuates the *wilāyah*.”²⁰ During the absence of the Hidden Imam, the jurists have gradually arrogated to themselves some of the charisma and authority of the divine guides.

¹⁸ Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. Translated, edited, and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), quoted by Hamid Dabashi in *Authority in Islam*, p. 101.

¹⁹ On this charismatic transference, see Lynda G. Clarke, “Early Doctrine of the Shi‘ah, According to the Shi‘i Sources,” Ph.D. dissertation (Montreal: McGill University, 1994), pp. 84-87.

²⁰ Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabāṭabā‘ī, *Zuhūr-i Shi‘ah (The Appearance of Shi‘ism): The Collection of Interviews with Professor Henri Corbin* (Tehran, 1969), p. 7, quoted in Hamid Dabashi, *Authority in Islam*, p. 117.

Acceptance of the concepts of *ijtihād*²¹ and *taqlīd*²², along with the process of deputization available through general deputyship (*al-niyābah al-‘āmmah*) and special deputyship (*al-niyābah al-khāṣṣah*) of the twelfth imam, as a correlate to the process of designation of the divine guides, have facilitated this transference of charisma, culminating in the full-fledged authority of the jurist (*al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah*).²³

The doctrine of imamate and leadership has had a major influence on the formulation of the distinct world views of the Shi‘ites and Sunnites, in the elaboration of the fundamental doctrines, on their methodology of law (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and on positive law (*fiqh*).²⁴ This point is poignantly made in a statement

²¹ In the Twelver Shi‘ite context, it means independent scholarly research undertaken by a qualified jurist (*faqīh*) to derive a new ruling on a legal or theological question based on the interpretation and application of the four sources of the Islamic Law: the Qur‘an, Sunnah, consensus and reason.

²² Emulation and the following of the dictates of a jurist.

²³ See Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Just Ruler (al-sultān al-‘ādil) in Shi‘ite Islam: The Comprehensive Authority of the Jurist in Imamite Jurisprudence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). Another work on this issue is forthcoming by Liyakatali Takim entitled *The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Islam*. For a scholarly discussion between the Sunnites and the Shi‘ites in the medieval period on the issue of legitimate leadership and its theological underpinnings, see Asma Afsaruddin, *Excellence and Precedence: Medieval Islamic Discourse on Legitimate Leadership* (Leiden: Brill, 2002). On the use of methodological devices in *uṣūl al-fiqh*, which Ayatullah Khumaynī employs to advance his theory of absolute clerical authority, see the article by Hamid Enayat, “Iran: Khumayni’s Concept of the ‘Guardianship of the Jurisconsult’,” in *Islam in the Political Process*, ed. James P. Piscatori (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 160-80 and Hamid Dabashi, *The Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp. 454-55.

²⁴ Devin J. Stewart makes a convincing case, with extensive documentation, that the development of the Twelver Shi‘ite legal school was greatly influenced by the development and crystallization of Sunnite jurisprudence, especially in the post-occultation period wherein the inerrant divine guide was not accessible to provide guidance in matters of doctrine and practice. The particular system of authority and leadership adopted by the Twelver Shi‘ites to fill the vacuum of the absence of the inerrant imām was, to a great extent, determined by the desire of the marginal *madhhabs* to accept some of the principles of Sunni jurisprudence and conform to them so that they would be treated as equals in intellectual discourse and not be dismissed as heretical or deviant sect. The case in point is the gradual acceptance and conformance to the concept of “consensus” (*ijmā‘*). These findings of Devin Stewart in the area of Shi‘ite jurisprudence and juridical tradition do not negate the fact that the presence of the person of the imām, the divine guide, is a central and pivotal concept in the Twelver Shi‘ite doctrinal and dogmatic tradition and has greatly shaped the Twelver Shi‘ites’ vision and world view. However, the extent and

attributed to the sixth imām to the effect that the disparity between the two world views, juxtaposed between truth and falsehood, is so tremendous that the only thing upon which both schools agree is with regards to facing the Ka‘bah²⁵ (*wa Allah, mā baqiya fī aydī-him shay’ min al-ḥaqq illā istiqbāl al-ka‘bah faqaṭ*²⁶). Another ḥadīth of a similar nature is reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: when Abū al-Dardā’ (d. 32/651 or 38/658) was asked about the reason for his sadness, he replied that he never witnessed the commands of the Prophet implemented by Muslims except when it came to performing the congregational prayers (*mā a‘rafu min ummah Muḥammad shay’ illā anna-hum yuṣallūna jamī‘*²⁷).

The primary sources employed by both the Sunnites and Shi‘ites in formulating their respective world views are the Qur’an and the corpus of ḥadīth literature (*sunnah*). However, in the case of the former school, the companions (*ṣaḥābah*) of the Prophet constitute the chief medium through which the prophetic message was preserved and transmitted. For the Shi‘ites, the sole channel is the divine guides, i.e., the unerring (*ma‘ṣūm*) imams, whose accounts

intensity of the influence diminished after the occultation of the twelfth imām in the fourth/ninth century. In addition, there was no need felt by the Shi‘ites to devise a legal methodology while the divine guide was present and accessible because he was to be the source of doctrine and practice. See Devin J. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shi‘ite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1998).

²⁵ The appellation “*abl al-qiblah*” in reference to the Sunnites is interpreted by al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī as mere outward and superficial believers in name only. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²⁶ al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, *al-Fuṣūl al-muḥimmah*, 3rd print (Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.), p. 226; Murtaḍā Anṣārī, *al-Rasā’il*, p. 465 in lithograph edition only. al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, *al-Fawā’id al-Ṭūsiyyah*, ed. Sayyid Maḥdī al-Lājawardī and Shaykh Muḥammad Dorūdī (Qum: al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘ilmiyyah, 1403/1982), p. 245, pp. 415-16. A slightly different variant of this ḥadīth can be found in Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-maḥāsin*, ed. al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī, 2 vols. (Qum: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1950.): “*lā wa Allah mā hum ‘alā shay’ mim mā jā’a bi-hi Rasūl Allāh illā istiqbāl al-Ka‘bah faqaṭ*,” 1:156, ḥadīth no. 89 {*Bab al-abwā’*, *Kitāb al-ṣifāt wa al-nūr wa al-raḥmah*}.

²⁷ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Abū Ṣuhayb al-Karamī (Riyad: Bayt al-afkār al-dawliyyah li al-nashr wa al-tawzī’, 1998), ḥadīth no. 530, p. 650.

of the prophetic message and whose interpretation of the Qur'an are authoritative.²⁸ In this sense, they are an extension of the apostolic authority and personality such that their authenticated sayings (*qawḥ*), actions (*fi'l*) and tacit approval (*taqrīr*) are considered part of the *sunnah*.²⁹ It is recorded that some of the disciples of the imāms would record their ḥadīth reports in the form of a personal notebook and bring them to the divine guides for review and confirmation. The two different conceptions of *sunnah* had a significant

²⁸ al-Kulaynī (d. 329/940-1), who compiled *al-Kāfī* in a different socio-political environment of Baghdad, surrounded by challenges from Mu'tazilism, Shi'ite rationalism, Sunnite traditionism and non-Imāmite Shi'ite extremism, compared to his predecessors such as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Barqī (d. 274/887) and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī (d. 290/902-3) in Qum, systematically underlined the necessity, in the matters of doctrine and practice, of reverting to the infallible divine guide who was the repository of *al-'ilm* and was free of any doubt (*shakk*) or uncertainty (*shubḥah*). In this regard, he downplayed the role of reason (*'aql*) as an independent source of deriving rulings without pairing it with *al-'ilm* and disavowed the hierarchical structure of leadership and authority of the religious scholars. Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq: "We are the possessors of *'ilm* (*al-'ulamā*) and our Shi'ah are those seeking *'ilm* (*muta'allim*) and the rest of the people are scum (*ghuthā*)."
(*Kāfī*, 1:41-42, ḥadīth no. 4 {*K. faḍl al-'ilm, Bāb aṣnāf al-nās*}). Also, the famous statement attributed to the first Shi'ite imam, 'Alī: "O' people! Ask me [anything] before you miss me (*salūnī qabla an tafqidūnī*), because certainly I am acquainted with the passages of the sky more than the passages of the earth." *Nahj al-balāghah*, compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, tr. Sayed Ali Reza (Rome: European Islamic Cultural Center, 1984), Sermon 188, p. 378. See Andrew J. Newman, *The Formative Period of Twelver Shi'ism: Hadith as Discourse Between Qum and Baghdad* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000), pp. 94-102 and Lynda G. Clarke, "Early Doctrine of the Shi'ah, According to the Shi'i Sources," Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 19-20.

²⁹ al-Sayyid Muḥammad Taqī al-Ḥakīm, *al-Uṣūl al-'āmmah li al-fiqh al-muqārin*, 2nd edition (Qum, Mu'assasah al al-bayt, 1979), p. 144; Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muzaffar, *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, 2nd edition, Bab 2 {*al-Sunnah*} (Najaf: Dār al-Nu'mān, 1967), 3:61. An important criterion for validating a ḥadīth report is that it should be in conformity with the teachings of the Qur'an. Any ḥadīth which conflicts with the Qur'an would have to be discarded as being invalid. A ḥadīth whose status of validity cannot be conclusively determined would be set aside in silence without passing judgment on it, out of reverence and respect that perhaps it truly originates from the divine guides but human intellect is not able to fathom its true meaning. See, *Kāfī*, 1:9 {*Muqaddamah*}; Muḥaffar, 3:209-261 on conflicting traditions (*al-ta'ādul wa al-tarājih*). Detailed discussion of the analytical process of *tarjih* in Sunni legal schools at the level of theoretical formulation and derivation of applied law is provided by Wael B. Hallaq in his work titled *Authority, Continuity and Change in Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 126-132, p. 153. This discourse, of course, pertains to the domain of probable knowledge. Imāmite scholars gradually made the transition from the principle of certitude in the derivation of legal norms to probable opinion (*zann*) starting with Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (d. 676/1227) in the 7th/13th century and formally embraced it in the fourteenth century with the acceptance of *ijtihād* by 'Allāmah al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325). See "'Allāmah al-Ḥillī on the Imamate and Ijtihād," translated and edited by John Cooper in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, pp. 240-249; and Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, *Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam: From the Office of Mufti to the Institution of Marja'* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1996), pp. 61-77.

influence on the elaboration of the doctrines (*uṣūl*) and practices (*furūʿ*) of the respective schools. Thus, the dispute over succession to the Prophet is not confined to determining who is to administer the affairs of the Muslim community; rather, it extends to the issue of who is the authoritative guide, interpreter and guardian of the message brought by Muḥammad. Thus on several occasions, the divine guides objected to the policies and actions of the caliphs as constituting a distortion (*taḥrīf*) of the true teachings of the Prophet.

There are a number of opinions expressed on the nature of the doctrine of imamate. Scholars have claimed one exclusive or predominant character for the imamate, to the exclusion of others. For instance, the contemporary scholar Mohammed A. Amir-Moezzi suggests that the doctrine of imamate is the pivot around which all the other fundamental doctrinal issues in Shiʿism revolve. Failure to understand this crucial doctrine and its evolution has distorted our understanding of the *Weltanschauung* of early Imamism: “The true axis around which Imamite doctrinal tradition revolves is that Imamology, without the knowledge of which no other great chapter, as is the case with theology or prophetology, could be adequately studied.”³⁰ He employs the earliest extant sources from the divine guides to sustain his thesis—as did Henry Corbin—that early Imamism, in contrast to the post-occultation tradition that he terms “theological-juridical rational Imamism,”³¹ was essentially an esoteric doctrine,

³⁰ Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shiʿism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam*, tr. David Streight (Albany: SUNY, 1994), p. 23.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19. An example of an Imamite scholar, according to Amir-Moezzi, who rationalizes the Twelver Shiʿite doctrine from its original esoteric nature would be Shaykh Mufid. See the excellent study on the works of Shaykh Mufid by Martin J. McDermott, *The Theology of al-Shaykh al-Mufid* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1978).

and that all other aspects of Shi'ite doctrine are derived from it.³² He arrives at this conclusion by selectively retrieving material from these early sources and translating key Arabic phrases in such a manner as to make them fit his theoretical framework for the imamate. For instance, he renders the ḥadīth of the seventh Shi'ite imām “*ma'rifat al-'ilm bi al-'aql*”³³ as “recognition of sacred knowledge.” In another case, the statement of the sixth Shi'ite imam: “*al-'aql dalīl al-mu'min*”³⁴ is translated as “hiero-intelligence is the guide of the initiated Imamite.” The sixth divine guide's phrase from *al-Kāfi* “*qad walada-nī Rasūl Allāh*”³⁵ is translated by him as “the prophetic/Imamic Light is in me” and in the same ḥadīth, the phrase “*wa anā a'lamu Kitāb Allāh*” is rendered as “I have the 'ilm, the initiatory Knowledge, of the Qur'an.”³⁶ Finally, translation of the passage on the tripartite division of humanity, i.e., “*yaghdū al-nās 'alā thalāthah ṣunuf: 'ālim wa muta'allim wa ghuthā' fa nahnu al-'ulamā' wa shī'atu-nā al-muta'allimūn wa sā'ir al-nās al-ghuthā'*” is given as follows: “People are divided into three categories: the spiritual initiator, the initiated disciple, and the dross

³² Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385) laments that the esoteric tradition in Twelver Shi'ism has long been ignored by their scholars and the laity such that “statements of this kind have never reached their ears or been uttered by their tongues.” Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Kitāb naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fi sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia (Tehran and Paris: Département d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche, 1975), p. 267.

³³ *Kāfi*, 1:20, ḥadīth no. 12 {*K. al-'aql wa al-jahl*}.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:29, ḥadīth no. 24 {*K. al-'aql wa al-jahl*}.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:79, ḥadīth no. 8 {*K. fadl al-'ilm, Bāb al-radd ilā al-Kitāb wa al-sunnah wa anna-bu laysa shay' min al-ḥalāl wa al-ḥarām*}.

³⁶ See footnotes no. 22, 32 and 36 in Andrew Newman, *The Formative Period of Twelver Shi'ism*, p. 110 and p. 112.

carried off by the waves. We [the imāms] are the spiritual initiators, our supporters are the initiated disciples, and the others are the dross of the waves.”³⁷

In contrast to this over-emphasis on the “suprarational esoteric tradition”³⁸ of Imamism, other scholars have advanced arguments and proofs demonstrating that the institution of imamate is primarily political in nature. Obsession with and excessive emphasis on the political dimension of the function of the divine guides and the attribution of political connotations to every aspect of Twelver Shi‘ism was brought to its climax in the writings and statements of the late Ayatullah Khumaynī (d. 1989), who regarded divine politics (*siyāsāt-e Khodā’ī*) and religion (*dīn*) as synonymous.³⁹ His thought on the issue constitutes “a true revolution in Shi‘ism . . . [and] has brought about an ideological revolution *in* Shi‘ism.”⁴⁰ He arrogated to the jurists the exclusive

³⁷ Mohammad A. Amir-Moezzi, “Only the Man of God is Human: Theology and Mystical Anthropology According to Early Imāmī Exegesis,” in *Shi‘ism*, ed. Etan Kohlberg (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), p. 22, fn. 17.

³⁸ Mohammad A. Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi‘ism*, p. 19.

³⁹ Such statements of political activism are striking and strange coming from Ayatullah Khumaynī whose background and emergence to prominence is conjoined with his penchant for gnosis and philosophy. His students relate that Ayatullah Khumaynī made a conscious decision to discontinue teaching classes on these subjects for almost ten years so that he would not be targeted by the seminary (*hawzeh*) or discredited for his disposition towards mysticism and philosophy, and for not focusing on the juridical subjects. This would have had the effect of downgrading his stature and consequently reducing his chances to attain the station of the *marja’ al-taqlīd* (“source of exemplary conduct”). His works on mysticism were published only posthumously so as not to tarnish his reputation as, first and foremost, a jurist (*faqīh*). As an aside, for a discussion on the hostility and difficulties that ‘Allāmah S. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā’ī had to undergo, especially from Ayatullah Burūjirdī, for teaching philosophy in Qum, see Hamid Dabashi, *The Theology of Discontent*, pp. 281-84. Contrast the program of action that was laid out by Ayatullah Khumaynī in his lecture series on Islamic government in Najaf in 1969 with a bewildering assessment by William Sullivan, United States Ambassador at Tehran during the Shah’s reign: “Khomeini would be likely to return to Iran as a consequence of a religious-military accommodation and . . . would play a ‘Gandhi-like’ role,” quoted in Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983), p. 368.

⁴⁰ Said Amir Arjomand, “Ideological Revolution in Shi‘ism,” in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi‘ism*, pp. 191-92.

mandate to govern and administer the affairs of Muslims (*wilāyat al-faqīh*)⁴¹ during the period of concealment of the messianic imām, and claimed that the qualified jurist is endowed with the all-comprehensive authority (*al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah*).⁴² The doctrine of imamate undergoes a revolutionary transformation in his approach, such that it is viewed as uninterrupted and continuous (*mustamarr*) with the right to rule assigned to jurists during the occultation of the divine guide.⁴³ He asserted that the primary function of the awaited imam, on his reappearance will be to defend and safeguard the Islamic state and to attain martyrdom in pursuit of this noble cause.⁴⁴ He stretched this concept to

⁴¹ At around the same time that Ayatullah Khumaynī was formulating and articulating his concept of *wilāyat al-faqīh* in Najaf in 1970, his student Ayatullah Murtaḍā Muṭahharī was elucidating the concepts of *walāyah* and *wilāyah* in Tehran, albeit exclusively from a mystical perspective that was free of any contemporary political relevance. See his work titled *Walā'-hā wa wilāyat-hā* (Intishārāt-e Ṣadrā, 1993). In contrast, Ayatullah Khumaynī makes reference to the mystical notions of *insān-e kāmīl* and *jihād-e akbar* but gives them a political signification to buttress his arguments in favor of establishing an Islamic government. For a discussion on Ayatullah Khumaynī's Islamicized version of philosopher/king, see Beatrice Zedler, "The Ayatollah Khomeini and his Concept of an Islamic Republic," in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 21 (1981): 83-98.

⁴² See my M.A. thesis, "Basis of Leadership: Khumaynī's Claims and the Classical Tradition" (Montreal: McGill University, 1992); idem., "Analysis of Khomeini's Proofs for *al-Wilāyah al-Muṭlaqah* (Comprehensive Authority) of the Jurist," in *The Most Learned of the Shi'a: The Institution of the Marja' al-Taqlid*, ed. Linda S. Walbridge (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 183-210. See also Ayatullah Khumaynī's conception of *wilāyah* towards the end of Chapter 3.

⁴³ The "verse of authority" in Qur'an, 4:59 that was consistently applied to the infallible divine guides by the Shi'ite exegetes is reinterpreted by Ayatullah Khumaynī to refer to the qualified jurist in his new Shi'ite political theory. The term *walī-ye amr* was confined in its application to the twelve infallible divine guides in the Shi'ite tradition until the 1979 Iranian revolution. This necessarily creates a tension between the holder of the office of *walī-ye amr* and *marja'-e taqlid* if both of these positions do not abide in the same person. In the contemporary context, Sayyid 'Alī Khāmanā'i is advanced as the *walī-ye amr* whereas the office of the *marja'* resides in the person of Ayatullah 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Sīstānī in Najaf, Iraq with the majority of the Shi'ites referring (*taqlid*) to him for religious guidance and prescriptions in substantive law, and remit their religious dues (primarily *khums*) directly to him or to his agents (*wukalā'*).

⁴⁴ *Ṣaḥīfa-ye nūr*, 15:364 (a speech delivered by Ayatullah Khumaynī on Muḥarram 19 1402/1981 at the Ḥusayniyyah Jamārān to commemorate the demise of 'Allāmah S. M. Ṭabāṭabā'i). "The preservation of the Islamic Republic is a divine duty which is above all other duties. It is even more important than preserving the Imām of the Age (*Imām-e 'aṣr*), because even the Imām of the Age [i.e. the Mahdī] will sacrifice himself for Islam," quoted in Farhang Rajaei, *Islamic Values and World View* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983), p. 70.

its farthest limit and further expanded the scope of the jurisconsult's (*walī-ye faqīh*) authority with the proclamation in January 1988 that the Islamic State has priority over secondary injunctions (*ahkām-e thānawīyyah*) such as prayers, fasting and pilgrimage, with the consequence that all governmental ordinances (*ahkām-e hukūmat*) have become religiously binding (*wājib*), while their non-performance constitutes a sin. In Ayatullah Khumaynī's own words: "I should state that the government, which is part of the absolute deputyship of the Prophet, is one of the primary injunctions of Islam and has priority over all other secondary injunctions, even prayers, fasting and *hajj*."⁴⁵ In this new interpretation, the scope of power enjoyed by the Islamic government is not circumscribed by the parameters laid down in the *sharī'ah*.⁴⁶ This is, without

⁴⁵ Sayyid Khāmanā'ī in the Friday prayer sermon had expressed the view that the Islamic state has limited power and that both the executive and legislative bodies are subordinate to a superior religious law. This prompted a fierce response from Ayatullah Khumaynī in which he publicly disagreed with Sayyid Khāmanā'ī and castigated him: "It appears, [Khumaynī writes to Khāmanā'ī] from Your Excellency's remarks at the Friday prayer meeting that you do not recognize government as a supreme deputyship bestowed by God upon the Holy Prophet (S) and that it is among the most important of divine laws and has priority over all peripheral divine orders. Your interpretation of my remarks that 'the government exercises power only within the bounds of divine statutes' is completely contrary to what I have said. If the government exercises power only within the framework of peripheral divine laws, then the entrustment of divine rules and absolute deputyship to the Prophet of Islam. . . would be hollow and meaningless. . . The government is empowered to unilaterally revoke any *sharī'a* agreements which it has concluded with the people when these agreements are contrary to the interests of the country or Islam. The Government can also prevent any devotional [*'ibādī*, from *'ibādāt*] or non-devotional affair if it is opposed to the interests of Islam and for so long as it is so. The government can prevent *hajj*, which is one of the important divine obligations, on a temporary basis, in cases when it is contrary to the interests of the Islamic country." Quoted by Chibli Mallat, *The Renewal of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 90, 91 and 92 from *Summary of World Broadcast: Middle East and Africa* (London), Jan 8, 1988. The original text was quoted in the Iranian newspaper *Ijtihādāt*, January 7, 1988 and *Kayhān-e hawā'iz*, January 6, 1988.

⁴⁶ This is a radical departure from his lecture series on Islamic government that he gave in Najaf in 1969. At that time, the jurists' primary function was to ensure that the state was governed in conformity with the *sharī'ah*.

doubt, a very new direction in the doctrine of imamate⁴⁷ but one that has a very limited following among senior and eminent Twelver Shi'ite jurists.⁴⁸

Objections to the "politicization" of imamate begin early in the tradition. Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1050/1640), in his work *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah*, articulates the difference between *nubuwwah*, *sharī'ah* and *siyāsah*. In his estimation, it is only superficial philosophers who claim that there is no difference between Divine Law (*sharī'ah*) and politics (*siyāsah*). He rejects this conception from four perspectives based on the elaboration by Plato: starting-point (*mabda'*), aim (*nihāyah* or *ghāyah*), activity (*fi'l*) and effect (*infi'āl*).⁴⁹ The starting-point of a system grounded in *sharī'ah* is God, whereas in a political system it is human beings. Similarly the ultimate aim of the *sharī'ah* is to provide a road map that humankind can follow in pursuit of felicity, prosperity, and the station of perfection, whereas in the case of politics, the aim is merely to seek public acceptance of and obedience to state injunctions in order to generate social order and stability. The activity in a system based on *sharī'ah* is focused on a truth (*ḥaqq*), which cannot be compromised for other interests (*maṣāliḥ*),⁵⁰

⁴⁷ In one of the new editions of *Mafātīḥ al-jinān* compiled by Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī, which is a collection of supplications and *ziyārāt* of the infallible divine guides, a new *ziyārat* called "ziyārat-e Imām Khumaynī" is added to this collection.

⁴⁸ This conclusion, for example, was attained by Ayatullah Ḥusayn 'Alī Muntazarī, a jurist in Qum who was initially heir-apparent to Ayatullah Khumaynī, and has consequently renounced his earlier views in favor of *wilāyat al-faqīh* that he had expressed in his two-volume work on this subject titled *Dirāsāt fi wilāyat al-faqīh wa fiqh al-dawlah al-Islāmiyyah*, 2 vols. (Qum: al-Markaz al-'ālamī li al-dirāsāt al-Islāmiyyah, 1988).

⁴⁹ Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīrāzī (Mullā Ṣadrā), *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah fi manābij al-sulūkiyyah*, commentary by Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī, edited with introduction by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, preface by S. H. Nasr (Mashhad: Mashhad University, 1967), pp. 364-366.

⁵⁰ An example is generally cited that 'Alī refused to compromise the truth in favor of expediency and a higher interest when he was offered the caliphate after the death of 'Umar on the condition that he follow the precedents of the previous two caliphs when the Qur'an and ḥadīth of the Prophet fail to provide a directive on an issue.

whereas in a political system devoid of *sharī'ah*, the factor of interests (*maṣāliḥ*) takes priority over the truth. Finally the effects (*infi'āl*) emanating from the *sharī'ah* and *siyāsah*, respectively, are different because the ultimate purpose of each differs. In the case of *sharī'ah*, the person is self-motivated (i.e. belief is the motivator and catalyst {*dāmin-e ijrā'ī*}) to act in a particular way based on a divine injunction and on the understanding that the benefit accrues to him in the form of prosperity and success. In a system based solely on *siyāsah*, the person performs only out of fear of the consequences of the state enforcement mechanism.

The dispute over the succession to the Prophet and the many polemical works on this subject may lead one to conclude that the issue of imamate is confined to the governance and administration of the affairs of the Muslim community. However, the *raison d'être* of imamate is to provide authoritative guidance, not governance (*maqām-e hidāyat* and not *maqām-e ḥukūmat*) with the aim of leading humankind to prosperity, felicity and perfection in this life and the afterlife.⁵¹ Accordingly, it is not necessary for the divine guide to assume a political post in order to validate his station of imamate. Only one component of the function of the imām is related to administering the divine law as legitimate ruler, but this without force or coercion because his status is different from that of a state leader in a political system. Accordingly, 'Alī refrained from imposing himself on the Muslim community after the demise of the Prophet

⁵¹ Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shi'ite Islam: Abū Ja'far ibn Qiba al-Rāzī and his Contribution to Imāmīte Shī'ite Thought* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1993), pp. 8-10.

and asserted that, were it not for the arrangement made by God with the scholars to provide guidance, he would never have entangled himself in the political domain.⁵² Furthermore, he expressed reluctance to assume the caliphate upon the death of ‘Uthmān when people converged on his home to petition him to accept this post.⁵³ On a number of occasions, he is reported to have said that there was no merit in expressing an opinion when it was known that people would not pay heed to his advice: “*lā ra’y li-man lā yuṭā’*.”⁵⁴

The essence of the doctrine of imamate (i.e. *maqām-e hidāyat*), in its embryonic form, can be gleaned from the letters sent by the Twelver Shi‘ite third divine guide Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī in response to the persistent appeals made by the people of Kufa and Basra, after the death of Mu‘āwiyah and Yazīd’s assumption of the caliphate, that he lead and guide them towards the truth (*al-ḥaqq wa al-hudā*), and throw off the yoke of Syrian domination: “...what is the imām {*mā al-imām*} except one who acts according to the Book {*al-ḥākim bi al-Kitāb*}, one who upholds justice {*al-qā’im bi al-qisṭ*}, one who professes the truth {*al-dā’in bi dīn al-ḥaqq*} and one who dedicates himself to [the essence of] God {*al-ḥābis nafsa-hu ‘alā dhāt Allāh*}?”⁵⁵ In his letter to the people of Basra, he forcefully

⁵² ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, *Nahj al-balāghah*, compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 3 (*Khuṭbat al-shiqshiqiyyah*), p. 106. Another statement ascribed to him where he says that governance over the Muslim community, in his estimation, is worth less than his old dilapidated sandal, idem., Sermon 33, p. 165: “By Allah, it [i.e. the old sandal] is more dear to me than ruling over you but for the fact that I have to establish that which is right and ward off the wrong.” (*wa Allāh la-hiya aḥabbu ilayya min imrati-kum illā an uqīma ḥaqq aw adfa’a bāṭil*)

⁵³ Ibid., Sermon 91, pp. 234-35.

⁵⁴ Ibid., Sermon 27, p. 54; *al-Furū’ min al-Kāfi*, ed. ‘Alī Akbar Ghaffārī, 5:6 {*Kitāb al-jihād, Bāb faḍl al-jihād*}; *Ma‘ānī al-akhbār*, p. 310.

⁵⁵ Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiyah*, tr. I. K. A. Howard (Albany, N.Y.: 1990), p. 26. See also S. Husain M. Jafri’s analysis of the motivation that led Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī to respond to the appeals made by the people of Kufa and Basra—it was not simply a desire to cast off the Syrian domination and accede to the

attributes his exclusive claim of entitlement to the rank of imām to his having inherited the charisma of the Prophet and to his distaste for rupturing the community (*umma*) over the issue of leadership:

We are his family {*ahl*}, those who possess his authority (*awliyā'*), those who have been made his trustees (*awṣiyā'*) and his inheritors {*wurathā'*}; we are the ones who have more right to his position among the people {*aḥaqq al-nās*} than anyone else. Yet, our people selfishly laid claim to this exclusive right of ours and we consented [to what they did] since we hated disunion and desired the well-being [of the community]. However, we know that we have a greater claim to that right, which was our entitlement {*mustaḥaqq 'alay-nā*}, than those who have seized it.⁵⁶

Purpose and Rationale

There exists no comprehensive analytical work on the different methodologies and approaches employed in the discourse on the doctrine of imamate. This work provides a panoramic view of imamate with a critical analysis of diverse methodologies and embraces the various aspects of this

caliphate, rather he had a higher ideal and the aspiration to restore the value system of the Prophet. In a last will and testament to his step-brother Muḥammad b. Ḥanafīyyah, Ḥusayn b. 'Alī is reported to have said: "... *innamā kharajtu li ṭalab al-iṣlāḥ fi ummat jaddī urīdu an āmura bi al-ma'rūf wa anḥā 'an al-munkar*"—"the sole purpose of my mission is to seek reform in the community of my grandfather by enjoining that which is universally good and forbidding that which is universally evil." Lūṭ b. Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd (Abū Mikhnaf), *Waq'at al-ṭaff*, ed. Muḥammad Hādī al-Yūsufī al-Gharawī (Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1367/1948), p. 85, fn. 1 and 'Abd al-Razzāq Muqarram, *Maqatal al-Ḥusayn*, 5th print (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmī, 1979), p. 139. Also see, S. Hussain M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman Group and Librairie du Liban, 1979), pp. 178-181.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 32 with some modification. This notion of exclusive entitlement by virtue of designation (*naṣṣ*), inherited knowledge (*'ilm*), trusteeship (*wiṣāyah*) and *walāyah* is a recurring concept from the time of the first divine guide, 'Alī.

doctrine to demonstrate that imamate has been the foundation of different aspects of the Shi'ite tradition at various points in time. This thesis argues that, while imamate no doubt has an esoteric meaning, its influence on the Shi'ite tradition is not limited to that dimension. Rather, imamate has flowed into and informed all aspects of the Shi'ite religious sciences and world view—including the “theological-juridical” aspects that Amir-Moezzi so vehemently argues against. Nor is its emphasis primarily political, as Ayatullah Khumaynī’s culminating treatise on Islamic Government would seem to imply. Rather, the various parts of Shi'ism have been built and then assembled together on the foundation of imamology, and we miss the coherence and integrity of the tradition if we do not acknowledge this fact. In order to avoid falling prey to the pitfalls of reductionism and precursorism,⁵⁷ I have opted instead for the path of contextualism and, accordingly, distance myself from rendering imamate as an exclusively socio-political⁵⁸ movement and from equating it with Islamic esotericism. The multiple dimensions of this doctrine become evident in the varied approaches employed by scholars in treating the subject. Published monographs and articles have, for the most part, confined the discourse on imamate to a specific perspective, be it socio-political, juridical, theological,

⁵⁷ A. I. Sabra, “The appropriation and subsequent naturalization of Greek science in medieval Islam: A preliminary statement,” *History of Science* 25:223-24, quoted in Robert Wisnovsky, *Avicenna’s Metaphysics in Context* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 17.

⁵⁸ Patricia Crone, in her recent work, brings to our attention that events which may outwardly appear to be political in nature at a superficial level were motivated by profound religious considerations in the early years after the demise of the Prophet. Thus, it would be incorrect to assert that the party of ‘Alī (*shī‘at Alī*), in its inception, was a political faction vying for power, and only later acquired religious coloring. The political disputes were the outcome of an earnest search to find a guide (*imām al-hudā, hādī, mahdī*) who would lead the community towards the path of guidance (*manāhij* or *subul al-hudā/al-rusd /al-rashād*). See Patricia Crone, *God’s Rule: Government and Islam*, pp. 21-23 under “The imamate and salvation.”

philosophical or mystical, without demonstrating the inter-relationship and interconnection of these various aspects. The present study will attempt to redress this shortcoming by elaborating on the different approaches employed by scholars in dealing with the doctrine of imamate and *wilāyah*, i.e., traditional, theological, philosophical and mystical, along with an analysis and critique. These categories, of course, are not totally independent and mutually exclusive. The different approaches and terminologies should not distract the reader from the realization that the primary purpose of these Shi'ite scholars, in different historical periods, was to underline the central and pivotal role of the person of the imām, without whose presence the earth would be annihilated (*la-sākhat al-ard*).⁵⁹

In undertaking this study I am aware and conscious of doctrinal evolutions and semantic changes in technical vocabularies between the time of the twelve divine guides and the early Imamite scholars, and the scholarly output of the post-occultation period. In other words, the doctrine of imamate is neither timeless nor unitary; it was neither generated in a vacuum nor produced in a unilinear fashion with monolithic comprehensiveness. However, I have not tried to chart the extremely complex doctrinal development, evolution and dynamics in the study of imamate, as this would be too great a task. Separate monographs would be required to study exhaustively and analyze the doctrinal evolution of imamology from the perspective of the Qur'an and ḥadīth,

⁵⁹ Different appellations are used to refer to the divine guide in the texts depending upon the approach, such as—*ḥujjab*, *ulū al-amr*, *al-ḥaqīqah al-Muḥammadiyyah*, *al-ta'ayyun al-awwal*, *al-tajallī al-awwal*, *al-'aql al-awwal*, *al-ruh al-awwal*, *al-ādam al-awwal*, *al-idāfah al-ishrāqiyyah*, *amr Allāh al-wāḥid*, *wajh Allāh al-wāḥid*, *al-rahmah al-wāsi'ah*, *al-wujūd al-munbasiṭ* and *al-kalimah kun al-wujūdiyyah*.

theology, philosophy and mysticism. My modest contribution is to bring to the fore the varied approaches and elucidate their commonalities, methods of analysis and linkages to the early corpus of Imamite ḥadīth literature. In the process I will show that it would be a serious flaw to reduce the doctrine of imamate to esotericism or to socio-political leadership.⁶⁰

Scholarly studies on the doctrinal formulations of Twelver Sh‘ism in the formative period prior to the occultation of the Hidden Imām have been undertaken by a number of scholars, primarily Wilferd Madelung,⁶¹ Joseph Eliash,⁶² Etan Kohlberg,⁶³ Henry Corbin,⁶⁴ Seyyed H. Nasr,⁶⁵ Hossein Modarressi,⁶⁶ Mohammed A. Amir-Moezzi,⁶⁷ Norman Calder,⁶⁸ Lynda G. Clarke⁶⁹ and Andrew J. Newman.⁷⁰ These works operate within a text-oriented tradition and have contributed tremendously to our understanding of the

⁶⁰ “Shī‘ism has usually been explained with reference to political and social factors. More emphasis needs to be placed on the religious phenomenon of Shī‘ī Islam which was the crucial factor in determining its external history.” Arzina R. Lalani, *Early Shī‘ī Thought: The Teachings of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir* (London: I. B. Taurus and The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2000), p. 2.

⁶¹ Wilferd Madelung, “Imāmism and Mu‘tazilite Theology,” in *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985), chapter 7; idem, *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran* (Albany: SUNY, 1988); idem, ‘al-Kulaynī,’ in *EI*², 5:362-3.

⁶² Joseph Eliash, “Misconceptions Regarding the Juridical Status of the Iranian Ulamā’,” in *IJMES*, 10 (1979): 9-25.

⁶³ Etan Kohlberg, “Imam and Community in the Pre-Ghayba Period,” in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi‘ism*, pp. 25-53.

⁶⁴ Henry Corbin, “Shī‘ism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and History,” *Religious Studies* 6 (1970): 229-42; idem, “De la philosophie prophétique en Islam Shi‘ite,” *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 31 (1962):49-116; idem, *En Islam iranien: aspects spirituels et philosophiques* (Paris, 1971-72) especially the chapter entitled “Prophétologie et imāmologie,” pp. 219-84.

⁶⁵ S. Muḥammad Husayn Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, *Shi‘ite Islam*, translated from the Persian and edited with an introduction and notes by Seyyed H. Nasr (Albany: SUNY, 1975).

⁶⁶ Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, op. cit. Also, see his most recent work titled *Tradition and Survival: A Bibliographical Survey of Early Shī‘ite Literature* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003).

⁶⁷ Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide*, op. cit.

⁶⁸ Calder, “The Structure of Authority . . .,” Ph.D. dissertation, op. cit.

⁶⁹ Clarke, “Early Doctrine of the Shī‘ah . . .,” Ph.D. dissertation, op. cit.

⁷⁰ Newman, *The Formative Period*, op. cit.

distinctive doctrines of the Twelver Shi'ites. In contrast to this select group of scholars, there has been a burgeoning literature from a variety of disciplines on clerical authority and political legitimacy that has grown exponentially in the aftermath of the 1979 Iranian revolution. The authors of this literature have attempted to show the practical relevance of the doctrines in different historical periods through the responses of the clerical class, which has ranged from outright rejection of partaking in political issues during the occultation of the Hidden Imām (due to the absence of the quality of *'ismah* [infallibility] and due to the fact that this would constitute usurpation of his prerogative), to accommodation and compromise with the political ruler, and, finally, to full-fledged assumption and arrogation of the comprehensive authority of the divine guide. As an example of the latter tendency, the influential work of Said A. Arjomand, entitled *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam*, merits special mention.⁷¹

Sources

At the end of each section on the approaches to the discourse of imamate, the most important primary references are cited in order of their chronological appearance as a reference tool for further research on the subject. This method of citing sources is adopted in place of a comprehensive bibliography at the end of the dissertation because one of the aims of this thesis is to introduce the reader to the primary sources that can serve as a basis for

⁷¹ Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi'ite Islam from the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984).

examining the various distinct approaches to the study of imamate. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the principles, approaches and discourse methods of each discourse are distinct, this does not imply that they are contradictory, or that a scholar who espouses one approach to the study of imamate necessarily rejects others. Thus, it is possible that a scholar may cite numerous ḥadīth reports and yet a careful reading of his analysis might reveal that his approach to the study of imamate is philosophical/mystical.⁷²

The following scholars who specialize in the fields of imamate and *wilāyah* or subjects related to them, such as transmitters (*rijāl*), theology (*kalām*), traditions (*ḥadīth*), philosophy (*falsafah*), gnosis (*‘irfān*) and manuscripts, were a constant source of information and guidance for this thesis.

Ayatullah ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Milānī — This Qum-based scholar has translated from Persian to Arabic the multi-volume work entitled *‘Abaqāt al-anwār*, and authored a number of works on imamate such as *al-Imāmah fī abamm al-kutub al-kalāmiyyah wa ‘aqīdat al-shī‘ah al-imāmiyyah* and the recently published two-volume work entitled *Muḥādarāt fī al-i‘tiqādāt*. He is a leading authority on the subject of imamate and the only scholar at the Qum seminary (*ḥawzeh*) who offers a class exclusively focused on this subject.

Shaykh Aḥmad Amīnī-Najafī — This eminent scholar with expertise in the Qur’anic sciences, theology, philosophy and mysticism has translated into

⁷² For example, the five-volume work of a contemporary scholar in Iran, Jawād b. ‘Abbās Karbalā’ī, titled *al-Anwār al-sā‘ī‘ah fī sharḥ ziyārat al-jāmi‘ah* makes copious references to the early ḥadīth reports, but his approach to the study of imamate is philosophical/mystical and not ḥadīth oriented. At times, one comes across direct quotations that he has borrowed from philosophical/mystical works without giving due credit to the authors, for fear of being branded by the seminary (*ḥawzeh*) as having leanings towards mysticism.

Persian, with commentary, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* in eight volumes. Recently, he completed the Persian translation and commentary of volumes six to nine of Mullā Ṣadrā's *Asfār*. His twelve-volume Persian translation of and commentary on the *Uṣūl al-fiqh* of Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā Muẓaffar is soon to be published (thus far, only Volume one has appeared). He has also completed a translation from Arabic to Persian of the *al-Ghadīr* by his late father, 'Allāmah Amīnī.

Ayatullah Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Māmakānī — The leading expert on the science of transmitters (*'ilm al-rijāl*) has produced a *Mustadrak to Tanqīḥ al-maqāl* that will comprise in excess of sixty volumes in total. Thus far, thirteen volumes up to the letter *thā'* have been published.

Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Māmakānī — Son to the above, has authored a book on *'ilm al-ḥadīth* entitled *Sharḥ al-miqbās al-bidāyah fī 'ilm al-dirāyah* in seven volumes. The abridged version of this work, entitled *Miqbās al-bidāyah*, is used at universities in Iran as a primary textbook for the graduate degree program with specialization in ḥadīth.

Shaykh Anṣārī Shīrāzī — This distinguished scholar teaches *al-ḥikmah al-muta'āliyah* ('transcendent theosophy') at the seminary in Qum.

The late **Ayatullah al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī** (d. 1416/1996)—This pre-eminent expert in his lifetime on manuscripts around the world dealing with the subject of imamate was a student of 'Allāmah 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Amīnī-Najafī and authored a *Mustadrak to al-Ghadīr*. He also studied under Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭahrānī and wrote a *Mustadrak to al-Dharī'ah*.

Ayatullah Shaykh Murtaḍā Farajpūr — A member of the editorial board supervising publication of the *Mulḥaqāt Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, he is a well-respected scholar and teacher.

Ayatullah Sayyid Aḥmad Ishkawārī — This scholar has expertise in the field of manuscripts. He was a colleague of al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī.

Ayatullah Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā Ja‘farī — A scholar of distinction with expertise in the field of imamate from the Qur’an and ḥadīth perspectives. *Al-Kāfi* and *al-Mizān* are being translated into English under his supervision and guidance.

Ayatullah Sayyid Aḥmad Madadī — This distinguished scholar with expertise in *‘ilm al-ḥadīth*, *‘ilm al-rijāl* and *kalām* is the head of the institute, Imām Mahdī Institute in Qum.

Shaykh Yūsufī — This scholar is affiliated with a number of research centers in Qum and has produced an edited version of Maytham’s work entitled *al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī taḥqīq amr al-imāmah*.

I am greatly indebted to these scholars for their expert guidance, support and encouragement, and extend to them my profound gratitude and appreciation.

My thesis is divided into six chapters and an appendix, beginning in the first chapter with an examination of the three key terms in the discourse on imamate, i.e., affection/love (*mawaddah*), temporal succession (*khilāfah*) and the comprehensive creative authority (*wilāyah*). This lays the groundwork and provide us with a framework to undertake the explication and analysis of the

four major approaches to the study of imamate—Qur'an and ḥadīth, theological, philosophical and mystical. A chapter is devoted to each of these approaches with a critical analysis of the methodologies. In addition, the different styles employed in the articulation of imamate and *wilāyah*, such as syllogism and poetry, will be elaborated upon with examples towards the latter part of the chapter on philosophy. The final chapter is devoted to the analysis of how the various approaches to imamate are applied in the extant works of Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 699/1299), where the coherence and integrity of the tradition become manifest. He is perhaps the first Imamite scholar in whose works one finds the application of the varied approaches to the treatment of the doctrine of Imamite. A summary of the findings and a critical self-evaluation of this thesis will be encapsulated in the conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

Three Principal Subjects in the Discourse of Imamate: *Mawaddah* (*mahabbah*,
hubb, *walāyah*), *Khilāfah* & *Wilāyah*

Imamite scholars have discussed the issue of imamate under the rubric of three major titles: love (*mawaddah*), temporal succession (*khilāfah*), and the comprehensive creative authority (*wilāyah*). A ḥadīth on the authority of the eighth Shi'ite imām, al-Riḍā, is employed in formulating this categorization.⁷³

(i) *Mawaddah/mahabbah/hubb/walāyah*

The foundation of creation by God is based on love and, as such, one of the names of God is *al-wadūd*, i.e. the one who loves: "I was a hidden treasure and desired to be known, thus, I created the creation so that I may become known." ("*kuntu kanz makhfī fa-ahbibtu an u'rafa fa khalaqtu al-khalq li-kay u'raf*").⁷⁴ On one occasion, the sixth imām was asked by one of his disciples whether religion had a component that dealt with love. He responded that the entirety of religion was about love.⁷⁵ In a tradition reported on the authority of the fifth Shi'ite divine guide, religion is equated to love and vice versa: "*fa al-dīn huwa al-hubb wa al-hubb huwa al-dīn*."⁷⁶ The intense love for the divine guides

⁷³ *Kāfi*, 1:283-290. The text of this ḥadīth will be quoted below in the section on "*khilāfah*."

⁷⁴ This ḥadīth is *mashhūr* (famous) but is not to be found as a *musnad ḥadīth* in the collection of major ḥadīth works. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kulaynī, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, 12 volumes (Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī, 2000), commentary by Mullā Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Māzandarānī, 1:22.

⁷⁵ Fayḍ Muḥsin al-Kāshānī, *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, ed. al-Shaykh Ḥusayn al-A'lamī, 5 vols., 2nd print (Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadr, 1416/1995), 5:50.

⁷⁶ Abū Ja'far Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-maḥāsin*, ed. al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī, 2 vols. (Tehran: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1950), 1:262-63, ḥadīth no. 327 {*Bāb al-hubb wa al-bughd fī Allāh*}.

permeates the Shi'ite world view as noted by S. H. Nasr: ". . . in the Shi'ite world, in addition to a Sufism similar to that found in the Sunni world, there is an esoteric element based upon love (*maḥabbah*) which colors the whole structure of the religion."⁷⁷

There is consensus in the Muslim community that love, affection, reverence and respect for Muḥammad and the progeny of Muḥammad comprising the twelve divine guides and his daughter, Fāṭimah are mandated by the Qur'an and the paradigm of the Prophet. However, in Shi'ism, the love and affection for the Prophet's family is employed as a criterion for determining the integrity and soundness of one's faith and as a litmus test to enable one to attain salvation. It was the norm and practice of all the prophets and the angels to love the divine guides, and this became a medium for attaining proximity to God and receiving His pleasure.⁷⁸ Even the inanimate objects express their praise and

⁷⁷ al-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Shi'ite Islam*, translated with an introduction by Seyyed Husayn Nasr (Houston: Free Islamic Literatures, Inc, n.d.), p. 14 (introduction).

⁷⁸ Abū al-Ḥasan al-Āmilī al-Nabāṭī al-Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār wa mishkāt al-asrār* (Qum: Mu'assasah Ismā'iliyyān, 1275/1858), p. 31. This work is the introductory (*Muqaddamah*) volume to al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Baḥrānī's *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 4 vols. Preface by Maḥmūd b. Ja'far al-Mūsawī al-Zarandī. (Qum: Mu'assasah Ismā'iliyyān, 1275/1858). Wilferd Madelung cites several examples from the Qur'an that the practice of previous prophets was to transmit their authority and charisma to their immediate family who were accorded an elevated position in the Qur'an. Thus, it would not be far-fetched to expect that Muḥammad would have envisioned his succession in a similar light. See Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 8-18. See Qur'an, 3:33-4, 19:58, 6:84-9, 37:76-7, 57:26, 11:71-3 and 4:34. Contrast this with the position of M. A. Shaban who maintains that Muḥammad "made no pronouncement on the question of how the *ummah* should continue after him. The famous Shi'ite tradition that he designated his cousin 'Alī as his successor at Ghadir Khum should not be taken seriously. Such an event is inherently improbable considering the Arab traditional reluctance to entrust young and untried young men with great responsibility. . . One can only conclude that Muḥammad intended that his followers should settle, on their own, the problem of succession, if indeed there was to be any successor at all. This fits very well with his deep understanding of his times and it was the only practical course for him to take." M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History: A New Interpretation*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 16. A similar view is held by Bernard Lewis, *The Arabs in History* (London: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 50.

love for the progeny of Muḥammad.⁷⁹ The degree of love increases as one obtains a deeper understanding (*ma'rifah*) of the infallible leaders.

The evidence for this fundamental necessity of love and affinity towards the divine guides is sought from the Qur'an: "Say: I do not ask you for any recompense for this [the communication of the revelation] except the love for near kinship (*al-mawaddah fi al-qurbā*)" (Q. 42:23). When this verse was revealed, the community asked Muḥammad about the identity of the near relatives (*qurbā*). He responded that it comprised 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.⁸⁰ It is further argued that the love for these personages entails unconditional absolute submission to them in order to benefit from their exoteric and esoteric guidance. This Qur'anic directive follows the pattern practiced by previous prophets who asked for no reward from their respective communities in return for their ministry.⁸¹ The difference between the previous prophets and Muḥammad is that the former did not seek recompense in the form of love and submission to their near kinship (*qurbā*). However, the recompense that was sought by the Prophet is not for personal gain, rather the benefit of loving and

⁷⁹ Nūr Allāh b. 'Abdullāh Shushtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil*, 36 volumes (includes *Mulḥaqāt* by Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, n.d.) (Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, n.d.), 7:278.

⁸⁰ al-Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmad b. 'Abdullāh b. Aḥmad b. Ishāq (Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī), *Shawāhid al-tanzīl li qarwā'id al-tafsīl fi al-āyāh al-nāzilāh fi ahl al-bayt*, ed. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī, 3 volumes (Tehran: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1990), 2:130; Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfi'ī, *Manāqib 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib* (Tehran: al-Maktabah al-Islāmiyyah, 1403/1982), p. 307; al-Ḥasan b. Yūsuf al-Muṭahhar al-Hillī, *Nahj al-ḥaqq wa kashf al-ṣidq*, ed. al-Shaykh 'Ayn Allāh al-Ḥasanī al-Armawī (Qum: Dār al-hijrah, 1986), p. 175; *Iḥqāq*, 22:96-7; 'Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī al-Najafī, *al-Ghadīr fi al-Kitāb wa al-sunnah wa al-adab*, 11 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-'Arabī, 1397/1977), 2:306-11; al-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabātabā'i, *al-Mīzān fi tafsīr al-Qur'an*, 2nd edition, 20 volumes (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī, 1957-74), 18:42-52.

⁸¹ "Say: I do not ask you for any reward for it; it is nothing but a reminder to the nations." (Q. 6:90); "And, O my people! I ask you not for wealth in return for it; my reward is only with God..." (Q. 11:29). Also, see Q. 11:51; 25:57; 26:109; and 26:127.

submitting to the divine guides returns back to the person concerned (*fa-huwa la-kum*⁸²) because the divine guides are a source of guidance and salvation for the community.

The centrality and affinity of this love are further underlined in numerous ḥadīth reports found in early works as a criterion of the validity of one's faith, and enmity towards them as a sign of unbelief (*ḥubbu-hu imān wa buḡḡdu-hu kufr*⁸³). Obedience and love for them is an expression of one's obedience and love for God and His Messenger (*man aṭā'a 'Alī fa-qad aṭā'anī wa man aṭā'anī fa-qad aṭā'a Allāh*,⁸⁴ *man aḥabba-hu fa-qad aḥabbanī wa man aḥabbanī fa-qad aḥabb Allāh*⁸⁵); it is the best form of worship (*ḥubb 'Alī afḍal al-'ibādah*⁸⁶) and condition for the acceptance of one's righteous deeds (*man aḥabba-hu tuḡbalu ṣalātu-hu wa ṣiyāmu-hu wa qiyāmu-hu*⁸⁷); it is a confirmation that one is born out of a lawfully wedded couple which is related by Abū Bakr, known as *ḥadīth al-khaymah*,⁸⁸ it provides the beneficiary with glad tidings of prosperity in both worlds;⁸⁹ it is instrumental for ease and comfort at the time of death when

⁸² "Say, whatever I ask you with regard to my reward, it is [actually] for you (*fa-huwa la-kum*). I rely for my reward on no one except God and He is witness to everything" (Q. 34:47).

⁸³ *Iḥqāq*, 4:263, 287; 5:43; 7:213, 216; 17:165; 21:129.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 6:410-12. In Sunnite ḥadīth collections, the person of 'Alī is replaced by 'amīrī: "*wa man yuṭī'a al-amīr fa qad aṭā'anī...*" See Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Nisābūrī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8 volumes (Beirut: Dār al-fikr, n.d.), 6:13.

⁸⁵ *Iḥqāq*, 17:8-11; 7:378; 6:410-12.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 30:311; 17:235.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 22:340; 9:252, 454.

⁸⁸ Quoted in *Ghadīr*, 4:323 from Ḥāfiẓ Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-naḍr*, 2:189; 'Allāmah Amīnī relates eleven other ḥadīth reports on this subject, 4:321-325. *Iḥqāq*, 33:237; 9:165. See also Etan Kohlberg, "The position of the *Walad Zinā* in Imāmī Shī'ism," in *Belief and Law in Imāmī Shī'ism* (Hampshire: Variorum, 1991), Chapter XI, pp. 237-266: "Their basic message is that a hallmark of the *walad zinā* is hatred of the *ahl al-bayt*," p. 239.

⁸⁹ *Iḥqāq*, 9:425; 18:471.

the soul is removed from the body and during the period of *barzakh*;⁹⁰ and it is a guarantee that they will be resurrected with the prophets and placed on the same stature as them.⁹¹ In essence, love for the divine guides is an assurance for experiencing true life (*yūhyā ḥayāt*⁹²) in this transient world, and success and prosperity in the afterlife:

One who dies while possessing the love of the progeny of Muḥammad dies the death of a martyr (*shahīd*).

One who dies while possessing the love of the progeny of Muḥammad dies the death of one who has been forgiven.

One who dies while possessing the love of the progeny of Muḥammad dies the death of a believer (*mu'min*) with perfect faith (*īmān*).

One who dies while possessing the love of the progeny of Muḥammad, the angel of death informs him of paradise.⁹³

At the same time, harboring hatred or ill-will against the imāms constitutes a cardinal sin which the ḥadīth reports regard as unpardonable and tantamount to warring against God and His messenger:

One who dies while hating the progeny of Muḥammad dies a death of a disbeliever (*kāfir*).

One who dies while hating the progeny of Muḥammad will not smell

⁹⁰ Ibid., 21:319; 22:341. Love for the divine guides is interpreted to mean love for the truth, humanity, goodness and anything that leads to prosperity and perfection.

⁹¹ Ibid., 3:577; 7:215; 17:197.

⁹² Ibid., 5:104-5.

⁹³ *Iḥqāq*, 2:298, 9:487-90; Sulaymān b. Ibrāhīm al-Qundūzī al-Ḥanafī, *Yanābī' al-Mawaddah*, ed. Sayyid 'Alī Jamāl Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-uswah, 1416/1995), 1:91. These ḥadīths are quoted by Qundūzī from *al-Kashshāf* of Zamakhsharī and *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr* of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī from their commentary on the verse on *mawaddah* (Q. 42:23).

the fragrance of paradise.

One who dies while hating the progeny of Muḥammad will come on the Day of Judgment with this stamped between his eyes, hopeless of the Mercy of God.⁹⁴

As a testimony of one's love for the progeny of Muḥammad, one is required to dissociate and denounce the partisans of their enemies who were a source of discomfort for the progeny of Muḥammad and usurped their rights. Ḥadīth reports are cited in which the displeasure of the divine guides is equated to the displeasure of God and His messenger.⁹⁵ Finally, *mawaddah* towards the divine guides invites God's bounties and blessings, and is instrumental in repelling harm, calamities, trials and tribulations.⁹⁶

(ii) *Khilāfah*

The function of the imām is to act as a deputy or successor to the Prophet in temporal and religious affairs. Scholars who treated the concept of imamate from a theological perspective put greater emphasis on the temporal function of the imām and equated the term *khilāfah* to it, whereas in the early ḥadīth reports, the scope of function and authority of the imām is wide and expansive, and the term *khilāfah* is employed to denote the divine mandate which is akin to prophethood with the exception of legislative authority.⁹⁷ This shift of emphasis is observable, especially from the time of Shaykh Mufid (d.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ "man abghada 'Alī fa-qad abghadanī wa man abghadanī fa-qad abghad Allāh," *Iḥqāq*, 5:291, 6:416, 16:598-622, 22:453, 24:474, 30:330, 31:252.

⁹⁶ *Iḥqāq*, 30:279; 18:243; 7:260.

⁹⁷ In numerous ḥadīth reports, the divine guides are referred to as the *khalīfah* in its comprehensive sense covering the temporal, religious and spiritual affairs. See for example, *Kāfi*, 1:275-76 {*K. al-hujjah, Bāb anna al-a'imma khulafā' Allāh fī arḍi-hi . . .*}; *Ghadīr*, 7:131.

413/1022), in order to respond to the rational challenges posed by the Mu'tazilite thinkers and in the process incorporated Mu'tazilite ideas in the formulation of his responses.⁹⁸ This demystification of the doctrine of Imamate led to the de-emphasis of the esoteric character of the imām, and narrowed the scope of the activities of the imām to one of guidance and leadership in temporal affairs. This trend continued in polemic works in which the Shi'ites attempt to demonstrate that 'Alī most deserved to be the caliph of the Muslim *ummah* after the demise of the Prophet. In other words, the principal components of imamate, i.e. *walāyah* and *wilāyah*, were set aside and marginalized from the second half of the fourth/tenth century. In this regard Amir-Moezzi observes:

The original tradition that might be called “esoteric nonrational Imamism” is reported especially by the “traditionalist” traditions of the “Qumm School”; it is this tradition that is the object of the present study, and it is not to be confused, especially where Imamology is concerned, with the later tradition called “theological-juridical rational Imamism,” influenced by Mu'tazilism and represented by the “rationalist” theologians and jurists of the “Baghdad School.” It is the confusion between these two Imamite traditions of quite different natures and “visions of the world” that is in large part responsible for the incoherencies,

⁹⁸ Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism*, p. 12.

extrapolations, and contradictions that can be seen in a great number of studies on Imamism.⁹⁹

The following ḥadīth on the authority of the eighth Shī'ite imām, al-Riḍā, provides a different perspective than Amir-Moezzi on the role and function of the imām. It is an all-inclusive mandate that encompasses religious-political and spiritual domains of guidance and leadership:

... And the matter of the Imāmate is one of the things by which the religion is completed. He did not pass away until he had clarified the guiding principles of their religion to his community and made plain their path for them, and he left them pointing in the direction of the path of the truth. And he established 'Alī for them as a sign and as Imām. He (Allāh) has not left for them anything which the community needs without clarifying it. Hence, whoever imagines that Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, has not perfected His religion has surely rejected the Book of Allāh, and whoever has rejected the Book of Allāh, is an unbeliever in it.

Do they know the value of the Imāmate and its position in the community that their selection could be allowable in this matter? Verily, the Imāmate is too sublime among values, too great among ranks, too high among stations, too impenetrable on all sides, too profound among the depths, for people to reach it with their intellects, or to grasp it with their opinions, or to establish an Imām by their choice. Verily, the Imāmate is that in which Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, has distinguished Ibrāhīm, the Intimate Friend (*al-Khalīl*), after Prophethood and Intimacy, as a third degree, and an eminence with which he honoured him and by which He raised his renown, and He said: "*Behold! I make you an Imām for the people.*" Then the Intimate Friend said out of delight in this: "*And of my seed.*" Allāh, the Blessed, the Sublime, said: "*My covenant shall not reach the evil-doers*" (al-Baqarah, 2:124). Thus, this verse has abolished the leadership (imāmah) of all evil-doers till the Day of Resurrection, and it has become for the select ones. Then Allāh, the Sublime, bestowed honours on him, by establishing it in his seed, the ones who are selected and purified (by Allāh)....

Verily, the Imāmate is the position of the Prophets, and the heritage of the successors. Indeed, the Imāmate is the

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 19.

vicegerency (*khilāfah*) of Allāh and the vicegerency of the Messenger, and the station of Amīr al-mu'minīn and the inheritance of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.

Truly, the Imāmate is the reins of the religion, the state of order of the Muslims, the rectitude of the world, and the might of the believers. Verily, the Imāmate is Islam's growing root, and its lofty branch. Through the Imām the prayer, *zakāt*, fasting, *hajj* and *jihād* (exerting oneself, striving in the way of Allāh, whether by means of one's property, one's life, one's knowledge, or by any other means) are perfected, the general wealth (of the Muslims, *ḥaḥ*) and charity (*ṣadaqāt*) are increased, the restrictions and the commands are put into practice, and the frontier-posts and borders are protected....

The Imām is like the risen sun which covers the world with its light and which is in a place where no hand or eye can reach it. The Imām is the radiant moon, the shining lamp, the brilliant light, and the star that guides in the heavy darkness, and in the middle of inhabited lands, deserted regions and the high seas. The Imām is sweet water for the thirst, the pointer towards true guidance, and the deliverer from destruction. The Imām is the fire on the heights (which guides those far away), and which warms those who seek the heat, and an indicator in dangers. He who moves away from him will perish.

....The Imām is Allāh's custodian over His creation, His Proof for his slaves, His vicegerent [*khaliḥah*] in His lands, a caller towards Allāh and the defender of Allāh's precincts. The Imām is the one who is purified from sins, free from all shortcomings, characterized by knowledge, distinguished by forbearance, the state of order of the religion, the might of the Muslims, the one who enrages the hypocrites, and the doom of the unbelievers. The Imām is unique of his time, no one can approach his rank, no man of knowledge is comparable to him, there is no one who can take his place, nor is there anyone similar to him or the same as him. He is characterized by every (kind of) eminence, without his seeking it or acquiring it, rather it is a characteristic from the Bestower of eminence, the All-giving. So, who is there who can arrive at knowledge of the Imām, or have the ability to select him? How far from the truth is it! Intellects have lost (themselves), imaginations have gone astray, minds have become perplexed, eyes have turned away, the great have been made small, the wise have confounded themselves, those who reflect forever fall short, orators falter, the intelligent become ignorant, poets become expressionless, prosodists incapable and the eloquent stammer, in describing one of his aspects, or one of his eminences. All of them have confessed their incapacity and inadequacy. How can his totality be described, and how can his inner essence be

characterized? How can anything concerning him be understood? Who can be found to take his place and to give what he can give? . . . What is the place of choice in this affair? What is the place of the intellect in this affair?

. . . Where can someone like this be found? Do you imagine that this can be found anywhere else but in the progeny of the Messenger? By Allāh, they have lied to themselves, they have promised to themselves the impossible, they have climbed up to a difficult and dangerous height, (and) their feet will slip and fall to the bottom. They want to appoint an Imām with (their) convulsed, unproductive and defective mind, and (their) misguided opinions. Nothing accrued to them but remoteness from him...¹⁰⁰

- (iii) *al-Wilāyah al-Muṭlaqah (Tashrī'ī and Takwīnī)*¹⁰¹— Legislative and Universal Creative Authority

Walāyah and *Wilāyah*: The primary meaning of the root is related to affinity and proximity of two or more things that are unimpeded by any extraneous items. According to the context, the closeness could be in terms of friendship, place, assistance or belief system. The second meaning signifies “authority, power.”¹⁰² The most popularly quoted verse on the subject of *wilāyah* is translated by Shi'ites as follows: “Only God is your *walī* and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and the poor-rate while they bow”

¹⁰⁰ *Kāfi*, 1:283-90 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb nādīr jāmi' fi faḍl al-imām wa ṣifāti-hi*}. Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, translated to English under the supervision of Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ja'farī. (Tehran: WOFIS, 1978–) vol. 1, part two, The Book of Divine Proof (II), pp. 92-109. So far, up to the end of Section 1 of *Kitāb al-ḥujjah* has been translated to English. This corresponds to volume 2, p. 189 of the work edited and translated to Persian by Mustafawī.

¹⁰¹ Different terms are employed to refer to this *wilāyah* such as *al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah*, *al-wilāyah al-'āmmah*, *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*, *al-wilāyah al-kullīyyah*. The terms *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah* and *tashrī'iyyah* are not found in the Qur'an or ḥadīth reports. See Luṭf Allāh Ṣāfi Gulpaygānī, *Wilāyat-e takwīnī wa wilāyat-e tashrī'ī* (Tehran: Mua'ssasat al-imām al-Mahdī, n.d.), p. 53. The term *wilāyah* is employed in this thesis in its technical sense and not in the signification found in some Shi'ite traditions and works to mean love (*maḥabbah*). It is possible to discriminate the two meanings in Shi'ite works based on the context and *qarā'in* of the sentence. *Wilāyah* like *wahy* and *mu'jizah* does not lend itself to intellectual constructs because it is a reality (*ḥaqīqah*) that the community is informed about through tradition-reports. The taste of an aspect of this *wilāyah* is experienced by a select few only. The analogy is made to making a small child understand the pleasure of having sex.

¹⁰² Hermann Landolt, “*Walāyah*,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Editor in Chief Mircea Eliade, 16 volumes (New York, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1987–), 15:316-23; *Mizān*, 6:10-16, 10:89, 16:291, 14:215.

(Q. 5:55). This same verse is interpreted differently by Sunnite exegetes by restricting the function of the *wāw* in the sentence to being only a conjunction with no reference to the state of the person (*wāw al-ḥāl*). Accordingly, the translation would read: “Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allāh, His Messenger, and the believers—those who establish prayers and pay zakāt and they bow down humbly (in worship).”¹⁰³

The verse is analyzed using linguistic, rational and traditional proofs to determine the identity of the *walī* and the scope of his authority. The particle “*innamā*” in the verse is employed to underline that the *wilāyah* is confined only to God, His Messenger and the person who gave the *zakāt* while in the state of genuflection (*rukūʿ*). The term *walī* is not defined as a friend or a patron, rather it is equated to *awlā bi al-taṣarruf*, i.e. more entitled to exercise full authority over the believers than they have over themselves: “The Prophet has a greater claim (*awlā*) on the faithful than they have on themselves” (Q. 33:6). Another argument to discredit reports that equate *walī* to friend is obtained from Qurʾanic verses that mention the believers in general denoted as *awliyāʾ* of each other, i.e. friends without the restrictive particle “*innamā*.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, it is argued that the word ‘*walī*’ in Q. 5:55 has a different signification in the context of this verse and is of a higher rank and status because it is conjoined with the *wilāyah*

¹⁰³ ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, *The Holy Qurʾān*, revised and edited by The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance (Medina: King Fahd Holy Qurʾan, 1989), p. 303. H. Landolt translates this verse as “Your *walī* is only God, his Messenger, and those who [truly] believe, who perform the prayer and give alms, bending the body.” H. Landolt, “*Walāyah*,” p. 317.

¹⁰⁴ “And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians (*awliyāʾ*) of each other...” (Q. 9:71)

of God and His Messenger. Ḥadīth reports, consensus amongst the scholars and occasion of revelation are employed to identify the person of ‘Alī as the *walī*.

Al-Wilāyah comprises real or creative *wilāyah (takwīnī)* and legislative *wilāyah (tashrī‘ī)*. Shi‘ite scholars have espoused differing opinions on the acceptance of the scope of authority invested on the imāms ranging from advocating comprehensive universal authority to outright rejection of the same for the imāms. Some Imamite scholars are silent on this matter and have deferred judgment on the basis that there is insufficient information to render any decisive conclusion.¹⁰⁵

The story of Jesus is normally cited in favor of the universal *wilāyah* as he was able to restore human life by breathing his spirit into it by the will of God: “...I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of dust like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with God’s permission and I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with God’s permission...” (Q. 3:49).¹⁰⁶ The distinction is made that the *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah* as it relates to God is *dhātī* (essential) whereas for prophets and imāms it is *‘araḍī* (accidental), i.e. with the permission of God (*bi-idhn Allāh*).

¹⁰⁵ Ṣāfi Gulpaygānī, pp. 13-15.

¹⁰⁶ Ja‘far Ṣubḥānī, *Wilāyat-e tashrī‘ī wa takwīnī dar Qur’ān-e majīd* (Qum: Mu’assasah imām Ṣādiq, 2003), pp. 64-68.

The *wilāyah* can be divided into fourteen¹⁰⁷ subjects for the sake of explication:

1. The luminous realities (*al-ḥaqīqah al-nūriyyah*)¹⁰⁸

“Therefore, believe in God and His Apostle and the Light which We have revealed; and God is Aware of what you do” (Q. 64:8).

The infallible leaders are endowed with a special soul and they emanate from God’s Light. In one sense, they are the Light of God.¹⁰⁹ This light is transmitted from generation to generation in the loins of Adam’s progeny. This transmission continued until it reached ‘Abd al-Muṭṭallib where it was divided into two between ‘Abdullāh (father of Muḥammad) and Abū Ṭālib (father of ‘Alī).

The divine guides, by virtue of this light, are able to inspire and influence the hearts of people in order to bring them in close proximity to God. In response to Abū Khālid al-Kabulī’s inquiry on the interpretation of the Qur’anic verse: “So believe in God and His Messenger and the light He has sent you,” (Q. 64:8) the fifth Shi’ite imam, al-Bāqir, replied: “I swear by God that the light (*al-nūr*) is the light of the Imāms from the household of the Prophet till the Day of Resurrection . . . The brilliance of the light of the Imām in the hearts of the believers is greater than that of the sun. It is the Imām who illumines the hearts of the believers. God prevents the brilliance of that light from reaching the

¹⁰⁷ These fourteen categories are interrelated and are not mutually exclusive. See *Kāfi*, 2:276-318 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb fīhi nukat wa nutaf min al-tanzīl fī al-wilāyah*} and 2:318-321 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb fīhi nutaf wa jawāmi‘ min al-riwāyah fī al-wilāyah*}. See Mahmoud Ayoub, *Redemptive suffering in Islām: a study of the devotional aspects of ‘Ashūrā’ in Twelver Shi’ism* (The Hague: Mouton, 1978), especially chapter 2, pp. 53-68.

¹⁰⁸ Sometimes referred to as *al-ḥaqīqah al-Muḥammadiyyah* or *al-ḥaqīqah al-‘Alawiyyah*.

¹⁰⁹ *Kāfi*, 1:276, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-‘immah nūr Allāh*}. “God is the light of the heavens and the earth...” (Q. 24:35).

hearts of whomsoever He wills; this being the explanation for the darkness of their hearts.”¹¹⁰ Similar ḥadīth reports abound to the effect that the true followers of the divine guides were recipient of some aspect of this light and thus were guided aright, whereas the enemies of the divine guides were deprived of this light and, consequently, fell astray: “. . . and to whomsoever God does not give light, he has no light” (Q. 24:40).¹¹¹ This division into antagonistic groups is a recurring theme.

The way to attain cognizance and understanding of God is by way of comprehending the light of the divine guides: “Knowing me (i.e. ‘Alī) is through the Light. Knowing God is identical to knowing me by the Light and this is the pure religion (*ma‘rifatī bi al-nūrāniyyah wa ma‘rifat Allāh ‘azz wa jall ma‘rifatī bi al-nūrāniyyah wa huwa al-dīn al-khālīṣ*)¹¹². ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. 329/941), in his exegesis of “And the earth shall beam with the light of its Lord...” (Q. 39:69) relates that Imām Ṣādiq had interpreted the light of his Lord to mean the light of the imām of the earth.¹¹³

The exalted nature of this light¹¹⁴ makes it impossible to fathom the precise nature of these luminous individuals and, consequently, the divine guides related issues on esotericism only to their select disciples (*aṣḥāb al-sirr*)¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 2nd edition, 110 volumes (Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-wafā’, 1983), 65:44-5, ḥadīth no. 90.

¹¹² Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir‘āt al-anwār*, p. 58.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ No one should attempt to draw a comparison or parallel between the divine guides and others: “*lā yuqāsu bi-nā aḥad min ‘ibād Allāh*,” *Biḥār*, 65:44, ḥadīth no. 90; Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir‘āt al-anwār*, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ “*law ‘alima Abū Dharr mā fī qalb Salmān la-qatala-hu*” (If Abū Dharr were to know what resides in the heart of Salmān, he would kill him), *Kāfi*, 2:254, ḥadīth no. 2 {*K. al-ḥujjab, Bāb fī-mā jā’anna ḥadītha-hum ṣa‘b mustaṣ‘ab*}; *Biḥār*, 25:246.

who had the capacity and were already initiated to comprehend their status. This is related in a story in which ‘Umar asked Abū Dharr about the identity of the person who was in the company of the Prophet in the mosque. The latter replied that he was not able to recognize the true nature of that person. Upon entering the mosque, ‘Umar observed that Muḥammad was with ‘Alī and in astonishment related to Muḥammad his dialogue with Abū Dharr. Muḥammad responded that Abū Dharr had uttered the truth because “no one can have full cognizance of ‘Alī except God and His Messenger.”¹¹⁶ In another tradition, the Prophet states that “no one can recognize God except I and you (‘Alī); no one can recognize me except God and you; no one can recognize you except God and I (“*Yā ‘Alī ma ‘arafa Allāh illā anā wa anta, wa mā ‘arafa-nī illā Allāh wa anta, wa mā ‘arafa-ka illā Allāh wa anā*”).¹¹⁷

2. The first creation of God (*awwal mā khalaqa Allāh*)

The infallible leaders are the first to be created after Muḥammad prior to any other creation. They are also viewed as the best, the perfect, and the most noble (*ashraf* and *afdāl*) of all the creations of God, with the exception of Muḥammad, for having been first to recognize divine Unicity and Majesty.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 8.

¹¹⁷ ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī, “*al-Asmā’ al-Ḥusnā*,” unpublished manuscript, p. 15; *Bihār*, 39:84. Another variant of this tradition is: “*Yā ‘Alī, mā ‘arafa Allāh ḥaqq ma‘rifati-hi ghayrī wa ghayra-ka, wa mā ‘arafa-ka ḥaqq ma‘rifati-ka ghayr Allāh wa ghayrī*,” in Ibn Shahr Āshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, 3 vols. (Najaf: Ḥaydariyyah, 1956), 3:60; *Bihār*, 39:84.

¹¹⁸ There are three opinions on the station and rank of the infallible imams. One group argues that they are superior to all the prophets and apostles with the exception of Muḥammad. Another opinion is that they are superior to all the prophets with the exception of the distinguished prophets known as the *ulū al-‘aẓm*. The last opinion is that all the prophets and apostles are more distinguished than the infallible imams. Both Shaykh Mufid and Sharīf Murtaḍā favor the first opinion. The latter justifies his view by arguing that since confirming belief on the imams is mandatory for the attainment of *īmān* and distancing from *kufr*, thus it is a higher station than all the other prophets, Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 20. Further, the

They are the Creator's purpose (final cause) in creating the world. It is for their sake (*'illat al-ghā'ī al-khilqah*—"li ajli-him"): "O Ali, were it not for us (i.e. the divine guides), God would not have created Adam or Eve, paradise or hell-fire and heavens or the earth" (*Yā 'Alī, law lā nahnu* {i.e. the divine guides} *mā khalaqa Allāh Ādam wa lā Hawwā' wa lā jannah wa lā al-nār wa lā al-samā' wa lā al-ard*).¹¹⁹ In one tradition, Ibn 'Abbās relates that the Prophet told him that he and 'Alī had been created from one light (*nūr wāḥid*)¹²⁰ 40,000 years prior to the birth of his forefather Adam and the divine throne. It was on account of the love for Muḥammad and his progeny that God created the humans and the universe.¹²¹ Shaykh Ṣadūq relates a ḥadīth in his work *al-I'tiqādāt* that "God did not create anyone superior than the Prophet and the imāms. They are the most loved by Him and the most noble...."¹²² The presence of these luminous lights is essential for the world to continue to exist. In this regard, the seal of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) came to a close with Muḥammad, but the need for a *walī* will continue till the end of time, and that is why the earth can never be void of a proof (*ḥujjah*) from God:

he was already a prophet prior to this new designation of 'imām.' In the esoteric sense, imamate is equivalent to *wilāyah* over the people, *Mizān*, 1:272. In a ḥadīth attributed to the sixth imam: "Before appointing Abraham as prophet, God Almighty appointed him His servant. Before ennobling him with His friendship, He bestowed on him the rank of messengerhood. Before granting him the rank of Imamate, He made him His sincere and devoted friend. It was therefore after Abraham had attained a whole series of high ranks that he was given the station of Imamate," *Mizān*, 1:276 quoting from *Kāfi*.

¹¹⁹ 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, 3rd print, 2 vols. (Qum: Mu'assasah dār al-kitāb, 1404/1984), 1:18.

¹²⁰ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'at al-anwār*, p. 30; *Bihār*, 57:192.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Risālat al-I'tiqādāt*, tr. Asaf A. A. Fyzee (London: Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 84.

If mankind consisted of only two persons, one of them would have to be an Imām . . . The last person to die will surely be the Imām so that no one may have a basis to protest against Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, that He has abandoned him without any Proof (*hujjah*) from Allāh for him.¹²³

3. Most beautiful names (*al-asmā' al-husnā*)¹²⁴

“And God’s are the best names, therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names” (Q. 7:180).

The name (*al-ism*) is derived from the mark (*al-simah*) and is an indication or a sign. This appellation has a general and universal application, and reference is to the named item (*mussammā*) whether it is a word formulation, an existent, or something else. However, when a linguistic meaning is applied, the universal sign or mark is transformed to a specific mark that refers to the named item (*musammā*). The universal meaning of a mark (*simah*), i.e. it is not restricted to the word, can be gleaned from the ḥadīth on the authority of the eight Shi‘ite imām: “When someone says “*bi ism Allāh*” it means, I put on myself one mark (or sign) of God’s marks and that mark is

¹²³ *Kāfi*, 1:253-4, ḥadīth no. 3, *Kitāb al-ḥujjah* {*Bāb law lam yabqā fi al-arḍ illā rajulān la-kāna aḥadu-humā al-ḥujjah*}.

¹²⁴ The names of God are manifested in the entirety of His creation including the inanimate objects and in this sense they are all signs (*āyāt*) of God. The name of God and God are one and the same (*‘ayniyyah*): “*al-ism huwa al-musammā*” (the name is identical to the named). The names of God are enumerated under the following: names of essence (*asmā' al-dhāt*), attributes (*asmā' al-ṣifāt*) and actions (*asmā' al-af‘āl*), and the principal (*ummahāt al-asmā'*). Nobody shares in the reality of His immutable attributes, however, the names (*asmā'*) are an intellectual appreciation or understanding of the divine attributes and consequently, can be applied to His creatures. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *al-Tawḥīd*, edited with footnotes by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Tahrānī (Qum: Jamā‘at al-mudarrisīn, 1416/1995), pp. 185-223, *Bāb 29* {*Asmā' Allāh ta‘ālā*}. See also Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qaysarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 5th print (Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2001), p. 258. In total, there are ninety-nine names of God related in multiple ḥadīth reports, *Tawḥīd*, pp. 194-223.

worship (*al-‘ibādah*). Faḍḍāl (narrator) asked the imām: “What is that mark (*simah*)?” The imām replied: “The indication or sign (*al-‘alāmah*).”¹²⁵

In other words, the name (*al-ism*) manifests the named item (*musammā*). Each and every existent is a manifestation, to the degree of its own essence, of the name of one of His attributes to the extent of its capacity to function as vehicle of self-manifestation. It is also a mark and a sign of an act (*fi’l*) from His actions (*af‘āl*).

The beautiful names of God comprise: attributes of his essence (*ṣifāt dhāt*)—knowing (*al-‘ālim*), powerful (*al-qādir*), living (*al-ḥayy*); attributes of his action (*ṣifāt fi’l*)—Creator (*al-khāliq*), sustainer (*al-rāziq*); glorification and sanctification (*tamjīd and taqdīs*)—sanctified (*al-quddūs*) and self-sufficient (*al-ghanī*). All of them necessitate manifestation in the outer world, and it is only by the vehicle of the existents that the properties of the names of God become apparent and understood through intellectual constructs. However, the true reality of God transcends human constructs and formulations. Thus, the attribute of His essence can be discerned by the self-manifestation of the attributes of existents whose properties such as creation, sustenance and mercy are manifested in the outer world in the relationship between the Essence and the cosmos, i.e. when we observe the created beings (*makhlūq*), we deduce that there is a creator (*khāliq*).

¹²⁵ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *‘Uyūn Akhbār al-Riḍā*, p. 260; idem., *Ma‘ānī al-akhbār*, ed. ‘Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī, 3rd edition (Qum: Mu’assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1416/1995) 3; idem., *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 229-30, ḥadīth no. 1.

The Essence of God is disclosed in the attributes and actions of the cosmos, for God is present everywhere: in His creatures, His signs, His attributes and His acts. The existents self manifest His attributes, His acts, His signs and His names, and are a point of reference that indicate the beautiful and perfect acts of the Creator. Ali is reported to have said: “I do not see anything except with the presence [cause] of God” (“*mā ra’aytu shay’ illā wa ra’aytu Allāh qabla-hu*”¹²⁶) and “[He] is present in things but not as a compound. [He] is absent from it but not vanished” (“*dākhil fī al-ashyā’ lā bi al-mumāzajah, wa khārij ‘anhā lā bi al-muzāyah*”¹²⁷). The fourth Shi‘ite imām is ascribed with the following in the supplication for the day of ‘Arafah in the month of Dhū al-ḥijjah: “You are disclosed to me in everything such that I see you manifested in everything. . . and you are apparent in everything” (“*anta al-ladhī ta’arrafta ilayya fī kull shay’ fa-ra’aytu-ka zāhir fī kull shay’ . . . Wa anta al-zāhir li-kull shay’*”¹²⁸).

All the existents are the ‘locus of manifestation’ (*mazāhir*) of the names of God but differ with one another in their capacity to function as vehicles of his self-manifestation. Each existent embodies a specific number of attributes of God based on its rank.

The divine guides are the supreme examples of the perfect man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) because they assume the character traits of God and manifest His names and attributes in perfect equilibrium: “We are the beautiful names of

¹²⁶ Māzandarānī, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfī*, 3:83 {*K. al-Tawḥīd, Bāb anna-hu lā yu’rafu illā bi-hi*}; 3:98 {*K. al-Tawḥīd, Bāb al-ma’būd*}.

¹²⁷ Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī, *Sharḥ al-Asmā’ al-Husnā*, 2 vols. (Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.), 2:96; another variant is *dākhil fī al-ashyā’ lā ka-shay’ fī shay’ dākhil, wa khārij min al-ashyā’ lā ka-shay’ min shay’ khārij*. *Mizān*, 8:263; *Kāfī*, 1:83, ḥadīth no. 2 {*K. al-Tawḥīd, Bāb anna-hu lā yu’rafu illā bi-hi*}; Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Tawḥīd*, p. 285, 306; *Ma’ānī al-akhbār*, 1:239, ḥadīth no. 217.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

God and the Supreme Symbol and the Greatest Sign” (“*wa nahnu asmā’ Allāh al-ḥusnā wa al-amthāl al-‘ulyā wa al-āyāt al-kubrā*”).¹²⁹

4. Intercession (*shafā’ah*)

“Surely your Lord is God, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days; and He is firmly established on the throne, regulating the affair; there is no intercessor except with His permission” (Q. 10:3).

The imāms are endowed with the privilege of *shafā’ah tashrī’ī* (intercession in legislation) and *shafā’ah takwīnī* (intercession in creation) to intercede on behalf of the creation of God to secure goodness for them and repel harm. The former *shafā’ah* is employed to petition God to forgive and overlook the infractions of human beings that relate to the rights of God (*ḥuqūq Allāh*). The latter *shafā’ah* acts as an intermediary between God and His creation in dispersing and diffusing divine bounties, mercy, grace and sustenance, including the act of creation. This meaning is related in a ḥadīth report on the authority of ‘Alī: “The earth was created for the sake of the seven—you receive sustenance through them, help and assistance is rendered to you on account of them and rainfall comes through [their intercession]—they include Salmān al-Fārsī,

¹²⁹ *Kāfi*, 1:196, ḥadīth no. 4 {*K. al-tawḥīd, Bāb al-nawādir*}; *Bihār*, 25:5, ḥadīth no. 7. al-Naḍr Muḥammad b. Mas‘ūd b. ‘Ayyāsh al-Sulamī al-‘Ayyāshī, *Kitāb al-tafsīr*, ed. Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Maḥallātī, 2 vols. (Tehran: al-Maktabah al-‘ilmiyyah al-Islāmiyyah, n.d.), 2:42 (*nahnu wa Allāh al-asmā’ al-ḥusnā al-latī lā yaqbalu Allāh min al-‘ibād ‘amal illā bi ma‘rifati-nā*) as interpretation of the Qur’anic verse: *fa ad’ū-hu bi-hā* (Q. 7:180). The divine guides are also referred to as *kalimāt Allāh* (words of God) in ḥadīth reports, Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Man lā yahḍuruh al-faqīh*, 4 vols., 2nd print, ed. ‘Alī Akbar Ghaffārī (Qum: Jāmi‘at al-mudarrisīn, 1404/1984), 2:592 {*Bāb marwḍi’ qabr amīr al-mu‘minīn . . .*}; *Bihār*, 24:173, and in some of the ziyārāt they are addressed as ‘*kalimat Allāh*’ (“*al-salām ‘alay-ka ya kalimat Allāh*” in *Bihār*, 100:307), ‘*kalimāt Allāh al-tāmmah*’ (*Kanz al-‘ummāl*, 1:108) and ‘*kalimāt al-Raḥmān*’ (*Bihār*, 100:278). In the ziyārah of the twelfth imam: “... *wa aḥbir kalimata-ka al-tāmmah . . . fi arḍi-ka*,” Taqī al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-‘Āmilī al-Kaf‘amī, *al-Balad al-amīn wa al-dir‘ al-ḥaṣīn* (Beirut: Mu‘assasah al-‘alamī, 1997), p. 404; *Bihār*, 99:82. In the supplication to celebrate the birth of the twelfth imam: “... *fa-tammat kalimatu-ka sidq wa ‘adl lā mubaddila li-kalimāti-ka wa lā mu‘aqqiba li-āyāti-ka*,” Kaf‘amī, p. 264.

Miqdād, Abū Dharr, ‘Ammār and Hudhayfah. I am their leader and they send benedictions upon Fāṭimah” (“*khuliqat al-arḍ li sab‘ah, bi-him turzaqūn, wa bi-him tunṣarūn, wa bi-him tumṭarūn, min-hum Salmān al-Fārsī wa al-Miqdād wa Abū Dharr wa ‘Ammār wa Hudhayfah, wa anā imāmu-hum wa hum al-ladhīna ṣallū ‘alā Fāṭimah*”¹³⁰). As a consequence, the earth can never be void of a *ḥujjah*, otherwise it would be annihilated and lose the cause of its existence.

On the Day of Judgment, the *shafā‘ah* will be available to all members of humanity, provided they were not inimical to the divine guides, i.e. they were not hostile to accepting the truth. A ḥadīth is related concerning the meaning of ‘*raḥīm*’ from the exegesis attributed to the eleventh imām in which he is reported to have said that only one percent of the Mercy (*raḥmah*) of God has been dispersed to His creation in this world which finds expression in the love between the mother and her child in the human and animal species. On the Day of Judgment, the entirety of the *raḥmah* of God will be diffused and accessible such that the community of Muḥammad will successfully intercede on behalf of its neighbors, associates and acquaintances, irrespective of their faith.¹³¹

Ḥadīth reports are cited from the early works that many of the previous prophets sought the intercession of the divine guides for help when confronted with a serious crisis, and that it was due to the honor of the divine guides that

¹³⁰ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu‘mān al-Mufid, *al-Ikhtisās* with introduction by al-Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī al-Sayyid Ḥasan al-Khurāsānī (Qum, Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.), p. 4. Other examples are *ḥadīth qudsī*: “*khalaqtu-ka li-ajli wa khalaqtu al-khalq la-ka,*” and “*law lā-ka la-mā khalaqtu al-aflāk,*” *Iḥqāq*, 1:430-31.

¹³¹ *Ikhtisās* ḥadīth no. 4, p. 25. Qudrat Allāh Ḥusayni Shāhmurādī analyzes the exegesis work attributed to the eleventh Shi‘ite imām and reaches the conclusion that it is authentic and properly ascribed to him. See ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī, *Tafsīr Fāṭimat al-Kitāb*, tr. Qudrat Allāh Ḥusayni Shāhmurādī (Tehran, n.p, n.d.), pp. 193-204.

God decided to knead the clay with His own Hand and breathe into it from His Spirit. Noah was rescued from the flood when he appealed to God by way of these luminous entities; Ibrāhīm prayed to God for the flames of fire to become cool by petitioning in the name of the progeny of Muḥammad. Moses was able to communicate with God by recourse to the intercession of the divine guides; Jesus was able to perform miracles, and was saved from crucifixion by being raised above on account of the intercession of the divine guides;¹³² It is due to the love for the *walī* of God that He created the world; and it is by their teachings and initiatory knowledge that God is worshipped by the angels and the people.

5. *al-‘ilm al-ladunnī*

The imāms are gifted with the all-encompassing knowledge from God, and this includes the past, present and future.¹³³ There is nothing that is concealed from the imāms and they can have access to specific knowledge, if they so desire: *anna al-a‘immah idhā shā’ū an ya‘lamū ‘alimū*.¹³⁴ They are privy to the knowledge of the earlier scriptures and can render judgments in accordance with the teachings of these divine books.¹³⁵ They have in their possession the *Jafr*, the *Jāmi‘ah* and the *Muṣḥaf Fāṭimah*.¹³⁶ Angels descend upon them to

¹³² Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir‘āt al-anwār*, p. 31. *Shafā‘ah* here is used in the sense of ‘*tawassul* (resorting to intermediaries by way of petitionary prayer)’ which is a form of *shafā‘ah*.

¹³³ “*ya‘lamūna ‘ilm mā kāna wa mā yakūn*,” *Kāfī*, 1:388-391 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-a‘immah ya‘lamūna ‘ilm mā kāna wa mā yakūnu wa anna-hu lā yakhfā ‘alay-him al-shay’*}.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:382-83 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-a‘immah idhā shā’ū an ya‘lamū ‘alimū*}.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:329-331.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:344-50. For greater elaboration on these written sources, see Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi‘ism*, pp. 73-4.

provide additional information continually and also on Friday night,¹³⁷ and on the night of power (*laylat al-qadr*).¹³⁸ They also possess knowledge of their life span, and the time and mode of their death, and choose to die on their own accord.¹³⁹ The sources of their knowledge are the celestial beings through inspiration; communication with the deceased prophets and imāms; the written sources and ascension to the Divine Throne. This initiatory knowledge is hereditary and transmitted through the spiritual lineage.¹⁴⁰ The faculty of infallibility (*'iṣmah*) is a necessary outcome of the bestowal of comprehensive knowledge and cognizance.

6. Muhaddath¹⁴¹

The imāms are not recipients of revelation (*wahy*¹⁴²) in the form in which it descended upon the prophets, but they are inspired by God through another process, and are referred to as *muhaddath*, i.e. spoken to by the celestial being by way of sounds in their ears (*naqr fi al-asmā'*) and supported by the *rūḥ al-qudus* whenever they desire to know something.¹⁴³ The Imamite scholars draw a distinction between a messenger who brings a new law and scripture (*rasūl*); a

¹³⁷ Ibid., 1:372-74.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 1:350-72.

¹³⁹ *Kāfi*, 1:383-87 {*K. al-hujjah, Bāb anna al-a'immaḥ ya'lamūna matā yamūtūna wa anna-hum lā yamūtūna illa bi ikhtiyār min-hum*}.

¹⁴⁰ The scope of knowledge in the section of *wilāyah* is far broader than in the section of *khilāfah* because knowledge in the latter section pertains to temporal affairs, eg. knowledge of the Qur'an, *sunnah* of the Prophet, and matters pertaining to society, etc. The divine guides are also referred to as *rāsikhūn fi al-'ilm* (Q. 3:7). Ibid, 1:321-31.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 2:13-15. Also see Etan Kohlberg, "The Term *Muhaddath* in Twelver Shi'ism," in *Studia Orientalia memoriae D.H. Baneth*, pp. 39-47 (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979).

¹⁴² *Wahy* is used in different contexts and meanings but the meaning applied to the revelation (*wahy*) to prophets has a specific meaning. Even the bees are recipients of *wahy* (Q. 16:68). Mother of Moses also received *wahy* (Q. 28:7). For further information, see *Mizān*, 2:135, 12:312, 15:346, 347, 18:75 and 18:7.

¹⁴³ *Kāfi*, 2:15-20; *Bihār*, 26:17.

non-lawgiving prophet (*nabī*) whose mission is to explicate and advance the message of his predecessor; and the imām who is the recipient of inspiration from celestial sources (*muhaddath*) with the aim of guiding people in exoteric and esoteric issues. The imāms are able to hear the angel (*naqr fi al-asmāʾ*), but cannot see him. On the Night of Decree (*laylat al-qadr*) in the month of Ramaḍān, the imām receives additional information about that which is to unfold in the subsequent year, and detailed elaboration on other issues through celestial inspiration. In addition, the imāms are able to make a celestial ascension to the Throne of the Lord to increase their knowledge, especially on Fridays.

7. *al-Imāmah al-bāṭiniyyah*¹⁴⁴

The imāms are able to provide inner guidance to their followers for the refinement of their souls by esoteric means. This is in contrast to outer guidance on issues related to the law and the *sharīʿah*. They develop a bond with their true followers who have accepted their *wilāyah* and are in communion with them. Further, their guidance covers the entirety of God's creation.

Every religion comprises a *ẓāhir* (exterior) and a *bāṭin* (interior) dimension. The chain of prophets and scriptures fall into the former category, and the uninterrupted chain of imāms constitute the latter whose presence is mandatory for life on earth to continue to exist. The faithful who submit to the *wilāyah* of the imāms and love them would be conferred the privilege of being initiated by the imāms and receiving guidance into the mysteries of the Divine

¹⁴⁴ The divine guides are referred to as *budāt* (*Kāfi*, 1:272-73), *ʿalāmāt* (*Kāfi*, 1:296) and *āyāt* (*Kāfi*, 1:296-97).

being and religion: “The person upon whose shoulders lies the responsibility for the guidance of a community through Divine Command, in the same way that he is the guide of man’s external life and acts, is also the guide for the spiritual life, and the inner dimension of human life and religious practice depends upon his guidance.”¹⁴⁵

8. Miracles and Charismata (*mu’jizāt* and *karāmāt*)

The term *mu’jizāt* is normally applied to the miracles performed by the prophets, and *karāmāt* to those of the saints of God. This distinction is especially apparent in the works of *kalām* and discussed in separate categories.

The imāms are able to perform miracles as a testimony of their high rank and stature. Some of the works on Imamate give a detailed list of the miracles attributed to the imāms.¹⁴⁶ Sharīf Murtaḍā severely rebukes the traditionists for attributing supernatural powers to the divine guides such as the ability to walk on clouds. Such accounts are fanciful and are in conflict with the faculty of reason.¹⁴⁷

9. Primordial covenant¹⁴⁸

In pre-existential time, God made a pact with the distinguished prophets (*ulū al-‘azm*) and the rest of the human beings to worship only Him and to testify to their devotion and love for the Prophet and his progeny. The scriptural evidence cited for this episode is in chapter 7, verse 172: “When your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of the sons of Adam, He had

¹⁴⁵ Ṭabāṭabā’ī, *Shi’ite Islam*, p. 212.

¹⁴⁶ al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Bahrānī, *Madīnat al-ma’ājiz*, ed. al-Shaykh ‘Izzat Allāh al-Mawlā’ī al-Hamadānī, 8 vols. (Qum: Mu’assasat al-ma’ārif al-Islāmiyyah, 1413/1992); *Bihār*, volume 41; and *Iḥqāq*, volume 8.

¹⁴⁷ Amir-Moezzi, p. 150, footnote no. 74.

¹⁴⁸ Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering*, pp. 58-62.

them bear witness against their own souls: ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They answered, ‘Verily, we bear witness.’ He did this lest on the Day of the Resurrection, they say ‘We were caught not expecting this’” (Q. 7:172). Sample ḥadīths pertaining to this verse are: “God took the pre-temporal pact from the prophets on the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī and the covenant was made with the prophets by virtue of the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī” (*inna Allāh akhadha mīthāq al-nabiyyīn ‘alā wilāyah ‘Alī wa akhadha ‘ahd al-nabiyyīn bi wilāyah ‘Alī*¹⁴⁸). The primordial covenant on love and fidelity (*walāyah*) to the divine guides was taken from the entire creation.¹⁴⁹

‘Allāmah Amīnī provides a detailed discussion and analysis of this subject with rational (*‘aqlī*) and textual (*naqlī*) proofs. He adduces nineteen Qur’anic verses and seventy ḥadīth reports, and subjects the *isnād* and text of each ḥadīth to scrupulous investigation. He cites both Sunnite and Shi’ite scholars who confirm his views on this subject, and further corroborates them with the use of poetry. He concludes that the primordial covenant is in reference to the affirmation of servitude to God (*rubūbiyyah*), prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and *wilāyah*.¹⁵⁰

This day is also referred to as *yawm al-mīthāq* (day of the pre-temporal pact), *yawm al-jam‘* (day of gathering of the entire human species), *yawm al-shāhid* (day of witness), *yawm al-mashhūd* (day of being witnessed), *yawm al-‘ard al-awwal* (day of first presentation), *yawm al-khalq al-awwal* (day of first

¹⁴⁸ *Baṣā’ir*, p. 93, *Bāb* 8, ḥadīth no. 4.

¹⁴⁹ *Bihār*, 17:383.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Amīnī, “Primordial Covenant,” pp. 1-132, unpublished manuscript.

creation), *yawm al-taklīf al-awwal* (day of first obligation), *yawm al-ba'th al-awwal* (day of first mission), *yawm al-iqrār* (day of affirmation), *yawm al-wilāyah* (day of *wilāyah*), *yawm balā'* (day of trial), *'ālam al-dharr* (world of particles), *'ālam alast* (world of testimony) and *'ālam al-aẓillah* (world of shadows).¹⁵¹

10. Presentation of deeds of the faithful to Prophet and his progeny ('ard al-a'māl)

The infallible leaders receive a full account of the deeds of their faithful followers who submit to their *wilāyah* on a weekly basis. They become joyful and happy when the deeds performed are positive, and get saddened and sorrowful when the deeds are negative.¹⁵² The sixth imām was asked on the interpretation of the verse: “Work so God will see your work and (so will) His Apostle and the believers...” (Q. 9:105), to which he replied that the reference is to the imāms.¹⁵³

11. Infallible guides are witnesses over the deeds of community

The infallible leaders will be the proof (*hujjah*) of God on the Day of Judgment over the faithful, by virtue of the following Qur'anic verse: “And thus We have made you a medium (just) nation that you may be the bearers of witness (*shahīd*) to the people and (that) the Apostle may be a bearer of witness (*shahīd*) to you” (Q. 2:143). On the Day of Judgment, every community will be summoned to appear in the presence of the imām of their respective time who

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁵² *Kāfi*, 1:318-19 {*Bāb 'ard al-a'māl . . .*}, *Mizān*, tr. S. A. Rizvi, 1:270 in reference to “And say: Work; so God will see you work and (so will) His Apostle and the believers...” (Q. 9:105).

¹⁵³ *Kāfi*, 1:318-19 {*Bāb 'ard al-a'māl . . .*}, ḥadīth no. 2; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, ed. Mīrzā M. Kūchabāghī (Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'Uẓmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1404/1983), pp. 259-60.

will act as a proof: “(Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imām...” (Q. 17:71).

12. Status of the infallible leaders

The status of the divine guides is so lofty that it was on account of love for them that God created the universe. They were created from the superior clay from heaven (*‘illiyīn*) and are from the original Light (*nūr*) of God.¹⁵⁴ In contrast, the opponents of the divine guides were created from the *sijjīn*, which is from hell, and composed of salty, brackish water.¹⁵⁵

Adam and the angels were commanded to prostrate before them in acknowledgment of their grand status, and to affirm the *wilāyah*. One who affirms the *wilāyah* of the divine guides is akin to a person who has affirmed the *wilāyah* of all the prophets sent by God, whereas one who accepts the *wilāyah* of Muḥammad, but rejects his infallible progeny, is akin to one who accepts the *wilāyah* of all the previous prophets, but rejects the *wilāyah* of the last Prophet.¹⁵⁶

13. Status of infallible leaders on the day of judgment

In addition to providing guidance and being an intermediary (*wāsiṭah*) for the distribution of divine blessings in this world, the divine guides play a role at the time of death, during questioning in the grave, and in the purgatory period. Their rank and status on the Day of Judgment is found under ḥadīth reports that confer on them the privilege of assigning people to paradise or hell, based on the affirmation or negation of their *wilāyah*: “*qasīm al-jannah wa*

¹⁵⁴ *Baṣā’ir*, pp. 34-5, p. 37, *Kāfi*, 2:232-234 {*Bāb khalq abdān al-a’immah. . .*}, 3:2-8 {*Bāb īnat al-mu’min wa al-kāfir*}.

¹⁵⁵ *Baṣā’ir*, pp. 38-40, p. 44, 191,

¹⁵⁶ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 20, 24.

al-nār,”¹⁵⁷ the loyalty and fidelity to the divine guides is the scale of one’s righteous deeds (*mīzān al-a‘māl*);¹⁵⁸ the path of safety on the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*) is the one of *wilāyah* (“And stop them, for they shall be questioned (Q. 37:24) [about the *wilāyah* to ‘Alī],”¹⁵⁹ “*la yajūzu aḥad al-ṣirāṭ illā man kataba la-hu ‘Alī al-jawāz.*”¹⁶⁰); the first question that will be posed on the Day of Judgment will be about the *wilāyah*; love and obedience of ‘Alī brings about salvation (‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb: “*law ijtama‘a al-nās ‘alā ḥubb ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib mā khalaqa Allāh al-nār*”¹⁶¹); permission required to reach the fountain (*ḥawḍ*) in paradise (“‘*Alī yawm al-qiyāmah ‘alā al-ḥawḍ lā yadkhulu al-jannah illā man jā‘a bi-jawāz min ‘Alī.*”¹⁶²).

14. Relationship of divine guides with God, prophets and the other existents before and after creation of universe

The infallible guides have a special and unique relationship with God as their luminous lights were created before anything else, and from a special heavenly material (*‘illiyyīn*). They are the firm rope of God (*ḥabl Allāh al-matīn*¹⁶³) and have been conferred the special knowledge of the greatest names (*al-ism al-a‘zam*).¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁷ *Baṣā‘ir*, Bāb 18, pp. 414-418.

¹⁵⁸ *Bihār*, 97:291.

¹⁵⁹ al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn, *al-Murāja‘āt*, ed. Ḥusayn al-Rādī, 3rd edition (Qum: Jam‘iyyat al-Islāmiyyah, 1982), p. 93. *Iḥqāq*, 2:299; 7:140-41, 162; 18:236-38, 496; in a ziyārah, ‘Alī is addressed as follows: “*al-salām ‘alā mīzān al-a‘māl,*” *Bihār*, 97:330.

¹⁶⁰ *Iḥqāq*, 7:140-151; 17:158-162; 236-238; 18:496; *Ghadīr*, 2:323, 10:279.

¹⁶¹ *Bihār*, 29:42-3; *Iḥqāq*, 7:152.

¹⁶² Ibn Maghāzilī, *Manāqib*, p. 119; *Ghadīr*, 2:323. Also, interpretation of Qur’anic verses “Of what do they ask one another? About the great event (*al-naba’ al-‘azīm*),” (Q. 78:1-2) and “Then on that day you shall most certainly be questioned about the plentiful blessings” (Q. 102:9).

¹⁶³ ‘Ayyāshī, 1:194.

¹⁶⁴ *Kāfī*, 1:334-35 {*K. al-ḥujjah*, Bāb mā u‘īya al-a‘immah min ism Allāh al-a‘zam}.

The infallible leaders have a relationship with the prophets by virtue of communicating with their spirits and being the inheritors of their knowledge.¹⁶⁵ Gabriel is reported to have told Muḥammad: “*inna Allāh ba’atha ‘Alī ma’a al-anbiyā’ baṭin wa ba’atha-hu ma’a-ka zāhir.*”¹⁶⁶ They are the mediators between God and the prophets as their names are invoked for the performance of miracles. As a case in point, it is asserted that Adam’s lapse was forgiven by God when he petitioned God in the name of the luminous entities; Moses was able to part the river by invoking their names; and Jesus was able to bring the dead back to life by appealing to God in the name of the fourteen infallibles. The prophets gave glad tidings to their respective communities on the future coming of the Prophet and his progeny.

The infallible divine guides have a close and intimate relationship with the faithful who have accepted their *wilāyah* and are devoted to them in sincerity. The light of the imāms shines in their hearts with greater intensity than the light of the stars. They guide the faithful like a compassionate father such that the analogy is made that one who cuts off his link with the divine guides is like an orphan.¹⁶⁷

The above categories on *wilāyah* are inter-related and intertwined. The division was made for the purpose of illustration and explication of the complex nature of *wilāyah* that is found in the corpus of early Twelver Shi‘ite ḥadīth literature. Later imamite scholars took great pain to demonstrate that ascribing

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 1:255.

¹⁶⁶ al-Sayyid Ni‘mat Allāh al-Jazā’irī, *al-Anwār al-Nu‘māniyyah*, 1:30; idem, *al-Nūr al-mubīn fi qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*, p. 105; Amīnī, *al-Asmā’ al-Husnā*, p. 35 where he quotes another ḥadīth from Ibn Abī al-Jumhūr that the Prophet said: “*bu’itha ‘Alī ma’a kull nabī sirr wa ma’i jāhr.*” *ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Bihār*, 2:2, ḥadīth no. 1

supernatural powers to the divine guides does not constitute exaggeration or extremism (*ghuluww*) by providing Qur'anic references and rational arguments, and instead accusing the Sunnites for exaggerating the virtues of the caliphs.¹⁶⁸ The virtues and excellence mentioned in the Qur'an and ḥadīth with regards to the divine guides have been gifted by God (*marḥūb*) and are not acquired (*iktisāb*). However, others can regard them as an ideal and a paradigm that can inspire them to strive for a higher rank of excellence in their own lives: "Certainly you have in the Apostle of God an excellent exemplar (*uswah ḥasanah*)" (Q. 33:21). Accordingly, every human being who is endowed with consciousness is potentially able to ascend to a higher status, depending upon the extent to which he polishes his cosmic mirror. The prophets and divine guides are able to actualize the names of God that are already latent in all human beings, and thus they become the point of reference worthy of emulation.

Sixth divine guide:

"*Bi-nā 'urifa Allāh wa bi-nā 'ubida Allāh nahnu al-adillā' 'alā Allāh wa la-w-lā-nā mā 'ubida Allāh.*"

(Shaykh Ṣadūq, *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 152)

¹⁶⁸ *Ghadīr*, 7:69-131; *Bihār*, 4:303, ḥadīth no. 31; 25: 328-50, especially ḥadīth no. 25. See also Wadād al-Qādī, "The Development of the term *Ghulāt* in Muslim Literature with Special Reference to the Kaysāniyya," in *Shi'ism*, ed. Etan Kohlberg (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), pp. 169-93. The exaggerators are viewed as unbelievers and of the worse category: "*anna-hum kāfir bi Allāh, jalla jalālu-hu, wa anna-hum sharr min al-Yahūd wa al-Naṣārā wa al-Majūs wa al-Qādariyyah wa al-Ḥarūriyyah wa min jamī' ahl al-bid'ah wa al-abwā' al-muḍillah*," in *Bihār*, 25:242. H. Modarressi maintains that the supernatural qualities attributed to the divine guides were acquired from the Kaysānite movement and got an added impetus upon the death of the eighth imam, al-Riḍā, who left a son of seven years old to assume the position of imām. This contributed to the notion that it is through divine grace that the imām is designated, inspired with knowledge and protected from error and sin. In contrast, an eminent scholar of the second/eighth century, Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh b. Abī Ya'fūr al-'Abdī (d. 131/748-49), who was a trusted and lavishly praised associate of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq maintained that the divine guides "were merely righteous and pious learned men (*'ulamā' abrār atqiyā'*)" {Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 30}. See also pp. 19-51.

CHAPTER 2

Different Approaches and Textual Sources on the Study of ImamateQur'an (*tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*) and Hadīth Approaches¹⁶⁹

(MANHAJ QUR'ĀNĪ WA ḤADĪTHĪ)

(a) Explanation of the Approach

The method of employing the Qur'an and the ḥadīth reports to articulate and document proofs for the doctrine of imamate is perhaps the oldest one. It is based on the premise that since the subject matter relates to the domain of divine investiture, only God could convey this to His subjects with a sense of authority, finality and completeness. Thus, the corpus of literature that could be relied upon is exclusively the Qur'an and the authentic ḥadīth reports from the Prophet and the twelve divine guides. Recourse to other sources like *'aql* would be viewed as an infringement and transgression into the domain of God's prerogative.

(b) Sources: Qur'an, ḥadīth reports and historical narratives

The Qur'an and ḥadīth reports constitute the two primary sources in the formulation and elaboration of the concept of imamate. Historical facts and anecdotes reinforce and supplement the evidences from the other two fundamental sources.

¹⁶⁹ This method of employing ḥadīth in the exposition of imamate should not be confused with the school of Akhbārī. The Uṣūlī scholars who differ with the Akhbārīs on fundamental issues employ ḥadīth reports extensively in their discourse on imamate.

(c) Discourse on the Subject

The discourse is centered around three subjects: *mawaddah*, *khilāfah* and *wilāyah*. The last category generally seeks recourse to allegorical and esoteric interpretation for proofs and documentation. This mode of interpretation (i.e. *ta'wīl*¹⁷⁰) was appropriated by the Shi'ites in their style of exegesis to argue in favor of the principle that the Qur'an has an inner dimension (*bāṭin*) that can be fathomed only by the legitimate divine guides who are the repositories of special knowledge and the "speaking Qur'an (*Qur'ān nāṭiq*)."¹⁷¹ We will first examine the method of analysis and sources employed by the exegetes who incline towards exoterical (*tafsīr*), allegorical and esoteric interpretations and then follow it up with the analysis used by the traditionists (*muḥaddithūn*).

Qur'anic Exegesis: *Tafsīr* (*Tanzīl*) and *Ta'wīl*

The Qur'anic verses fall into one of the following four categories: verses that are explicit and self-evident; verses that require exegesis by the use of other Qur'anic verses, ḥadīth reports, occasion of revelation and historical information; verses that require allegorical interpretation with the use of the

¹⁷⁰ See below for a discussion on the evolution of the terms "*tafsīr*" and "*ta'wīl*."

¹⁷¹ During the caliphate of 'Alī, he is reported to have protested at the cessation of the conflict with the army of Mu'āwiyah in the Battle of Siffīn when they raised copies of the Qur'an on their lances to avoid a complete defeat. 'Alī asserted that the Qur'an does not speak by itself but through a human agent: "*ḥārabnā-hum 'alā tanzīli-hi wa al-yawm nuḥāribu-hum 'alā ta'wīli-hi*," quoted from Ṭabarī by Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, "Divine Attributes in the Qur'an," in *Islam and Modernity: Muslim Intellectuals Respond*, edited by John Cooper, Ronald L. Nettler and Mohamed Mahmoud (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2000), p. 197. See also M. Ayoub, "The speaking Qur'an and the silent Qur'an: A study of the principles and development of Imāmī Shī'i tafsīr," pp. 177-98 in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

concept of ‘metaphor’ (*majāz*);¹⁷² and esoteric interpretation to discover the “true” or the “real” meaning of the verses that is in keeping with the Qur’anic ethos and the ḥadīth-reports, and avoids arbitrary personal interpretation (*tafsīr bi al-ra’y*).

The terms “*tafsīr*” and “*ta’wīl*” have undergone semantic changes with the passage of time. At the outset, it seems that these terms were used interchangeably and were regarded as synonyms. This is evidenced in many of the titles of the works of Qur’an commentaries where the term “*ta’wīl*” is used but the method of exegesis is primarily based upon ḥadīth reports (*tafsīr bi al-ma’thūr*). For instance the exegesis work by Ṭabarī (d. 923) is entitled *Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl āy al-Qur’ān* and by Māturīdī (d. 944) is *Ta’wīlāt al-Qur’ān*. Discussion and debate on the signification of these terms was prompted by the need to define ways in which the traditional material could be employed for exegetical purpose. *Ta’wīl* became associated with a style of exegesis based upon reason and personal opinion (*ra’y*), whereas *tafsīr* was based upon ḥadīth reports transmitted from the Prophet, his Companions or the Successors.

Tafsīr Approach: Analysis of Qur’anic verses on

Mawaddah, Khilāfah and Wilāyah

An example of a Qur’anic verse on *mawaddah* is chapter 42 verse 23: “Say: I do not ask you for any recompense for this [the communication of the revelation] except the love for near kinship (*al-mawaddah fī al-qurbā*).” When this verse was revealed, the community asked Muḥammad about the identity of

¹⁷² The Mu’tazilites are credited with the concept of *majāz* to interpret the ambiguous or unclear (*mutashābih*) verses of the Qur’an.

the near relatives (*qurbā*). He responded that it comprises 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.¹⁷³ It is further argued that the love for these personages entails absolute unconditional obedience to them as well and the Qur'anic directive follows the pattern of previous prophets who asked for no reward from their respective community in return for their ministry.¹⁷⁴

On *khilāfah*, a sample relevant verse is "O you who believe. Obey God and obey the Apostle and those in authority (*ulū al-amr*) from among you..." (Q. 4:59). Imamite scholars who use the Qur'an and ḥadīth reports approach would cite the aforementioned verse and argue that since obedience is absolute and conjoined with obedience to God and His Messenger, the persons identified as "*ulū al-amr*" must be infallible (*ma'ṣūm*). Other Qur'anic verses such as, "Therefore, wait patiently for the command of your Lord, and obey not from them a sinner or an ungrateful one" (Q. 76:24) and "When his Lord tried Abraham with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imām of men. Abraham said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He" (Q. 2:124) and "Surely, God desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House (*ahl al-bayt*)! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying" (Q. 33:33) would be cited to further strengthen their argument. Subsequently, they would seek out ḥadīth reports to identify persons who would meet the criterion of infallibility: (*anā wa 'Alī wa al-Ḥasan wa al-*

¹⁷³ For a list of sources, see footnote no. 80.

¹⁷⁴ "Say: I do not ask you for any reward for it; it is nothing but a reminder to the nations." (Q. 6:90); "And, O my people! I ask you not for wealth in return for it; my reward is only with God..." (Q. 11:29). Also, see Q. 11:51; 25:57; 26:109; and 26:127.

Husayn wa al-tis'ah min wuld al-Husayn muṭahharūn ma'sūmūn).¹⁷⁵ The other method of identifying the *ulū al-amr* is by exclusion, i.e. since no other persons other than the twelve divine guides have been confirmed to be *ma'sūm* by ḥadīth reports, the status of *ulū al-amr* is reserved for them alone.¹⁷⁶

A sample Qur'anic verse on *al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah* of the divine guides is: "And those who disbelieve say: You are not a messenger. Say: God is sufficient as a witness between me and you and whoever has knowledge of the Book (*wa man 'inda-hu 'ilm al-Kitāb*)" (Q. 13:43). Those who possess treasure of the knowledge of the Book and the unseen are the divine guides: "None knows God's unseen realm except those whom He chooses from among His messengers" (Q. 72:26). In a ḥadīth report, the sixth Shi'ite imām states: "We are the administrators of Gods' affair, the treasures of His knowledge, and the repository of His revealed mysteries."¹⁷⁷ The bestowal of this *wilāyah* is not contingent upon assumption of political power and authority. Greater elaboration on the esoteric interpretation of the Qur'anic verses that pertain to *wilāyah* will be given under the section of *ta'wīl*.

A total of eighty-six verses that apply to the divine guides are related by 'Allāmah Ḥillī in *Nahj al-ḥaqq* and greater elaboration and explanation of these verses with copious references are provided by Shushtarī in *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*. Other

¹⁷⁵ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:334; *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 3:482.

¹⁷⁶ *Ta'wīl al-āyāh al-zāhirah fī faḍā'il al-'itrah al-tāhirah*, 1:133; *Majma' al-bayān*, 2:64; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 204; *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 3:424; *Tafsīr al-ṣāfi*, 1:427; Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār*, p. 381; *Murāja'āt*, letter 6 and 12; *Sabīl al-najāh*, 126-219; *Ghadīr*, 1:165, 196, 277; *Mizān*, 4:411-442.

¹⁷⁷ *Kāfi*, 1:192.

works enumerate additional verses that are applied to *mawaddah*, *khilāfah* and *wilāyah*.¹⁷⁸

Elaborate Analysis of the Verse on *Khilāfah*¹⁷⁹

“Only (*innamā*) God is your *walī* and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the zakāt while they bow” (Q. 5:55).¹⁸⁰

Imamite scholars maintain that this verse was revealed in connection with ‘Alī’s rendering of zakāt to a beggar while in the state of genuflection (*rukū’*) during the ritual prayer.

Method of Analysis

The term “*innamā*” that comes at the beginning of the verse has a sense of exclusivity that limits the *wilāyah* only to God, His Messenger and the person who rendered zakāt while in the state of *rukū’*. This is demonstrated by traditional (*naqlī*) and rational (*‘aqlī*) proofs.

Traditional Proofs (*Naqlī*)

There is consensus (*ijmā’*) among Arab grammarians and linguists that the particle “*innamā*” is only employed to convey the sense of exclusivity without exception. Thus, its usage in this verse has the same connotation of exclusivity as agreed upon by linguists.

¹⁷⁸ For example, the father of ‘Allāmah Majlisī relates that he has seen more than one hundred thousand ḥadīth reports on the virtues (*ṣaḍā’ih*) of the divine guides, *Lawāmi’*, 2:493 and *Rawḍat al-Muttaqīn*, 8:648.

¹⁷⁹ For the analysis of this verse on *wilāyah*, refer to *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 2:399-415; *Murāja’āt*, pp. 39-46; *Ghadīr*, 1:162, 196, 397, 398; 2:52; 3:152, 155-167; 8:55; 9:197.

¹⁸⁰ For a different translation of this verse that is inclusive of all believers and not restricted to the divine guides, see H. Landolt, “*Walāyah*,” p. 317. See also the discussion in Chapter 1 under “*al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah*.”

Rational Proofs ('aqlī)

The particle “*inna*” is used to confirm one aspect of a statement and the particle “*mā*” to negate another. Even with the union of these two particles to “*innamā*” they both carry their original individual meanings based on the principle of *istiṣhāb*¹⁸¹ and consensus (*ijmā'*).

(i) *Istiṣhāb*

Istiṣhāb is based on certainty that was attained in an earlier time and any doubt cast on it at a later time would be rejected and discarded. In the case of “*innamā*”, when the two particles are joined together, it carries the combined meaning of “*inna*” and “*mā*” of exclusivity and the same holds true for it—any doubt cast on it at a later time would have to be rejected.

(ii) Consensus (*Ijmā'*)

There is a longstanding consensus among Arab grammarians and linguists that even after the union of “*inna*” and “*mā*,” they each possess their individual meaning. Thus, when combined together as “*innamā*”, the first particle continues to connote confirmation (“*inna*”) of one aspect and the second particle still connotes negation (“*mā*”) of another.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ *istiṣhāb* is based on certainty that was attained in an earlier time and any doubt cast on it at a later time would be rejected and discarded. For instance, a person who is reported missing is assumed to be alive and living until the time when his death is confirmed. Doubt and skepticism on his state is not entertained until certainty of his death.

¹⁸² Another opinion on the composite of “*innamā*” is that it consists of “*inna*” and “*mā al-kāffab*” which results in the meaning of “*mā wa illā*,” i.e. there is none else except the one. In both configurations, the outcome is the same, that the *walī* referred to in the verse applies to one person.

Applying the Principles of *Istishāb* and *Ijmā'* on the Qur'anic verse 5:55

Given that the particle "*inna*" signifies confirmation and "*mā*" negation, there are three possible outcomes after the union of these two particles into "*innamā*":

1. It confirms and negates the statement simultaneously.
2. It negates the mentioned persons in the verse and confirms the rest.
3. It confirms the mentioned persons in the verse and negates the rest.

The first possibility is impossible because it would entail a contradiction if the *wilāyah* of God, His Messenger and the person who gave zakāt is confirmed and negated at the same time. Such a statement would be reprehensible (*qabīh*) and not possible to attribute to the divine word. The second possibility is equally impossible in the sense that the *wilāyah* of God, His Messenger and the person who rendered zakāt would be negated and the *wilāyah* of others confirmed. This is based on consensus of the grammarians and linguists. The third possibility is the only one that can be entertained because it confirms the *wilāyah* of the mentioned persons in the verse and negates the *wilāyah* of all others that have not been mentioned. Thus, the collective term "*innamā*" connotes exclusivity and confines the station of *wilāyah* to only God, His Messenger and the person who gave zakāt while in the state of ritual prayer.

Meaning of the Term *Walī*

The person identified as *walī* is endowed with authority over all aspects of the person's affairs to the extent that he has more authority (*awlā bi al-*

taṣarruf) than the person whom he is representing. The Arabic linguists have applied this term in a number of cases with this signification:

1. "The sultān is *walī* of one who has no *walī*." That is, the sultān has universal authority to execute the affairs of a person who has no *walī*.
2. "*walī* for the *diyyah* (blood money or compensation for injury or death)." The *walī* is responsible to pay the *diyyah* on behalf of the person whose affairs are under his authority.
3. "*walī* of the deceased." The *walī* of the deceased has universal authority to discharge the obligations of the deceased.

Identity of the *Walī*

The plural verbal form is used to refer to the *walī* who gave zakāt while in the state of ritual prayer and in the posture of *rukū'*. Discussion abounds on whether this allows for the possibility of more than one person or not to claim *wilāyah*. Imamite scholars argue that the intent of the verse is to apply the term *walī* to only one person and that is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, based on the following proofs:

1. There is consensus amongst the exegetes that the occasion of revelation for this verse was commendation of 'Alī for giving the zakāt while in the state of prayer to the petitioning poor person, and thus the reference is to one person only even though the plural form of the verb is used.
2. If the term *walī* is applied to the generality of the Muslims then this would entail an impossibility because both the *walī* and *mutawallā 'alayh* would be one and the same person. In other words, each individual

would have discretionary authority (*wilāyat al-taṣarruf*) over others and at the same time be *mutawallī*.

3. The characteristics of the person mentioned in the verse, whose *wilāyah* is conjoined with that of God and His Messenger, is quite clear and explicit, i.e. the person gave zakāt in the state of ritual prayer while in the posture of *rukū'*. There is consensus among the scholars that the only person who gave zakāt while in the state of prayer is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and thus even though the plural form is used, the intent is one person.
4. The plural form of the noun or verb is used in other parts of the Qur'an as a form of respect, adulation or as a style of eloquence.¹⁸³

Consensus (Ijmā')

The consensus of the Muslim community on the identity of the *walī* is derived by way of three methods:

1. Consensus among the community that the term *walī* applies to only a group of believers and not the general Muslim community. They also agree that the only person in whose honor this verse was revealed is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.
2. Consensus that irrespective of whether the term *walī* is used in its specific or general sense, 'Alī would be included in both categories. Since it was demonstrated that the latter category was false, it follows that the only person identified as the *walī* in the verse is 'Alī.

¹⁸³ See Qur'an, 3:173, 5:11 and 3:61.

3. Consensus amongst exegetes and traditionists that this verse was revealed in commendation and recognition of the selfless act of ‘Alī to attend to the petition of the beggar.

Summary

The term *walī* is interpreted in its comprehensive sense because the *wilāyah* of the one who gave zakāt is equated to the *wilāyah* of God and His Messenger. Further, since the station of *walī* (prophets and imāms) is lofty and exalted, the quality of such a person would only be known to God and thus only He would be able to designate the particular person through divine investiture. The term *walī* in the above verse is expansive in its scope and meaning but the majority of Imamite scholars have employed this verse in a limited manner to prove the imamate of ‘Alī in the sense of succession to the Prophet in governing all the temporal affairs of the Muslim community.

The above is a case example of the method in which a scholar who subscribes to the Qur’an and ḥadīth approach would systematically examine the literature to document proofs and arguments in favor of the designation and succession of ‘Alī and his progeny.

Other Qur’anic Verses Cited on *Mawaddah*, *Khilāfah* and *Wilāyah*

1. “O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and God will protect you from the people; surely God will not guide the unbelieving people” (Q. 5:67).

This verse was revealed on the occasion of Ghadīr in 10/630 whereupon the Prophet addressed the pilgrims and gave a sermon. Towards the end of his sermon, he asked them: “Do I not have more authority over you than you have upon yourselves?” When they responded in the affirmative, he asserted: “Of whomsoever I am the *mawlā*, ‘Alī is his *mawlā*. O God, love those who love ‘Alī, be inimical towards those who are inimical to him, help those who help him and abandon those who abandon him.”¹⁸⁴

2. “This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and I have approved Islam for your religion” (Q. 5:3).

Hadīth reports from Shi‘ite and Sunnite sources are cited to link the occasion of revelation of this verse to the day of Ghadīr that coincided with the Prophet’s farewell sermon. The multi-volume study by ‘Allāmah Amīnī titled *al-Ghadīr* is an exhaustive work devoted to enumerating sources from the first to the fourteenth century of the Islamic era. ‘Allāmah Amīnī seeks recourse to ḥadīth reports, historical anecdotes, exegesis, theology and poetry to argue on the validity of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr that it was a confirmation of the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī on eighteenth of Dhū al-ḥijjah 10/630.

The author of *al-Mīzān*, ‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, comments on this verse at great length to prove that the reference “this day” refers to the day of Ghadīr and not to any other occasion such as the commencement of the prophet’s

¹⁸⁴ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:187; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, pp. 172-73.

ministry, conquest of Mecca, or revelation of the chapter of Repentance (chapter 9) which informs the polytheists that pagan customs will no longer be tolerated in the Ka'bah. He argues that despair and despondency of the unbelievers was the outcome of providing universal guidance to the nascent Muslim community in the person of 'Ali and his progeny. Thus, the mission of the Prophet would be preserved from any distortion or tampering by virtue of designating a successor who would provide leadership and guidance, apply the teachings of the Qur'an and safeguard the community from going astray.

He views this verse on perfection of religion to be a fulfillment of an earlier divine promise made to the believers: "God has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them successors in the earth as He made successors those before them, and that He will most certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will most certainly, after their fear, give them security in exchange; they shall worship Me, not associating anything with Me; and whoever disbelieves after this, these it is who are the transgressors" (Q. 24:55).

He further argues that the Divine bounty and favor referred to in the above verse applies to the completion of the *wilāyah* of God and His Messenger by vesting authority in the *ulū al-amr* or the divine guides. This Divine bounty is conditional upon obedience to His instruction. Failure to comply would result in the loss and withdrawal of the Divine grace and bounty: "This is because God does never change a bounty which He has

conferred upon a people until they change their own condition; and because God is Hearing, Knowing” (Q. 8:53). The perfection of religion refers to the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī and not the completion or closure of legislation or the *shari‘ah* because there are ḥadīth reports on additional injunctions and revelations such as the matter of interest (*ribā*) that was revealed after the above verse. Traditions cited by him are in the category of *mutawātir*, i.e. the chains of transmissions are numerous and are uninterrupted with no faults or deficiencies.¹⁸⁵

3. “God desires only to remove defilement from you, O people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*), and to purify you (*yutaḥhira-kum*) completely” (Q. 33:33).

Shi‘ite exegetes argue that there are numerous uninterrupted chains of transmissions (*mutawātir*) that confirm that this verse was revealed in reference to the Prophet, ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. Some of the Sunnite scholars who have cited these ḥadīths include the Hanafite scholar, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Kabīr along with Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Ṭabarī. This Qur’anic verse is also employed to confirm the inerrancy and infallibility (*‘ismah*) of the divine guides from any kind of sin, mistake or forgetfulness (*sahw*).¹⁸⁶

4. “And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of God; and God is Affectionate to the servants” (Q. 2:207).

It is related by Ibn ‘Abbās that this verse was revealed in praise of ‘Alī who slept on the bed of Muḥammad while the latter fled towards Medina to

¹⁸⁵ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:157; Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, *al-Mīzān*, tr. S. A. Rizvi, 9:227-270.

¹⁸⁶ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:11; *Nabī al-ḥaqq*, p. 174; *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 4:234;

escape from the stratagem of the Quraysh who had conspired to assassinate him while in bed.¹⁸⁷

5. "If anyone disputes with you in this matter [concerning Jesus] after the knowledge which has come to you, say: come let us call our sons (*abnā'a-nā*) and your sons, our women (*nisā'a-nā*) and your women, ourselves (*anfusa-nā*) and yourselves, then let us swear an oath and place the curse of God on those who lie" (Q. 3:61).

This verse of mutual imprecation was revealed in connection with the dialogue with the Christian delegation of Najran who insisted on the divinity of Jesus. It is related that the Prophet was accompanied only with 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn and no one else from the emigrants (*muhajirūn*), helpers (*anṣār*) or his wives. The word "*abnā*" in the verse is equated to Ḥasan and Ḥusayn; "*nisā*" is applied to Fāṭimah and "*anfus*" is equated to 'Alī. Further, since the latter is the self of Muḥammad, he enjoys the same scope of *wilāyah* as the Prophet.¹⁸⁸

6. "Then Adam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful" (Q. 2:37).

Shi'ite exegetes argue that the words that Adam received to seek forgiveness from God for his lapse were the names of the five luminaries—Muḥammad, 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:96; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 176.

¹⁸⁸ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:163-65; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, pp. 177-78.

¹⁸⁹ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 179; *Iḥqāq*, 3:76, *Ghadīr*, 7:300.

7. “And remember when Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commandments which he fulfilled, [God] said: I shall make you an imām for the people. He said: And also of my offspring? [God] said: My pact will not comprise the evil-doers” (Q. 2:124).

This verse is cited to demonstrate that the position of the divine guide is based on merit and confined to a person who is immune from committing sins or moral violations. Polytheism is a major vice of which the companions were guilty and thus they would not be entitled to assume imamate: “O my son! Do not associate anyone with God; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity” (Q. 31:13). It is argued that only ‘Alī was the one who never bowed down to other idols in the entirety of his life because he was brought up under the care and patronage of Muḥammad from birth.¹⁹⁰

8. “And those who disbelieve say: ‘Why has not a sign been sent down upon him from his Lord? You are only a warner (*mundhir*) and (there is) a guide (*hād*) for every people” (Q. 12:7). The title “guide” is applied to ‘Alī by virtue of ḥadīth reports.¹⁹¹
9. “And the foremost are the foremost, these are they who are drawn near (to God)” (Q. 56:10-11). The one who was foremost in excellence in the time of Muḥammad was ‘Alī.¹⁹²
10. “They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide. And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan

¹⁹⁰ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, pp. 179-180.

¹⁹¹ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:293; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, pp. 180-81.

¹⁹² *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:213; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 181; *Iḥqāq*, 3:114.

and the captive: We only feed you for God's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks" (Q. 76:7-9).

The occasion of revelation was a vow of fast for three days taken to remedy the ill-health of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. At the time of breaking the fast on each of the three days, a poor person, an orphan and a captive respectively petitioned for food, and they were given the food that had been designated for breaking the fast of 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn and their maid Fiḍḍah.¹⁹³

11. "And if they intend to deceive you—then surely God is sufficient for you; He it is Who strengthened you with His help and with the believers" (Q. 8:62).

In a ḥadīth report related by Abū Hurayrah, it is inscribed on the throne that "There is no God except the One with Whom there is no partner; Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger; He has strengthened him with the support of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib."¹⁹⁴

12. "O Prophet! God is sufficient for you and (for) such of the believers as follow you (Q. 8:64).

Traditions are cited to argue that this verse was revealed to single out 'Alī as the only one who supported the Prophet's mission without fail.¹⁹⁵

13. "O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then God will bring a people, He shall love them and they shall love Him,

¹⁹³ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 2:298; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 184; *Iḥqāq*, 3:158-69; *Ghadīr*, 3:107-11;

¹⁹⁴ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 185.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

lowly before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers, they shall strive hard in God's way and shall not fear the censure of any censurer; this is God's grace. He gives it to whom He pleases, and God is Ample-giving, Knowing" (Q. 5:54).

This verse gives glad tidings to the person who will overpower the forces around Khaybar and liberate the fortress. The person chosen by the Prophet to undertake this task, after two earlier unsuccessful attempts, was 'Alī.

14. "Surely God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! Call for (Divine) blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation" (Q. 33:56).

The prophet was asked about the formula for sending benedictions on him and he replied: "Say: O God, send blessings upon Muḥammad and the progeny of Muḥammad just as you send your benedictions on Abraham and the progeny of Abraham."¹⁹⁶

15. "(As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men" (Q. 98:7).

In a ḥadīth report related by Ibn 'Abbās, when this verse was revealed, the Prophet stated to 'Alī: "It is you and your followers (*shī'atu-ka*) who will arrive satisfied and well-pleased whereas your enemies will arrive with anger and disappointment."¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 188; Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Fayrūz Ābādī, *Faḍā'il al-khamsah min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-sittah*, 3 vols. (Beirut: al-A'lamī, 1973), 1:208; *Ghadīr*, 2:302.

¹⁹⁷ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 189-90.

16. “O you who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) God and be with the true ones (*ṣādiqīn*)” (Q. 9:119).

This verse is applied to ‘Alī and is connected with the famous prophetic ḥadīth known as *ḥadīth al-ḥaqq*: “‘Alī is with the truth and the truth is with ‘Alī; wherever the truth is, ‘Alī will incline to it.”¹⁹⁸ Other ḥadīth reports are cited, especially from the fifth Shi‘ite imām, Muḥammad Bāqir, that confirm that the term *ṣādiqīn* includes all the divine guides from the progeny of Muḥammad.¹⁹⁹ Further, this verse is advanced to prove that the person who is vouchsafed from dishonesty and deception has to be infallible (*ma‘ṣūm*).

17. “When your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of the sons of Adam, He had them bear witness against their own souls: ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They answered, ‘Verily, we bear witness.’ He did this lest on the Day of the Resurrection, they say ‘We were caught not expecting this’” (Q. 7:172).

The primordial covenant, according to ḥadīth reports, comprises the following: “I am your Lord, Muḥammad is your Prophet and ‘Alī is your leader (*amīr*).”²⁰⁰

18. “And in the earth there are tracts side by side and gardens of grapes and corn and palm trees having one root and (others) having distinct roots—they are watered with one water (*yusqā bi mā’ wāḥid*), and We make some of them excel others in fruit” (Q. 13:4).

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 190.

¹⁹⁹ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:260; *Ghadīr*, 2:305.

²⁰⁰ Ibn Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*, ed. Muḥammad al-Kāzīm (Qum: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1410/1989), p. 48; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 191; *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 3:307.

A ḥadīth report is cited on the authority of the Prophet: “People are created from different trees, however, you (‘Alī) and I (Muḥammad) have been created from the same tree.”²⁰¹

19. “Whoever brings a good deed (*ḥasanah*), he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed (*sayyi’ah*), he shall be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly” (Q. 6:160).

In a ḥadīth report, the good deed is equated to love for the progeny of Muḥammad and the evil deed is regarded as hostility towards them that will lend the person into hell-fire.²⁰²

20. “O you who believe! Answer (the call of) God and His Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life; and know that God intervenes between man and his heart, and that to Him you shall be gathered” (Q. 7:24).

The invitation to that which gives life and prosperity is acceptance of the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

21. “And we did not send before you any but men to whom We sent revelation—so ask the people of the Reminder (*ahl al-dhikr*) if you do not know” (Q. 16:43).

Ibn ‘Abbās relates: “The *ahl al-dhikr* are Muḥammad, ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. They possess knowledge, intelligence and demonstrative proofs. They are the progeny of Muḥammad and the treasure-trove of messengership to whom the angels visit.”²⁰³

²⁰¹ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 196. Other ḥadīths convey a similar meaning in *Baṣā’ir*.

²⁰² *Ibid*, 201.

²⁰³ *Shawāhid al-tanzīl*, 1:334; *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, 210; *Iḥqāq*, 3:482.

22. “Of what do they ask one another? About the great event (*al-naba’ al-‘azīm*)”
(Q. 78:1-2).

A prophetic ḥadīth gave this explanation about this verse: “People will be asked about the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī. There is no deceased in the East or the West, on land or sea except that *munkar* and *nakīr*, the two angels who interrogate the deceased in the grave, will question him/her on the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī. The deceased will be questioned about his Lord, his religion, his Messenger and his imāms.”²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ *Nabj al-ḥaqq*, p. 211.

Ta'wīl

Definition of Ta'wīl

Ta'wīl, in Shi'ite usage, in contrast to *tanzīl*, applies to the true and final interpretation of the Qur'an that delves into the inner (*bāṭin*) meaning or meanings of the Qur'an juxtaposed to the outer (*zāhir*) explications. This applies not only to the ambiguous or unclear verses (*mutashābihāt*); rather it covers the entirety of the Qur'an. In addition, just as the Qur'an has an inner and outer dimension, so do the ḥadīth.²⁰⁵ The sixth divine guide is reported to have said: "We can speak about a word in seven ways." One of the followers in the audience, expressing his surprise, asked, 'Seven, O son of the Messenger of God?' The Imām replied, 'Yes [not only seven], but seventy.'²⁰⁶ In the famous *ḥadīth al-ṭhaqalayn* which is related by both Shi'ite and Sunnite sources, the Qur'an is conjoined with the *ahl al-bayt* (i.e. the divine guides) and are not to be separated till the end of time. Thus, it is evident from the foregoing that just as *zāhir/bāṭin* is a fundamental characteristic of textuality in the Shi'ite style of exegesis, so also is *tafsīr/ta'wīl*. The word *ta'wīl* is derived from *al-awl* (i.e. to return) and thus connotes a need to return back to the precise and decisive verses (*muḥkam*) referred to as the source or the basis of the Book (*umm al-Kitāb*).²⁰⁷

The mode of *ta'wīl* is primarily employed to confirm the lofty station of Muḥammad and his progeny, and the necessity of loving and obeying them in

²⁰⁵ *Bihār*, 2:185.

²⁰⁶ I. Poonawala, "al-Zāhir wa 'l-Bāṭin," in *EP*, 11:389 quoting from Qādī al-Nu'mān, *Asās al-ta'wīl*, ed. A. Tāmīr (Beirut, 1960), p. 27.

²⁰⁷ Qur'an, 3:7. An example of this mode of *ta'wīl* of the verse: "The Beneficent God firmly sat upon the Throne" (Q. 20:5) would require a return to the decisive verse, "nothing is like a likeness of Him" (Q. 42:11) in order to conclude that sitting on the Throne refers to the dominance, sovereignty and mastery of God's kingdom over His creation.

contrast to those who are ignorant of their true rights and position. The Qur'anic verse, "And there are some among men who take for themselves objects of worship besides God, whom they love as they love God..." (Q. 2:165) is applied to those who have pledged their allegiance to temporal leaders who usurped the right of the divine guides and opposed their divine investiture. The esoteric exegesis attempts to show that the unique position of the divine guides is unparalleled and none can be a match for it.²⁰⁸ In a ḥadīth reported by al-Mufaḍḍal, the sixth imām says that God would not have used His hands to create Adam or breathe His spirit into him were it not for the fact that Adam had affirmed his belief in the *wilāyah* of 'Alī.²⁰⁹ Another ḥadīth on the rank of the divine guides relates that two-thirds of the Qur'an pertains to them: "The Qur'an has come down in three parts: one concerns us, one our enemies, and one consists of rules and injunctions."²¹⁰ In a ḥadīth report by the sixth imām to Abū Baṣīr: "There is not a single verse revealed that gives glad tidings of entry to paradise and goodness except that it is about us and our followers; and there is not a verse that mentions the people as evil and driven to hell-fire except that it relates to our enemies and their followers."²¹¹

²⁰⁸ In *Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, it is related by the eighth imām that 'Alī is reported to have said: "We are the progeny of Muḥammad against whom none should make a comparison. The Qur'an was revealed about us and we are the treasure trove of messengership" (Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār*, p. 6). "Were it not for your love and the love of 'Alī and his progeny, I would not have created paradise, hell, earth, heavens, angels or the rest of creation." (Ibid., p. 29) "We were the cause of creation and the one who showed the angels how to praise and glorify God. Because of us, God is recognized and worshipped." (Ibid., p. 30)

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 31.

²¹⁰ Lynda Clarke, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 109.

²¹¹ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār*, p. 52.

Qur'anic Usage of *Ta'wīl*

The term *ta'wīl* is used in the Qur'an with varied signification from the ultimate realization of the veracity of the Qur'an and prophethood on the Day of Judgment to the comprehension of the true reality of an allegorical expression or a dream. In one sense or another, it relates to discovering the inner truth and reality of the verse without violating its outward meaning. This is illustrated in the narrative of Moses and Khidr wherein the former protests the actions of Khidr. In response, Khidr explains his justifications and advises Moses that he would not have objected had he known the *ta'wīl* and the inner reality of his actions:

He [Khidr] said: This shall be separation between me and you; now I will inform you of the significance (*ta'wīl*) of that which you could not have patience. As for the boat, it belonged to (some) poor men who worked on the river and I wished that I should damage it, and there was behind them a king who seized every boat by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers and we feared lest he should make disobedience and ingratitude to come upon them. So we desired that their Lord might give them in his place one better than him in purity and nearer to having compassion. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them, and their father was a righteous man; so your Lord desired that they should attain their maturity and take out their treasure, a mercy from your Lord, and I did not do it of my own accord. This is the significance (*ta'wīl*) of that which you could not have patience (Q. 18:78-82).

Hadīth Usage of *Ta'wīl*

In the corpus of ḥadīth literature, there are numerous ḥadīth reports on *ta'wīl* and degrees of comprehension of the inner mysteries of the Qur'an, both in the Sunnite and Shi'ite sources. For instance, the Prophet is reported to have

said to 'Alī: "Fight for the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'an as I have fought for its *tanzīl*."²¹²

In other traditions he says: "The apparent meaning (*zāhir*) of the Qur'an is elegant, and its inner meaning (*bāṭin*) is profound; the marvels [of the Qur'an] cannot be fathomed and its wonders cannot be exhausted."²¹³

Authoritative Expositors of *Ta'wīl*

The ones who possess the divine knowledge and are able to authoritatively give the esoteric interpretation of the Qur'anic verses are Muḥammad and his inerrant progeny: "He it is Who has sent down to you the Book, of it there are some verses that are *muḥkam* (clear, precise, decisive), they are the basis of the Book (*umm al-Kitāb*), and others are *mutashābih* (unclear or ambiguous); then as for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is ambiguous, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation, but none knows its interpretation (*ta'wīl*) except God; and²¹⁴ those who are firmly rooted in knowledge (*al-rāsikhūn fī al-'ilm*) say: 'We believe in it, it is all from our Lord'" (Q. 3:7). There are numerous traditions in the works of ḥadīth that apply the phrase "firmly rooted in knowledge" to the divine guides.²¹⁵ Qur'anic verses that are "*mutashābih*" do have a meaning and

²¹² Lynda Clarke, Ph.D. Dissertation, p. 111.

²¹³ I. Poonawala, "al-Zāhir wa 'l-Bāṭin," *EP*, 11:389 quoted from al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabrisī, *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Hāshim al-Rasūlī and F. al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī (Tehran: 1959-60), 2:9.

²¹⁴ There is extensive discussion on whether the 'and' in this verse is conjunctive or not, i.e. do both God and those firmly rooted in knowledge share the knowledge of *ta'wīl*? See *Mizān*, 5:40-41, tr. S. A. Rizvi. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, admits that grammatically it is possible to have either of the readings, however, he favors the opinion that the 'and' is not conjunctive because, had it been so, the name of the Prophet would have been mentioned first and foremost for this honor, next to God, as done with reference to other virtues mentioned in the Qur'an, such as, 2:285, 9:26, 9:88, 3:68 and 66:8, *ibid*.

²¹⁵ *Kāfī*, 1:308-309 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-rāsikhīn fī al-'ilm hum al-a'immah*}.

relevance that can be fathomed by seeking recourse to the “*muḥkam*” verses because the entirety of the Qur’an is a living document that will never die since the inherited knowledge of *ta’wīl* resides in the person referred to as the *ḥujjah* or proof of God whose presence is mandatory in every age.²¹⁶

Specimen Works on *Ta’wīl*

The works on *ta’wīl* encompass a variety of subjects, but the one that is of interest to this thesis is *wilāyah* of Muḥammad and his progeny along with the virtues related about them. Two of the best works on this subject matter are *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār* by Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmilī al-Nabā’ī al-Futūnī (d. 1138/1726) and *Ta’wīl al-āyāh al-zāhirah fī faḍā’il al-‘itrah al-ṭābirah* by Sharaf al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Astarābādī (d. 1557 or 58). The former was published as a compendium and introductory volume to *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān* in the lithograph edition only, and it employs ḥadīth reports and Arabic literature to explicate the Qur’anic verses on the subject of *wilāyah*. These esoteric works not only provide the esoteric interpretation of the verses but also explicate the method of deriving the hidden interpretation along with proofs. Other exegesis works limit themselves to the presentation of ḥadīths to elucidate the verses. Critical editions of these works have been published with detailed and valuable notes.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ “*Inna al-Qur’ān ḥayy, lā yamūt*” (the Qur’an is alive, [and] will never die), Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 5.

²¹⁷ *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār* was printed only in the first print with *Burhān*, published by Mu’assasah Ismā’īliyyān, Qum. Future editions do not include this introductory (*Muqaddamah*) compendium perhaps because of its esoteric nature. The computer research center in Qum that is patronized by the religious leader of Iran, Sayyid Khāmanā’i, has issued a CD on *tafsīr* that comprises all the major works of exegesis in Twelver Shi’ism and, once again, *Burhān* is in the collection, but the introductory volume that contained the exegesis by Futūnī is missing. A

Ta'wīl: Mir'āt al-anwār and al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān

A classic work by a Shi'ite scholar with an esoteric interpretation of the Qur'an is *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* authored by 'Allāmah al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Baḥrānī (d. 1696). An introductory volume was prepared by Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Āmilī al-Nabāṭī al-Futūnī as a compendium to a commentary work that he had composed entitled *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār*. It is related that Mīrzā Ḥusayn al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī, compiler of *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il*, located the manuscript of this introductory volume in the library collection of the author of *Jawāhir al-kalām*. He was able to obtain it with great difficulty, and on his arrival in Tehran, he came across individuals who wanted to print *al-Burhān* of Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī. Since the work of Sayyid Baḥrānī is exclusively a collection of Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth reports, it was felt by Mīrzā Nūrī that printing the introductory volume by al-Futūnī would enhance the value of the work of Sayyid Baḥrānī and prepare the reader to benefit from its content. Thus, the first volume of al-Futūnī was printed as a compendium, only in the lithograph edition, and entitled *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār wa mishkāt al-asrār* in conjunction with *al-Burhān* which comprises four volumes.

Major Topics of Discussion in Mir'āt al-anwār

- Esoteric interpretation summons people to accept the *wilāyah* of the divine guides just as the exoteric interpretation invites people to accept monotheism and prophethood.

critical edition of *Burhān* with extensive footnotes, comprising ten volumes, was published in Lebanon. However, it does not contain *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār* by Futūnī.

- Inner meaning of the Qur'an is not confined to a time because *ta'wīl* relates to the reality that is not contingent on time.
- The esoteric and exoteric interpretation are inter-related and should not be contradictory.
- The comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'an is endowed only to Muḥammad and his infallible progeny.
- Love and obedience of the divine guides is an integral part of faith just like monotheism and prophethood are cardinal aspects of one's faith. Rejection of the divine guides renders void one's righteous deeds and entails expulsion from the orbit of sound faith (*īmān*) into unbelief (*kufr*) and polytheism (*shirk*).
- Lofty station of the divine guides before and after creation of the world.
- Distortion, interpolation, corruption and tampering of the Qur'an to expunge references to the exalted station and virtues of Muḥammad and his progeny.²¹⁸
- Injunction to obey the divine guides and their comprehensive authority (*al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*).

²¹⁸ Early Sunnite and Shi'ite ḥadīth reports can be cited that indicate the Qur'an in its extant form is incomplete. The opinion of the author of *Mir'āt al-anwār* is a minority opinion amongst the Shi'ite scholars. From the time of Ibn Bābawayh and onwards, Imamite scholars attempted to demonstrate that the present Qur'an is identical to the one revealed to Muḥammad. What has been left out or omitted concerns only the authoritative interpretations of the divine guides. See Sayyid al-Khū'i, *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, "The Prolegomena to the Qur'an," tr. A. A. Sachedina (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Lynda Clarke, Ph.D. dissertation, pp. 87-102.

- Use of the plural noun and pronoun to indicate, in their outward meaning, the grandeur and majesty of God, and, in their esoteric meaning, the divine guides.
- The broken letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muqatta'āt*).
- Rejection of exaggeration and extremism (*ghuluww*) that elevates the status of the divine guides to semi-divinity.
- The compendium is arranged in alphabetical order and gives an esoteric interpretation under respective titles.

Method of Analysis

The following are case examples wherein the divine guides interpret the Qur'anic verses by recourse to *ta'wīl*. Illustrations of these examples also reveal the method of analysis employed in the interpretation.

Example 1: Life (*al-Ḥayāt*) and Death (*al-Mawt*)²¹⁹

The terms 'life' and 'death' are used in different contexts and have varied signification. In the case of earth, the word 'death' signifies a land that has no proprietor, vegetation, water and so on. In the case of an insane person, an unbeliever or a person who is sleeping, the same term is used to signify one who is bereft of intellect and understanding. The most popular application of the term in its exoteric sense is the lifting up of the soul from the body and

²¹⁹ 'Allāmah Amīnī in an unpublished manuscript elaborates on the esoteric meaning of 'life' and 'death' in the following terms. 'Life' is demonstrated in the visible signs evident in the object of concern, be it vegetation, humans, etc. In the case of humans, if the faculty of reflection and cognizance of the status of the divine guides is lost, then the person would be categorized as 'dead.' There are a number of ḥadīth reports that define an ignorant person (*jāhil*) as 'dead.'

termination of terrestrial life. In the esoteric sense, 'death' signifies the state of a person who is separated from religion, faith and true belief system, i.e. ignorant of the true status of the divine guides; thus this term (*mawt*) is applied to those who are inimical to the divine guides and reject their *wilāyah*.²²⁰

The term 'life' is defined as the state of a person who has made a transition to believe and affirm in the *wilāyah* of the divine guides, and 'death' is defined as a rejection of the *wilāyah*: "You bring forth the dead (*mayyit*) from the living (*ḥayy*), and the living from the dead..." (Q. 3:27) refers to a believer who is extracted from the clay (*tīnah*) of the unbelievers. Conversely, the reverse transformation refers to an unbeliever who is extracted from the clay of the believers.²²¹ Further, the Qur'anic verse "Is he who was dead when We raised him to life...(*awa man kāna mayt fa ahyay-nā-hu*)" (Q. 6:122) alludes to the lifeless state of the person when he is submerged and mixed with the clay of the unbelievers. He attains life when he is separated from this clay. It is related in *al-Manāqib* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the verse: "Neither are the living and the dead alike (*wa mā yastawī al-ahyā' wa lā al-amwāt*)" (Q. 35:22) refers to

²²⁰ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār*, p. 298. The status and rank of a believer who confirms the *wilāyah* of the divine guides is so lofty that even gossiping or backbiting about him is equated to eating the dead flesh of one's own brother: "Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it" (Q. 49:12).

²²¹ *Kāfi*, 3:2-8 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bāb ṭīnat al-mu'min wa al-kāfir*}. There are three types of ḥadīth reports that give rise to embroiled discussion on the issue of free-will and predestination (determinism) (*jabr*): ḥadīths on clay (*tīnah*); ḥadīths on guidance (*hidāyah*) and misguidance (*ḍalālah*); and ḥadīths on prosperity (*sa'ādah*) and wretchedness (*shaqāwah*). Qur'anic verses are also cited in this theological discourse. Some scholars such as 'Allāmah Mājlīsī have categorized such ḥadīth reports and Qur'anic verses as obscure and ambiguous (*mutashābih*) that do not lend themselves to a complete and thorough understanding. Others have attempted to collect the relevant ḥadīth reports and Qur'anic verses to demonstrate that they do not conflict with the principle of free-will and are not a form of coercion. A systematic discussion on this matter is provided in the unpublished manuscript of 'Allāmah Aminī that is devoted to the commentary on the Qur'anic verse that deals with the primordial covenant, (Q. 7:172).

‘Alī, Ḥamzah, Ja‘far, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Fāṭimah and Khadījah. In essence, true life, in its eternal form, is attained when one acknowledges and affirms the *wilāyah* of the divine guides; rejection of the divine guides leads to the acquisition of eternal death.

The Qur’anic verse, “...answer (the call) of God and His Apostle when he calls you to that which gives you life (*yuhyī-kum*)” (Q. 8:24) refers to the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī that is a source of life²²² and likewise the verse “...and whoso gives life to a soul, shall be if he had given life to mankind altogether” (*wa man ahyā-hā fa ka-annamā ahyā al-nās jamī‘*) (Q. 5:32) refers to a person who provides guidance to an unbeliever, and, subsequently the latter confirms his belief in the *wilāyah* of the divine guides.

The esoteric interpretation of the verse, “Know that God gives life to the earth after its death (*yuhyī al-arḍ ba‘d marwī-hā*)” (Q. 57:17) refers to the era of the awaited messianic savior, the Mahdī, who will restore life on earth with his reappearance, by instilling justice and equity in the place of injustice and inequity.²²³

Example 2: Water

The divine guide is a source of life for the soul just as water is the source of life for the body. This signification is used for the imāms and the messianic imām (*al-Qā‘im*). In other cases, the symbol water is applied to knowledge, *wilāyah*, faith (*īmān*) and truth (*haqq*). Another application of water is to the

²²² Futūnī, *Mir‘āt al-anwār*, p. 134, quoting from *Manāqib*.

²²³ *Ibid.*, quoting from *Kanz al-fawā‘id* on the authority of Imām Bāqir.

original seed of creation of the Prophet, divine guides and their followers from the pure seed, and their enemies from dark and impure ocean (*al-baḥr al-ajāj al-zulmānī*).²²⁴

The esoteric commentary of the word ‘water’ in the verse “Say: Have you considered if your water should go down, who is it then that will bring you flowing water (*mā’ ma’īn*)?” (Q. 67:30) refers to the imāms who are the doors to God mediating between Him and the creation.²²⁵

The verse, “And if they should keep to the (right) way, We would certainly give them to drink of abundant water (*mā’ ghadaq*)” (Q. 72:16) applies to those who quench their thirst from the fountain of *wilāyah* and will be bestowed with copious and beneficial knowledge along with strong faith.²²⁶

In the verse, “...and sends down water from the heavens, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death...” (Q. 30:24), the heavens refer to the Prophet, and the water is in reference to ‘Alī.

The multiplicity of meanings for the term “water” are all inter-related and ultimately lead to the central role and importance of the *walī* in nourishing the soul of the believers and leading them to prosperity.

Example 3: Rabb

In the esoteric interpretation, the term *rabb* is employed in its etymological sense of reverence and devotion to an entity. It is not confined to God alone. The case in point is this Qur’anic verse in which the scholars are

²²⁴ *K. al-Maḥāsīn*, 1:196, ḥadīth no. 22; *Kāfī*, 1:24, ḥadīth no. 14 {*K. al-‘aql wa al-jahl*}

²²⁵ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 305.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, quoting from *Kanz al-fawā’id*.

referred to as lords: “They have taken their doctors of law and their monks for lords (*arbāb*) besides God” (Q. 9:31). The last part of the verse “lords besides God” is applied to those who submitted and paid heed to the unjust rulers and caliphs who succeeded the Prophet and usurped the right of succession of the divine guides.²²⁷

The Qur’anic verse “The parable of those who disbelieve in their Lord: their actions are like ashes on which the wind blows hard on a stormy day...” (Q. 14:18) is applied to those who deny the *wilāyah* of ‘Alī and consequently their righteous deeds will not benefit them because they will be swept away like the ashes.²²⁸

“As to him who is unjust, we will chastise him, then shall he be returned to his Lord...” (Q. 18:87). The return is to ‘Alī in whose presence they will undergo severe chastisement and ardently wish that they were turned into earth (*turāb*), i.e. the followers of Abū Turāb.²²⁹ ‘Allāmah Majlisī surmises that the reason why the appellation ‘*rabb*’ is applied to ‘Alī is because he was entrusted with the task of moulding the creatures of God to perfection in this life and in the hereafter.²³⁰

Summary

The divine guides related such statements to a select number of their disciples who had greater understanding and cognizance of the station of *wilāyah* and not to the general community and thus, at times, differing

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 154.

²²⁸ Ibid., quoting from *Tafsīr al-Qummī*.

²²⁹ Ibid., quoting from *Kanz al-fawā'id*.

²³⁰ Ibid., quoting from *Bihār*.

interpretations of the same verse are found in the ḥadīth reports. The true stature and exalted station of the divine guides along with the initiatory secrets could be revealed only to those who had the necessary pre-requisites and training:²³¹ “*inna amranā ṣa‘b mustaṣ‘ab . . .*” “*inna ḥadītha-nā ṣa‘b mustaṣ‘ab la yaḥtamīlu-hu illā malak muqarrab aw nabī mursal aw ‘abd imṭaḥana Allāh qalba-hu li al-īmān*” (Our teaching is arduous; the only ones who can withstand it are a prophet sent to men, an angel of Proximity, or an initiated one whose heart has been tested by God for faith).²³² This is in keeping with the principle articulated in the ḥadīth: “We, the group of prophets have been ordered to talk with the people according to the capacity of their understanding (*‘alā qadr ‘uqūli-him*).”²³³ A believer ought to accept both the outward and the inward meanings of the Qur’an as mandated by the Qur’an to embrace the *muḥkam* and *mutashābih*. However, the interpretation should be done in such a manner that it is free from arbitrariness or subjectivity and must be derived by recourse to the authoritative interpreters, the divine guides: “Whosoever interprets the Qur’an using his own judgment (*ra’y*) shall not receive reward if he is correct, and if he is in error he is responsible for his own sin.”²³⁴

²³¹ *Baṣā‘ir*, 20-28; *Kāfi*, 2:253-7 {*K. al-ḥujjab, Bāb fi-mā jā’a anna ḥadītha-hum ṣa‘b mustaṣ‘ab*}; *Bihār*, 2:183-5; Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, p. 61.

²³² Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi‘ism*, p. 5.

²³³ *Kāfi*, 1:28, ḥadīth no. 15 {*K. al-‘aql wa al-jahl*}

²³⁴ Futūnī, *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*, 1:16.

Chronological Bibliography

Qur'ān

- al-'Askarī, Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 260/874). *Tafsīr*. Qum: Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī, 1409/1988. {The claim that this work was dictated by Imām al-'Askarī is examined with scrutiny by Quḍrat Allāh Ḥusaynī Shāhmurādī and he reaches the conclusion that it is an authentic work in *Tafsīr Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*. Translated by Quḍrat Allāh Ḥusaynī Shāhmurādī. Tehran: Maktabah amīr al-mu'minīn, 1404/1984 (pp. 193-244). It is the Persian translation of the work by 'Allāmah Amīnī which was edited with extensive footnotes by Shaykh Riḍā 'Abd al-Ḥusayn al-Amīnī al-Najafī. Tehran: Maṭba'at al-Ḥaydarī, 1985.
- al-'Ayyāshī, al-Naḍr Muḥammad ibn Mas'ūd ibn 'Ayyāsh al-Sulamī (d. 320/932). *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. Edited by Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Maḥallātī. 2 vols. Tehran: al-Maktabah al-'ilmiyyah al-Islāmiyyah, n.d.
- al-Qummī, 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm (d. 329/940). *Tafsīr al-Qummī*. 2 vols. 3rd print. Qum: Mu'assasah dār al-kitāb, 1404/1984. {S. M. Modarressi is of the view that this work of exegesis has been wrongly attributed to al-Qummī. See *Tradition and Survival: A Bibliographical Survey of Early Shī'ite Literature*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003, p. xvii}.
- Ibn Furāt al-Kūfī (d. 352/963). *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*. Edited by Muḥammad al-Kāzim. Qum: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1410/1989.
- Ibn Ishāq, al-Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmad b. 'Abdullāh b. Aḥmad (Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī) (d. 430/1038). Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī. *al-Nūr al-Mushta'āl min kitāb mā nazala min al-Qur'ān fī 'Alī*. Qum: Wizārat al-Irshād al-Islāmī, 1406/1985.
- . *Shawāhid al-tanzīl li qawā'id al-tafsīl fī al-āyāt al-nāzilah fī ahl al-bayt*. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī. 3 volumes. Tehran: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1990.
- al-Ṭabrisī, Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl (d. 560/1164). *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 10 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī al-maṭbū'āt, 1415/1994.
- al-Astarābādī al-Najafī, Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī (d. 1557 or 58). *Ta'wīl al-āyāh al-zāhirah fī faḍā'il al-'itrah al-ṭāhirah*. 3 vols. Edited with footnotes by Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī. Qum: Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī, 1411/1990.

- al-Kāshānī, Fayḍ Muḥsin (d. 1091/1680). *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*. Edited by al-Shaykh Ḥusayn al-A‘lamī. 2nd print. 5 vols. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadr, 1416/1995.
- al-Baḥrānī, al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Husaynī (d. 1107/1695). *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. 4 vols. Preface by Maḥmūd b. Ja‘far al-Mūsawī al-Zarandī. Qum: Mu’assasah Ismā‘īliyyān, 1275/1858 {An important work on *ta’wīl* in lithograph form. A multi-volume critical edition of this work has been published in Lebanon with extensive footnotes but it does not contain *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār*}.
- al-Ḥuwayzī, ‘Abd al-‘Alī b. Jumu‘ah al-‘Arūsī (d. 1112/1700). *Tafsīr nūr al-thaqalayn*. Edited by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Maḥallātī. 4th print. 5 vols. Qum: Mu’assasah Ismā‘īliyyān, 1412/1991.
- al-Futūnī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Āmilī al-Nabāṭī (d. 1140/1727). *Tafsīr mir’āt al-anwār wa mishkāt al-asrār*. Qum: Mu’assasah Ismā‘īliyyān, 1275/1858. {This work is the introductory (*Muqaddamah*) volume to al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Baḥrānī’s, *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān* but only in the lithograph edition cited above. It is not included in the recent multi-volume edition of *al-Burhān* published in Lebanon}.
- al-Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, al-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn (d. 1402/1981). *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. 2nd edition. 20 vols. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-a‘lamī, 1957-74.
- _____. Persian translation of *al-Mīzān* by S. Muḥammad Bāqir Mūsawī Hamadānī. 4th print. 40 volumes. Tehran: Intishārāt-e Muḥammadī, 1987.
- _____. *al-Mīzān: An Exegesis of the Qur’ān*. Translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi. Tehran: WOFIS, 1983-. Thus far, 12 volumes have been translated which covers up to the end of chapter 5 of the Qur’ān.
- _____. *Dalīl al-mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. Index of *al-Mīzān* by Ilyās Kalāntarī. Translated by ‘Abbās Tarjumān. Tehran: Intishārāt-e bayān, 1983.
- al-Khū‘ī, al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsīm al-Mūsawī (d. 1992). *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān* (The Prolegomena to the Qur’ān). Translated by Abdulaziz. A. Sachedina. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Hadīth

Importance of Hadīth-Reports and Historical Narratives

on *Mawaddah*, *Khilāfab* and *Wilāyah*

The corpus of ḥadīth literature and narratives play a central role in the discourse on imamate, in its universal sense, for the exegetes, traditionists, theologians, philosophers and mystics. It is also an important source for the enumeration of virtues (*faḍā'il*) of the divine guides and their unique station. All of these groups employ ḥadīth and narratives in their articulation of imamate. The difference lies in the manner in which they relate and analyze these sources.

Method of Narrating and Analysing the Chain of Transmitter (*isnād*)

and Text (*matn*)

(a) Chain of Transmitter (*isnād*)

There are three methods employed in narrating and analyzing the *isnād*:

1. Relate the text of the ḥadīth from a specified source without attaching the chain of transmitters. This approach is found in popular works that exalt the status of the divine guides and enumerate their virtues. An example of a work that uses this method is George Jordac's *Ṣawt al-'adālah al-insāniyyah*.²³⁵

²³⁵ George Jordac, *Ṣawt al-'adālah al-insāniyyah (The Voice of Human Justice)*, tr. M. Fazal Haq (Karachi: Islamic Seminary Press, 1956).

2. Relate the text of the ḥadīth with the chain of transmission (*isnād*) from a specified source.²³⁶ The chain of transmission is appended to the text of the ḥadīth reports but is not subject to any critical examination to determine the reliability and trustworthiness of the transmitters. A sample work that uses this approach is *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq* of Shushtarī, which was appended with commentary and elaborate footnotes by a group of scholars under the supervision of Ayatullah Mar'ashī Najafī.²³⁷
3. Relate the text of the ḥadīth with the chain of transmission (*isnād*) and subject the latter to a critical analysis for reliability and trustworthiness.

A seminal work that uses this approach is *al-Ghadīr* by 'Allāmah Amīnī

²³⁶ Quoting of a ḥadīth with the chain of transmitters does not imply that the author accepts the authenticity of the ḥadīth report, especially on the subject of *wilāyah*. For example, ḥadīth reports on the authority of Ḥāfiẓ Rajab al-Bursī (d. about 813/1410) are related by Majlisī (*Biḥār*, 1:118) and Sayyid Muḥsin Amīn 'Āmilī (*Ghadīr*, 7:36) but they do not regard this transmitter as reliable because of his extremism and exaggeration (*ghuluww*). 'Allāmah Amīnī attempts to rehabilitate this transmitter in his work in *Ghadīr*, 7:33-68 and argues that he was falsely accused of disseminating extremist views about the divine guides and their followers. Another example is the transmitter, 'Abdullāh b. Qāsim al-Baṭāl, on whose authority Kulaynī relates many ḥadīth reports but Majlisī in *Mir'āt al-'uqūl* (3:119) finds this transmitter weak and unreliable with a proviso that perhaps the transmitter is falsely accused of extremist tendencies on account of our intellect not being able to fathom the true meaning of the ḥadīth reports that he cites, and the fact that an eminent *muhaddith* like Kulaynī relates ḥadīth reports on the authority of this transmitter, and that God knows best. Ibn Ghaḍā'irī has also rejected the reliability of this transmitter (*Mu'jam*, 11:303). Instances of such transmitters are numerous in the works of *rijāl* who were rejected because they related ḥadīths on the issue of *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*. Thus, there is a difference of opinion among *rijāl* scholars on these transmitters. Several Shi'ite scholars and Ayatullah Khū'i, in particular, disagree with this method of *rijāl* criticism. In his multi-volume work on *rijāl* he argues that the science of *rijāl* is a scholarly enterprise (*ijtibādī*) and thus one should refrain from imitating the opinions of previous scholars on the transmitters without undertaking personal inquiry and investigation to reach a conclusion (Abū al-Qāsim al-Khū'i, *Mu'jam al-rijāl al-ḥadīth wa tafṣīl ṭabaqāt al-ruwāt*, 23 vols. (Qum: Manshūrāt madīnat al-'ilm, 1978), 1:11-15).

²³⁷ Ayatullah Mar'ashī al-Najafī has appended more references (manuscripts and printed works), chains of transmissions and texts of ḥadīth reports to *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq* and titled it *Mulḥaqāt Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, vols. 20-33 (Qum: Maktabah Ayatullah al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1409/1988). He provides the tree of *isnād* from one disciple to another, each of whom was authorized (*ijāzah*) to relate ḥadīth reports, till it reaches the first transmitter who had heard the ḥadīth from the divine guides or their companions. {al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī al-Ṭabrizī al-Najafī al-Ḥā'irī (d. 1362/1943), *Mushajjarah ijāzāt al-'ulamā' al-Imāmiyyah*. Introduction by Sayyid Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī (Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985)}.

who categorized the ḥadīth reports in separate *masānīd* and made a comparison between ḥadīths related in Sunnite and Shi'ite sources.²³⁸ A detailed analysis of his method will be undertaken in subsequent pages in this section.

Categorization of Hadīths

Ḥadīth reports cited in the discourse on imamate and *wilāyah* to corroborate and explicate Qur'anic verses can be divided into five major categories:

1. Ḥadīth reports that provide elaboration on the Qur'anic verses and provide details on the occasion of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) based on the fact that, without this information, the proofs from the Qur'an would not suffice to reach a decisive conclusion.
2. Ḥadīth reports that are integral and stand by themselves that were related on the subject of imamate, *wilāyah* and *khilāfah*. They have no relationship to the revelation of the Qur'anic verses.

²³⁸ Some of the ḥadīth reports in Sunnite sources that outwardly are in praise of 'Alī and the other divine guides, but ultimately lower their station, are viewed as having been fabricated by those who were inimical to the divine guides. An example of such a ḥadīth attributed to the Prophet praises Fāṭimah in this manner: "Fāṭimah is an integral part of me. Whoever harms her has harmed me and whoever harms me has harmed God." It is cited in Sunnite ḥadīth sources that the Prophet chastised 'Alī with these words in response to Fāṭimah's annoyance with the latter. Thus, there is one group of Imamite scholars who completely refrain from relating ḥadīth reports that are cited by Sunnite sources. An entire chapter in *Bihār* is devoted to them (*Bihār*, 2:214, Chapter 28, ḥadīth 10). Another group centered around 'Allāmah Majlisī only relates ḥadīth reports on certain issues like sedition (*fitan*) and designation of 'Alī (*Bihār*, 55:90) from Sunnite sources that have been confirmed in Shi'ite sources with their independent chains of transmissions, and only those ḥadīths which do not lower the rank and station of the divine guides. The third group comprises 'Allāmah Amīnī and his students such as Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz Ṭabāṭabā'ī who engage in an exhaustive study of the Sunnite ḥadīth sources and correlate the same with Shi'ite ḥadīth sources. The above ḥadīth is normally cited by Shi'ite sources in connection with the displeasure of Fāṭimah with regards to Abū Bakr's refusal to give her the land estate of Fadak and for the assumption of caliphate in the place of 'Alī (Māzandarānī, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, 7:217).

3. Ḥadīth reports that deal with the issue of explicit designation (*naṣṣ*).
4. Ḥadīth reports that pertain to the issue of superiority (*afḍaliyyah*) of the divine guides. This conclusion that the imām must be *afḍal* is placed as the minor premise in the syllogism used to prove the imamate of the divine guides to the effect that, based on reason, it is reprehensible (*qabīḥ*) to give preference to one of inferior status (*maḥḍūl*) over one who is superior (*fāḍil*).
5. Ḥadīth reports that confirm the infallibility (*‘iṣmah*) of the divine guides and provide the prerequisite conditions necessary for one to be bestowed with this faculty, based on reason.²³⁹

(b) Commentaries on Text (*matn*) of Hadīths

In the early period of Shi‘ite history, ḥadīth reports were cited with the chain of transmission without providing any elaborate commentary generally. *Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays*²⁴⁰ and *al-Kāfī* are classic works of this type. This could be classified as a traditional or Akhbārī approach, in its positive connotation, to the ḥadīth. Gradually, Imamite scholars prepared commentaries on the ḥadīth reports and, depending upon the approach of the respective scholar, the commentary had a traditional, theological, philosophical or mystical bent.

²³⁹ This classification is provided by Ayatullah al-Sayyid ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Milānī, *Muhāḍarāt fi al-i’tiqādāt*, 2 vols. (Qum: Markaz al-abḥāth al-‘aqa’idiyyah, n.d.), 1:29-30.

²⁴⁰ Sulaym b. Qays al-‘Āmirī al-Kūfī al-Hilālī (d. 76 A.H.), *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilālī*, 3 vols., edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Anṣārī al-Zanjānī al-Khū‘īnī (Qum: Dalīl-e mā, 1423/2002). {Volume 1 is devoted to a survey of the author and the book; volume 2 is a study of the text; volume 3 traces the composition of the work and provides a detailed subject index}.

Traditional Perspective

In this approach, the Imamite scholar attempts to provide meaning and elaboration of words and phrases of the ḥadīth report under consideration by citing Qur'anic verses and other ḥadīths for the explanation of the ḥadīth under investigation. For example, the work of Shaykh Ṣadūq titled *Ma'ānī al-akhbār* relies exclusively on ḥadīth reports and Qur'anic verses for the explication and elaboration of the ḥadīths.²⁴¹ Other traditionists provide limited commentary on the ḥadīth reports and examine the chain of transmission, to a limited extent, for their validity and trustworthiness. A case in point is the work of 'Allāmah Majlisī titled *Mir'āt al-'uqūl* and Māzandarānī's commentary on *al-Kāfī*. However, they would both limit rational proofs to the extent that they are corroborated by Qur'an and ḥadīth reports. For example, ḥadīth reports dealing with the creation of human beings from clay (*tīnah*) would be categorized as

²⁴¹ Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Ma'ānī al-akhbār*. As an example, he explains the meaning of *ṣalawāt* by relating a ḥadīth report on the authority of the sixth imām that one who sends salutations to the Prophet has in actuality affirmed his primordial covenant with God that was made before creation, Qur'an, 7:172 (Chapter on Meaning of *ṣalawāt*, p. 115). For a meaning of *maṭlā* in the ḥadīth of Ghadīr, see p. 65; meaning of progeny (*āl*) and family (*ahl*) and descendants (*'itrat*) and community (*ummah*) (p. 93); meaning of infallibility (*'iṣmah*) (p. 132); meaning of 'differing opinions in the community is a mercy' (*ikhtilāf ummatī raḥmah*) (p. 157) is explained in a totally different manner from the Sunnite sources. He relates a ḥadīth on the authority of the sixth imām that the Prophet had indeed made this statement but people have misunderstood its true meaning: "If disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) among them is a mercy then it follows that the unity of the community would be a curse and punishment. They did not understand its true meaning. His intention is derived from 'Why should not then a company from every party from among them go forth (*naḥara*) that they may apply themselves to obtain understanding in religion, and that they may warn their people when they come back (*raja'ū*) to them that they may be cautious?' (Q. 9:122) He [Prophet] commanded them to go forth (*yanfuru*) and migrate towards the Messenger of God by visiting him frequently (*yakhtalifu ilayh*) to acquire knowledge. Then, return back to their respective communities to teach them. Thus, he meant coming and going from one city to another (*ikhtilāfa-hum min al-buldān*) and not disagreement in the matter of religion of God. Surely, the religion of God is one and united." Another Qur'anic verse cited is "Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation (*ikhtilāf*) of the night and the day are signs for men who understand" (Q. 3:190) wherein the word "*ikhtilāf*" is used in the sense of coming and going one after another. Further, in the Shi'ite *ziyārāt* one comes across the phrase "*wa mukhtalaf al-malā'ikah*" which is defined as a place where the angels visit divine guides frequently by coming and going.

obscure or ambiguous (*mutashābih*), and since the intellect cannot comprehend the true meaning because the outward meaning entangles one in the issue of determinism (*jabr*), one should accept the ḥadīth uncritically because only God knows its true meaning.²⁴²

Theological Perspective

The scope of inquiry of an Imamite scholar who subscribes to the theological approach is broader than the traditionist in the sense that he would employ rational proofs and use *‘aql* for the elaboration of the ḥadīth reports.

Philosophical Perspective

The philosophical approach to the study of the text of the ḥadīth would use its principles (*al-qawā‘id al-falsafiyah*) when engaged in a commentary of the ḥadīth reports. Philosophical terms such as *wujūd munbasit*, *arwāḥ mā khalaqa Allāh* and *qā‘idat al-sinkhiyyah* would be employed from philosophy. An example of such a commentary is *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi* by Mullā Ṣadrā.

Mystical Perspective

The mystical perspective does not confine itself to Qur’an, ḥadīth, *‘aql* and philosophical principles. It engages in esoteric and personal testimonial (*dalīl dhawqī* or *shuhūdī*) interpretation of the ḥadīth reports as will be evident in the extensive discussion on *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah* under the section on mystical approaches that will follow later in this thesis.

²⁴² *Bihār*, 15:5; 64:81.

Example: Interpretation of “hand of God (*yad Allāh*)”

The following ḥadīth is related in *al-Uṣūl al-kāfī* in the section of *Kitāb al-tawḥīd, Bāb al-nawādir* on the authority of the sixth imām: “We are the proofs (*ḥujjah*) of God; we are the door (*bāb*) to God; We are the tongue of God; We are the face of God; We are the eyes of God in His creation; we are the guardians of God in the affairs of God,”²⁴³ and “I am the eye of God, I am the hand of God, I am the beloved of God and I am the door to God.”²⁴⁴

1. **Traditional Interpretation:** It would classify the phrase “hand of God” as an ambiguous and obscure phrase (*mutashābih*) and seek to find a decisive verse (*muḥkam*) for its elaboration such as “nothing is like a likeness of Him (Q. 42:11).” Accordingly, the phrase “the hand of God is above their hands (*yad Allāh fawqa aydi-him*)” (Q. 48:10) and “the heaven, We raised it high with power (*bi aydi*)” (Q. 51:47) would be interpreted as the power and might of God based on Qur’anic verses, ḥadīth reports and books on etymology.²⁴⁵ Thus, this phrase would be applied to the divine guides to mean that they are the intermediaries through which the power and might of God is manifested and executed.
2. **Theological Interpretation:** A similar interpretation as above with some rational proofs. Books on theology generally devolve to issues pertaining to *khilāfah* and imamate. Accordingly, ḥadīth reports such as the one given above are enumerated in the section of the virtues (*faḍā’il*)

²⁴³ *Kāfī*, 1:199, ḥadīth no. 7 {*K. al-tawḥīd, Bāb al-nawādir*}.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ḥadīth no. 8.

²⁴⁵ Fakhr al-Dīn Turayhī, *Majma’ al-Bāḥayn*, ed. A. al-Ḥusaynī, 2nd edition, 6 volumes (Tehran: al-Maktabah al-murtaḍawīyah, 1395/1975), 1:487.

of the divine guides without giving much commentary. Once imamate is established for the divine guides, the latter section of the work provides a brief commentary about these virtues.

3. **Philosophical Interpretation:** Imamite scholars employ philosophical principles such as *wāsiṭat al-wujūd* and the principle of *ashraf* to demonstrate that the power and might of God are executed strictly through the divine guides only. For instance, creation, divine mercy and sustenance are dispersed through the mediation (*wāsiṭah*) of the divine guides.²⁴⁶
4. **Mystical Interpretation:** The phrase “*yad Allāh*” is defined as the manifestation of the power of God that finds expression in the *walī* who has dissolved himself into the infinite divine reality after having gone through the phase of self-purification and the acquisition of divine attributes. For example, ‘Alī is reported to have said: “I was able to pluck out the door to the citadel of Khaybar by the power (*quwwah*) of the divine (*rabbāniyyah*).”²⁴⁷ In a *ḥadīth qudsī* it is related: “I continue to bestow My favors on my servant until I make him like me in the sense that just as I say for everything ‘be’ and ‘it is’ likewise he says ‘be’ and ‘it is.’”²⁴⁸ In another *ḥadīth qudsī* it is related: “When I love someone, I

²⁴⁶ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi* and *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Tehran: Maktabat al-mahmūdī, 1391/1971). His commentary is partial and ends with *Kitāb al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-a’immah wulāt amr Allāh wa kbazanah ‘ilmi-hi*, p. 373.

²⁴⁷ Aḥmad al-Āshtiyānī, *al-Wilāyah* (n.p.: Aḥmad al-Āshtiyānī, 1989), p. 4.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

become the ear through which he hears, the eye through which he sees.”²⁴⁹

The scope of interpretation is the widest and would not limit the appellation “*yad Allāh*” to the divine guides. Rather, they would include other saintly figures as worthy of the appellation and the virtues associated with the title.²⁵⁰

Analysis of the Hadīth of Ghadīr

When he (the Prophet) had completed its (Hajj) ceremonies, he left for Medina accompanied by the multitudes previously mentioned. He arrived at the poll of Khum (Ghadīr Khum) in al-Juhfa, where the roads of the people of Medina, the people of Egypt and the people of Iraq cross. That was on Thursday, Dhū al-hijjah 18 [when] Gabriel, the faithful, brought down Allāh’s revelation saying: “O Messenger! Deliver that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord” (5:67). And he commanded him to point out ‘Alī to the people and proclaim to them the revelation concerning him about the *wilāyah* and the obligation of obedience upon everyone. Those of the people who were in front were near Juhfa. The Prophet of Allāh commanded that those who advanced should be halted at that place. He forbade them to sit down under five gum acacia trees (*sumurat*) which were close to each other. When the summons to prayer was given for the noon prayers, he went towards them (the trees) and prayed at the head of the people under them... When he had completed his prayers, he stood delivering a speech in the middle of the people, on the saddles of the camels. He made them all hear, raising his voice, saying: “...O people, the Kind, the Knower, informed me that a Prophet has not lived but half the age of his predecessor and that I am about to be recalled and I responded. I am to be interrogated and you are to be interrogated. What will you say?” The people said, “We bear witness that you have proclaimed the message and that you have given the advice and that you have made the endeavour, may Allāh reward you!” He said, “Would you not bear witness that there is no deity but Allāh and that

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁵⁰ Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Kitāb naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, p. 102, 107, 131, 261. Ayatullah Khumaynī subscribes to this view. See Rūḥ Allāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī, *Ta’līqāt ‘alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam & Miṣbāḥ al-uns* (Dār al-mahajjah al-bayḍā’ and Dār al-rasūl al-akram, 1422/2001), pp. 22-28.

Muḥammad is His Servant and His Messenger; that His Garden is true; that His Fire is true; that death is true; that the hour comes of which there is no doubt; and that Allāh will resurrect those in the graves?" They said, "Yes. We bear witness to that." Then he said, "O Allah, bear witness [to that]," [and he continued], "O people! Do you hear?" They said, "Yes." He said, "I am preceding you to the Pond (*al-Ḥawḍ*) and you will rejoin me at the Pond...See to it how you will look after the Two Treasures (*al-Thaqalayn*) after me." A caller called out, "What are the Two Treasures, O Messenger of Allah?" He said, "The Bigger Treasure (*al-Thaql al-Akbar*) is the Book of Allāh, one end of it is in the Hand of Allāh and one end is in your hands. If you adhere to it you will not go astray. The Smaller Treasure (*al-Thaql al-Aṣghar*) is my Family (*'Itratī*). The Kind, the Knower, informed me that they will not separate until they rejoin me at the Pond. I wished that from Allāh for them. Do not precede them so that you may not perish. Do not fail to reach them so that you may not succumb." Then he held the hand of 'Alī and raised it until the white of the armpit could be seen and all the people recognized him. He said, "O people, who is more worthy (*awḷā*) [in the eyes of] the believers than their own selves?" They said, "Allāh and His Messenger know better." He said, "Allāh is my Master and I am the master of the believers and I am worthier in their eyes than their own selves. Whoever has me for his master has 'Alī for his master." He said it thrice, and according to Aḥmad, the *imām* of the Ḥanbalis, four times.²⁵¹

The ḥadīth of Ghadīr has been subject to analysis by numerous scholars to argue in favor of explicit succession of 'Alī after the death of Muḥammad, based on divine designation, and the arrogation to him of the comprehensive authority that was vested in the person of Muḥammad.

Step 1: Chain of Transmission (*isnād*)

The chain of transmission would be subject to scrutiny to prove that this ḥadīth has been related by numerous independent chains of reliable

²⁵¹ Translated by A. A. Sachedina in *Ghadīr* (Toronto: ISIJ of Toronto and NASIMCO, 1990), pp. 48-49 from 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad al-Amīnī al-Najafī, *al-Ghadīr*, 1:9-11.

transmitters, in both the Sunnite and Shi'ite sources, such that it would be classified as *mutawātir* (i.e. a ḥadīth with uninterrupted chains of transmissions related via numerous independent chains such that no doubt can be entertained concerning its authenticity).

Step 2: Text of Ḥadīth (*matn*)

The term “*mawlā*” is equated to “*awlā*” based on the following proofs:

1. Before confirming the title of “*mawlā*” on ‘Alī, it is reported that Muḥammad asked the assembled if he had more authority over them than they had upon themselves (*alastu awlā bi-kum min anfusi-kum*) to which the people responded in the affirmative. It was after this affirmation that Muḥammad asserted: “Of whomsoever I am the *mawlā*, ‘Alī is his *mawlā* (*man kuntu mawlā-hu fa ‘Alī mawlā-hu*).” This implies that the word “*mawlā*” is employed in the same sense as “*awlā bi al-taṣarruf*,” i.e. discretionary authority over all affairs.
2. Proofs from Qur’anic verses, ḥadīth reports and Arabic literature where the word “*mawlā*” is used in the sense of “*awlā*.” For instance, the Qur’anic verse, “The Prophet has a greater claim (*awlā*) on the faithful than they have on themselves” (Q. 33:6) would be adduced along with other ḥadīth reports and Arabic poetry that was composed to congratulate ‘Alī on the day of Ghadīr.
3. Since the word “*mawlā*” has multiple meanings,²⁵² one should seek recourse to other hints and signs within the text (*qarā’in muttasilah*) of

²⁵² According to ‘Allāmah Amīnī, it has 27 possible meanings. See *Ghadīr*, 1:340.

the sermon of the Prophet. The most important *qarīnah* is the phrase attributed to Muḥammad: “Am I not entitled to a greater right over you than you have upon yourselves?” To this question, his assembled followers responded in the affirmative. It was after this confirmation that the Prophet declared: “Of whomsoever I am the *mawlā*, ‘Alī is his *mawlā*.” External pointers (*qarā’in munfaṣīlah*) cited are that Muḥammad instructed them to halt in the middle of the desert in scorching heat to deliver this sermon and instructed them to convey his message to those who were absent from this assembly (*fa-l-yuballigh al-shāhid al-ghā’ib*). Other *qarā’in* include people coming to congratulate ‘Alī after the completion of the Prophet’s sermon; and poems being composed by Ḥassān b. Thābit in this assembly to celebrate the event of Ghadīr. ‘Allāmah Amīnī provides ten *qarā’in* (internal and external) that relate to the incident of Ghadīr.²⁵³

The ḥadīth of Ghadīr is viewed by Imamite scholars as the most important proof in favor of establishing an explicit designation for the succession of ‘Alī to Muḥammad and bestowing him with the same scope of authority as the Prophet, with the exception that he cannot be a recipient of revelation. This position is supported by a statement attributed to ‘Alī when he was asked about the most important proof for his imamate based on *sunnah*, in which he said that it is this ḥadīth of Ghadīr in which the Prophet bestowed the

²⁵³ Ibid., 1:371-78.

wilāyah on him based on divine instruction.²⁵⁴ Once the validity of this ḥadīth is established, other ḥadīth reports are cited to cement the station and rank of the divine guides in the section of *faḍā'il* (virtues) without providing much commentary or analysis.

Reason for Adopting this Method of Argument in the Analysis of Ḥadīth of Ghadīr

The method of analysis demonstrated above was adopted by Imamite scholars in response to challenges posed to them from different circles. A small group of Sunnite scholars questioned the veracity of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr and alleged that it was a forgery and a fabrication. In response, Imamite scholars turned to *isnād* criticism and attempted to show that this ḥadīth has been related by transmitters who are regarded as reliable and trustworthy by Sunnite scholars. Thus the validity of the historical event of Ghadīr has to be accepted. An extensive analysis of ḥadīth criticism in respect to the ḥadīth of Ghadīr is undertaken by 'Allāmah Amīnī in his monumental work titled *al-Ghadīr*.

Other Sunnite scholars accepted the validity of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr as a factual historical event, but contested the meaning that was attached to the Prophet's statement in regards to 'Alī. They believed that the term "*mawlā*" is not equivalent to "*awlā*" as interpreted by Shi'ite scholars, and rejected the implication that the Prophet was designating him as his successor. In response, Shi'ite scholars sought recourse to ḥadīth reports in which the term "*mawlā*" is employed in the sense of "*awlā*". In addition, they turned to the etymological

²⁵⁴ Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Ṭabrisī, *Ihtijāj*, 2 volumes (Beirut: Dār al-Nu'mān, 1980): "*naṣbu-hu iyyāya yawm ghadīr khumm bi al-wilāyah amr Allāh 'azz wa jall*," 1:233.

(*lughawī*) background of the word “*mawlā*” as well as to Arabic literature. In the case of the former, the obvious and immediate meaning of the word “*mawlā*,” in the absence of other hints, is equivalent to “*awlā*.” When further challenged to prove that the word “*mawlā*” is used to signify “*awlā*” and not the other twenty-six meanings, they would return to Arabic literature by pointing to the *qarā’in* that are internal and external to the ḥadīth of Ghadīr. In addition, prominent poets from the first century of the Islamic era to the present era would be quoted to prove that poems that used the word “*mawlā*” understood it in the sense of “*awlā*.”

Analysis of Hadith al-Ghadīr by ‘Allāmah Amīnī

The approach of ‘Allāmah Amīnī with respect to the analysis of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr is unique in the sense that it is a mixture of different treatments to which the Imamite scholars have subjected the issue of imamate and *wilāyah*. His approach cannot be categorized as exclusively ḥadīthī, historical, literary, theological, philosophical or mystical. Rather, it a combination of them along with an extensive use of Arabic poetry.

He begins his analysis with an introduction about the importance of this ḥadīth and the need for a historical survey. He provides the entire text of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr and reminds the reader that a number of subjects precede the famous statement by the Prophet: “*man kuntu mawlā-hu fa ‘Alī mawlā-hu.*”

Analysis of Chain of Transmitter (*isnād*) and Text (*matn*)

1. ‘Allāmah Amīnī categorizes the transmitters of ḥadīth into *ṭabaqāt* and provides their *masānīd* in the *rijāl* criticism. Each of the transmitters is

scrutinized for reliability and trustworthiness. Scholars who have confirmed or rejected the transmitter are also enumerated. A total of 110 companions are examined in great detail in alphabetical order. An analysis is made of *tābi'īn*, *tābi'īn* of *tābi'īn*, authors and Muslim scholars—Sunnite and Shi'ite—in historical chronology from the first century of the Islamic era onwards. In total, 360 prominent individuals are mentioned who wrote about the ḥadīth of Ghadīr and have confirmed its authenticity. A brief biography of each author, summary of his books and his methods are provided for each of the scholars.

2. 'Allāmah Amīnī also produced a study of scholars who wrote separate monographs on the incident of Ghadīr.

Objections by 'Alī, Fāṭimah, other divine guides and their disciples to Abū Bakr's Caliphate

In this section, 'Allāmah Amīnī responds to criticism leveled against 'Alī and the other divine guides for their passivity and silence after the assumption to caliphate by others. He argues that on numerous occasions 'Alī, Fāṭimah, the other imāms and their disciples protested at the assumption of the caliphate by Abū Bakr and others under the title "*munāshadāt*" (protestations).

Qur'anic verses

Commentary from Sunnite and Shi'ite sources is provided for three Qur'anic verses that are related to the ḥadīth of Ghadīr, namely, the verse on *iblāgh* (Q. 5:67), the verse on *ikmāl* (Q. 5:3) and the verse on the questioner (Q.

70:1). The sources from Sunnite works are used as a basis for his proofs and argumentation.

Celebration of Ghadīr

The occasion of Ghadīr was a moment of great celebration as demonstrated in the behavior of the Prophet and his companions who came to congratulate ‘Alī for having become the *walī* of the whole community. It is also related that the Prophet’s placing his white turban (*sahḥāb*) on ‘Alī symbolized his designation.²⁵⁵

Objections to *Isnād*

Sunnite scholars such as Ibn Ḥazm who have objected to the validity of the *isnād* of Ghadīr, are listed and responses are provided to each one.

Meaning of *Mawlā*

‘Allāmah Amīnī enumerates twenty-seven possible meanings for the word “*mawlā*” and provides reasons why the most appropriate and obvious application has the meaning of “*awlā*” and “*walī*” by resorting to poetry from Sunnite sources and other hints and allusions (*qarā’in*) surrounding the event of Ghadīr. There are two types of *qarā’in*—one is connected (*muttaṣilah*) and the other is disconnected (*munfaṣilah*). An example of the former is the Prophet using the word “*awlā*” in the context of his authority before mentioning ‘Alī as the “*mawlā*” (*alastu awlā bi-kum min anfusi-kum*), and a sample of the latter is his

²⁵⁵ *Ghadīr*, 1:292.

assembling people on a scorching day in the desert and also the fact that people came to congratulate (*tabniyah*) 'Alī after the sermon of the Prophet. To supplement the above, 'Allāmah Amīnī provides other ḥadīths related by the divine guides on the issue of *mawlā* and *wilāyah*.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶Ibid., 1:386-90.

Chronological Bibliography
Ḥadīth

- Ibn Abī Ṭālib, ‘Alī (d. 41/661). *Nahj al-balāghah*. Compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī. Translated by Sayed Ali Reza. Rome: European Islamic Cultural Center, 1984.
- al-Hilālī, Sulaym b. Qays al-‘Amirī al-Kūfī (d. 76/695). *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilālī*. 3 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Anṣārī al-Zanjānī al-Khū’inī. Qum: Dalīl-e mā, 1423/2002. {Volume 1 is devoted to a survey of the author and the book; volume 2 is a study of the text; volume 3 traces the composition of the work and provides a detailed subject index}.
- al-Shaybānī, Zurārah b. A‘yan al-Kūfī, *Musnad Zurārah b. A‘yan* (d. 150/767). Compiled by Bashīr al-Muḥammadī al-Māzandarānī. Qum: Mu‘assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1993.
- al-Barqī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid (d. 280/894). *Kitāb al-maḥāsīn*. 2 vols. Edited by al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī. Qum: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1950.
- al-Kūfī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Thaqafī (d. 283/896). *al-Ghārāt*. 2 volumes. al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Muḥaddith. Qum: Bahman, n.d.
- al-Ṣaffār, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Qummī (d. 290/902-3). *Baṣā‘ir al-darajāt*. Edited by Mīrzā M. Kūchebāghī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-‘uzmā al-Mar‘ashī al-Najafī, 1404/1983. {S. M. Modarressi is of the opinion that a larger part of this work is suspect and in all likelihood had been interpolated. See his *Tradition and Survival*, p. xvi}.
- al-Nisā‘ī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad b. Shu‘ayb (d. 303/915). *Khaṣā‘iṣ Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Ed. Muḥammad al-Kāzīm al-Maḥmūdī. Qum: Majma‘ ihyā’ al-thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1419/1998.
- al-Kulaynī Muḥammad b. Ya‘qūb b. Ishāq (d. 329/940). *al-Kāfī*. 2nd print. 8 volumes. Edited by ‘Ali Akbar Ghaffārī. Tehran: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1388/1968 {Includes *Uṣūl*, *Furū‘*, and *Rawḍah*}.
- *al-Kāfī*. Tehran: WOFIS, 1978-. This work is being translated to English under the supervision of Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ja‘farī. So far, up to the end of Section 1 of *Kitāb al-ḥujjah* has been translated to English. This corresponds to volume 2, p. 189 of the work edited and translated to Persian by Muṣṭafawī.

- _____. *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*. 12 volumes. Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī, 2000. Commentary by Muḥammad Sāliḥ b. Aḥmad Māzandarānī
- _____. *al-Uṣūl min al-kāfi*, 3 volumes [Arabic with Persian commentary and translation]. Edited and translated by S. Jawād Muṣṭafawī. Tehran: Daftar-e nashr-e farhang-e ahl-e bayt, nd. and the 4th volume is edited and translated by Hāshim Rasūlī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e masjid-e chahardah ma'ṣūm, 1966.
- Ibn Bābawayh, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq) (d. 381/991). *Ma'ānī al-akhbār*. Edited by 'Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1379/1959.
- al-Mas'ūdī, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (d. 346/957). *Ithbāt al-waṣīyyah li al-Imām 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Qum: al-Raḍī, nd.
- _____. *al-Tawḥīd*. Edited with footnotes by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Tahrānī. Qum: Jamā'at al-mudarrisīn, 1416/1995.
- _____. *'Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*. 2 vols. Qum: Dār al-'ilm, 1957.
- al-Mufīd, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān (d. 413/1022). *al-Ikhtisāṣ*. Introduction by al-Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī al-Sayyid Ḥasan al-Khurāsānī. Qum, Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.
- al-Ṭūsī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 460/1067). *Fihrist kutub al-Shī'ah wa uṣūli-him*. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Qum: Maktabat al-muḥaqqiq al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1420/1999.
- Ibn al-Maghāzilī al-Shāfi'ī, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Wāsiṭī (d. 483/1090). *Manāqib 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Bahbūdī. 2nd print. Tehran: al-Maṭba'ah al-Islāmiyyah, 1402/1982.
- al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far 'Imād al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim (6th/12th century). *Bashārat al-Muṣṭafā li-shī'at al-Murtaḍā*. Edited by Jawād al-Qayyūmī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1420/1999.
- Sibt b. al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256). *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*. Edited by Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣādiq Baḥr al-'Ulūm. Tehran: Maktabah naynawā al-ḥādīthah, n.d.
- al-Kanjī al-Shāfi'ī, Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Qurashī (d. 658/1259). *Kifāyat al-ṭālib fī manāqib 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. 3rd print. Tehran: Dār iḥyā' turāth Ahl al-bayt, 1404/1983.

- al-Dhahabī, al-Ḥāfiẓ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān (d. 748/1347). *Ṭuruq ḥadīth “man kuntu marwā-hu fa-‘Alī marwā-hu.”* Edited by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī. Qum: Intishārāt-e dalīl, 1421/2000.
- al-Zarandī, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad (d. 750/1349). *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn fi faḍā’il al-muṣṭafā wa al-murtaḍā wa al-batūl wa al-sibṭayn.* Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. Tehran: Maktabah naynawā al-ḥādithah, n.d.
- Ibn Shahr Āshūb al-Māzandarānī, Abū Ja‘far Rashīd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (d. 877/1472). *Manāqib āl Abī Ṭālib.* 4 volumes. Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1376/1956.
- al-Ṭabarī al-Ṣaghīr, Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Rustam (d. 923/1517). *Dalā’il al-imāmah.* Qum: Mu’assasat al-ba‘thah, 1413/1992.
- al-Shushtarī, Sayyid Nūr Allāh al-Ḥusayn al-Mar‘ashī (d. 1019/1610). *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil,* 36 volumes (includes *Mulḥaqāt* by Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar‘ashī al-Najafī). Edited by Shahāb al-Dīn al-Najafī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-Mar‘ashī al-Najafī, 1957–.
- al-‘Āmilī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥurr (d. 1104/1692). *al-Fawā’id al-Ṭūsiyyah.* Edited by Sayyid Mahdī Lājawardī Ḥusaynī and Shaykh Muḥammad Dorūdī. Qum: al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘ilmiyyah, 1403/1983.
- _____. *al-Fuṣūl al-muhimmah.* 3rd print. Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.
- _____. *Ithbāt al-hudāt bi al-nuṣūṣ wa al-mu’jizāt.* 3 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Rasūlī. Qum: al-Maṭba‘ah al-‘ilmiyyah, n.d.
- _____. *Wasā’il al-shī‘ah ilā taḥṣīl masā’il al-shar‘iyyah.* 20 vols. Beirut: Dār ihyā’ turāth al-‘Arabī, 1971.
- al-Baḥrānī, al-Sayyid Hāshim (d. 1107/1695). *Ghāyat al-marām wa ḥujjat al-khiṣām fi ta’yīn al-imām min ṭarīq al-khāṣṣ wa al-‘āmm.* 7 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid ‘Alī ‘Āshūr. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-ta’rīkh al-‘Arabī, 1422/2001.
- _____. *Kashf al-muhimm fi ṭarīq khabar “Ghadīr khumm.”* Qum: Mu’assasah ihyā’ turāth al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Baḥrānī, n.d.
- _____. *Madīnat al-ma‘ājiz.* 8 volumes. Edited by ‘Izzat Allāh al-Mawlā’ī al-Hamadānī. Qum: Mu’assasat al-ma‘ārif al-Islāmiyyah, 1413/1992.
- al-Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir (d. 1111/1699). *Bihār al-anwār.* 110 volumes. 2nd edition. Lebanon: Mu’assasat al-wafā’, 1983.

- . *Mir'āt al-'uqūl*. 26 vols. Edited by S. Hāshim al-Rasūlī with introduction by S. Murtaḍā al-'Askarī. Tehran: Dār-al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1404/1983.
- al-Ḥārithī, al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad b. Mu'tamad Khān al-Badkushānī (d. 1126/1714). *Nazal al-abrār bi-mā ṣaḥḥa min manāqib ahl al-bayt al-aṭḥār*. Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. Isfahan: Maktabat al-imām Amīr al-mu'minīn al-'āmmah, 1403/1983.
- al-Futūnī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Āmilī al-Nabāṭī (d. 1140/1727). *Ḍiyā' al-'ālamayn fī bayān fadā'il al-a'immaḥ al-muṣṭafayn*. Manuscript form at Mu'assasah āl al-bayt, Qum, Iran.
- Al-Qandūzī al-Ḥanafī, Sulaymān b. Ibrāhīm (d. 1293/1876). *Yanābi' al-mawaddah li-dhawī al-qurbā*. Edited with introduction by al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Khurāsān. Najaf: al-Maktabah al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1384/1965. This same work has also been edited by Sayyid 'Alī Jamāl Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī. 3 volumes plus one volume index. n.p.: Dār al-uswah li al-ṭibā'ah wa al-nashr, 1416/1995.
- al-Lakhnawī, al-Sayyid Mīr Ḥāmid Ḥusayn al-Mūsawī (d. 1306/1888). *'Abaqāt al-anwār fī ithbāt imāmat al-a'immaḥ al-aṭḥār*. Multiple volumes for each separate ḥadīth. Edited by Mawlānā al-Burūjirdī and vocalized by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-'Āmilī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1416/1995-.
- al-Ṭabrisī, al-Nūrī (d. 1320/1902). *Mustadrak al-wasā'il*. 18 volumes. Qum: Mu'assasah Āl al-bayt li ihyā al-turāth, 1408/1987.
- al-Ḥā'irī, al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī al-Ṭabrizī al-Najafī (d. 1362/1943). *Mushajjarah Ijāzāt al-'ulamā' al-Imāmiyyah*. Introduction by Sayyid Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985. {He provides the tree of *isnād* from one disciple to another, each of whom was authorized (*ijāzah*) to relate ḥadīth reports, till it reaches the first transmitter who had heard the ḥadīth from the divine guides or their companions}.
- al-Mūsawī, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn (d. 1377/1957). *al-Murāja'āt*. 2nd edition. Edited by Ḥusayn al-Rādī. Beirut: al-jāmi'iyyah al-Islāmiyyah, 1402/1982. {It contains a good index to locate the Qur'anic verses and ḥadīths related to imamate: *Sabīl al-najāh fī tatimmat al-murāja'āt*}.
- al-Amīnī al-Najafī, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad (d. 1390/1970). *Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'*. Edited with detailed annotations by Muḥammad Amīnī-Najafī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e Istiqlāl, 1997.

- . *al-Ghadīr fī al-Kitāb wa al-sunnah wa al-adab*. 11 vols. 3rd print. Tehran: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1987.
- . *Sīratu-nā wa sunnatu-nā*. 2nd print. Beirut: Dār al-Ghadīr li al-maṭbū'āt and Dār al-kitāb al-Islāmī, 1992.
- . *Thamarāt al-asfār*. Unpublished manuscript. It is a collection of ḥadīth reports that he gathered from his travels to Turkey, India, Syria and other countries after inspecting numerous manuscripts.
- Ābādī, Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Fayrūz (d. 1990). *Faḍā'il al-khamsah min al-ṣiḥāḥ al-sittah*. 3 volumes. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī, 1973.
- Tahrānī, Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī (d. 1994). *'Aqā'id al-insān: imāmah*. Qum: Sayyid Hāshim Tahrānī, 1411/1990.
- al-Ṭabāṭabā'i, al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 1416/1996). *Ahl al-bayt fī maktabat al-'arabiyyah*. Qum: Mu'assasah āl al-bayt, 1417/1997.
- Al-Milānī, al-Sayyid 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī (Contemporary scholar at the Islamic seminary in Qum). *Nafaḥāt al-azhār fī khulāṣah "Abaqāt al-anwār."* 20 volumes. n.p.:n.d.
- Tustarī, Muḥammad Taqī. *al-Akhhār al-dakhīlah*. So far, five volumes have been published. Footnotes by 'Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1976-

CHAPTER 3

Theological Approach to Imamate(MANHAJ KALĀMĪ²⁵⁷)(a) Definition

The theological approach to the treatment of Imamate combines rational and traditional intellectual constructs to explain and justify matters related to the issue of imamate and underscores the importance of reason in discovering religious truth. In this approach, the Qur'an and the ḥadīth corpus²⁵⁸ continue to play an important role, based on their own merit, and are employed to serve as a source material for making rational arguments. In other words, the method is both *naqlī* (textual sources) and *'aqlī* (rational demonstration).

The *kalāmī* approach was employed also at the time of the divine guides. A good example of this method is demonstrated in the mode of argumentation used by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam. His style of proving imamate was approved by the sixth imām:

²⁵⁷ One of the first persons to compose a work on imamate using a *kalāmī* approach is 'Alī b. Ismā'īl b. Shu'ayb al-Maytham b. Yahyā al-Tammār (died after 179/795), who was the great-grandson of Maytham al-Tammār—the devoted and trusted companion of the first Shi'ite divine guide, 'Alī. He resided in Basra and engaged in debates with the first speculative theologian of the Mu'tazilites, Abū al-Hudhayl al-'Allāf (d. ca. 227/841) and Abū Ishāq al-Nazzām (died between 220/835 and 230/845). 'Alī b. Ismā'īl is counted amongst the companions of the eighth Shi'ite imam, 'Alī al-Riḍā, and authored a number of works including one on imamate entitled *al-Kāmil* and another one entitled *Majālis Hishām b. al-Ḥakam*. He is authenticated as a man of integrity and probity in the works of *rijāl*. See Abū al-'Abbās al-Kūfī, *Rijāl al-Najāshī*, p. 251; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī's *Kitāb al-fihrist*, p. 87 and *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 332; Khū'ī, *Mu'jam*, 12: 299-300 (no. 7943); Māmaqānī, *Tanqīḥ al-maqāl*, 2:270. See also Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfī*, p. 466; Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, p. 43 and p. 161.

²⁵⁸ Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth reports that are commonly used to demonstrate the comprehensive creative authority (*al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*) of the divine guides are generally excluded in the works of *kalām* primarily because the discussion on *wilāyah* was reserved for the select disciples of the divine guides and their followers who had the maturity and the intellect to understand the lofty station of the divine guides.

A group of companions were gathered around Abū ‘Abdillāh; Humrān ibn A‘yan, Muḥammad ibn al-Nu‘mān, Hishām ibn Sālim and al-Ṭayyār were in that group. With them was Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, who was young. Abū ‘Abdillāh said to him: “O Hishām, will you not tell me how you debated with ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd ([80/699 – 144/761], the second most important of the Mu‘tazilites, and the most eminent of his time)? How did you question him?” Hishām replied: “O son of the Messenger of Allāh! I respect you too much, and hence I feel shy before you, and I find myself tongue-tied in your presence.” Abū ‘Abdillāh said: “When I give you an order, you must carry it out.” Hishām said: “I was informed of the situation of ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd, and that he was sitting in the mosque of Basra (teaching). This was distressing for me, so I set out to meet (him) and reached Basra on Friday. When I arrived at the mosque of Basra, I found a large circle surrounding ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd, who was wearing a black woolen cloth round his waist and another over his shoulders. People were asking him questions. I asked the people (who were standing) around him to make way for me, which they did, and I sat upon my knees in the back row of the students (who were sitting). Then I said: ‘O learned scholar! I am a stranger. Will you allow me to ask a question?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I said to him: ‘Do you have eyes?’ He replied: ‘O my son! What kind of a question is this? How can you question a thing which you see (clearly yourself)?’ I said: ‘But this is my question.’ He said: ‘O my son! Ask, even though your question may be foolish.’ I told him: ‘Then answer my question.’ He said: ‘Ask (it).’ I said: ‘Do you have eyes?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘What do you do with them?’ He replied: ‘I see colors and individual things with them.’ I asked: ‘Do you have a nose?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘What do you do with it?’ He replied: ‘I smell odours with it.’ I asked: ‘Do you have a mouth?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘What do you do with it?’ He replied: ‘I taste flavors with it.’ I asked: ‘Do you have ears?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘What do you do with them?’ He replied: ‘I hear sounds with them.’ I said: ‘Do you have a heart (the seat of the soul and perception)?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I said: ‘What do you do with it?’ He replied: ‘I discriminate with it whatever is presented to the parts of my body and (my) senses.’ I asked: ‘Are you not, with these parts of your body, without need of your heart (soul)?’ He replied: ‘No.’ I said: ‘How can this be when they are quite sound and healthy?’ He replied: ‘O my son! When the parts of the body doubt regarding anything which is smelt, tasted or heard, they refer it to the heart to remove the doubt and replace it with certainty.’” Hishām said: “I said to him: ‘Has Allāh appointed the heart to remove the doubts of the body?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ I asked: ‘The heart is necessary,

otherwise the parts (of the body) cannot reach certainty.' He replied: 'Yes.' I said: 'O Abū Marwān! Allāh, the Blessed, the Sublime, did not leave the parts of the body without appointing a guide (Imām) for them so that they might verify the truth and reach certainty about what is doubted. How could He leave all His creatures in confusion, doubt and difference of opinion without appointing anyone as their guide (Imām), to whom they might refer their doubts and confusions, when He has given the parts of your body a guide to whom you can refer your doubts and confusions?' He was completely silent, and said nothing to me. After some time, he turned towards me and said: 'Are you Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam?' I replied: 'No.' He asked: 'Are you one of his companions?' I replied: 'No.' Then he said: 'Where do you come from?' I replied: 'I am of the people of Kufa.' He said: 'Then you are surely he.' Then he embraced me and vacated his seat for me. And then he kept silent until I got up." The narrator said: "Abū 'Abdillāh smiled and said: 'O Hishām! Who taught you this?' Hishām replied: 'It is something which I learnt from you and put together (in this way).' He said: 'By Allāh, this is written in the books of Ibrāhīm and Mūsā.'"²⁵⁹

The endorsement of this style of reasoning by Imām Ṣādiq is noteworthy and is indicative that future Imamite theologians drew from this corpus of ḥadīth literature to formulate and systematically institutionalize the interrelationship and interdependence between reason (*'aql*) and revelation (*sam*). It also enabled them to provide a rational substratum to the faith and belief system in the face of challenges confronted from their opponents and supporters during the absence (*ghaybah*) of the twelfth imām.

(b) Sources:

The primary sources employed by those who adopt this approach in the articulation of the doctrine of imamate comprise Qur'an, ḥadīth reports from the divine guides and rational proofs (*al-dalā'il al-'aqliyyah*).

²⁵⁹ *Kāfi*, translated by WOFIS under the supervision of Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ja'farī, Volume 1, Part Two, Book 4 (I), pp. 7-10, ḥadīth no. 3 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb al-iḍṭirār ilā al-ḥujjah*}.

(c) Method of Discussion and Analysis in Books of *Kalām* on Imamate

Scientific interrogations (*al-maṭālib al-‘ilmiyyah*): These are fundamental questions that are posed in various sciences to clarify the subject matter. The primary questions posed are three in number: *mā*, *hal* and *lim*.

Mā is of two forms: *Mā al-shāriḥah* and *mā al-ḥaqīqiyyah*. The former poses a question on the linguistic meaning of the word; its response will be in accordance with the dictionary definition of the term. The latter questions the quiddity and essence of the term. The response will define the term in accordance with the nature and essence of the meaning of the term.

Hal likewise has two forms: simple *hal* and compound *hal*. The former asks the question about the existence or non-existence of a thing. The latter is concerned about the characteristics and attributes of the thing in question. For example, ‘is God the creator of evil or not?’ It follows that the compound *hal* can be deliberated upon only after the simple *hal* has been responded to and clarified.

Lim poses a question on the causal relationship (*‘illah*) of an item, and it logically follows *mā* and *hal*. It has two forms: *lim thubūt* and *lim itḥbāt*. The former is concerned with the issue of the cause of existence of a thing, and the latter is concerned with the proofs for the confirmation and presence of a thing.

The secondary interrogations comprise questions such as *ayy*, *ayn*, *kayf*, *kam*, *matā*, and *man*.

The sequence of these principles is logically structured and requires that the preceding issue be dealt with before the subsequent issue can be examined.

This structured flow adopted by the Imamite theologians will be evident in the division of subjects and analysis on the issue of imamate.

Theologians adopted the classification method used in formal logic and applied it to theology with certain adaptations. One of the areas of application was on the subject of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) with titles such as:

1. '*Mā al-nabī?*' i.e. definition of prophethood.
2. '*Hal al-nabī?*' i.e. is the existence of the prophet obligated by the wisdom of God or not?
3. '*Lim yajibu wujūd al-nabī?*' i.e. why is the existence of a prophet obligatory? It discusses the purpose, wisdom and benefit of having a prophet.
4. '*Kayf al-nabī?*' i.e. characteristics and conditions of prophethood.
5. '*Man al-nabī?*' i.e. who would fulfill the above conditions to be designated as the prophet.

In the section of imamate, an identical sequence of questions, as above, are posed:²⁶⁰

1. '*Mā al-imām?*' i.e. definition of imamate that is in accordance with the technical and specialized meaning of this term as defined by theologians (*mutakallimūn*).

²⁶⁰ A work on *kalām* that employs this method is one by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī in *Talkhīṣ al-muḥaṣṣal*, 2nd edition (Dār al-aḍwā', 1985). It is a summary and commentary of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Muḥaṣṣal afkār al-mutaqaddimīn wa al-muta'akhhirīn*. One of the treatises is titled *Risālat al-imāmah* (pp. 424-33). The doctrine of imamate is elaborated under five categories: *mā*, *hal*, *lim*, *kayf* and *man*. This is identical to the treatment on imamate adopted by Maytham al-Bahrānī in his *Qawā'id al-marām fi 'ilm al-kalām*, ed. al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī (Qum: Maktabah Ayatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985), p. 173.

2. '*Hal al-imām?*' i.e. does the existence of an imām flow from the wisdom of God or not? In other words, is designation of an imām obligatory in such a manner that there would be no period devoid of the presence of an imām?
3. '*Lim yajibu wujūd al-imām?*' i.e. the purpose, benefit and wisdom behind designating an imām.
4. '*Kayf al-imām?*' Characteristics and conditions of the person assuming the position of imām.
5. '*Man al-imām?*' Discussion about the person who is appointed to the position of imamate.

Most important subjects of discussion under the rubric of imamate in works of theology comprise the following:

1. Necessity of appointing the imām.
2. Necessity of recognizing the imām.
3. Necessity of designating the imām.
4. Necessity of infallibility of the imām.
5. Knowledge of the imām.
6. Necessity for the imām to be the most virtuous and of highest merit (*afdāl*).
7. Imamate of 'Alī as the immediate successor of the Prophet.
8. Imamate of the remaining eleven imāms from the progeny of 'Alī.
9. Negation of the claims of *khilāfah* of claimants other than the twelve divine guides.

10. Sects (*firaq*) among the Shi'ites.
11. Injunction regarding the opponents (*muḥārib*) and those who are inimical (*nawāṣīb*) to the Shi'ite imāms and their followers, and dissenters (*mukhālif*) of the doctrine of imamate.²⁶¹

The above are primary categories that one would find in all the works of *kalām* written by theologians, be they Sunnite or Shi'ite. The difference would only lie with respect to the brevity or detail in the manner of discussion of the subject matter.

²⁶¹ Numbers 1-2 would fall under '*mā al-imām*,' no. 3 under '*hal al-imām*,' nos. 4-6 under '*kayf al-imām*,' and nos. 7-9 under '*man al-imām*' and nos. 10 and 11 stand by themselves.

MĀ al-Imāmah?

Definition:

The concept of imamate as defined by Sunnite and Shi'ite scholars from a theological (*kalāmī*) perspective is given below:

Shams al-Dīn al-Isbahānī al-Ash'arī²⁶² (d. 746/1345): "Imamate is a position of succession to the Prophet entrusted on a person for the establishment of religious injunctions and the preservation of social order. As such, it is obligatory on every person to follow this person."

Ramaḍān b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Bihishtī (d. 1571): "Imamate is a position of universal leadership on temporal and religious matters in the capacity of deputy of the Prophet."²⁶³

Al-Fāḍil al-Qūshjī (d. 1474 or 75): "Imamate is a position of universal leadership on temporal and religious matters by virtue of succession to the Prophet."

'Allāmah Ḥillī: "Imamate is a position of universal leadership on temporal and religious matters for a person who is a deputy of the Prophet."²⁶⁴

Imamite theological works define imamate as *khilāfab* in the narrow signification that this term acquired, and thus do not include issues dealing with *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*. As a result, the scope of authority vested in the person of the imām is narrower than the one afforded by philosophers or mystics.

It should be noted that from a linguistic perspective, Imamate means leadership. However, in its technical meaning, as employed by theologians, it

²⁶² A famous Sunnite scholar who is credited with a number of works including a commentary on *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī.

²⁶³ Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd*, p. 9.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

has the following characteristics that can be gleaned from the above definition of an imām by Sunnite and Shi'ite scholars:

1. General leadership over the community.
2. Leadership in worldly and religious matters.
3. Deputy of the Prophet.
4. Obedience to the imām is mandatory in the same fashion as obedience to the Prophet was obligatory.

There is general agreement between the Sunnite and Shi'ite scholars on the above four major points, however, differences crop up on the following four subjects:

1. Shi'ites assert that the appointment of imām is like the appointment of the prophet and thus rests with God. However, the Sunnites assert that designation rests with the people or with a select council.
2. Shi'ites assert that imamate, like prophethood, is one of the components of the fundamentals of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*). In contrast, Sunnites argue that imamate is a component of the secondary matters of religion (*furū' al-dīn*). It follows that there is no scope for *ijtibād* and *taqlīd* if it is classified under principles of religion. The outcome of imamate classified as part of *furū' al-dīn* is allowance for the designation of an imām to fall under collective responsibility (*wājib kifā'ī*), i.e. if one qualified person or a group selects someone as an imām, it is sufficient,

and others are absolved of the responsibility of selecting and appointing an imām.²⁶⁵

3. Shi'ites assert that the imām should be infallible just as was the Prophet. The Sunnites say that whosoever proclaims the declaration of faith with certain conditions is eligible to be an imām and infallibility is not a requirement.
4. Shi'ites assert that God designated 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib as a successor to the Prophet and he is to be followed with the chain of eleven imāms from the progeny of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī, and they are all proofs of God. However, the Sunnites claim that God did not explicitly designate any person to succeed the Prophet and the number of imāms is not limited to twelve.

In the discussion that follows, we will deliberate on the above issues and explain the opinions and proofs of both schools of thought.

²⁶⁵ For a critical and exhaustive analysis of this subject, refer to *Ghadir*, 7:141-152.

HAL yajibu nasb al-Imām?

There is a small minority of scholars, such as al-Aṣamm (d. 200/816) from the Mu‘tazilite²⁶⁶ and the Kharijites,²⁶⁷ who are of the opinion that there is no need to appoint an imām. However, the majority of Muslims are of the view that there is a need to appoint an imām, but on the issue of designating an imām, there are four opinions on the necessity of this investiture:

1. It is obligatory for *God* to appoint an imām based on *rational proofs* (*‘aql*).
2. It is obligatory for *God* to appoint an imām based on *revelatory proofs* (*sam’*).
3. It is mandatory for *people* to appoint an imām based on *rational proofs*.
4. It is mandatory for *people* to appoint an imām based on *revelatory proofs*.

(i) Obligation on *God* to appoint an imām based on *rational proofs*

- (a) This opinion is espoused by the Twelver Shi‘ites and the Isma‘ilites.
- (b) The advocates of this opinion argue that it is not possible for human reasoning to fathom the true reality and human responsibilities for the attainment of justice and equity by itself without a divinely appointed person like a prophet or imām. Thus, it is obligatory upon God to send such a person so that humanity can be guided to the true path and attain cognizance

²⁶⁶ According to him it is not obligatory to have an imām during times of peace and security, however, in times of crisis it is mandatory, Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi‘ Tajrīd*, p. 109.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

(*ma'rifah*) of God. The principle of *lutf* is employed to substantiate this point of view.

Benevolence Principle (*Qā'idat al-lutf*)²⁶⁸

The benevolence principle rests on the premise that the primary purpose of creation is to attain the divine purpose of prosperity (*sa'ādah*) and perfection (*kamāl*). God is mandated to motivate human beings towards perfection by appointing a divine guide who would encourage people to obey God and, consequently, bring them closer to God. At the same time, his presence and guidance would discourage people from the commission of sins and steer them away from disobedience to God.²⁶⁹

The method adopted by Imamite theologians in articulating the benevolence principle is as follows: It is incumbent on God to have His proof on earth so that, by his presence and teachings, people will be guided in such a way that the divine purpose of human prosperity and perfection can be attained. The divine guide would induce people to choose obedience to God and avoid the commission of sins. The syllogism (*qiyās*) is broken down as follows:

Minor premise: The existence of an imām is *lutf* (divine benevolence)

Major premise: Every *lutf* is obligatory upon God

Conclusion: Thus, it is incumbent on God to designate an imām.

²⁶⁸ The principle of *lutf* and proofs that are rational and revelatory are generally treated in the section of prophethood (*nubuwwah*).

²⁶⁹ Benevolence (*lutf*) is defined in two ways. First, attainment of the divine purpose of human creation, which is perfection and prosperity. Second, motivation towards the commission of acts of obedience to God and deterrence from His disobedience. In actuality, the second meaning is a subset of the first because a person who encourages people to obey God and refrain from sins is guiding them towards the path of perfection and prosperity.

Proof for the validity of the minor premise: The presence of a person who would induce people to perform righteous deeds and conduct themselves with fairness and justice is a source of blessing and grace for the individual and the society. By his presence, the people would be encouraged to obey God and perform good deeds, and refrain from the disobedience of God and the commission of evil deeds. He motivates people to obey God and avoid sin; implements divine decrees; safeguards the Divine Law; educates the public as an authoritative teacher; prevents social disorder and corruption to take place on earth; encourages people to cultivate the attribute of justice at the level of the individual and society. Thus, his presence is a source of benevolence in both meanings of the term '*lutf*' i.e. attainment of the divine purpose for human creation; and cultivation of obedience to God and rejection of disobedience to Him.

Proof for the validity of the major premise: The divine goal for the creation of human beings is to enable them to attain perfection and prosperity. Not sending a guide and informing humanity of such a person would defeat the purpose of God. Secondly, God has made it obligatory upon Himself to facilitate this journey towards perfection: "Surely, it is for Us to show the way" (Q. 92:12).

Conclusion: It is obligatory upon God based on rational proofs to appoint an imām.

Critical Analysis of the Benevolence Principle

The principle of *lutf* suffers from contradiction when attempting to explain the current situation wherein the imām has entered into occultation and is no longer accessible for many of the aforementioned functions cited.

The major premise that it is incumbent on God to designate an imām, based on the principle of *lutf*, is unconditional and applies under all circumstances, irrespective of whether or not the community is mature enough to receive the imām. The challenging nature of this issue led the imamite theologians to explain that the primary reason for the delay in the reappearance of the occult imām is the lack of preparedness on the part of his followers to receive him, listen to his guidance, obey him and implement his instructions. It was argued that three conditions would have to be fulfilled for the presence of the occult imām to become actualized. One aspect is obligatory upon God; another aspect is mandatory on the imām; and the last component is obligatory on the people.²⁷⁰ That which is obligatory on God is the creation of the designated infallible leader and his empowerment with strength, knowledge and excellence over others, and with the explicit evidence of the identity of such a person so that he may be recognized by all. That which is incumbent on the imām is to accept the responsibility and privilege conferred upon him by God to be the inerrant guide and be prepared to execute his responsibilities. The third condition necessary for the fulfillment of complete *lutf* is for the people to be prepared to help and assist the imām; pay heed to his instruction and obey

²⁷⁰ Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi‘ Tajrīd*, pp. 150-161.

him. Since they have failed to fulfill this requirement, the people are the cause of depriving themselves from benefiting from the fullness of the *lutf* of the presence of the imām. Thus, it is argued by Imamite theologians, the fault lies with the people and not with God or the imām. This tripartite relationship is encapsulated by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī: “*wujūdu-hu bi-naḥsi-hi lutf, wa taṣarrufu-hu lutf ākhar, wa ‘adamu-hu minnā.*”²⁷¹

However, the reasoning provided by the use of revealed sources and reason for the necessity of the presence of the imām is not conditioned on the acceptance of the people of the designated imām. The mere presence of the imām is an act of *lutf* because, through him, people will be guided towards perfection and prosperity. And likewise, Qur’anic verses that are cited in favor of the benevolence principle are absolute and unconditional such as “Surely, it is for Us to show the way (*inna ‘alay-nā la-l-hudā*)” (Q. 92:12), and “He has ordained mercy on Himself” (Q. 6:12). Furthermore, many of the other prophets mentioned in the Qur’an were rejected and mocked by their people and, in spite of this, God sent them to their respective communities. Thus, the responses by Imamite theologians on the reasons for the absence of the occult imām are inadequate and suffer from contradiction based on rational and textual proofs. The aforementioned flaws apply to the method of proof and argumentation employed by the theologians but does not hinder their argument about the existence of the imām as a source of benevolence (*lutf*).

²⁷¹ Ibid.

This problem is peculiar to the theological treatment of the concept of imamate because it limits the function of the imām to guidance in temporal and religious affairs that is akin to *khilāfah*. In the other treatment of imamate by traditionists, mystics and philosophers, the position of imām also encompasses *al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah* and his existence is advanced as the Creator's purpose (final cause) in creating and the reason for the continuity of life in all worlds.

(ii) Obligation on God to appoint an imām based on revelatory proofs

(a) This opinion is shared by those who do not accept the rational proofs, i.e. the benevolence principle (*lutf*). Therefore, they are obligated to provide revelatory proofs from the Qur'an and ḥadīth reports.

(b) It is incumbent upon God to designate an imām based solely on revelatory proofs (*sam', shar', naql*) and not on rational proofs (*'aql*). The principle of *lutf* is deemed weak and insufficient by this group in explaining the necessity of appointing an imām and thus only God could clarify this issue without doubt or ambiguity. Their textual proofs consist of Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth reports.²⁷²

Sample Qur'anic Verses

“Surely, it is for Us to show the way” (Q. 92:12).

“You are only a warner and (there is) a guide for every people” (Q. 13:7).

²⁷² For a list of ḥadīth reports, see *Biḥār*, 23:102.

“Say: Is there any of your associates who guides to the truth? Say: Allāh guides to the truth. Is He then Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go right unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge?” (Q. 10:35)

“Surely Allāh chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Imran above the nations. Offspring, one of the other, and Allāh is Hearing, Knowing” (Q. 3:34-35).

(iii) Mandatory for people to appoint an imām based on reason:

(a) The exponents of this opinion are Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, Baghdadi Mu‘tazilites, Jāḥiẓ, Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Khayyāṭ, Abū al-Qāsim al-Ka‘bī,²⁷³ and the Zaydites because they are of the opinion that the imamate will be in the progeny of Ḥasan or Ḥusayn by consultation.²⁷⁴

a. The syllogism for this rational proof:

Minor premise: Designation of an imām repels harm and injury from a human being. (Because when there is a leader who provides discipline and organization, he produces security for the public and safeguards them against chaos).

Major premise: Repulsion of harm from oneself is obligatory based on reason.

²⁷³ Aḥmad Aminī, *Sharḥ jāmi‘ Tajrīd*, p. 90, quoting Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s *Arba‘in fi uṣūl al-dīn*.

²⁷⁴ Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī, *Tawḍīḥ al-Murād*. Extensive Commentary and footnotes on *Kashf al-Murād*. (Tehran: Maktabat al-Mufīd, n.d.), p. 678.

Conclusion: Therefore, it is mandatory for the people to appoint an imām.

It is noteworthy to observe that the Mu'tazilites, in accordance with the foundation of their school, are of the view that on all matters the benevolence of God must be bestowed. That is, it is obligatory upon God to disperse all possible benevolence to His creation without exception. Accordingly, in the section on prophethood, they use this principle of *lutf* to make it incumbent on God to send prophets in order to enable the *mukallaf* fulfil his/her religious obligations. However, in their deliberation in the section on imamate, instead of employing the benevolence principle, they discard this principle and resort to the above argument to conclude that it is mandatory on the people to designate an imām. They do not regard the existence of the imām as *lutf*. Thus, designation of the imām is not obligatory upon God. Sharīf Murtaḍā appropriates many of the Mu'tazilite principles and employs them to prove the soundness of his argument in favor of the doctrine of imamate by drawing a parallel between prophethood and imamate. This process was one of, of course, cross-fertilization.

(iv) Mandatory for people to appoint an imām based on revelatory proofs

- (a) Proponents of this view are the Sunnite Akhbārīs, Ash‘arites, and from among the Mu‘tazilites are Jubbā‘iyyūn including Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā‘ī (d. 303/915) and his son, and a minor group of Mu‘tazilites.
- (b) Four proofs are advanced:

The first proof is that there was consensus amongst the companions of the Prophet that the issue of succession was of such great importance that it had a higher priority than providing the funeral rites to the Prophet after his death.²⁷⁵

The second proof advanced goes as follows:

Minor premise: The designation of an imām is a preliminary to an obligation.

Major premise: The pre-requisite for an obligation is itself obligatory.

Conclusion: The designation of an imām is obligatory.

The validity of the major premise is self-evident and requires no further elaboration. As for the minor premise, it is argued that, on many occasions, God has instructed followers to implement the divine decrees, preserve the territorial integrity of the lands by engaging in military warfare (*jihād*) and preserve social order and cohesion. These goals could be attained only with the presence of an imām. Thus, there is revelatory

²⁷⁵ This is a weak argument because there was no consensus amongst the Prophet’s companions on the issue of succession. Furthermore, there is no relationship between consensus of the Prophet’s companions and necessity of designating an imām by the fiat of public assent sanctioned by revelatory proofs.

proof (*shar'*) for the people to designate an imām who will facilitate carrying out the above-mentioned tasks.²⁷⁶

The third proof advanced by Rāzī is that designation of an imām is necessary for the sake of securing against harm. It is because of this necessity to repel harm from oneself that a rational person would appoint an imām to obtain safety and security such that ethical values can be cultivated in society. One is mandated to repel harm from oneself to the extent possible.²⁷⁷

The fourth proof attributed to Taftāzānī,²⁷⁸ is that it is necessary to designate an imām based on the prophetic tradition that has been related in Sunnite and Shi'ite sources: "One who dies without recognizing the imām of his time has died the death of the age of ignorance."²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ The method of confirming the necessity of the preliminary so that the designation of an imām also becomes confirmed leads to a necessity based on rational proofs and not revelatory proofs. This is because the former is a ruling based on reason and thus the conclusion is attained through a rational argument.

²⁷⁷ Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd*, pp. 97-8. Other scholars like Qūshjī in *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd* have used a similar argument except that he has augmented the minor premise "*daf' al-maḍārr* (repulse of harms)" with "*jalb al-manāfi'* (procurement of benefits)," *ibid.*

²⁷⁸ Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd*, pp. 104-05.

²⁷⁹ On the origin and analysis of this ḥadīth, see *Ghadīr*, 10:359. Imamite scholars have objected to this proof because the Qur'anic prophecy to the effect that, on the day of judgment, everyone will be summoned by their respective imām (Q. 17:71-72) requires that the imām in question be one who is of high rank and immune from committing sins. Further, Taftāzānī himself, after relating this ḥadīth, confesses that "after the reign of the Abbasid era, the matter of knowing the imām is difficult." Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd*, p. 100.

LIM yajibu wujūd al-imām

Under this section, in works of Imamite theologians, an attempt is made to discover the purpose and wisdom behind the existence of an imām. Two postulations are advanced in favor of the presence of an imām:

- i. The *mukallaf* is attracted towards obedience to God and repelled from commission of sins by virtue of the existence of the imām.
- ii. The *shar'* (divine injunctions) is safeguarded and implemented by the presence of the imām.

Both of these points were discussed in the above section of *hal* while examining the four opinions on the issue of the appointment of an imām.

KAYF al-imām

Under this category, we have the following important issues that are discussed after having proven that the appointment of an imām (*naṣb al-imām*) is obligatory upon God:

1. Infallibility (*‘iṣmah*)
2. Knowledge of the imām (*‘ilm*)
3. Virtues of the imām (*faḍā’il*)
4. Explicit designation of the imām (*naṣṣ*)

‘ISMAH²⁸⁰

The issue of *‘iṣmah* is relevant for those who espouse the view that God is mandated to designate a person who is bestowed the responsibility of being the imām. In contrast, those who hold the view that the community is entrusted to choose a leader do not regard the quality of *‘iṣmah* as a necessary condition for the imām. *‘Iṣmah* means that the person is immune from committing errors or mistakes in matters of knowledge and practice.

It is mandatory for the imām to be infallible for the following reasons:

1. The function of the imām is to provide guidance and assistance for people in obeying God and avoiding sins. If this person is prone to commit sins, then he is obliged to seek guidance from another person who would be the source of providing instruction to attain prosperity and lead a righteous life. This process would lead to infinite regress (*tasalsul*). Since this is not possible, thus the imām must be infallible.

²⁸⁰ For more elaborate discussion on the concept of *‘iṣmah*, see in this chapter the section: “The obligatory nature of explicit designation.”

The mode of argument (*al-qiyās al-istithnā'*) for this proof is that since the conclusion is null and void, it follows that the antecedent (*muqaddam*) must also be null and void.

2. The imām is the protector and guardian of the Divine Law (*Shar'*). The person who is conferred this responsibility must be infallible so that no distortion might creep into the divine prescriptions and be a source of misguidance for followers. For the imamites, the Qur'an is viewed as a collection of divine prescriptions and the imām is its guardian, protector and explicator (*Qur'ān nāṭiq*). This is also mentioned in the ḥadīth of *thaqalayn* which states that the Qur'an needs an explicator: "I leave behind you two important and precious items. If you grasp on to them you will never go astray: The Book of God and my progeny. These two will not separate from each other till they reach me at the pond of *kawthar*. See to it how you deal with them."²⁸¹
3. If the imām were not infallible and committed sins, it would oblige people to disobey him and not follow his example. This would contradict the Qur'anic verse that enjoins people to obey the instructions of the imām unconditionally: "Obey God, his Messenger and those in authority (*ulū al-amr*²⁸²)" (Q. 4:59).²⁸³

²⁸¹ For a detailed list of Sunnite sources that relate this ḥadīth, see *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 9:309. For Shi'ite sources, see *Bihār*, 23:104-66.

²⁸² There is consensus amongst the Muslim community that the *ulū al-amr* is identical to "imām." Difference lies with respect to the identity of this person.

²⁸³ Rāzī, in his exegesis of this verse, asserts that the *ulū al-amr* must be infallible because the Qur'anic verse, 4:59 is absolute and unconditional with respect to obedience of the *ulū al-amr*. The person must be infallible because God, in other places in the Qur'an, prohibits obedience to those who sin, "...and obey not from among them a sinner or an ungrateful one" (Q. 76:24),

4. If the imām was not infallible, it would violate one of the primary purposes of his designation, which is for people to obey him and receive guidance. Followers would be obliged to follow a person who is not protected from the commission of sins.
5. If the imām were to commit sins then he would be relegated to a spiritual station lower than the ordinary person because he would be guilty of committing sins in spite of possessing a higher degree of knowledge and cognizance of God. Such a scenario is impossible, and thus the imām must be infallible. There are accounts in which the scholars are promised a bountiful reward for their acts of obedience and an intense punishment for disobedience.²⁸⁴

Imamite scholars go to great lengths to prove that the attribute of *'iṣmah* does not mean that the imām has been insulated by God from the possibility of committing sins by removing this tendency and faculty from his essence.²⁸⁵ If this were the case, he would not be worthy of any praise for his obedience and

“...and whoever exceeds the limits of God these it is that are the unjust” (Q. 2:229), “And do not obey the bidding of the extravagant” (Q. 26:151). God has mandated obedience to *ulū al-amr* in one place in the Qur’an and has mandated disobedience in another place of the unrighteous persons. If *ulū al-amr* were not infallible, it would result in the union of command and prohibition on one matter with identical consideration. This is impossible for God because God is Wise and this act is abominable (*qabīḥ*) even for an ordinary person, let alone for God. Thus, issuance of an abominable (*qabīḥ*) act from God is impossible from a Wise God. (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 20 vols. (Miṣr: al-Maṭba‘ah al-bahīyyah al-Miṣriyyah, 1934-38), 10:144 on the Qur’anic verse on *ulū al-amr* (Q. 4:59). For Rāzī, the community as a collective entity is infallible and inerrant (*ma‘ṣūm*). See also W. Madelung, *EI*², “*Iṣma*,” 4:184 (*iṣmat al-jamā‘ah*); on the invalidity of consensus of the community with regards to choosing the Prophet’s successor, see *Ghadīr*, 1:131-53.

²⁸⁴ If a scholar does not practice what he knows, then his punishment will be more severe than an ignorant person. On the authority of the sixth Shi‘ite divine guide: “O’ Ḥafṣ. Seventy sins of an ignorant person are forgiven by God before He forgives one single sin of a learned one.” (*Kāfi*, 1:59, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. faḍl al-‘ilm, Bāb luzūm al-ḥujjah ‘alā al-‘ālim*}).

²⁸⁵ Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī is of the opinion that the imāms are unable to commit sins even if they so desired. They have been moulded in such a way that they only obey God’s decrees and avoid all sins.

devotion to God, and would not merit any reward or punishment. Such a person would be exempt from any obligation (*taklīf*). Some Shi'ite scholars assert that the degree of understanding of the imām is so lofty that not only is he not able to commit sins, the mere thought of committing a vice is also absurd and far-fetched.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁶ An elaborate discussion on the meaning of *'iṣmah* in Twelver Shi'ism and its implications can be found in the works of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā titled *Tanzīh al-anbiyā' wa al-a'immaḥ*, ed. Fāris Hassūn Karīm (Qum: Būstān-e kitāb-e Qum, 1422/2001) and *al-Shāfi fī al-imāmah*, ed. 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Ḥusaynī al-Khaṭīb, 4 volumes (Tehran: Mu'assasat al-Ṣādiq, 1410/1989), 1:137-300; al-Shaykh al-Mufīd, *Awā'il al-maqālāt* (Tehran: McGill University and University of Tehran, 1993); and 'Allāmah Ḥillī, *Kashf al-murād*. Discussion of this subject matter is normally found under prophethood (*nubuwwah*). There are differing opinions on whether the divine guides are protected from committing sins prior to their appointment and whether they are liable to lapse into a state of forgetfulness or commit minor sins that do not tarnish their character or stature, or entail blame and/or punishment. Gradually, this doctrine also encompassed the necessity for the nobility and honor in the lineage of the divine guides. See Abbas Kadhim, "The mysterious journey of Moses (Q. 18:60-82): Does it refute or confirm the Shi'i doctrine of *'iṣmah*?" in *International Journal of Shi'i Studies*, 2 (1): 97-120.

AFDAL

The concept of *afdaliyyah* expresses the idea that the imām must be superior to others in all aspects dealing with intellectual, spiritual and physical matters such as perfect faith, comprehensive knowledge, nobility, impeccable character, courage, servitude to God and born of pure lineage.

Imamite scholars use rational proofs to demonstrate that the infallible imām must be superior to his subjects. There are three possibilities: either the imām is equal in rank to another person; is lower than another person; or is superior to others. The first possibility is rejected on the basis that there would be no factor that would lend preponderance (*tarjih bi-lā murajjih*) concerning the choice of one person over another if they are both of equal status and rank, spiritually and physically. The choice would be arbitrary and this would be incompatible because it would be abominable (*qabih*), based on reason. An act that is abominable cannot issue from God who is all-Wise. The second option is impossible based on reason because giving preference and preponderance to a person of lower stature against one of higher stature is abominable (*taqdīm al-mafḍūl ‘alā al-fāḍil qabih ‘aql^{an}*). The Qur’an confirms this rule of reason in the verse, “Is He then Who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed, or he who himself does not go aright unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you; how do you judge?” (Q. 10:35) Consequently, the third option is confirmed to the effect that the designated imām ought to be superior to all from all perspectives, be it knowledge, ethics, nobility, bravery or all other spiritual and physical points of view.

This rational proof assumes that, at any given time, there should be only one imām and no more than one divine guide. This assumption is derived from textual (*naqlī*) evidence and by recourse to ḥadīth reports in several sections of *al-Kāfī*, such as the detailed description of the twelve imāms, and the fact that there will be only twelve imāms in all and no more than that, and that the imām has dominion over the entire earth. Further, even if there were two imāms living simultaneously such as Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, only one of them would be the imām of the time, and the other would assume imamate upon the death of the living imām. There are ḥadīth reports that, with the exception of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, future imāms would not be from brothers, uncles and immediate families.²⁸⁷ Gradually, as *kalām* became current among the Muslims, the Imamite theologians sought rational proofs to substantiate the need of imamate. Thus, they have made this assumption based on their world view and tried to prove that there is only one imām at any particular time, and the identity of this person is already determined. However, they did not disclose this to the reader as they engaged in this rational proof on *afdaliyyah*. The syllogism on the necessity of *afdaliyyah* has come about in works of *kalām* with the sole purpose of proving an already established position derived from ḥadīth reports and consequently, the premise for this syllogism is not based on rational sources. In essence, the issue of imamate of the divine guides is in actuality a matter of submission and surrender (*ta'abbudī*) to the statements of the Prophet and the

²⁸⁷ *Kāfī*, 2:38-40 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb thabāt al-imāmah fī al-a'qāb wa anna-hā lā ta'ūdu fī akh wa lā 'amm wa lā ghayri-himā min al-qarābāt*}; 2:40-52 {*K. ḥujjah, Bāb mā naṣṣ Allāh wa rasūlu-hu 'alā al-a'immaḥ wāḥid fa-wāḥid*}; 2:266-272 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-arḍ kulla-hā li al-imām*}.

Qur'an. However, theologians have attempted to provide rational proofs in places where it is possible to do so. For example, one can pose the following questions: why only twelve imams?, why only one imām at any particular time?, why all from the Quraysh?, etc. without being able to provide a rational explanation. This is akin to trying to discover why the morning prayer has two units (*rak'ah*), whereas the afternoon prayers consist of four units. Such issues are established from the Prophet's directive and Qur'anic verses: "...and whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back..." (Q. 59:7).

The Obligatory Nature of Explicit Designation [by God] (*wujūb al-naṣṣ*)

After having established that it is obligatory upon God to appoint (*naṣḥ*) an imām, Imamite theologians enumerate proofs to demonstrate that God is obligated to explicitly designate (*naṣṣ*) an imām and inform the public of the identity of this divine guide by way of a message conveyed through the prophet or the preceding imām. Without identifying the profile of such a person, it would not be possible for the community of believers to follow the instructions of God.

Three proofs are advanced to demonstrate that God is duty-bound to appoint an imām through divine investiture:

1. *ʿIsmah*:²⁸⁸ Since infallibility is a necessary requirement for the imām and the knowledge of this quality is privy only to God, the imām must be appointed by God. The attribute of immunity from the commission of sins (*ʿiṣmah*) is a hidden quality that human beings cannot identify, and thus it is necessary for God to inform them of such a person by revealing the message to his Prophet, who is His agent for providing guidance to the community and leading them to prosperity.

The concept of *ʿiṣmah* in the form in which it is articulated in works of Imamite theology was developed by recourse to Qur'an and ḥadīth reports in order to argue in favor of explicit designation (*naṣṣ*) of the imām by God. In the case of authenticating the claim of prophets, greater importance was

²⁸⁸ The centrality of *ʿiṣmah* is underlined by Martin J. McDermott: "Al-Mufid's central thesis to which all his other doctrines are related is that one must believe in the presence in the world of the infallible imam." (*The Theology of al-Shaykh al-Mufid*, p. 50).

placed on the performance of miracles to validate their claims as bona fide prophets instead of *'ismah*, whereas in the case of imamate, *'ismah* is of central importance. Only limited use of miracles (*i'jāz*) is made in authenticating the claim of the imām because most of the reports on miracles are *khābar al-wāḥid* and would fail the test of ḥadīth criticism. In the above proof, the necessity of *'ismah*, in its comprehensive sense, is critical in establishing the need for God to identify the person who possesses this faculty.

Definition of *'ismah*: The faculty of full cognition and knowledge endowed on a person by God, based on merit and Grace of God, which prevents him from indulging in a sinful act (*dhanb*) or committing an error (*khaṭā'*). This is derived from the Qur'anic verse: "... and Allāh has revealed to you the Book and the Wisdom and He has taught you what you did not know" (Q. 4:112). The last part of the verse "He has taught you what you did not know" is said to refer to Divine knowledge and cognition that cannot be attained by resorting to the Book and Wisdom. It is this knowledge that produces a faculty enabling the person to be completely immune from committing sins or errors because of having been inspired with complete knowledge.²⁸⁹

Three Types of *'Ismah*:

- a. Inerrant in receiving the revelation (*talaqqī al-wahy*).²⁹⁰
- b. Inerrant in conveying and transmitting the divine message to the people (*al-tablīgh wa al-risālah*).²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ *Mizān* (Arabic), 2:134.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:134-36; Qur'an, 2:213, 20:52, 72:26-28 and 19:64.

c. Inerrant from commission of sins (*ma'ṣiyah*).²⁹²

The above three categories apply to both the prophets and the imāms with consideration of the differences between a prophet and an imām. The latter is not a recipient of revelation but is an authentic transmitter of the Prophet's treasure of knowledge to the community by way of inspiration (*ilhām*) and being a *muḥaddath*. There are ḥadīth reports on "*ḥujjiyyah fatwā al-a'immah*"²⁹³ that put forth that the statements of the imām are of equal validity as the statements of the Prophet. On one occasion, one of the disciples of the sixth imām informed him that he occasionally forgot on whose authority he had heard a particular ḥadīth report, i.e. whether it was from one of the imāms or the Prophet. The sixth imām advised him that this matter was unimportant because the statements of the imāms and the Prophet are one and the same and

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² This conclusion is obtained from Qur'anic verses that mandate people to obey the Prophet unconditionally, e.g. "And We did not send any apostle but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission..." (Q. 4:64). The argument goes that God would not make it obligatory for His subjects to obey His Messengers unconditionally unless they were protected from the commission of sins and errors. Qur'anic verses that speak about forgiveness of the Prophet for some infractions are interpreted in such a way such that the immunity of the Prophet would be safeguarded. For example, the verse in the chapter on victory, "...that Allah may forgive you of your past sins (*dhanbu-ka*) and those to follow and complete His favor to you and keep you on a right way" (Q. 48:2) is addressed to the Prophet, but the interpreters argue that the intended party is the Prophet's community. They argue that this mode is used for the educational purpose of the community. 'Allāmah Ṭabaṭabā'i provides a fresh and cogent interpretation of this verse that it was revealed in relation to the prophecy of victory. He defines '*maghfirah*' as protection from the negative consequences of one's actions that are not necessarily sinful. Thus, in this verse God is informing the Prophet that He has dispelled all the negative effects of his previous actions that may have prevented the victory to come to fruition. This is implied in the phrase, "complete His favor (*ni'mah*)." He asserts that this interpretation is the most valid because it takes into consideration the occasion of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) and the verse preceding and following, that is, the verse was revealed in connection with the victory bestowed on the Muslims to overpower the Meccans. *Mizān* (Arabic), 18:275.

²⁹³ *Jāmi' al-aḥādīth al-Shī'ah*, 1:120-219. This is an important work of ḥadīth that was compiled under the supervision of Ayatullah Burūjirdī and after his death, Ayatullah Khū'i.

thus he can attribute the statement to any one of them because they are identical.²⁹⁴

Inerrancy from commission of sins and errors from all the three categories of *'iṣmah* is of great importance in demonstrating, by way of rational proofs, the necessity for God to designate the divine guides as only He is privy to this knowledge. Further, textual proof for this inerrancy is documented from the Qur'an, "God desires only to remove defilement from you, O people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*), and to purify you (*yuṭahhira-kum*) completely" (Q. 33:33).²⁹⁵

The deliberation and articulation of the concept of *'iṣmah* was motivated primarily to defend the character and integrity of the prophets (*nabi*) who were being denigrated and defamed.²⁹⁶ In the case of imāms, the discussion of imamate came about to establish the necessity of designation from God, and to provide a basis for an alternative to many of the incompetent and corrupt leaders who assumed power during the Umayyad and Abbasid reigns. The issue of *'iṣmah* is of significance for the Twelver Shi'ites. However, it is of minor importance for the Sunnite scholars, especially some of the Ash'arites, in whose opinion it is not necessary for the prophets to be infallible in the complete sense, let alone the imāms.²⁹⁷

2. *Sīrat al-nabi*: Second, the practice (*sīrah*) of the prophet on issues pertaining to all matters of religion, even those of a minor nature, demonstrates that he took great pains to give clear and unambiguous

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 1:127, ḥadīth no. 102 and p. 128 ḥadīth nos. 105-06.

²⁹⁵ *Mizān* (Arabic), 16:330.

²⁹⁶ *Tanzīh al-anbiyā'*. See sections on the prophets Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Solomon, etc.

²⁹⁷ On the views of Sunnite scholars on *'iṣmah* and Shi'ite responses, see *Iḥqāq*, 2:196-275.

instructions to the community for their guidance. It was the norm of the Prophet to elucidate on matters of religion with clarity and precision such that no doubt or ambiguity could be entertained. When he went on a mission outside of Medina, even for a short duration, he would have been sure to appoint a deputy to take care of the affairs of the community in his absence. Since the issue of succession evidently was of paramount importance and highly critical, it follows that he must have given a clear instruction to the community, based on divine decree on this matter, by identifying the person who was to succeed him and by giving his characteristics.²⁹⁸

This proof is classified by ‘Allāmah Ḥillī as *burhān limmī* in contrast to *burhān innī*. The conclusion of the former is certain and decisive because the effect (*ma‘lūl*) is discovered from the cause (*‘illah*), whereas for the latter proof method, it is the converse (i.e. *‘illah* is discovered from the *ma‘lūl*), and thus the conclusion has the possibility of being false.

3. *‘Ijāz* or *Mu‘jizah*: A group of Imamite theologians have advanced the performance of miracles (*i‘jāz*) by the imāms as another proof over and above the two proofs mentioned already based on the argument of explicit designation by God.²⁹⁹ Performance of miracles by the divine guide is used as a vehicle to convince the community of the truthfulness

²⁹⁸ There is Qur’anic evidence cited by Imamite scholars in the following verse in which God commands the Prophet to inform the public about the issue of succession: “O Apostle, inform(Q. 5:67).

²⁹⁹ For a list of miracles attributed to each of the imams, consult *Bihār* from volumes 41 to 51 under the title “miracles.”

of his claim that he had been designated by God and possessed the quality of infallibility. A similar discussion is found in the section on *nubuwwah*.

Critical analysis of the first proof

The minor premise that *'ismah* is a necessary quality of the imām in this syllogism to prove the necessity of divine designation was actually a conclusion acquired from another syllogism. Thus, this proof is a compound syllogism (*burhān murakkab*).

Critical analysis of the second proof

The minor premise in this syllogism that the practice (*sīrah*) of the Prophet in matters of religion was to provide directives to the community and thus that this norm also applies in the matter of succession is not universally accepted. There is serious disagreement among Muslim scholars on whether this was in actuality the practice of the Prophet, and, as a consequence, the community is divided on whether the Prophet made an explicit designation in favor of 'Alī. Thus, the minor premise is not decisive and the conclusion that it is mandatory for God to designate the Prophet's successor cannot be classified as *burhān limmī*.³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ For greater discussion on *burhān limmī*, consult Muḥammad Khwānsārī, *Manṭiq-e ṣūrī*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Mu'assasah-ye intishārāt-e āghāh, 2003), pp. 215-218.

MAN al-Imām?Designation of ‘Alī after the Prophet

Imamite theologians provide rational proofs and textual evidence to demonstrate that ‘Alī was the only person worthy of succession after the prophet on two grounds—he had the quality of *‘iṣmah* (infallibility)³⁰¹ and he was explicitly designated (*al-naṣṣ al-jalī*) by the prophet on different occasions to succeed him.³⁰² These two conditions are viewed as necessary for the assumption of imamate and to bestow on the divine guides the entitlement for exclusive love and affinity (*mawaddah*), along with being a criterion of true and sound faith.

The rationalist leanings of the Imamite theologians led them to formulate syllogisms to demonstrate the entitlement of ‘Alī for immediate succession to the Prophet and for the legitimacy of the other eleven imāms. These syllogisms were based on information gathered on issues dealing with imamate and *mawaddah* from the Qur’anic verses, ḥadīth reports and literature on virtues (*faḍā’il*) of the imāms.

³⁰¹ Other sects amongst the Muslims do not regard the quality of *‘iṣmah* and divine designation (*naṣṣ*) as necessary conditions for the assumption to the office of imamate. For example, the Abbasids argued that the imām can be appointed through inheritance; Zaydis are of the opinion that the imām is one who rises up with the sword; other groups arrogate the right of appointment of the imām to “*ahl al-ḥall wa al-‘aqq*.” Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi‘ Tajrīd*, pp. 263-64.

³⁰² Later imamite theologians also list miracles and *karāmāt* as evidence for the imamate of ‘Alī.

Sample Qur'anic Verses³⁰³

1. Verse on *wilāyah*: “Only (*innamā*) God is your *walī* and His Apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the zakāt while they bow” (Q. 5:55).³⁰⁴
2. Verse on *tablīgh*: “O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allāh will protect you from the people; surely Allāh will not guide the unbelieving people” (Q. 5:67).
3. Verse on purification (*tathīr*): “God desires only to remove defilement from you, O people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*), and to purify you (*yuṭahhira-kum*) completely” (Q. 33:33).
4. Verse on love (*mawaddah*): “Say: I do not ask you for any recompense for this [the communication of the revelation] except the love for near kinship (*al-mawaddah fī al-qurbā*)” (Q. 42:23).
5. Verse on one who sells himself (*man yashtarī nafsa-hu*): “And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of God; and God is Affectionate to the servants” (Q. 2:207).
6. Verse on mutual imprecation (*Mubāhalah*): “If anyone disputes with you in this matter [concerning Jesus] after the knowledge which has come to you, say: come let us call our sons (*abnā'a-nā*) and your sons, our women

³⁰³ More Qur'anic verses and explanation are cited in chapter 2 under the section on Qur'an.

³⁰⁴ A variant translation of this Qur'anic verse with grammatical arguments was provided on Chapter 1 under “*al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah*.”

(*nisā'a-nā*) and your women, ourselves (*anfusa-nā*) and yourselves, then let us swear an oath and place the curse of God on those who lie" (Q. 3:61).

7. Verse on *fatalaqqā* Adam: "Then Adam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful" (Q. 2:37).
8. Verse *innī jā'ilu-ka*: "And remember when Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commandments which he fulfilled, [God] said: I shall make you an imām for the people. He said: And also of my offspring? [God] said: My pact will not comprise the evil-doers" (Q. 2:124).
9. Verse on *al-hādī*: "And those who disbelieve say" Why has not a sign been sent down upon him from his Lord? You are only a warner (*mundhir*) and (there is) a guide (*hād*) for every people" (Q. 13:7).

'Allāmah Ḥillī enumerates eighty-six verses that relate to the divine guides. Other works by Imamite scholars attribute hundreds of verses that are in reference to the inerrant imams.

Sample Hadīth Reports

1. Ḥadīth of Ghadīr.³⁰⁵
2. Ḥadīth of *khilāfab*: When the Qur'anic verse "And warn your near relatives"³⁰⁶ was revealed, the Prophet gathered the family and after the meal asked them, "Who amongst you will secure my religion, my promises, and be my successor (*khalīfatī*) and be with me in paradise?"

³⁰⁵ See Chapter 2 under "Analysis of the ḥadīth of Ghadīr."

³⁰⁶ Qur'an, 26:214.

To this, ‘Alī replied that he would be and the Prophet confirmed his statement.³⁰⁷

3. Ḥadīth *al-manzilab*: “Your relation to me is identical to the relation of Aron to Moses with the exception that there will be no prophet after me.”³⁰⁸
4. Ḥadīth *al-thaqalayn*: A caller called out, “What are the Two Treasures, O Messenger of Allāh?” He said, “The Bigger Treasure (*al-thaql al-akbar*) is the Book of Allāh, one end of it is in the Hand of Allāh and one end is in your hands. If you adhere to it you will not go astray. The Smaller Treasure (*al-thaql al-asghar*) is my Family (*‘itratī*).”
5. Ḥadīth *innī dāfi’ al-rāyah ghad*: The Prophet is reported to have said the following with regards to the person who would liberate the fortress of Khaybar—“Tomorrow, I will give the standard to a person who is loved by God and His messenger and he loves God and His messenger. He charges and does not retreat. He will not return without a victory handed to him by God.”
6. Ḥadīth *al-mu’ākhāt*: The Prophet coupled ‘Alī to himself in the pact of brotherhood after the migration from Mecca to Medina.³⁰⁹
7. Ḥadīth *inna ‘Alī minnī*: “Surely ‘Alī is from me and I am from ‘Alī. He is the *walī* of all the believers after me. None can carry out my mission except myself or ‘Alī.”

³⁰⁷ Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 1:111, 195.

³⁰⁸ *Iḥqāq*, 5:132-234.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 6:461-486.

8. Ḥadīth *lā yuḥibbu-ka illā mu'min*: “None loves you except that he is a believer (*mu'min*) and none hates you except that he is a hypocrite (*munāfiq*).”
9. Ḥadīth *khāṣif al-na'l*: The Prophet is reported to have said, “There is among you one who will fight for the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'an as I have fought for its *tanzīl*.” Abū Bakr and 'Umar asked if they were the ones who would undertake this task to which the Prophet replied in the negative and said that the identity of the person is one who is mending shoes. On further inquiry, they saw 'Alī repairing the sandal of the Prophet.³¹⁰
10. Ḥadīth *anā madīnat al-'ilm*: “I am the city of knowledge and 'Alī is its gate.”³¹¹
11. Ḥadīth *al-ḥaqq ma'a 'Alī*: “Truth is with 'Alī and 'Alī is with the truth. They will not separate from each other till they reach me at the pond on the Day of Judgment.”³¹²
12. Ḥadīth *al-Kisā'*: It is reported that the Prophet gathered 'Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn along with himself under the mantle prior to the revelation of the verse on purification: “God desires only to remove defilement from you, O people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*), and to purify you (*yutaḥhira-kum*) completely” (Q. 33:33).

³¹⁰ Ibid., 6:24-38.

³¹¹ Ibid., 5:469-501.

³¹² Ibid., 5:623-638.

Virtues (*fadā'il*)

The virtues are divided into the following categories: spiritual, physical, external and internal. A sample of each one is given below.

Spiritual: Perfect faith (*īmān*), comprehensive knowledge, contemporaries of 'Alī seeking his advice for adjudication of a difficult issue, nobility, impeccable character, ascetic and courageous.

Physical: Servitude to God, perfect worshippers, determination and resoluteness on the battlefield.

External: Born of a pure lineage; spouse and children are of noble character.

Based on the above information, the Imamite theologians were able to craft rational arguments in favor of 'Alī to demonstrate that he was the only one entitled to be the successor immediately (*bi lā faṣl*) after the demise of the Prophet by recourse to the necessity of divine designation (*naṣṣ*), superiority (*afdaliyyah*), infallibility (*'iṣmah*) and performance of miracles (*mu'jizah* and *karāmah*):

1. Minor premise: Infallibility is a necessary condition for the office of imamate.

Major premise: There is consensus among the Muslims that amongst the contenders for imamate after the Prophet no one with the exception of 'Alī had the attribute of *'iṣmah*.

Conclusion: Therefore, 'Alī is the only eligible candidate to the office of imamate.

2. There are several verses in the Qur'an that endow 'Alī with the rank of imamate and *wilāyah*, and mandate people to obey him (based on the Qur'anic verses cited above, such as the verse on *wilāyah*, Q. 5:55). This is adduced as evidence that he was to be the immediate successor to the Prophet.³¹³

Minor premise: There are several places in the Qur'an where 'Alī is referred to as the successor to the Prophet.³¹⁴

Major premise: If the Qur'an confirms the imamate of someone, then only that person is entitled to assume the office of imamate.

Conclusion: Therefore, 'Alī is to be the imām after the Prophet.

3. There are ḥadīth reports of indubitable authenticity (*mutawātir*) that confirm 'Alī was to be the successor to the Prophet.³¹⁵

Minor premise: Ḥadīth reports of unquestioned veracity are related in favor of 'Alī being the imām, testamentary trustee and successor to the Prophet.³¹⁶

Major premise: If there are statements from the Prophet of unquestioned authority on the imamate of a particular person, then only he is entitled to assume the office of imamate.

³¹³ *al-naṣṣ al-khafi* (implicit designation) requires other proofs, exegesis and elaboration to reach the conclusion that 'Alī was designated to succeed the prophet. There is *al-naṣṣ al-khafi Qur'ānī* (e.g. Q. 5:55) and *al-naṣṣ al-khafi ḥadīthī* (e.g. *ḥadīth al-manzilah*).

³¹⁴ The majority of Sunnite scholars dispute the interpretation of the Qur'anic verses in this minor premise, and thus do not accept the conclusion of the syllogism. For an example on the method employed by Imamite theologians in interpreting Qur'anic verses to establish imamate of 'Alī, see chapter 2 of this thesis.

³¹⁵ For example, the ḥadīth of Ghadīr and the ḥadīth of brotherhood (*mu'ākhāt*) in which Muḥammad paired himself with 'Alī and *ḥadīth al-manzilah*.

³¹⁶ The majority of Sunnite scholars would dissent with the interpretation of these ḥadīth reports and, as a consequence, would challenge this conclusion.

Conclusion: Therefore, 'Alī was to be the immediate successor and testamentary trustee to the Prophet.

4. 'Alī was the most meritorious (*afdāl*) amongst his contemporaries in all aspects dealing with spiritual and physical matters such as knowledge, religious understanding, nobility, justice and courage.

Minor premise: 'Alī was the most meritorious (*afdāl*).

Major premise: One who is the most superior in merit is the only one entitled to assume imamate because it is abominable (*qabīḥ*), based on reason, for one of inferior status (*mafḍūl*) to assume imamate in the presence of one of a higher status.³¹⁷

Conclusion: Only 'Alī was deserving and entitled to be the immediate successor of the Prophet.

5. The performance of miracles by 'Alī coupled with his claim that he is the successor to the Prophet demonstrate the veracity of his claim because it would be abominable (*qabīḥ*) to expect from the all-Wise God that He would bestow the power of performing miracles to a false claimant. This method of proving the veracity of the claim is similar to the proof advanced in the section on prophethood.

Minor premise: Many miracles have been attributed to 'Alī.

³¹⁷ Most of the Sunnite scholars allow for the assumption of imamate by one of inferior status (*mafḍūl*) in the presence of one of a higher status (*afdāl*), especially the Ash'arites.

Major premise: On many occasions, ‘Alī asserted that he is the immediate successor to the Prophet and entitled to assume the office of imamate.³¹⁸

Conclusion: The statements of any person who is conferred the privilege to perform miracles and makes assertions have to be accepted by virtue of the ability to perform miracles. Therefore, ‘Alī is the successor to the Prophet and the only one entitled to assume imamate.

6. There is consensus amongst the Muslims that only one of the following three were entitled to assume the office of imamate after the Prophet: ‘Abbās, Abū Bakr or ‘Alī. The Imamite theologians exclude the first two possibilities by reference to the Qur’anic verse: “My covenant will never reach the oppressors (*zālimūn*)” (Q. 2:124). One of the definition of ‘oppressor’ is the worship of idols at some point in one’s life. In this regard, Imamite scholars attempt to prove that only ‘Alī was free from the stigma of worshipping idols, whereas others used to engage in polytheism and fight against Muḥammad in the early years of the advent of Islam before their conversion.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ For a detailed list of occasions where ‘Alī advanced his exclusive entitlement to the office of imamate, see *Ghadīr*, 1:159-213.

³¹⁹ Aḥmad Amīnī, *Sharḥ jāmi‘ Tajrīd*, p. 426-37.

7. Imamite theologians confine the office of imamate exclusively to 'Alī by arguing that other contenders advanced as candidates were not competent³²⁰ and capable of occupying the rank of imām.³²¹

³²⁰ Details on this issue will appear in this thesis under the title *ghayr al-salāhiyyah* in this chapter.

³²¹ These syllogisms, with the proofs for minor and major premises, and explanations with references are derived from *Tawdīh al-Murād*, pp. 704-707.

Designation of the other eleven imāms

The method of proving the imamate of the other eleven imāms from the progeny of 'Alī is similar to that employed in demonstrating the exclusive right of 'Alī to assume the office of imamate after the demise of the prophet, i.e. use of Qur'anic verses, ḥadīth reports and miracles attributed to them.

The term *ulū al-amr* in Q. 4:59 is interpreted to apply to 'Alī and his successors comprising the eleven imams, by recourse to ḥadīth reports on explicit designation (*naṣṣ*) of each of the imāms who were competent and able to assume the office of imamate because they possessed the quality of *'iṣmah*. God would not mandate the community to obey *ulū al-amr* unconditionally unless they were immune from committing sins and errors. Therefore, it is argued, they are the only ones deserving and capable of assuming the office of imamate because no one else, other than the fourteen divine guides, has ever made a claim of infallibility.

The interpretation that *ulū al-amr* includes 'Alī and the eleven divine guides, of course, rests on the interpretation that is derived from different ḥadīth reports. The most important ḥadīth cited by Shi'ite scholars³²² on the matter of explicit designation with the names of each of the imāms is attributed to the prophet on the authority of Jābir b. 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī.³²³ Furthermore, each of the preceding imāms is reported to have made an explicit designation of

³²² Some Sunnite traditionists such as Qandūzī Ḥanafī in *Yanābī' al-mawaddah*, 3:398-99 have related this ḥadīth.

³²³ Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī, *'Aqā'id al-insān* (Qum: author, 1411/1990), pp. 71-2.

his successor and informed some of his closest disciples on this matter to avoid dissent and dispute after his death.³²⁴

Ḥadīth reports on the authority of the Prophet are cited in favor of the succession of ‘Alī and the eleven imāms in which he gave a profile of the individuals who are to assume the post of imamate by virtue of explicit designation (*al-naṣṣ al-jalī*): “The first one of them is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the twelfth one will have the same name and *kunyah* as the Messenger of God. He will reappear and fill the earth with justice and equity at a time when the world will be engulfed in oppression and injustice.”³²⁵ The first of this type of ḥadīth was mentioned above and is cited by Jābir b. ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī on the authority of the Prophet. This is supplemented with explicit designation from each of the preceding imām in favor of his successor.

Issues like the necessity of *‘iṣmah*, highest in merit (*afḍal*), virtues (*faḍā’il*) and miracles (*mu’jizah*) attributed to the imāms are used in connection with the *naṣṣ* of each of the imāms and with the aid of sophisticated techniques found in *‘ilm al-kalām* to prove the exclusive right of the eleven imāms for the position of imām by formulation of syllogisms.

A case example of the rational demonstration of *afḍaliyyah* would go as follows: The eleven imāms are endowed with the most meritorious attributes with respect to the spiritual (*nafsāniyyah*) and physical (*badaniyyah*) states that none else could challenge. Thus, reason dictates that they should occupy the

³²⁴ Most of these ḥadīth reports are *khabar al-wāḥid*.

³²⁵ *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, p. 204; *Iḥqāq*, 3:424; *Biḥār*, 23:283; *Ghadīr*, 1:165, 196, 277; *Jāmi’ aḥādīth al-Shī’ah*, 1:126-219; *Mizān*, 4:411-442.

office of imamate because it would be abominable (*qabīḥ*) to give preference to one of a lower stature, and it is impossible for the all-Wise God to act contrary to the dictates of reason. Therefore, the eleven imāms are the only ones entitled to assume imamate and regulate the affairs of the community in the mundane and religious spheres.³²⁶

The discussion on the eleven imāms is brief and concise in works of Imamite theology in comparison to the section on 'Alī, because many of the issues have already been dealt with in proving the imamate of 'Alī, i.e. *naṣṣ*, *'iṣmah*, *afdaliyyah* and *mu'jizah*.

³²⁶ al-Ḥasan b. Yūsuf al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, ed. Ḥasan Zādeh al-Āmulī (Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1993) pp. 397-98.

Negation of the claims for imamate of other contenders and demonstration of their incompetence (*ghayr al-salāhiyyah*)

After providing scriptural (*al-adillah al-naqliyyah*) and rational (*al-adillah al-'aqliyyah*) proofs in favor of the designation (*naṣṣ*) of the twelve divine guides, the speculative theologians engage in the analysis of the competency of the other contenders who made claims for the office of imamate. The treatises that they wrote attempt to discredit the claims of those other than the divine guides by using two different methods.

First Method: One approach is to assert that the conditions that are necessary for the assumption to the office of imamate, i.e. *'iṣmah*, *naṣṣ*, *afdaliyyah* and *'ilm* are not present in the persons who made claims of imamate. In addition, the Imamite theologians assert that the contenders made many errors of judgment and lacked the knowledge and wisdom along with ethical and moral values to lead the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet. Thus, the contenders could not be classified as legitimate successors of the Prophet and sanctioned by divine law (*mashrū'iyyah*). This type of literature is known as *maṭā'in*.³²⁷

Second Method: In response to the necessary conditions laid out by Shi'ite scholars for the position of imām, the Sunnite scholars likewise formulated evidence in favor of the caliphs, especially Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Uthmān by recourse to Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth reports. For example, the verse of the

³²⁷ In works of *kalām*, the scope of investigation and analysis of the *maṭā'in* literature is limited. Detailed works like *Ghadīr* provide an exhaustive account on the incompetency of the other candidates from the perspective of the Twelver Shi'ites by historical analysis. Also, see works such as 'Allāmah Ḥillī's *Nahj al-ḥaqq* and Shushtari's *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*.

cave (*ghār*): “If you will not aid him, God certainly aided him [Abū Bakr] when those who disbelieved expelled him, he [Abū Bakr] being the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he [Prophet] said to his companion: ‘Grieve not, surely God is with us.’ So God sent down His tranquility upon him and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see” (Q. 9:41) and ḥadīth reports in favor of Abū Bakr that he led the congregational prayers during the last days of the Prophet’s life while he was ill are cited, along with other virtues, to argue that he also possessed explicit designation (*nass*), *afdaliyyah* and *‘ilm*, and, consequently, his succession was sanctioned by divine law (*mashrū‘iyyah*).³²⁸ Shi‘ite scholars engaged in a rebuttal by critically examining the chain of transmission (*isnād*) and the text (*matn*) of these ḥadīth reports to demonstrate that they had been fabricated and could not pass the test of ḥadīth criticism.³²⁹

³²⁸ Chapters from the following works that deal with imamate are compiled with a rebuttal by Ayatullah Sayyid ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Milānī in his work titled *al-Imāmah fī aḥamm al-kutub al-kalāmiyyah wa ‘aqīdat al-Shī‘ah al-Imāmiyyah* (Qum: Sayyid al-Shuhadā’, 1372/1413): *al-Ṭarā‘if ‘alā sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, *al-Marāṣid ‘alā sharḥ al-Maqāsid*, *Risālah fī ṣalāh Abī Bakr*, *Risālah fī ḥadīth al-iqtidā’ bi al-Shaykhayn*, *Risālah fī al-Muta‘ayn*, *Risālah fī ḥadīth sayyid kuhūl ahl al-jannah* and *Risālah fī ḥadīth aṣḥābī ka al-nujūm*.

³²⁹ Faḍl b. Shādhān Nishābūrī, *al-Īdāh* (Tehran: Daneshghā-ye Tehran, 1984) {S. H. Modarressi is of the view that this work has been wrongly ascribed to Faḍl b. Shādhān and in actuality belongs to Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, see *Tradition and Survival*, p. xvii}; Shaykh Mufīd, *al-Iṣṣāḥ*; Sharīf Murtaḍā, *al-Shāfi fī al-Imāmah*. ‘Allāmah Amīnī in *al-Ghadīr* provides a detailed critical analysis of such ḥadīth reports to demonstrate that they have been concocted.

Sects (*firaq*) of the Shi'ites

The literature on sects (*firaq*) is of interest to Imamite theologians to affirm their view that the only valid Shi'ite sect is that of the Twelver Shi'ites. They attempt to provide proofs and engage in critical analysis of the other sects to dismiss the claims of the latter. The sectarian literature is primarily descriptive and historical in nature. The most important work titled *Firaq al-Shi'ah* is by Nawbakhtī who lived in the tenth century.

It is important to note that the word "Shi'ah" had a wide and expansive meaning during the time of the Prophet, and in the formative period of Islam, in prophetic statements such as "O' 'Alī surely your *shī'ah* (*shī'atu-ka*) are the ones who will be triumphant on the Day of Judgment" under the Qur'anic verse "(As for) those who believe and do good, surely they are the best of men" (Q. 98:7). This word has had differing meanings at various times. For example, in Sunnite works the title of *Shi'ah* was applied to anyone who believed that 'Alī was *afdāl* even if this person accepted Abū Bakr as the legitimate successor of the Prophet; to one who believed in the *khilāfab* of rightly guided caliphs, but espoused the view that Mu'āwiyah lacked ethical and moral values. In early Sunnite works the word *Shi'ah* was employed to defame or discredit a person with whom they disagreed on the matter of succession and the virtues of the rightly guided caliphs. For instance, Ḥākīm Nīshābūrī, the author of *Mustadrak al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, was given the appellation of "*shī'ah*" because he affirmed the veracity of, and included in his works ḥadīth reports on the virtues (*faḍā'il*) of the divine guides. This difficulty of categorization is evidently faced by Aghā Buzurg

Ṭahrānī in his monumental catalogue of Shi'ite works, *al-Dharī'ah ilā taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*. The meaning attached to "Shī'ah" from the post-occultation period, according to Shi'ite scholars, is one who believes in the *wilāyah* of the twelve infallible divine guides and rejects the claims of all other contenders to the office of imamate. Both the Shi'ite and Sunnite scholars have employed the word "Shī'ah" in a signification that best fits their argument, and confirms their belief system, without taking into account the evolution of the meaning of this word. As a consequence, many of their rational demonstrations would be classified as *mughālaṭah*.³³⁰

³³⁰ Another example of *mughālaṭah* has occurred with the term "*faqīh*" which, at the outset of Islam, had a wide meaning referring to one who has profound insight in religion including knowledge of other religions such that *ahkām al-dīn* were only a minor subset. However, at present the term "*faqīh*" is applied to one who has mastery over the religious practices (*ahkām*) and jurisprudence only. The Qur'anic verse, 9:122 is interpreted in this narrow sense to deduce the limited and circumscribed scope of knowledge of the *faqīh*. Another case is the term "*rujū*" in the ḥadīth report related on the authority of Ishāq b. Ya'qūb to equate to *taqlīd* of a *mukallaḥ* of one of the *mujtahids*, in recent usage (*ammā al-ḥawādīth al-wāqī'ah, fa-irjī'ū fi-hā ilā ruwāt ḥadīthi-nā...*).

Judgment on those who oppose the imamate of the divine guides

The last section in the discourse on imamate is generally devoted to the fate of those who oppose the imamate of the divine guides. The opponents are divided into two groups: *muḥārib* (i.e. those who fight against the divine guides) and *mukhālif* (i.e. those who reject the imamate of the divine guides). It is argued by Imamite theologians that the former are guilty of *kufṛ* (unbelief) and are destined to hell fire by virtue of the ḥadīth report: "Fighting against you, O 'Alī, is equivalent to fighting against me (Prophet)."³³¹ With respect to the latter there are differing opinions. One is that they would be destined to hell and are categorized as *kāfir* (unbelievers) because they rejected the imamate of the divine guides after indisputable evidence had been brought to them by the Prophet on a fundamental aspect of religion. Another opinion categorizes them as *fāsiq* instead of *kāfir* and there are three possibilities for their destiny: consigned to hell for eternity; some of them would be transferred from hell to paradise after a duration; they would be placed neither in hell nor in paradise because they are not guilty of *kufṛ* to deserve the former and have not attained *īmān* to deserve the latter.³³²

In *Kāfī*, the divine guides are presented as being quite tolerant and accommodating to those Sunnites who failed to acknowledge their *wilāyah* due to ignorance and not animosity. The sixth Shi'ite imām castigates his disciple, Hāshim Ṣāhib al-Barīd, for exhibiting the characteristics of the Kharijites in his

³³¹ Derivation of this judgment is from *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, *Kashf al-murād* and other *kalāmī* works. For the source of this ḥadīth and others of similar nature refer to *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, 5:43 and 31:574.

³³² This is the opinion of Ibn Nawbakht (*Kashf al-murād*, p. 398)

eagerness to consign people to hell-fire on account of not accepting the *wilāyah* of the divine guides. Thus, the divine guides are portrayed as exerting effort to reign in and control the over zealous supporters. He concludes by underlining the ultimate authority of the divine guides in all matters, by reminding his disciples that it is abominable and evil to utter statements on a matter of their own accord without first having heard it from the divine guide: “*a-mā inna-hu sharr ‘alay-kum an taqūlū bi-shay’ mā lam tasma‘ū-hu minnā.*”³³³

The fifth Shi‘ite imām censures Zurārah for persisting to maintain that there are only two categories of people—believers (*mu‘min*) and unbelievers (*kāfir*)—and dismisses this short-sightedness on his part as arising from his young age and lack of maturity.³³⁴ The imām is paving the way for creating an accommodating position with the Sunnite community who are not engaged in hostile acts against the divine guides.

In contrast to the above conciliatory position, one finds exclusivist and intolerant positions articulated vis-à-vis the Sunnites in some of the other ḥadīth reports, and in the writings of Imamite Shi‘ite scholars that stretch to the present time. For example, Muḥammad Bāqir al-Waḥīd al-Bihbahānī (d. 1205) categorically states that those who deny (*munkir*) the fundamental principle of imamate and do not express love (*mawaddah*) for the divine guides are to be classified as unbelievers (*kāfir*). They would not be entitled to receive zakāt and

³³³ *Kāfī*, 4:120-2, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bāb al-dalāl*}.

³³⁴ *Ibid.* In ḥadīth no. 2, the fifth Shi‘ite imām castigates Zurārah for being too eager to categorize people as unbelievers for failing to endorse the *wilāyah* of the divine guides, 4:122-5, ḥadīth no. 2. Also, see 4:127, ḥadīth no. 4 {*K. al-īmān wa al-kufr, Bāb al-mustad‘af*}, in which the divine guide reprimands Zurārah for his over exuberance in talking about imamate to those who may not be able to fathom this concept and being persistent in his inquiry of questions about *mustad‘af*.

are not entitled to any respect (*'adam al-ihtirām*), to such an extent that one cannot bless them when they sneeze.³³⁵ In his estimation, those who deny the *wilāyah* of the divine guides are more evil than Christians and Jews. One should dissociate from them based on the Qur'anic directive, "You shall not find a people who believe in God and the latter day befriending those who act in opposition to God and His Apostle, even though they were their (own) fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk; these are they into whose hearts He has impressed faith..." (Q. 58:22). A similar intolerant position is adopted by Sharīf Murtaḍā because, according to him, cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of the imāms is of equal importance and as necessary as cognizance of prophethood.³³⁶ Shaykh Anṣārī (d. 1281/1864) in his work titled *al-Makāsib* asserts that one is allowed to gossip and backbite (*ghībah*) the Sunnites because they are not entitled to respect (*ihtirām*) or the rights of brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) on account of denying the *wilāyah* of the divine guides.³³⁷ A more recent example of exclusivism can be found in the lecture notes of the late Ayatullah Khū'ī (d. 1992) where he states that the collective evidence from the ḥadīth, *ziyārāt* and supplications (*ad'iyyah*) is so conclusive that it leaves no room for doubt or ambiguity with regards to the unbelief (*kufr*) of the Sunnites because they have denied and failed to confirm the *wilāyah* of the divine guides (*lā shubḥah fī kufri-*

³³⁵ Muḥammad Bāqir al-Wahīd al-Bihbahānī, *Maṣābiḥ al-zalam*, 11 volumes (Qum: Mu'assasat al-'allāmah al-mujaddid al-Wahīd al-Bihbahānī, 1424/2003), 10:473, 7:246.

³³⁶ Murtaḍā, *Intiṣār*, p. 217, 243, 477.

³³⁷ Murtaḍā Anṣārī, *al-Makāsib*, p. 40. The reference on backbiting is to the Qur'anic verse, "O you who believe! Avoid suspicion, for even a little suspicion is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite (*yaghtab*) others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?..." (Q. 49:12).

him li anna inkār wilāyat al-a'immaḥ...yujiba al-kufr wa al-zandaqah. . .).³³⁸ In addition, one should dissociate and withdraw (*barā'ah*) from them. They are the ones who are referred to as unbelievers (*kāfir*) and polytheists (*mushrik*) in the *ziyārat al-jāmi'ah*: "One who opposes you is an unbeliever and one who fights against you is a polytheist and one who rebuffs you will be consigned to the lowest level in the hellfire" ("*wa man jāhada-kum kāfir wa man ḥāraba-kum mushrik wa man radda 'alay-kum fi asfal darak min al-jahīm*") and "whoever acknowledges His Unity accepts it from you" ("*wa man waḥḥada-hu qabila 'an-kum*").³³⁹ Accordingly, it is permitted to backbite, slander and defame them, and be suspicious of them.

The above intolerant statements are not the norm as the Sunnites are accorded the status of a *muslim* but not a *mu'min*³⁴⁰ in terms of the ladder of faith. This is the method adopted by the Shi'ite scholars to bridge the divide between the Sunnites and Shi'ites for the sake of cohesion and unity in the Muslim *ummah*, and be able to maintain social relations with the larger community. As such, the formula of declaration for one to enter the fold of Islam is agreed by both to be only the dual testimony, i.e. confirmation of belief in one God and the messengership of His Prophet. Furthermore, according to Shi'ite law, it is permitted to marry a person who belongs to the Sunnite school

³³⁸ Abū al-Qāsim al-Khū'i, *Miṣbāḥ al-faqāḥah fi al-mu'āmalāt*, compiled by Muḥammad 'Alī al-Tawḥidī (Najaf: al-Maṭba'ah al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1954), 1:324-25.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ The category of "*mu'min*" is reserved for those who love, accept and follow the instructions of the fourteen divine guides comprising the Prophet, Fāṭimah and the twelve imams, and dissociation from those who are inimical to the divine guides.

of thought, eat the meat of an animal that is slaughtered by one who is a Sunnite Muslim and they are regarded ritually pure (*tāhir*).

Chronological Bibliography

Theology (*kalām*)

Nishābūrī, Faḍl b. Shādhān (d. 260/874). *al-Īdāb*. Tehran: Danashghā-ye Tehran, 1984 {S. H. Modarressi is of the view that this work has been wrongly ascribed to Faḍl b. Shādhān and in actuality belongs to Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabarī, see *Tradition and Survival*, p. xvii}.

Qāḍī Nu'mān (d. 363/974). *Da'ā'im al-Islām*. Egypt: Dār al-ma'ārif, n.d.

Ibn Bābawayh, Muḥammad b. 'Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq) (d. 381/991). *al-Imāmah wa al-nuṣrah min al-khīrah*. Qum: Madrasat al-Imām al-Mahdī, 1984.

_____. *A Shi'ite Creed: A translation of Risālat al-i'tiqādāt*. Translated by Asaf A. A. Fyze. London: Oxford University Press, 1942.

al-Mufīd, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān (d. 413/1022). *Awā'il al-maqālāt*. Introduction with extensive annotation by Faḍlullāh al-Zanjānī. Edited by 'Abbāsquḷī (Wā'iz Charandānī). Tabrīz: Raḍā'i, 1371/1951.

_____. *Muṣannafāt Shaykh al-Mufīd*. 14 volumes. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1992.

_____. *Taṣḥīḥ al-i'tiqād (Sharḥ 'aqā'id al-Ṣadūq)* is included in the above book edited by Zanjānī.

Asadābādī, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025). *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-'adl*. 20 volumes. Cairo: Dār al-Miṣriyyah, n.d.

'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037). *Farq bayn al-firaq*. Beirut: Dār al-ma'ārifah, n.d.

al-Murtaḍā, Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mūsawī (d. 436/1044). *al-Intiṣār*. Najaf: al-Maṭba'ah al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1971.

_____. *al-Shāfi fī al-imāmah*. 2nd edition. 4 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Ḥusaynī al-Khaṭīb. Tehran: Mu'assasat al-Ṣādiq, 1990.

_____. *Tanzīh al-anbiyā'*. 2nd edition. Edited by Fāris Karīm. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2001.

al-Ṭūsī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 460/1067). *al-Rasā'il al-'ashar*. Edited by Wā'iz Zadeh al-Khurāsānī. Qum: Jamā'at al-mudarrisīn, 1404/1983.

_____. "*Tambīd al-uṣūl*" dar 'ilm-e kalāmi-ye Islāmī. Translated with annotations by 'Abd al-Muḥsin Mishkāt al-Dīnī. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1980.

al-Nawbakhtī, al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā (died at the beginning of fourth/tenth century). *Firaq al-Shī'ah*. Edited by H. Ritter. Istanbul: Staats Drucker, 1931.

Al-Ṭabrisī, Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan (d. 548/1154). *al-Ihtijāj*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Kharsān. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Nu'mān, 1966.

Ibn Ṭāwūs, 'Alī b. Mūsā (d. 664/1266). *al-Ṭarā'if fī ma'rifah madhāhib al-ṭawā'if*. 2 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Alī 'Āshūr. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī li al-maṭbū'āt, 1999.

al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn (d. 672/1273). *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Edited by Muḥammad Jawād al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī. Tehran: Markaz al-nashr, 1987.

_____. *Talkhīṣ al-muḥaṣṣal*. 2nd edition. Dār al-aḍwā', 1985.

_____. *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Translated and vocalized by Aḥmad Amīnī Najafī. Qum: Murtaḍā, 1999 {contains Arabic text with full vocalization, Persian translation and footnotes from three major works: *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Kashf al-murād* by 'Allāmah Ḥillī and *Tawḍīḥ al-murād* by Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī. So far, only the section on imamate has been published}.

al-Baḥrānī, Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. 'Alī b. Maytham (d. 699/1299). *al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī taḥqīq amr al-imāmah*. Edited with introduction by Shaykh Yūsufī. Qum: Majma' al-fikr al-Islāmī, 1417/1996.

_____. *Qawā'id al-marām fī 'ilm al-kalām*. Edited by al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985.

al-Ḥillī, al-Ḥasan b. Yūsuf al-Muṭahhar (d. 726/1325). *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Edited by Ḥasan Zādeh al-Āmulī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī under the auspices of Jamā'at al-mudarrisīn, 1415/1994.

_____. *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. 2nd print. Edited with footnotes by Ja'far Subḥānī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-Imām al-Ṣādiq, 2003.

- . *Nahj al-ḥaqq wa kashf al-ṣidq*. Edited by al-Shaykh ‘Ayn Allāh al-Ḥasanī al-Armawī. Qum: Dār al-hijrah, 1986.
- . *Talkhīṣ al-Shāfi*. 3rd edition. 4 vols. Edited by Ḥusayn Baḥr al-‘Ulūm. Qum: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1974.
- . *Tawḍīḥ al-Murād*. Extensive Commentary and footnotes on *Kashf al-Murād* provided by Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Mufid, n.d.
- Lāhijī, ‘Abd al-Razzāq Fayyāḍ (d. 1072/1660). *Gawhar-e murād*. Introduction by Zayn al-‘Ābidīn Qurbānī Lāhijī. Tehran: Wizārat-e farhang wa irshād-e Islāmi, 1993.
- al-Baḥrānī, al-Sayyid Hāshim (d. 1107/1695). *Ghāyat al-marām wa ḥujjat al-khiṣām fi ta’yīn al-imām min tariq al-khāṣṣ wa al-‘āmm*. 7 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid ‘Alī ‘Āshūr. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-ta’rīkh al-‘Arabī, 1422/2001.
- Shahrastānī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm (d. 1153/1740). *Kitab al-milal wa al-niḥal*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad b. Faṭḥ Allāh al-Badrān. Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Azhar, 1371/1951.
- . *Muslim Sects and Divisions*. Trans. A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn. London: Kegan Paul International, 1984.
- Iqbāl, ‘Abbās (d. 1955), *Khāndān-e Nawbakhtī*. 3rd print. Tehran: Kitābkhānah-ye Tahūrī, 1978.
- al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, al-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn (d. 1402/1981). *al-Mīzān fi tafsīr al-Qur’ān*. 2nd edition. 20 volumes. Beirut: Mu’assasat al-‘alamī, 1957-74.
- al-Mīlānī, Sayyid ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī. *al-Imāmah fi aḥamm al-kutub al-kalāmiyyah wa ‘aqīdat al-Shī‘ah al-Imāmiyyah*. Qum: Sayyid al-Shuhadā’, 1413/1992. {Contains the following texts and their rebuttal on issues dealing with imamate: *al-Ṭarā’if ‘alā sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, *al-Marāṣid ‘alā sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, *Risālah fi ṣalāh Abī Bakr*, *Risālah fi ḥadīth al-iqtidā’ bi al-Shaykhayn*, *Risālah fi al-Muta‘tayn*, *Risālah fi ḥadīth sayyid kuhūl ahl al-jannah and Risālah fi ḥadīth aṣḥābī ka-al-nujūm*}.
- . *Muhāḍarāt fi al-i’tiqādāt*. 2 vols. Qum: Markaz al-abḥāth al-‘aqā’idiyyah, n.d.
- Subḥānī, Ja‘far. *Pīshwā’i az nazare Islām*. Qum: Intishārāt-e maktab-e Islām, 1993.

CHAPTER 4

Philosophical Approach to Imamate

(MANHAJ FALSAFĪ)

Islamic philosophy is divided into two major categories: theoretical philosophy (*al-ḥikmah al-naẓariyyah*) and practical philosophy (*al-ḥikmah al-‘amaliyyah*).

Imamate and Wilāyah in Theoretical Philosophy

The section on general principles (*al-umūr al-‘āmmah*) deliberates on issues that relate to the relationship between the Creator (*qadīm*) and the created (*ḥādith*), cause (*‘illah*) and effect (*ma‘lūl*), substances (*jawāhir*), accidents (*a‘rāḍ*), metaphysics (*ilāhiyyāt*) [i.e. with respect to the attributes (*ṣifāt*), names (*asmā’*) and actions (*af‘āl*) of God], and briefly addresses prophethood.

In the section regarding the relationship between the Creator and the Created, the infallible guides are adduced as the intermediaries in executing divine prescriptions and diffusing His bounties, blessings, sustenance and guidance (*wāsiṭat al-fayḍ*). With reference to *‘illah* and *ma‘lūl*, the divine guides are the cause (*‘illah*) for the procurement of the divine purpose of creation. They are the first to be created (*al-ṣādir al-awwal; awal mā khalaqa Allāh; awal mā ṣadar*) and the most virtuous (*ashraf*). Under the section on substances (*jawāhir*), the divine guides are posited as the universal intellect (*al-‘aql al-kullī*) or first intellect (*al-‘aql al-awwal*) that had the qualities to assume the divine attributes and become the loci of His manifestation (*mazāhir*). Under the section on metaphysics (*ilāhiyyāt*), the divine guides are presented as the names of God (*al-*

asmā' al-ḥusnā) and the manifestation of God's attributes. Under the subject dealing with the actions (*af'āl*) of God, the divine guides are referred to as the *mashī'at Allāh*, i.e. the desires and wishes of the divine guides are identical to the divine will: "*nahnu mashī'at Allāh*."³⁴¹ Under the section on *nubuwwah*, the imāms have the same *wilāyah* with the exception of the post of *nubuwwah* (prophethood) or being the recipient of revelation.³⁴² "*anā wa 'Alī min nūr wāḥid*."³⁴³

The subject matters enumerated above, with reference to *wilāyah* of God and the infallible guides, will be elaborated with the employment of general philosophical principles. Scholars who use the philosophical approach to the study of imamate and *wilāyah* do not rely primarily on Qur'anic verses or ḥadīth reports for the demonstration of their proofs and argumentation. Instead, they resort to the intellect (*'aql*) as their primary tool. The revelatory sources are employed at times to supplement or confirm the dictates of reason and to demonstrate that the verdict of reason is in conformity with the verdict of religion.

Philosophical principles are employed to establish that the divine guides are the 'loci of manifestation' of the names of God and belong to the category of

³⁴¹ 'Alī al-Namāzī al-Shāhrūdī, *Mustadrak Safīnat al-Bihār*, ed. Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-Namāzī, 10 volumes (Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1419/1998), 6:99.

³⁴² For two excellent works on *qā'idat al-wāḥid, imkān al-asbraf, al-ṣādir al-awwal, al-fayḍ al-muqaddas and al-nūr al-Muḥammadiyyah*, see Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī, *Asās-e Tawḥīd dar qā'idah-ye tawḥīd wa waḥdat-e wujūd* (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1951) and Muḥyī al-Dīn Mahdī Ilāhī Qumshah'ī, *Ḥikmat-e Ilāhī*, 6th print (Tehran: Intishārāt-e Islāmī, 1984).

³⁴³ *Tafsīr al-Qummi*, 1:18.

'the perfect man' (*al-insān al-kāmil*).³⁴⁴ They are the Creator's purpose (final cause) in creating the world of creation (*ghāyat al-khilqah*) and are able to assume the character traits of God in perfect equilibrium because of the presence of homogeneity (*sinkhiyyah*) of the First Cause and the effect.

Causality

The causes are divided into four categories: final cause (*al-'illah al-ghā'iyyah*); efficient cause (*al-'illah al-fā'iliyyah*); formal cause (*al-'illah al-ṣūriyyah*); and material cause (*al-'illah al-māddiyyah*). The first two are grouped as *'ilal al-wujūd* and the last two as *'ilal al-qiwām*. There is a close relationship and interconnectedness between the first two causes just as there is a close interconnection between the last two causes in the sense that the one cause by itself would not be able to produce an act independent of the other.

The agent (*fā'il*) is the source for bringing into existence the essence (*māhiyyah*) of the final cause in the external world. The ultimate objective (*ghāyah*) is the cause (*'illah*) of the activity of the agent (*fā'il*) but not for bringing into existence (*wujūd*) the agent (*fā'il*). In other words, the final cause (*al-'illah al-ghā'iyyah*) prompts an activity in the agent and without the goal, there would be no activity of the agent. This close relationship between an agent (*fā'il*) and an end finds expression between the seeker and the sought, and between the

³⁴⁴ On the concept of *al-insān al-kāmil*, see Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī, *Asrār al-ḥikam*, introduction by Toshiko Izutsu (Tehran: Mawlā, 1985), pp. 67-74. James W. Morris argues that a better translation for *al-insān al-kāmil* is "fully human being" and the often translated "perfect man" is misleading. He draws a distinction between *basbar* and *insān* to arrive at this conclusion. See James W. Morris, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 84, fn. 94. According to Ibn Sīnā, a person who has been endowed with the virtues of chastity, wisdom, courage and justice from *al-ḥikmah al-'amaliyyah* combined with the virtues of *al-ḥikmah al-naẓariyyah* has attained prosperity and it is lawful to worship him after God. (Ibn Sīnā, *Shifā'*, p. 455).

lover and the beloved. This principle is adduced as a universal principle that affords no exception.

Three Views on the Acts (*af'āl*) of God

There are three differing opinions expressed on the issue of the acts of God (i.e. is there an ultimate goal (*ghāyah*) in the scheme of creation or not?) by the Mu'tazilites, Ash'arites and the philosophers.

1. Mu'tazilites: The actions of God would never be devoid of an aim (*gharaḍ*) because they are based on wisdom and benefit. If it were not so, then His acts would lack a preponderance and be guilty of *tarjīḥ bi lā murajjih*.³⁴⁵ Critics have argued that this makes God imperfect (*nāqiṣ*) because he would be dependent on the aim.
2. Ash'arites: The Ash'arites held a diametrically opposed view that God is omnipotent and his actions are not constrained by the presence of a purpose or aim. Further, it is not possible to entertain the possibility that God's action would attain completion and perfection through the mediation of a purpose.³⁴⁶
3. Philosophers: The opinion of the philosophers with respect to the acts of God is free from the objections leveled against the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites. They argue that the aim is not an added attribute of the

³⁴⁵ The philosophical principle is "*al-tarjīḥ min ghayr murajjih muḥāl*." See Ghulām Ḥusayn Ibrāhīmī Dīnānī, *Qawā'id-e kullī-ye falsafī dar falsafah-ye Islāmī*, 3 vols. (Tehran: Mu'assasah-ye muṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e farhangī, 1986), 1:149-159; Also, see "*kull fi'l ikhtiyārī lā budda la-hu murajjih ghā'i*," Dīnānī, 2:426-434.

³⁴⁶ There are other opinions among the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites that remove the objections leveled against them. For instance, if their assertion that God has no *gharaḍ* is made to mean that God does not have a *gharaḍ* that is superimposed on His Essence, then this view is identical to that of the philosophers, *ibid.*, 1:72.

essence of God. Thus, the act of God is not dependent on the aim (*gharaḍ*) because the essence of God itself is the aim. Accordingly, the final cause and the cause of the activity (*al-‘illah al-fā‘iliyyah*) are united.³⁴⁷

Having established that God’s acts have a purpose and an aim, philosophers employ several philosophical principles to demonstrate that God’s acts are not a superadded attribute to His essence but rather they are His essence. In a similar fashion, when it is said that God is ‘knowing,’ ‘powerful’ and ‘eternal,’ it does not mean that He possesses the attributes of knowledge, power and life that are distinct from His essence. Rather they are identical with His essence. Otherwise, they reasoned, it would imply plurality of the Godhead, which is impossible.

Another two principles are *al-‘ālī la yaf‘al shay’ li-ajl al-sāfil*³⁴⁸ and *al-‘ālī la yaltafitu ilā al-sāfil*³⁴⁹—An existent that is of a higher status does not perform an act because of an existent of a lower status. Instead, it has an aim that is either part of its essence or a command based on a higher existent than itself. An important derivation from this principle is that the Creator from Whom actions are manifested has no purpose or reason above and beyond Himself because He is absolutely perfect and not in need of completion (*istikmāl*): “*laysa li-fi’l al-ḥaqq tabāraka wa ta‘ālā limmiyyah ghayr dhāti-hi.*”³⁵⁰ Thus, the cause of His act (*al-‘illah al-fi‘liyyah*) and the aim of the act (*al-ghāyah al-fi‘liyyah*) are not an addition

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 3:358.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 2:390.

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 2:391.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

to His essence, and, consequently it can be said about God: “*huwa al-awwal wa al-akhir wa al-zāhir wa al-bāṭin wa huwa bi-kull shay’ alīm.*” The first (*awwal*) and the last (*akhir*) are not used in the context of time (*zamān*), rather they are employed in relation to the chain of causality and the arc of ascent and descent of existents (*mawjūdāt*).

Sinkhiyyah (Homogeneity of Cause and Effect)³⁵¹

In the next step, it is important to establish that the divine guides have assumed the character traits of God in perfect equilibrium based on the philosophical principle of *sinkhiyyah* between the First Cause and the effect. This is done with the employment of the following philosophical principles:

(a) *al-shay’ lā yazharu ‘an-hu mā yushābihu-hu kull al-mushābahah*³⁵² — This principle is employed to demonstrate the necessity of *sinkhiyyah* between the cause and the effect. From one aspect, the effect is in close proximity to the cause because it cannot be contradictory or in opposition to the cause, and, from another aspect, it is distant from the cause because it cannot be in identical resemblance to the cause.

(b) *al-ma’lūl yajibū an yakūna munāsib li-al-‘illah*³⁵³ — The effect must have appropriate qualities that would allow it to be the recipient of the effect from its cause.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Seyed G. Safavi, “Mullā Ṣadrā on Causation,” in *Transcendent Philosophy*, volume 3, no. 4 (December 2002).

³⁵² *Dinānī*, 2:322-26.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3:416-19.

³⁵⁴ Some theologians reject this principle because this relatedness between the cause and effect would be the cause of becoming entangled in the issue of entities that resemble God, *ibid.*

Supreme Station of the Divine Guides

Several philosophical principles are used to demonstrate that the divine guides are the first to have been created (*awwal mā khalaqa*) and the most meritorious (*ashraf mā khalaqa*): they are the loci of manifestation (*maqābir*) of God's names and attributes, perfect beings (*al-insān al-kāmil*), and the ultimate purpose of creation (*ghāyat al-khilqah*) since they possess *sinkhiyyah* to assume the divine traits.

(a) *kull mā kāna 'illatu-hu akmal fa-huwa akmal*³⁵⁵ — An existent whose cause is more perfect is indicative of its own greater perfection. The degree of perfection or imperfection is evaluated on the basis of the perfection of the cause (*'illah*) that can be detected from the agent (*fā'il*). In the case of the ultimate initiator, God, His cause is perfect and, accordingly, the recipients of His cause (*ma'lūl*) are closest to perfection. The ones who can assume (*sinkhiyyah*) His traits are the first to be created (*al-ṣādir al-awwal*) and the first intellect (*al-'aql al-awwal*). The reference is to the divine guides because they are the *ashraf al-makhlūqāt* and the loci of manifestation of the names of God.

(b) *Imkān al-ashraf*³⁵⁶ — In the chronological order of creation, it is necessary for an existent of a higher status (*ashraf*) to have precedence over an existent of a lower status (*akbass*). In other words, if an existent of a lower status exists, then necessarily an existent of a higher status has already been created. For example, a comparison between *'aql* and *nafs*

³⁵⁵ Dīnānī, 2:387-89.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 1:18-28.

leads one to the conclusion that the former is of a higher status than the latter. Thus, if it is proven that *nafs* has been created then necessarily *'aql* has also been created.

The divine guides are adduced as most meritorious creatures because of their precedence in creation³⁵⁷ (*aʿwwal mā khalaqa Allāh, al-ṣādir al-aʿwwal*), loci of manifestation of divine names and attributes, presence of *sinkhiyyah* between the cause and the effect, and being the ultimate cause for the world of creation.

(c) *kaynūnah kull shay' innamā yakūnu bi-ḥasab al-maḥal*³⁵⁸ — The type of existence of each existent is in accord with its rank and station in the world of creation or chain of existents. In the case of divine guides, since they are the ultimate cause of creation and the perfect being, in as much as they are the loci of manifestation of the divine names and attributes, then only they could assume and manifest (*tajallī*) all the divine attributes.

(d) Based on the principle "*al-aʿwwal fī al-fīkr huwa al-ākhir fī al-ʿamal*"³⁵⁹ that the original ultimate purpose and intent is not identical to the first act in a series of actions. For instance, the ultimate objective of planting a tree is to reap the fruits from this tree. However, this final objective comes to fruition as the final act after a series of other acts preceding it.

This analogy is used in the case of the existence of the Prophet who was

³⁵⁷ *Kull mā huwa aqdamu bi-al-zamān fa-huwa ākhir bi al-rutbah wa al-sharaf* (Ibid., 1:51-52)—An entity that has priority in the order of creation is superior in terms of rank and virtue to an existent that was created later.

³⁵⁸ Ibid, 3:398.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 1:53-59, 3:378.

commissioned as the last prophet in time, but in reality was the original ultimate purpose for prophethood, and thus holds the highest rank. This is encapsulated in *al-ḥadīth al-qudsī*: “*law lā-ka lamā khalaqtu al-aflāk*,”³⁶⁰ and the ḥadīths “*naḥnu al-sābiqūn wa naḥnu al-ākhirūn*”³⁶¹ and “*kuntu nabī wa Ādam bayn al-mā’ wa al-tīn*.”³⁶² In other words, from the perspective of rank and station, he has a priority, but from the perspective of time, he is the last. Outwardly, he is the son of the progeny of Adam, but, inwardly, Adam is his son.

From the above discussion, one can conclude that the divine guides have a crucial role to play in the world of creation because they are the cause of the ultimate purpose of the Creator. Second, there is a close interconnectedness between these guides and the other three causes that relate to the world of creation. Thus, they are the medium (*wāsiṭah*) through which the divine decrees and wishes are executed for His creatures. This *wilāyah* that is bestowed on them is a reality (*ḥaqīqī*) and is not relative (*i’tibārī*). The assumption of political authority or lack thereof, does not confirm or reject this reality.

Case Examples of this Method

Mullā Ṣadrā employed a method that fused and synthesized philosophy, theology and mysticism in the elaboration of *wilāyah* in his work *Aṣfār*, Qur’anic

³⁶⁰ *Iḥqāq*, 1:430-31.

³⁶¹ Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (Shaykh Ṣadūq), *Kamāl al-dīn wa tamām al-ni’mah*, ed. ‘Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī (Qum: Mu’assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1405/1984), p. 206.

³⁶² *Ghadīr*, 7:38.

exegesis and *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*.³⁶³ He adduces philosophical principles along with the citation of Qur'anic verses and tradition reports from the Prophet and the infallible guides to substantiate his thesis that the divine guides enjoy a supreme station and are the loci of manifestation (*mazābir*) of divine names and attributes, perfect beings, and the medium (*wāsiṭah*) through which divine bounty and benevolence is diffused to His creatures. *Wilāyah* is the cornerstone of his approach and analysis.

The following examples have been taken from Mullā Ṣadrā's works to demonstrate his method of discourse and analysis on the issue of imamate and *wilāyah*:

Example 1

“The earth would perish (*la-sākhat*) without the presence of an imām.”³⁶⁴

Mullā Ṣadrā provides the sequence of creation (*marātib al-wujūd*) with the employment of philosophical principles. Creation and continuity of the existence of the whole creation is dependent on the existence of the divine guides who are the *wāsiṭah* between the Creator and His creation. When God created the existents, he paid attention to their merits and virtues, and followed the *qā'idat al-ashraf*. The existent that is superior became the cause for the creation of existents of a lower status. For example, vegetation (*nabāt*) was

³⁶³ In contrast, Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī was successful in achieving a fusion of *kalām* and philosophy to support his position with constant references to the Qur'an and the ḥadīth reports in his work titled *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. The basis of discourse is *kalāmī* but includes certain subjects from philosophy. The book would be categorized as a *kalāmī* text and not philosophical because the basis is *kalām*. In a similar manner, the book of Mullā Ṣadrā titled *al-Ḥikmah al-muta'āliyah fī al-asfār al-'aqliyyah al-arba'ah* would be categorized as *falsafī* and not *'irfānī*.

³⁶⁴ *Kāfi*, 1:252, ḥadīth 10 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-ard lā takhlū min ḥujjah*}.

created for animals, and animals were created for human beings. Thus, animals become the cause for the existence of vegetation. The first existent in the order of creation would be the perfect being (*al-insān al-kāmil*) or the imām (*ḥujjah*). Everything was created for them and is subservient to them (*khalaqtu-ka li-ajlī wa khalaqtu al-khalq la-ka*). Without the presence of the divine guides, all the other existents would forfeit the cause of their existence and perish.³⁶⁵

The aim and purpose of the existence of the imām is not limited to providing religious guidance such that, if he is not accessible or people deny his station, then the purpose would be rendered void, as is the case with the twelfth messianic imām. Rather, the aim of his existence is far loftier than mere outward guidance to the people. The imāms are the aim and purpose for the world of creation and, through the luminosity of their light (*nūr*), people are guided towards the truth and brought out from darkness; they are the cause of opening the doors of the Mercy of God.³⁶⁶

Example 2

Muḥammad ibn Fuḍayl narrated to us that Abū Ḥamzah said: “Abū Ja‘far said to me: ‘Verily, only he who knows Allāh (really) worships Him. And he who does not know Allāh worships Him misguidedly like these (people).’ I said: ‘May I be made your ransom! What is knowledge [*ma‘rifah*] of Allāh?’ He said: ‘It is the affirmation of Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, the affirmation of His Messenger, acceptance of the leadership of ‘Alī,

³⁶⁵ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, p. 462.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

and following him and the true guidance of the Imāms, and declaration before Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, against taking part [*barā'ah*] with their enemies. Thus Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, is known³⁶⁷

The way to attain cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of the absolute and perfect Creator require *wasā'iṭ fi al-ijād* (channels) such as angels, prophets, imāms and saints. They are able to understand the acts (*af'āl*) of God from His essence and His attributes in sequence of merit (*al-ashraf fa al-ashraf*): "The apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allāh and His angels and His books and His apostles" (Q. 2:285). The imāms are the *wāsiṭat al-fayḍ* of God in the sense that through them guidance, sustenance and bounties are dispersed. Thus, one could not attain cognizance of God without the help of the *wāsiṭah* (mediator, intermediary) and the conviction attained through them is true *īmān*.³⁶⁸

Example 3

"A devotee of God cannot claim to be a believer [*mu'min*] until he knows [*ya'rifa*] Allāh, His messenger and all the Imāms (including) the Imām of his time, and refers (everything) to him and submits to him."³⁶⁹

The Prophet and imāms are links that lead one to the cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of God. Understanding God depends upon the proper

³⁶⁷ *Kāfi*, 1:254, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb ma'rifat al-imām wa al-radd ilay-hi*}. English translation from *Kāfi*, translated by WOFIS, Tehran, Iran, Volume One, Part Two, 4 (I), p. 42.

³⁶⁸ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, p. 467.

³⁶⁹ *Kāfi*, 1:255, ḥadīth no. 2 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb ma'rifat al-imām wa al-radd ilay-hi*}. English translation of *Kāfi* by WOFIS, Tehran, Iran, Volume One, Part Two, 4 (I), p. 43.

comprehension of the Prophet, and an appropriate understanding of the Prophet relies upon understanding of the imāms in the proper sequence of their designation. Further, the quality of infallibility is a hidden attribute that requires an explicit designation of each of the imāms and of the Prophet along with the performance of miracles. This method of argument is *kalāmī*.³⁷⁰

Example 4

“I heard Abū ‘Abdillāh say: ‘There is commonality between the successors [i.e. the divine guides — *awṣiyā*’] and the messengers with respect to binding obedience.’”³⁷¹

There is no distinction between the command of obedience to the Prophet and the imāms³⁷² because they are both the mediators (*wāsiṭah*) of God, and the vehicle for guidance to attain salvation by way of teaching the Book, providing wisdom, and illuminating the hearts of believers to attain cognizance (*ma‘rifah*) of God.³⁷³ The Prophet and the imām have been created from the same luminous light (*nūr*) and of the same substance (*tīnah*).³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, p. 468.

³⁷¹ *Kāfi*, 1:263-64, ḥadīth no. 5 { *K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb farḍ ṭā‘at al-a‘immah*}. English translation of *Kāfi* by WOFIS: Tehran, Iran, Volume One, Part Two, 4 (I), p. 57.

³⁷² Mullā Ṣadrā responds to the objection about how it is possible to mandate obedience to the imāms just as it is mandated to obey the Prophet because the latter received direct guidance from God, whereas the former received the teaching through the Prophet. He asserts that the mediators can be of two categories: one is *wāsiṭah fi al-i‘dād* and the other is *wāsiṭah fi al-ifādatah wa al-ijād*. The imām enjoys the first mediation by way of the Prophet’s preparing him to be identical to him and of the same rank: “O’ Ali, you and I are the fathers of this community.” Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, p. 479.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 479.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 481.

Example 5

“We are the administrators of Gods’ affair, the treasures of His knowledge, and the repositories of His revealed mysteries.”³⁷⁵

The imāms are the mediators between God and His creation since they are perfect beings and the loci of manifestation of the divine names and all His attributes, and receptacles of the knowledge of the unseen (*ghayb*). It is through their mediation that goodness and blessings continue to flow in perpetuity (*wāsiṭah bayn Allāh wa bayn al-khalq fī ifāḍat al-kahyrāt wa nuzūl al-barakāt ‘alā al-dawām*) because the imāms possess the traits of God that will never perish or die away (*lā tubīd wa lā tafnā*). They are the treasure house of divine knowledge and possess the key to the unseen world. They are referred to as the words of God (*kalimāt Allāh al-tāmmah*), the keys to the unseen world (*mafātīḥ al-ghayb*), and treasure trove of His knowledge (*khazā’inu-hu ‘ilmi-hi*). The relation between the treasure-house of the knowledge of God and the imāms is akin to intellect (*‘aql*) and the one who possesses intelligence (*‘āqil*): “And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, (*khazā’inu-hu*) and We do not send it down but in a known measure” (Q. 15:21).³⁷⁶ Reference is made to the philosophical principle, “*li-kull sāfil quwwah imkān al-wuṣūl ilā mā huwa a’lā min-hu*,”³⁷⁷ i.e. a lower existent aspires to acquire qualities of a higher existent.

³⁷⁵ *Kāfi*, 1:273, ḥadīth no. 1 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-a’immah wulāt amr Allāh wa khazanah ‘ilmi-hi*}.

³⁷⁶ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, p. 492.

³⁷⁷ *Dīnānī*, 1:290-93.

Example 6

The names (*asmā'*) of God comprise the unseen world which has the necessary tools to recognize the immutable entities (*al-a'yān al-thābitah*).³⁷⁸ When He wishes to bring these entities into existence in the outer world, just as they were established in the hidden (*bāṭin*) world, He does so with his divine names (*al-asmā' al-ḥusnā*). The first stage for the actualization of these entities is the first soul (*al-rūḥ al-awwal*) who becomes privy to the divine names and their luminosity. The divine guides become the manifestation of divine knowledge, divine attributes and divine power. To be sure, Mullā Ṣadrā clarifies that the divine guides should not be equated to having a role in divinity because their existence is not attributable to their own essence, rather it is accidental (*bi al-ʿaraḍ*). However, the infallible entities are the ultimate purpose of creation.³⁷⁹

Example 7

Prophethood has an inner (*bāṭin*) and an outer (*ẓāhir*) dimension. The former finds expression in the *wilāyah*, which is the cornerstone of their rank, and the latter is exhibited in the *sharīʿah*. *Wilāyah* is of two forms: *ʿāmmah* and *khāṣṣah*. It is defined as proximity to the Reality (*al-Ḥaqq*). The former is bestowed on one who believes in God and performs righteous deeds: "God is the guardian (*walī*) of those who believe, He brings them out of the darkness into the light" (Q. 2:256). The latter is a gift endowed by God on one who annihilates

³⁷⁸ This term is rendered by Affifi (1938:47) as 'fixed prototypes,' Izutsu (1983: 159) as 'permanent archetypes' and F. Rahman as 'the stable essence' in *The Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā* (Albany: SUNY, 1975), p. 47.

³⁷⁹ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, p. 579.

himself in the divine names and attributes. The prophets and imāms are the illuminated *'aql* that receive the luminosity and knowledge (*mazhar al-'ilm al-Ilāhī*) from God, and they are the manifestation of divine mercy (*al-tajallī al-rahmānī*).³⁸⁰

Additional Philosophical Principles

The following are additional philosophical principles that are employed to complete the above discussion pertaining to the station of the divine guides:

1. *imkān al-ashraf* — In the chronological order of creation, it is necessary for an existent of a higher status (*ashraf*) to have precedence over an existent of a lower status (*akbass*). In other words, if an existent of a lower status exists, then necessarily an existent of a higher status has already been created.³⁸¹
2. *imkān al-akbass* — This principle is the opposite of *imkān al-ashraf* and they are frequently used together to prove the existence of entities that lie between two extremes by reference to the arc of descent (*nuzūlī*) and ascent (*su'ūdī*).³⁸²
3. *kull azalī la yumkin an yufsad* (or *yafsud*)³⁸³ — An entity that is eternal (*azalī*) can never be prone to corruption because it is never subject to change or transformation, since it is not comprised of genus (*jins*). Another way of proving this principle is based on the fact that, since an eternal entity is not in need of anything else for its existence, it is exempt

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 616-17.

³⁸¹ Dīnānī, 1:18-28.

³⁸² Ibid., 1:29-32.

³⁸³ Ibid., 1:33-37.

from a need for a cause and is eternal. As such, it would not subject itself to any change or corruption.³⁸⁴ A related principle is that an entity without end is also an entity without beginning: “*mā lā awwal la-hu lā ākhir la-hu.*”³⁸⁵ These principles are used to prove the permanence of the *al-nafs al-nāṭiqah* as related in a ḥadīth: “You (humanity) were created to live forever and not to perish (*khuliq-tum li-al-baqā’ lā li-al-fanā’*).”³⁸⁶

4. *li-kull sāfil quwwah imkān al-wuṣūl ilā mā huwa a’lā min-hu* — There is an innate affinity and love present in a lower status existent towards one of higher status.³⁸⁷
5. *al-māhiyyah min ḥaythu hiya laysat illā hiya* — This principle of quiddity is used to elaborate on the lofty status of the clay (*al-ṭīnah al-‘illiyīn*) of the divine guides and their followers, in contrast to *al-ṭīnah al-sijjīn* which is the composition of their enemies including Satan, materialists, profligates, unbelievers, the wretched, ignorant and so on.³⁸⁸
6. *al-wāḥid lā yaṣḍuru ‘an-hu illā al-wāḥid* — The peripatetic philosophers and the school of illumination regard the First Intellect as the *al-ṣādir al-awwal*, whereas the mystics equate the *al-ṣādir al-awwal* to *al-wujūd al-‘āmm*, *al-fayḍ al-munbasit*, *al-nafs al-raḥmānī*, *irādah* and *al-mashī’ah al-fi’liyyah*.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁴ Ibid., 1:38.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., 1:85. Other principles related to this issue are: *mā thabata qidamu-hu imtana’a ‘adamu-hu*, 1:199; *kull kā’in fāsīd*, 2:452; *kull murakkab yanḥal*, 2:456.

³⁸⁶ Sabzawārī, *Asrār al-ḥikam*, p. 310.

³⁸⁷ Dinānī, 1:290-93.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 2:468.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 2:620, 621, 623, 636.

7. *kull mā huwa ab'ad 'an al-kathrah fa huwa akmal* — This principle deals with the notion of *al-insān al-kāmil*. An existent that is close to God is more complete and more perfect, such as the divine guides.³⁹⁰
8. *al-ism huwa 'ayn al-musammā bi i'tibar al-huwiyyah wa al-wujūd* — The name is identical to the named.³⁹¹ The way to attain cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of God is through the divine guides because they possess the divine names and are the loci of manifestation of His names and attributes: "*law-lā-nā mā 'urifa Allāh, law-lā-nā mā wuḥhida Allāh*"³⁹² and "*wa naḥnu asmā' Allāh al-ḥusnā wa al-amthāl al-'ulyā wa al-āyāt al-kubrā*"³⁹³

The intent of the discussion in this section is not to assert that all philosophical works use the above method of treatment in their analysis of the subject of imamate. For example, the work of Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī titled *Asrār al-ḥikam* is apparently a philosophical work. However, he uses a theological approach in certain sections when treating the issue of imamate.³⁹⁴ The proofs that he adduces to establish imamate are primarily theological in nature and are similar to the ones found in works of *kalām*. However, he sporadically provides

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 3:101.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 3:108-13. Other philosophical principles that are employed in the discourse on imamate are: *kull mumkin maḥfūf bi al-wujūbayn* (ibid., 2:575); *kull ma'lūl fa-huwa murakkab fī ṭab'i-hi min jihatayn: jihat bi-hā yushābihu-hu al-fā'il wa yuḥākī-hi wa jihat bi-hā yubāyinu-hu wa yunāfi-hi* (ibid., 3:422-25); *laysa fī al-wujūd marwūḍ yūṣaf bi al-iḥlāq illā wa la-hu wajh ilā al-tagyīd* (ibid., 3:436-440); *waḥdat al-ma'qūlāt laysat ka-waḥdat al-maḥsūsāt waḥdah 'adadiyyah* (ibid., 3:447-49); *kull huwiyyah sawā' kānat wājibah aw mumkinah fa-lā budda la-hā min lawāzim 'aqliyyah wa furū'āt* (ibid., 3:457-59); *kull mā yutlaqu 'alay-hi subḥāni-hi wa 'alā ghayri-hi fa-innamā yutlaqu 'alay-hi-mā bi-ma'niyayn mukhtalifayn laysa fī darajah waḥidah* (ibid., 3: 460-64); *kullu mā yaqa'u bi-hi al-idrāk laysa illā al-nūr* (ibid., 3:465-68);

³⁹² Shaykh Ṣadūq, *Tawḥīd*, p. 152.

³⁹³ See footnote no. 129 for the sources.

³⁹⁴ Sabzawārī, *Asrār al-ḥikam*, pp. 405-25.

a philosophical and mystical interpretation to some of the ḥadīths that are cited in favor of imamate.

In addition, the claim of philosophers is that they rely exclusively on rational demonstrations to prove their assertions. However, there are instances in this work of Mullā Sabzawārī where conclusions are drawn without providing any rational proof or textual evidence to support his point. The case example pertains to the establishment of the imamate of the eleven imams, which he claims has been established by the multiple, independently verifiable, uninterrupted chain of transmissions (*mutawātir*).³⁹⁵

Practical Philosophy (*al-hikmah al-'amaliyyah*)

al-Hikmah al-'amaliyyah is divided into three branches: ethics (*tahdhīb al-akhlāq*), domestic politics (*tadbīr al-manzil*) and national politics or sociology (*al-siyāsah al-mudun*). Issues pertaining to government, *khilāfah* and imamate, in the sense of political leadership, would fall under the rubric of *al-siyāsah al-mudun*. The classic work is by Fārābī titled *al-Madīnah al-fāḍilah*. In his other work titled *Tahṣīl al-sa'ādah*, the qualities of the imām are discussed at some length.³⁹⁶ Generally, in this section, philosophers treat the issue of imamate in a limited way and with brevity, devoting no separate section to imamate. Only after Mullā Ṣadrā do we observe that more attention is devoted to this subject because of his introduction of a new perspective.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 421.

³⁹⁶ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fārābī, "Tahṣīl al-sa'ādah," in *al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah* (16) (Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1999), pp. 137-41.

There are scholars such as ‘Allāmah Majlisī whose basic approach to the study of imamate is from the Qur’an and ḥadīth perspective, yet he does not fail to give credit to the philosophical treatment on this subject where warranted. This is evidenced in his commentary of the first ḥadīth from *al-Kāfi* in *Kitāb al-ḥujjah, Bāb al-idṭirār ilā al-ḥujjah*. In this ḥadīth, the sixth Shi‘ite imām explains why people are in need of a proof from God. Majlisī in his ḥadīth commentary titled *Mir’āt al-‘uqūl* writes that the imām provides a proof by way of two distinct methods — one is advanced by theologians and another by philosophers. The entire text of the philosophical argument is taken from Mullā Ṣadrā’s *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*³⁹⁷ without mentioning him by name. The first proof goes as follows: God is Wise and does not act whimsically without a purpose. This aim is guidance for human beings to attain felicity and prosperity. This roadmap is in need of divine prescriptions because human intellect cannot achieve this goal. Thus, he assigns human beings with responsibilities and provides a means for them to know their duties. The best way for cognizance (*ma‘rifah*) of God is through sending infallible guides who are of high character, deserving and capable of receiving revelation. This cognizance of the Divine and legislation cannot be attained through sensation, reflection and other means. Thus, it is incumbent on God to send His proofs for the procurement of His purpose on earth.

The second demonstration that is adduced by the philosophers is as follows: God is all-Powerful and the Creator of everything. God does not have a

³⁹⁷ Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi*, pp. 438-9.

body or any similarities to any other object that humans can imagine (*laysa kamithli-hi shay'*), and thus His subjects are not able to develop any direct relationship with Him. God is all-Wise and does that which is in the best interest of humans, and has full knowledge of their state of affairs. Humans are in need of a guide to aide them in matters of this life and the hereafter. They need guidelines for conducting social life because they cannot live in isolation. In this interdependent life, they need a blueprint from God, which is conveyed through a divinely appointed guide who resembles other humans in physical features, but possesses special attributes such that he can be a recipient of revelation.³⁹⁸

Imamate and Political Philosophy

In one work, Aḥmad Maḥmūd Şubḥī³⁹⁹ attempts to provide a philosophical analysis of the belief system of the Twelver Shi'ites by referring to their original sources. He views this school as an esoteric movement that has acquired a number of myths and absurdities. The esoteric dimension was obtained from the *Ikhwān al-ṣafā'*'s principles and writings. He argues that the mystery of survival of the Twelver Shi'ites, in spite of its small number and the fact that it has undergone austere political and social conditions, is indicative of the inherent merit of some of its teachings.

His work follows the same sequence of subjects that is found in classic works of theology, i.e. *naṣb al-imām*, *naṣṣ al-imām*, *'iṣmah*, *afdaliyyah*, etc. His

³⁹⁸ *Mir'āt al-'uqūl*, 2:256.

³⁹⁹ Aḥmad Maḥmūd Şubḥī titled *al-Nazarīyyah al-Imāmiyyah la-day al-Shi'ah al-Ithnā' 'Āshariyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍat al-'Arabiyyah, 1991).

claim of undertaking a philosophical analysis on theological subjects seems to be missing with the exception of the section dealing with Fārābī. More important, he reduces the role of the imām to one of a political statesman (theocracy) akin to the governance model in the political history of Christianity in the middle ages. The institution of imamate and religious leadership is viewed by him as authoritarian, and, in contrast, the system of governance in the Sunnite school is posited as more democratic. Duncan MacDonald, Goldziher and George Makdisi are of the same opinion. However, recent scholarship has raised serious questions about these claims, especially during the period of post-occultation of the messianic imām.⁴⁰⁰ Religion and politics are viewed as two distinct entities by Şubḥi and the mode of governance chosen by the people is arbitrary and free of any divine prescription.⁴⁰¹ The major flaw in this work is reducing the role of the imām to one of political leadership.

⁴⁰⁰ See Devin J. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy*, pp. 7-13.

⁴⁰¹ *Ijtihād* and *qiyās* can only be applied in areas where there is absence of explicit evidence (*naṣṣ*), from the Qur'an and *sunnah*.

Syllogisms and other Methods in the Discourse on Imamate

Imamite scholars make use of syllogisms and other modes of proofs and argumentation in their articulation of the doctrine of Imamate. Support for such an analysis is sought from Scriptures by virtue of the Qur'anic verse: "Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom (*hikmah*) and goodly exhortation (*al-maw'izah al-hasanah*), and have disputations (*jādil*) with them in the best manner" (Q. 16:125). The call to invite people with wisdom is equated with demonstrative syllogism (*burhān*); the goodly exhortation with rhetorical syllogism (*khiṭābah*) and the disputation with dialectical syllogism (*jadal*). Another Qur'anic verse that is adduced as a proof for the use of disputation is: "Say: O followers of the Book! Come to an equitable proposition between us and you that we do not serve any but God and (that) we shall not associate anyone with Him, and (that) some of us shall not take others for lords besides God" (Q. 3:64). A tradition on the authority of the sixth imām is put forward to praise the employment of reason in the articulation of the necessity for a divine guide or a *ḥujjah* at all times.⁴⁰² The imāms would invite their disciples to engage in debate and disputation with those who denied the necessity of the existence of a divine guide, and would inform them of their strong and weak points. Yūnus b. Ya'qūb relates:

I was in the presence of Abū 'Abdillāh when a person from Syria came in to him and said: "I am an expert in *kalām* (Islamic theology), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *farā'id* (the calculation of inheritance). I have come here to debate [*munāzarah*] with your companions." Abū 'Abdillāh asked him: "Is what you will say from the Messenger of Allāh or from yourself?" He replied:

⁴⁰² The full text of this ḥadīth is cited in Chapter 3.

“Both — from the Messenger of Allāh and from myself.” Abū ‘Abdillāh said: “Then you are a partner with the Messenger of Allāh.” He said: “No.” The Imām said: “Have you received any revelation from Allāh, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, which has informed you?” He replied, “No.” The Imām said: “Is obedience due to you in the same way as it is due to the Messenger of Allāh?” He replied, “No.” Abū ‘Abdillāh turned towards me and said: “O Yūnus ibn Ya‘qūb! This man has defeated himself [*khaṣama nafsa-hu*] before he has started to speak.” Then the Imām said: “O Yūnus! If you had been a good debater [*tuḥsinu al-kalām*], you would have debated with him [*kallamta-hu*].” Yūnus said: “How great was my misfortune. I said: ‘May I be made your ransom! I have heard you forbidding disputation (in religion) [*tanhā ‘an al-kalām*] and you said: “Woe unto the experts in disputation who say, ‘This is acceptable, this is not. This can be deduced (from that), this cannot be deduced (from that). This can be understood, that cannot.’” Abū ‘Abdillāh said: “I have said: ‘Woe upon those who abandon what I (the Imām) have said [*taraktū mā aqūlu*] and follow their own likings. . .”⁴⁰³

The five forms of syllogism comprise demonstration (*burhān*), dialectical (*jadal*), rhetorical (*khiṭābah*), poetic (*shi‘r*) and sophistical (*mughālahah*). Even though rhetorical and poetic syllogisms fall outside the purview of logic, Islamic philosophers have tended to include them in an ancillary role to the demonstrative proofs. The primacy of demonstration is underlined in the works of scholars because only this method produces a decisive and conclusive assent to the conclusion of the syllogism. These syllogisms employ premises such as self-evident first principles (*awwaliyyāt*), sensible experiences (*maḥsūsāt*) and empirically tested (*mujarrabāt*) propositions.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ *Kāfi*, translated by WOFIS under the supervision of Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ja‘farī, Volume 1, Part Two, Book 4 (I), pp. 10-11, ḥadīth no. 4 {*K. al-ḥujjah, Bāb al-iḍṭirār ilā al-ḥujjah*}.

⁴⁰⁴ This is not to suggest that only Imamite theologians employ these syllogisms. Of course, others do as well.

The divine guides encouraged their disciples and guided them in the employment of different forms of proofs and argumentation to prove the necessity for the presence of an infallible guide at all times. This is reflected in a ḥadīth report cited in *Kāfī* where Hishām b. al-Ḥakam in a debate with ‘Amr b. ‘Ubayd sought recourse to *burhān ‘aqlī* to demonstrate the necessity for the presence of a proof of God on earth. The sixth Shi‘ite imām was so pleased with his mode of argumentation that he asked him to repeat it in an assembly.⁴⁰⁵ Another report is cited by Yūnus b. Ya‘qūb who observed the following incident when he was in the company of the sixth imām who had invited his disciples to engage in a debate with a visitor from Syria and thereafter gave them his feedback on their debate skills:

... Then Abū ‘Abdillāh turned towards Ḥumrān and said: “You debate on the authority of the traditions and you act correctly.” Then he (the Imām) turned towards Hishām b. Sālim and said: “You intended (to debate) on the authority of the traditions but you do not know them.” Then he turned towards al-Aḥwal and said: “You debate with agile and guileful analogy. You destroy what is incorrect with (another) incorrect (argument), but your incorrect (argument) is more triumphant.” Then he turned towards Qays al-Māṣir and said: “You argue so that when you reach nearest to the (meaning of) traditions of the Messenger of Allāh you go furthest away from (the meaning of) them. You mix up what is correct with what is incorrect, but a little of what is correct suffices for a lot of what is incorrect. You and al-Aḥwal are very agile and skillful.” Yūnus said: “By Allāh, I thought that he would speak to Hishām in more or less the same way as to the previous two. But he said: ‘O Hishām! You never fall to the ground; when you drop near the ground, you soar up (once more). It is a man such as you who should debate [*fa-al-yukallim*] with people. You must guard yourself against slips and errors. In

⁴⁰⁵ The full text of this ḥadīth is cited at the beginning of Chapter 3.

the hereafter, there will be intercession (for you), if Allāh wills.”⁴⁰⁶

The best form of argumentation that produces assent and certitude is demonstrative syllogism. In this, both the form (*ṣūrah*) and matter (*māddah*) of the syllogism are of the highest order and beyond reproach. Thus, the conclusion is certain and not subject to doubt or ambiguity. The two forms of demonstrative syllogisms are *burhān limmī* and *burhān innī*. In the former, the flow is from the cause to the effect, whereas in the latter it is the opposite.

Dialectical syllogisms are based upon universally accepted beliefs (*al-mashhūrāt*) and presuppositions (*al-musallamāt*) such that public opinion would lean towards those beliefs and the intellect can comprehend them. The intended purpose of dialectical syllogism is to overpower the opponent by providing convincing arguments that use textual proofs accepted by his rival.

Rhetorical syllogism is viewed as an instrument for communicating demonstrated truths to the populace who may not have the intellectual aptitude or patience to engage in a rigorous rational demonstration. A body of generally accepted beliefs and statements are unreflectively assumed to be true by some groups and sects. They are invoked with the goal of producing contentment in the hearts and minds of the populace.

Sophistical premises (*mughālatah*) are based on false premises that attempt to draw a correlation to true premises with the aim of claiming the truthfulness of the conclusion of the syllogism.

⁴⁰⁶ *Kāfi*, translated by WOFIS, Volume 1, Part Two, Book 4 (I), pp. 15-16, ḥadīth no. 4 {*K. al-hujjah, Bāb al-iḍṭirār ilā al-hujjah*}.

Corroboration by Poetry (*shi'r*) and Literature (*adab*)

The Qur'an both reproaches and praises the poets: "And as to the poets, those who go astray follow them. Do you not see that they wander about bewildered in every valley? And that they say that which they do not do, except those who believe and do good and remember God much, and defend themselves after they are oppressed" (Q. 26:224-27). Thus, it is argued, that all forms of poetry are not condemned, rather only those which lead people astray and misguide them. To support this position, ḥadīth reports are cited on the authority of the Prophet that a poet who writes poetry on a matter of truth is supported by *rūḥ al-qudus*⁴⁰⁷ and is like a *mujāhid* striving with his tongue.⁴⁰⁸ It is related that the Prophet praised the poem composed by Ḥassān b. Thābit after the sermon that he delivered on the day of Ghadīr and asserted that Ḥassān was supported and strengthened by the *rūḥ al-qudus*.⁴⁰⁹

There is a distinction made in formal logic between poetry (*shi'r*) and corroboration (*istishhād*) by way of poetry. The substance of the syllogism in the former is imagination (*takhayyul*) and the purpose is to produce an effect in the faculty of imagination (*al-infi'ālāt al-nafsiyyah*). However, the latter uses poetry along with Qur'anic verses, ḥadīth reports, historical reports, etymology and other information to reach a conclusion of an intellectual assent.

⁴⁰⁷ *Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, 1:15 and *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, 2:704, no. 748.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ghadīr*, 2:9.

⁴⁰⁹ Ḥākim al-Nishābūrī, *al-Mustadrak*, 3:369, no. 5417.

Example: Demonstrative Syllogism (*burhān*)

A good example of a work on exegesis that employs demonstrative syllogism is *al-Mizān* by ‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī. His commentary on the Qur’anic verse: “This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and I have approved Islam for your religion” (Q. 5:3) is a good illustration for this mode of argumentation.⁴¹⁰ *al-Ghadīr* by ‘Allāmah Amīnī is another example of a work that employs ḥadīth reports for demonstrative syllogism.⁴¹¹ In addition, the intellectual assent sought by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam in his debate with ‘Amr b. ‘Ubayd is also a good illustration. The works of theology are replete with examples of demonstrative syllogism and have been cited in the section on *kalām* in this thesis.

Example: Dialectical Syllogism (*jadāl*)

A sample work that employs the method of dialectical syllogism is by Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Firūz Ābādī titled *Faḍā’il al-khamsah min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-sittah*.⁴¹² Furthermore, a great majority of the works in theology (*kalām*) employ this mode of argument and proof.

Example: Rhetorical Syllogism (*khiṭābah*)

An example of the *khiṭābī* approach is found in Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī’s work *Asrār al-ḥikam* in the section dealing with the confirmation of imamate of

⁴¹⁰ See Chapter 2 under “Other Qur’anic verses . . .” for an elaboration on this method.

⁴¹¹ *Ghadīr*, 1:230-38.

⁴¹² Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Fayrūz Ābādī, *Faḍā’il al-khamsah min al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-sittah*.

the eleven imams. He provides no proof (*burhān*) on this subject, and no Qur'anic verses, ḥadīth reports or rational proofs are advanced to support his position that the eleven imāms have been designated with multiple, uninterrupted transmission (*nusūṣ mutawātirah*).⁴¹³ It is a form of tautology.

Example: Corroboration by Poetry (*shī'r*)

Two sample works that employ poetry to corroborate the Shi'ite doctrine of Imamate and *wilāyah* are *Risālatān fī al-mawlā*⁴¹⁴ by Shaykh Mufīd and *al-Ghadīr* by 'Allāmah Amīnī. The former provides the etymology of *mawlā* in general and then places the meaning of this word in the context of *ḥadīth al-Ghadīr*. He cites various poets including Ḥassān b. Thābit and Labīd b. Rabī'ah. The former cites a famous couplet to prove that the meaning of *mawlā* in the context of Ghadīr is *awlā*.⁴¹⁵ 'Allāmah Amīnī provides an exhaustive account in his elaboration of the meanings of the word *mawlā* from the first to the fourteenth century of the Islamic era by citing twenty-seven varied connotations and concludes that the most appropriate meaning in the context of Ghadīr is *awlā bi-al-taṣarruf*.⁴¹⁶

Tablīlī

Scholars of different persuasions have written treatises on the noble character and personality of the divine guides from varied perspectives,

⁴¹³ Sabzawārī, *Asrār al-ḥikam*, p. 421.

⁴¹⁴ Shaykh Mufīd, *Risālatān fī al-mawlā*, ed. Muḥammad Mahdī Najaf (London: Dār Zayd li-al-nashar, 1990).

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴¹⁶ *Ghadīr*, 1:340-54.

especially on 'Alī, by engaging in an analysis of the biographical literature (*sīrah*), virtues (*faḍā'il*), *riwāyah*, treatment of their disciples, manner of governance, etc. Such works do not rely on rigorous application of any one particular perspective, i.e. Qur'an, ḥadīth, theological, philosophical or mystical, or any particular mode of proof, i.e. *burhān*, *jadāl*, *khiṭābah* and *shi'r*. The subjects encompass love and affinity to the divine guides (*maḥabbah*) and *khilāfah*. Here are some examples:

Shi'ite scholars: Murtaḍā Muṭahhari's work titled *Jādhībah wa dāfi'ah* argues that the personality of 'Alī produced strong forces of attraction and repulsion because he took firm and uncompromising positions based on the core value of justice. Another work by the same author is *Sayrī dar Nahj al-balāghah* that provides a panoramic view of the person and traits of 'Alī. Similar works are authored by Tawfīq al-Fakīkī titled *al-Rā' wa al-ra'iyyah* which is a commentary on the epistle that 'Alī composed for Mālik al-Ashtar on the rules and etiquettes of governance before sending him as governor to Egypt.

Sunni Scholars: *al-Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib* by 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Abd al-Maqṣūd consists of nine volumes.

Non-Muslim Scholars: *al-Imām 'Alī: Ṣawt al-'adālah al-insāniyyah* by George Jordac in five volumes. Another sample is the work of Sulaymān Kattānī on Imām 'Alī that has been translated to English by I. K. A. Howard.

Tarkībī

This category is applied to works that employ multiple methods of analysis in their discourse and treatment of imamate and *wilāyah*. A fine

example of such a work is the monumental multi-volume opus of 'Allāmah Amīnī titled *al-Ghadīr fī al-Kitāb wa al-sunnah wa al-adab*. He employs different types of proofs comprising *burhān*, *jadāl*, corroboration by *shi'r* and historical analysis.⁴¹⁷ Other authors include Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and Mullā Ṣadrā who wrote masterpieces in different fields such as theology, philosophy and mysticism employing a methodology and technical language appropriate to each of the respective fields.

⁴¹⁷ See especially volumes 5 and 7 of *Ghadīr* for a sample of these approaches. A good illustration is provided in his analysis on the issue of extremism (*ghuluww*) in 7:69-87. For a theological discourse on imamate, see 7:131-52.

Chronological Bibliography

Philosophy (*falsafah*)

- al-Fārābī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 950). *al-Fārābī on the Perfect State*. Introduction, translation and commentary by Richard Walzer. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- _____. "Taḥṣīl al-sa'ādah," in *al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah* (16). Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1999.
- Ibn Sīnā (d. 422/1037). *al-Ishārāt wa al-tanbihāt*. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2002.
- _____. *al-Shifā'*. 4 volumes in 10. Edited by Ṭahā Ḥusayn. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1983-85.
- Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (Mullā Ṣadrā) (d. 1050/1641). *al-Ḥikmah al-muta'āliyah fī al-asfār al-'aqliyyah al-arba'ah*. 3rd edition. 4 volumes in 9. Beirut: Dār al-turāth al-iḥyā' al-'Arabī, 1981-90.
- _____. *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfī*. Tehran: Maktabat al-maḥmūdī, 1391/1971.—His commentary is partial and ends with *Kitāb al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-'immah wulāt amr Allāh wa khazanah 'ilmi-hi*.
- _____. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm ta'līf Ṣadr al-muta'allihīn*. Compiled by Muḥammad Khwājawī. Qum: 1987. {This is a complete list of his commentaries in several volumes}.
- Sabzawārī, Mullā Hādī (b. 1797 or 98). *Asrār al-ḥikam*. Introduction by Toshiko Izutsu. Tehran: Mawlā, 1985.
- _____. *Majmū'-e rasā'il*. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1981.
- _____. *Metaphysics of Sabzavari*. Translated to English by T. Izutsu and M. Mohaghegh. Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1991.
- _____. *Sharḥ Ghurar al-farā'id (Sharḥ-e Manzūmah-ye ḥikmat)*. 2nd edition. Edited by M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu. Tehran: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies and Tehran University, 1981.
- _____. *Sharḥ-e Manzūmah*. 2 volumes. Commentary and Persian translation by Murtaḍā Muṭahharī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e ḥikmat, 1982.

Āshtiyānī, Mīrzā Mahdī. *Asās-e tawḥīd dar qā'idah-ye tawḥīd wa waḥdat-e wujūd*.
Tehran: University of Tehran, 1951.

Qumshah'ī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Mahdī Ilāhī. *Ḥikmat-e Ilāhī*. 6th print. Tehran:
Intishārāt-e Islāmī, 1984.

Dīnānī, Ghulām Ḥusayn Ibrāhīmī. *Qawā'id-e kullī-ye falsafī dar falsafah-ye Islāmī*,
3 vols. Tehran: Mu'assasah-ye muṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e farhangī, 1986.

CHAPTER 5

Mystical Approach to Imamate and Wilāyah

(MANHAJ 'IRFĀNĪ)

Introduction

Two mystical groups will be examined for the purpose of illustrating the manner in which the issues of imamate and *wilāyah* are deliberated. They are *taṣawwuf* and *'irfān*.⁴¹⁸

Taṣawwuf

Taṣawwuf comprises both Sunnites and Shi'ites who espouse close affinity and love towards 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The former accords a high station and rank to 'Alī and, at the same time, relates virtues and charismata (*karāmāt*) to the other three rightly guided caliphs (*al-khulafā' al-rāshidūn*) and other caliphs who ruled over the Muslim world.⁴¹⁹ In contrast, amongst the Shi'ites, the high rank and station is reserved only for the divine guides who are viewed as superior to others in terms of virtues and full-fledged creative authority (*al-wilāyah al-takwīniyyah*). They enumerate the virtues and high station of 'Alī without discrediting, defaming or trivializing the virtues related about others.⁴²⁰ There is a subset among the Shi'ites who denigrate the other caliphs and view

⁴¹⁸ There are other groups and sects that have an elaborate scheme for the analysis of the concept of imamate and *wilāyah* such as *Ahl al-ḥaqq*, *Ḥurūfiyyah* and *Shaykhiyyah*.

⁴¹⁹ *Ghadīr*, 11:103-197.

⁴²⁰ An example of this group are followers of Mīrzā Ḥasan Ṣāfi 'Alī Shāh, *Baḥr al-ḥaqā'iq* (Tehran: Kitābkhānah-ye sanā'ī, 1984 or 85).

them as unworthy of a high status because, in their estimation, they had usurped the right of succession from 'Alī.⁴²¹

Theoretical Mysticism (*al-'irfān al-naẓarī*)

'Irfān naẓarī draws heavily from the works of Ibn 'Arabī, who wrote profusely on this subject. Two of his most famous works are *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* (The Meccan Illuminations) and *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (The Bezels of Wisdom). He established a new school (*maktab*) and a method that has since been adhered to by scholars, such as Mullā Ṣadrā, and adopted with modifications. Scholars with Shi'ite leanings were attracted to the writings of Ibn 'Arabī because of his exposition of *wilāyah* that closely resembled the world view of the Twelver Shi'ites in certain aspects dealing with imamology. Some have suggested that Ibn 'Arabī leaned towards the Shi'ite world view, but outwardly claimed to be of Sunnite persuasion.⁴²²

Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī has a tendency to uncritically accept the writings of Ibn 'Arabī whereas others, such as Mullā Ṣadrā, subject the works of Ibn 'Arabī to close scrutiny and disagree with his views on issues that are incompatible with the world view of the Twelver Shi'ites.⁴²³ This incisive criticism by Mullā Ṣadrā of the works of Ibn 'Arabī is undertaken with the utmost reverence and respect. This led Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī, a traditionist and vocal opponent of Ibn

⁴²¹ An example of this group is Khāksāriyah. For information on the other numerous sects in *taṣawwuf*, see as a sample work, Ma'ṣūm 'Alī Shāh, *Ṭarā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Muḥammad Ja'far Maḥjūb, 2 vols. (Tehran: Kitābkhānah-ye bārānī, 1980); Sulamī Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn, *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyyah*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn Shuraybah (Miṣr: Dār al-kitāb al-'Arabī, 1953).

⁴²² *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qaysari*, pp. 59-60. Qūnawī accepts the Shi'ite understanding of *wilāyah* in his commentary of *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, *ibid*.

⁴²³ Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ*, p. 102, p. 107. For an example of Mullā Ṣadrā's critique of Ibn 'Arabī's view on eternal punishment in hell-fire, see Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah*, pp. 777-78.

‘Arabī, whom he labels as the most inimical (*ashadd naṣīb*) to the divine guides, to raise objections against Mullā Ṣadrā for showing respect to Ibn ‘Arabī.⁴²⁴ He writes with dismay that Mullā Ṣadrā refers to Ibn ‘Arabī with the praiseworthy phrase “*al-muḥaqqiq al-‘arif bi Allāh*” when it is evident that he has no sympathy for the Shi‘ite world view for the following reasons: Ibn ‘Arabī, when describing the *aqṭāb* in *al-Futūḥāt*, asserts that the persons who enjoyed the stature of outward (*zāhirah*) and inward (*baṭinah*) caliphates, include, among others, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ḥasan, Mu‘āwiyah b. Yazīd, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Mutawakkil. It is well known that Mutawakkil desecrated and demolished the shrine of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī and prevented the pilgrims from paying a visit to his gravesite; the source of misguidance (*aṣl al-ḍalālāt*) originated with the Shi‘ites; Ibn ‘Arabī, in describing the classes of spiritual men, relates his meeting with al-Khaṭarī, a member the class of *rajabiyyūn*, who was endowed with the special gift “of being able to detect the extremist Shi‘ites (*rawāfiḍ*) even when they were posing as Sunnīs, because they appeared to him metamorphosed into swine [*bi-ṣūrat al-khanzīr*];”⁴²⁵ and he regards ‘Umar as possessing the faculty of infallibility (*‘iṣmah*).⁴²⁶ According to Shaykh Qummī, these statements should be evaluated independently and do not rehabilitate Ibn ‘Arabī in so much as he asserts his belief in the concept of the messianic imām.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁴ ‘Abbās b. Muḥammad Riḍā al-Qummī, *Safīnat al-bihār wa madīnat al-ḥikam wa al-āthār*, 2 vols. (Tehran: Intishārāt-e kitābkhānah-ye sanā’ī, 1970), 1:310-11.

⁴²⁵ Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn ‘Arabī*, tr. Liadain Sherrard (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993), pp. 105-06.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 1:311. The author of *al-Rawḍāt* states that the first person to write a commentary on *Kāfi* from the perspective of unbelief (*kufīr*) is Mullā Ṣadrā, *Safīnat al-bihār*, 1:310.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

A contemporary scholar in Iran, Shaykh Jawād b. ‘Abbās Karbalā’ī, who espouses a traditionist approach, employs concepts and phraseology found in gnostic (*‘irfanī*) texts in his five volume work titled *al-Anwār al-sāṭi‘ah*, which is a commentary on *Ziyārat al-jāmi‘ah*.⁴²⁸ He avoids any mention of gnosis (*‘irfān*) or the works of these scholars due to the stigma that is normally attached to mysticism, in the opinion of traditionists. Furthermore, traditionists are of the opinion that writings of Ibn ‘Arabī that are in harmony with the Shi‘ite world view have been taken from the infallible divine guides without giving them due credit.⁴²⁹

Sources

The primary sources employed are revelation through experiential testimony (*shuhūdī*) and tasting by the inner heart (*dhawqī*). Recourse to reason (*‘aql*) and textual evidence (*naql*) supplement, confirm and buttress the conclusions; however, they are not the primary sources.⁴³⁰ Ḥadīth reports that are cited in their works are generally not subject to scrutiny from the point of view of *isnād*. Many of the ḥadīth reports cited are generally weak and deficient from the perspective of chains of transmission (*isnād*) and are not to be found in the early ḥadīth corpus. However, with the passage of time, these ḥadīth reports attained fame (*mashhūr*) and are frequently used in the sources. For example, the

⁴²⁸ Jawād b. ‘Abbās Karbalā’ī, *al-Anwār al-sāṭi‘ah fī sharḥ Ziyārat al-jāmi‘ah*, 5 volumes (Tehran: Mu‘assasat al-‘alamī, 1990).

⁴²⁹ *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qayṣarī*, pp. 59-60.

⁴³⁰ Like theologians, the mystics have a precommitment to justify their religious beliefs by the use of reason and revelatory sources, and subsequently to draw new conclusions and results from these beliefs. Reference to revealed texts and reason is made to justify that which was already attained through *dhawq* and *shuhūd*. In theological texts, reason is invoked to confirm conclusions already derived from the Qur’an and ḥadīth reports.

al-ḥadīth al-qudsī: “*law-lā-ka la mā khalaqtu al-aflāk*” and “*kuntu kanz makhfī fa-ahbabbtu an u’rafa fa khalaqtu al-khalq li-kay u’raf*” fall in this category.

Method of Analysis

Definition of *Wilāyah* and *Walāyah*⁴³¹

1. The linguistic meaning of *wilāyah* is guardianship, governance and dominion, whereas *walāyah* means love (*maḥabbah*). It is said that it is derived from *walī* and means closeness or proximity.
2. The technical meaning of *wilāyah* is a universal reality, divine attributes and aspects from His essence which are manifested outwardly in the person of the divine guide: “And He is the Guardian (*walī*), the Praised One” (Q. 42:28). The *wilāyah* in one form or other finds expression in all existents, be they necessary or contingent existents. Existence (*wujūd*) cannot take form without the *wilāyah*. However, the nature of *wilāyah* varies in accordance with the rank (*marātib*) of each existent, depending on its station (*bi-al-kamāl wa al-naqṣ wa al-shiddah wa al-da’f*). The closer the existent is to God, the higher the rank of its *wilāyah*. The word “*walī*” is the esoteric name of God. Thus, *wilāyah* is the inner reality of Muḥammad (*al-ḥaqīqah al-Muḥammadiyyah*) that

⁴³¹ The centrality of this concept in the Shi’ite world view led H. Landolt to remark: “It is for these reasons that *walāyah*, and not the profession of monotheism (*tawḥīd*) as in Sunnī Islam, appears as the principal “pillar of Islam” in the classical collections of Shi’ī traditions, both those of the Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah, or Twelvers (e.g., al-Kulaynī, d. 940), and those of the Fatimid Ismā’iliyyah (e.g., Qāḍī al-Nu’mān, d. 974), who follow a common line of imāms up to Ja’far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765),” H. Landolt, “*Walāyah*,” pp. 319-20.

is revealed in outward form in the person of Muḥammad and comprise the disclosure of all the divine names and attributes in their perfect form for the cognizance of God and religious guidance. This *wilāyah* in all its dimensions was transmitted to the Prophet's successors consisting of the twelve divine guides who are consequently referred to as proofs of God (*ḥujaj Allāh*) and successors (*kbūlafā'*) to the Prophet. His successors enjoy a high rank and station by virtue of being the successors to his *wilāyah* and, consequently, their station is higher than the other prophets.⁴³² They all originate from the same light (*nūr wāḥid*) and one reality (*ḥaqīqah wāḥidah*): “*awwalu-nā Muḥammad, awṣaṭu-nā Muḥammad, ākhiru-nā Muḥammad, kullu-nā Muḥammad.*”⁴³³

Example

Imamite scholars who are in agreement with the mode of discourse found in *'irfān nazārī* have adopted the concept of *wilāyah* from the works of Ibn 'Arabī, especially his *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, with modifications to fit their world view such that the chain of *wilāyah* would end in the person of 'Alī and the other eleven divine guides. Qur'anic verses and

⁴³² One can be dismissed from the station of *nubuwwah* but not from *wilāyah*. The latter is not dependent on time (*zamān*) and is akin to existence (*wujūd*).

⁴³³ The name '*al-walī*' is the inner aspect of the name of God because *wilāyah* is hidden in the divinity (*ilāhiyyah*). Thus, *wilāyah* is the inner dimension of divinity for it is the concealed mystery. See *Rasā'il-e Qaysarī (Ḥawāshī bar Fuṣūṣ)* with introduction and footnotes by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Āshṭiyānī; commentary by Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshah'ī (Tehran: 1977), p. 66.

Shi'ite ḥadīths are put forward to formulate the modified version of *wilāyah* and make it compatible with the Shi'ite world view on imamate.

Ibn 'Arabī's articulation of the seal of *wilāyah* does not preclude the possibility for other saints to be recipients of the station of *walī*.⁴³⁴ This contradicts the Shi'ite worldview that 'Alī and the other eleven divine guides, who shared the same essence and *wilāyah* as the Prophet, are the seal of the *wilāyah* (*khatm al-wilāyah*) in its general (*'āmmah*) and special form (*khāṣṣah*).⁴³⁵

The *wilāyah*, as explained by Shi'ite scholars, is divided into two: *'āmmah* and *khāṣṣah*. The former is accessible to all believers (*mu'minūn*) based on the Qur'anic verse: "God is the guardian (*walī*) of those who believe" (Q. 2:257). It is structured in the form of a hierarchy with different ranks based upon the degree of faith and conviction (*īmān*) of the believer. The highest rank is reserved for Muḥammad and the twelve imāms and the daughter of Muḥammad, Fāṭimah. The *al-wilāyah al-khāṣṣah* is bestowed on those with sound heart who have annihilated themselves in the essence of God: "Now surely the friends of God—they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve" (Q. 10:62). It is confined to only those who are complete and perfect in the sense that they have cast off the human characteristics by migrating from *quds al-jabarūt* to *quds al-lāhūt*. This

⁴³⁴ Ibn 'Arabī, *Naṣṣ al-nuṣṣ*, p. 102, 107, 131. Ayatullah Khumaynī shares a similar opinion as Ibn 'Arabī with reference to the *wilāyah*. See below.

⁴³⁵ Ibn 'Arabī identifies and affirms the Seal of Universal (*'āmmah*) Sainthood with Jesus, several times, in his work, however, with regards to the Seal of Muḥammadan Sainthood (*khāṣṣah*) there is less clarity, but collective evidence indicate that Ibn 'Arabī identifies this Seal with himself. A third seal is suggested by Michel Chodkiewicz: Seal of the Divine Names (Chodkiewicz, p. 125, footnote no. 31). Ali al-Oraibi argues that 'Alī b. Sulaymān and Maytham al-Bahrānī are the first ones to link the Seals to the divine guides and imamology such that Imām 'Alī is the Seal of Universal Sainthood and the Mahdī is the Seal of Muḥammadan Sainthood. Ali al-Oraibi, "Shi'i Renaissance," Ph.D. Dissertation (Montreal: McGill University, 1992), pp. 215-16.

wilāyah is restricted to Muḥammad and his successors and trustees, the twelve divine guides who enjoy the highest rank (*fawq martabah fi al-wilāyah wa al-qurb martabah*). Those who have been endowed with the knowledge of the unseen originate from one reality, one light (*nūr*), and are of the same essence and attributes (*al-‘ayn al-wāḥidah*). The Qur’anic verse in which ‘Alī is referred to as the ‘*nafs*’ of the Prophet is cited to solidify this opinion (Q. 3:61).

Ayatullah Khumaynī’s Opinion on *Wilāyah* and the Rightly Guided Caliphs

Ayatullah Khumaynī’s conception of *wilāyah*, surprisingly, is very similar to Ibn ‘Arabī’s by allowing the possibility that ordinary human beings who undergo a thorough purification can attain the station of *walī*.⁴³⁶ Furthermore, he heaps praise and admiration on ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb⁴³⁷ for having received special knowledge and grace from the Prophet.

There is a ḥadīth report cited by Ibn ‘Arabī regarding ‘Umar to the effect that the Prophet dreamt that while he was drinking milk, some of it spilt from his fingertips and he gave this grace to ‘Umar.⁴³⁸ This is interpreted as the knowledge of the Prophet. Ayatullah Khumaynī deduces that since the text of

⁴³⁶ Rūḥ Allāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī, *Ta’līqāt ‘alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam & Miṣbāḥ al-uns* (Dār al-maḥajjah al-bayḍā’ and Dār al-rasūl al-akram, 1422/2001), pp. 22-28. This book was published posthumously but he had completed writing margin notes for the two works in 1355/1936, *ibid.*, p. 386.

⁴³⁷ Ayatullah Khumaynī was critical of the conduct of the first three caliphs in his lecture series on Islamic Government which he delivered in Najaf in 1969: “The first two successors to the Prophet adhered to his example in the outer conduct of their personal lives, even though in other affairs they committed errors, which led to the grave deviations that appeared in the time of ‘Uthmān...,” in Āyatullāh Rūḥ Allāh al-Mūsawī al-Khumaynī, *Islam and Revolution*, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981), p. 57. Generally, ‘Umar is portrayed quite negatively in the works by Twelver Shi’ites as the one who angered and annoyed the Prophet’s daughter, Fāṭimah, and masterminded the incident at Saqīfah in which Abū Bakr was chosen as the caliph after the Prophet’s death.

⁴³⁸ This ḥadīth is viewed by some Sunnite ḥadīth experts to have been fabricated. See, *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qaysari*, p. 544; *Ghadir*, 8:33-36, 60-96. The Shi’ites categorically reject this ḥadīth.

the ḥadīth is in high praise of ‘Umar, thus, in all likelihood, it is authentic: “Perhaps the content and purport of this ḥadīth testifies to its veracity and truthfulness.”⁴³⁹ There is another ḥadīth report that is related by Ibn ‘Arabī and attributed to the Prophet in which he is reported to have said that if he were to choose a close friend (*khalīl*), he would have chosen Abū Bakr. It is quite startling to observe that Ayatullah Khumaynī does not challenge the veracity of this ḥadīth since it is generally cited in Shi‘ite sources in reference to ‘Alī. Instead, he proceeds to give a commentary that a person who has annihilated himself in the Lord has in actuality dissolved himself in the essence and attributes of God such that friendship (*khullab*) with him constitutes friendship with God.⁴⁴⁰ This prompted a rebuttal from Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Āshtiyānī (d. 2005) who holds Ayatullah Khumaynī in high esteem and refers to him as the “seal of the philosophers and mystics in our age” (*khātam-e ḥukamā wa ‘urafā dar ‘aṣr-e mā*).⁴⁴¹ He writes that there is unanimity amongst the Shi‘ites and Sunnites about the fact that the Prophet is reported to have said: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate”⁴⁴² and, consequently, this ḥadīth quoted by Ibn ‘Arabī has to be rejected as inauthentic. Finally, there is a ḥadīth ascribed to the Prophet in which he relates that anyone who possesses even one of the three-hundred ethical attributes is deserving of entering paradise. In response, Abū Bakr asked the Prophet if he possessed one of those ethical traits to which the Prophet informed him that he had all of them. Ayatullah Khumaynī does not

⁴³⁹ Khumaynī, *Ta’līqāt ‘alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, p. 21.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-01.

⁴⁴¹ *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qayṣarī*, p. 33, 115.

⁴⁴² A variant of this ḥadīth that has been concocted by Abū Hurayrah says that Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān are the walls, *ibid.*, p. 544.

subject this ḥadīth to any analysis from the perspective of text (*matn*) or chain of transmission (*isnād*). Instead, he provides a commentary to the effect that all these attributes vanish and annihilate in the Unicity of God and that this will become apparent on the Day of Judgment.⁴⁴³ Accordingly, all the characteristics are present in all the existents and this is reflected in the story of Moses and the dead dog: God instructs Moses to bring Him an existent that is inferior to himself. He decides to take a dead dog but realizes his error and abandons the idea. God informs him that had he brought the dead dog, He would have expelled him from the station of prophethood.⁴⁴⁴

In contrast to the above ḥadīths which are attested to by Ayatullah Khumaynī, one finds a categorical Shi'ite position articulated in his last will and testament (*waṣīyyat nāmeḥ*) wherein he begins with the famous *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* and emphasizes the centrality of *wilāyah* of the divine guides. He repeatedly makes references to the lofty station of the divine guides, who are unique and unparalleled, and takes great pride that the Twelver Shi'ites are their followers: "We take pride that the infallible imāms from 'Alī b. Abī Tālib to the saviour of humanity, the Revered Mahdī, Master of the age (manifold blessings and peace on him) is alive and oversees our affairs, by the power of the Omnipotent God, are our imāms. ("mā muftakharīm keb a'immaḥ-ye ma'sūmīn, az 'Alī b. Abī Tālib tā munjī bashar, Hadrat-e Mahdī Šāhib Zamān, 'alay-him ālāf al-

⁴⁴³ This ḥadīth pertains to ethics (*akhlāq*) and has no relationship with the esoteric meaning that is ascribed to it by Ayatullah Khumaynī.

⁴⁴⁴ Khumaynī, *Ta'liqāt 'alā miṣbāḥ al-uns*, p. 386.

*tahīyyāt wa al-salām, keh beh qudrat-e Khudāwand-e qādir, zindah wa nāzir-e umūr ast, a'immah-ye mā hastand*⁴⁴⁵).

⁴⁴⁵ Sayyid Muḥammad Shafī'i Māzandarānī, *Darshāy-e az waṣīyyat nāmā-ye imām Khumaynī*, 17th print (Qum: Daftar-e nashr-e ma'ārif, 2003), p. 30. He also states that the Twelver Shi'ites take pride: in belonging to the school of Ja'farī: "*mā mustakharīm keh madhhab-e mā Ja'farī ast....*" (ibid., p. 29); in being the followers of 'Alī who wrote the masterpiece work titled *Nahj al-balāghah*, which is second only to Qur'an (ibid, p. 34); in the legacy left behind by the divine guides such as *Muṣḥaf Fā'imah*, *Ṣaḥīfah-ye sajjādiyyah* and various supplications (*ad'iyyah*) recited in the months of Sha'bān and Dhū al-ḥijjah that he refers to as "*Qur'ān-e ṣā'id*." (ibid, p. 38). He underlines the necessity of preserving and safeguarding the commemorative ceremonies to mark the tragedy of Karbalā' and the sacrifices rendered for a higher ideal (ibid, p. 39). The criticisms leveled against these practices should not detract the followers from steadfastness and resolution (ibid, p. 40).

Chronological Bibliography

Mysticism (*'irfān*)

- Suhrawardī, Yaḥyā b. Ḥabash (d. 1191). *Majmū'ah-ye muṣannafāt-e Shaykh-e Ishrāq*. Introduction and annotations by H. Corbin. Tehran: Académie iranienne de philosophie, 1976-77.
- Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn (d. 638/1240). *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited with footnotes by Abū al-'Alā 'Afifī. Tehran: Intishārāt al-Zahrā', 1987.
- _____. *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited by M. M. al-Ghurāb. Damascus: M. M. al-Ghurāb, 1985.
- _____. *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*. 9 volumes. Edited by Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyyah, 1999.
- Shīrāzī, Rukn al-Dīn Mas'ūd (Bābā Ruknā) (d. 1367). *Sharḥ-e Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Commentary in Persian. Tehran: McGill University and Tehran University, 1980.
- Āmulī, Sayyid Ḥaydar (d. 787/1385). *Kitāb naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited by Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia. Tehran and Paris: Département d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche, 1975.
- Ibn Turkah, 'Alī (d. 1446). *Tambīd al-Qawā'id*. 2nd print. Introduction by Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1981.
- Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (Mullā Ṣadrā) (d. 1050/1641). *Kasr aṣnām al-jāhiliyyah*. Edited by M. T. Dānishpazhūh. Tehran: Dāneshghāh, 1962.
- _____. *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfī*. and *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*. Tehran: Maktabat al-maḥmūdī, 1391/1971. His commentary is partial and ends with *Kitāb al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-'immah wulāt amr Allāh wa khazanah 'ilmi-hi*.
- Sabzawārī, Mullā Ḥādī (b. 1797 or 98). *Sharḥ al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā*. 2 vols. Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.
- _____. *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah fī manāhij al-sulūkiyyah*. Edited by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī. Mashhad: Markaz-e nashr-e dāneshghāhī, 1967.
- Āshtiyānī, Aḥmad. *al-Wilāyah*. Tehran: author, 1989.

al-Amīnī al-Najafī, ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad (d. 1390/1970). “*Asmā’ al-Ḥusnā*.” Unpublished manuscript in author’s possession.

_____. “*Primordial Covenant*.” Unpublished manuscript in author’s possession.

al-Khumaynī, Rūḥ Allāh al-Mūsawī (d. 1989). *Miṣbāḥ al-hidāyah ilā al-khilāfah wa al-wilāyah*. Translated by Sayyid Aḥmad Fihri. Tehran, 1980.

_____. *Ta’liqāt ‘alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and *Miṣbāḥ al-uns*. Dār al-maḥajjah al-bayḍā’ and Dār al-rasūl al-akram, 1422/2001.

Āshtiyāni, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 2005). *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qayṣarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. 5th print. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2001.

Gulpaygānī, Šāfi Luṭf Allāh. *Wilāyat-e takwīnī wa wilāyat-e tashrī’ī*. Tehran: Mua’ssasat al-imām al-Mahdī, n.d.

Karbalā’ī, Jawād b. ‘Abbās. *al-Anwār al-sāti’ah fī sharḥ ziyārat al-jāmi’ah*. 5 vols. Tehran: al-A’lamī, 1990.

Qumshah’ī, Muḥammad Riḍā. *Dhayl-e faṣṣ-e Shaythī Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam dar mabāḥith-e wilāyat bā risālah-ye marwū’ al-khilāfah al-kubrā*. n.p., 1973.

Šubḥāni, Ja’far. *Wilāyat-e tashrī’ī wa takwīnī dar Qur’ān-e majīd*. Qum: Mu’assasah imām Šādiq, 2002.

CHAPTER 6

Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. ‘Alī b. Maytham al-Baḥrānī:Multiple Approaches to the Study of Imamate

The biographical account of Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. ‘Alī b. Maytham al-Baḥrānī (d. 699/1299)⁴⁴⁶ remains sketchy at best due to the unstable and tumultuous times in which he lived. The seventh/thirteenth century was fraught with internecine conflicts between different fiefdoms and family clans, machinations, strife and sedition within the Muslim world, aggravated by invasion from outside forces, like the Mongols who remained unchecked by incompetent rulers such as ‘Abdullāh al-Mu‘taṣim (d. 218/833). Thus, it comes as no surprise that only scanty and limited information has reached us about the dates of his birth and death, his mentors, disciples, travels, place of burial, and so on, despite his fame and accomplishment as a scholar who was eagerly petitioned and sought after by the Hilla school.

Birth and Death

The first account recorded on the date of birth and death of Maytham is in the work of Sulaymān b. ‘Abdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī.⁴⁴⁷ He places the date of birth at 636/1238 and date of death at 769/1367. The date of his death is not corroborated by any of the later sources and thus, in all probability, it was

⁴⁴⁶ See below for the reason why I have opted to select 699/1299 as the date of his death. This date is also favored by the author of *Kashf al-ḥujb* and by Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭahrānī. See Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭahrānī, *Ṭabaqāt a‘lām al-Shī‘ah*, 2nd edition (Qum: Mu‘assasah Ismā‘iliyyān, nd), 7:187-88.

⁴⁴⁷ Sulaymān b. ‘Abdullāh al-Māḥūzī al-Baḥrānī, *Fibrīst al-Bābūya wa al-‘ulamā’ al-Baḥrain*, p. 69.

either based on a misplacement of diacritical marks (*tashīf*) or an error of transposition (*tahrīf*) made by a copyist because, by this account, Maytham would have been 133 years old at the time of his death. There has been no mention of any major work written by him after 681/1282 and no further reference that he lived to the very ripe old age of 133. It is likely that the copyist meant to write the year of his death to be 679/1280 instead of 769. The former date has been corroborated by other sources but it is probably inaccurate as well because Maytham completed writing the abridged version of *Nahj al-Balāghah* in the year 681/1282 and he would have been only 42 years old in 679/1280 to have accomplished writing so many works, travel extensively and build relationships with the rulers of his day. Thus, in all likelihood, he was born in Bahrain in 636/1238 and died in 699/1299 at the age of sixty-three, if we assume that, for the date of his demise, the error would have been made in writing “*sab‘īn*” instead of “*tis‘īn*,” which is a common error. In any event, one can be assured that his death was after 681/1282 which corresponds to the year in which he completed, in Iraq, the abridged version of *Nahj al-Balāghah* titled *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*, that he had composed at the request of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Juwaynī, governor of Baghdad, for his two sons al-Nizām and al-Muzaffar. There is no consensus on the place of his burial as there are conflicting reports that he was interned either in Bahrain or Baghdad.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁸ Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-A‘lām*, 6th edition, 8 volumes (Beirut: Dār al-‘ilm li-al-malāyīn, 1984), 8:293; Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amin al-‘Āmili, *A‘yān al-Shī‘ah*, 49:98; al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmili, *Amal al-āmīl*, 2:332; ‘Alī al-Bilādī, *Anwār al-badrayn*, pp. 62-70; ‘Abdullāh al-Māmaqānī, *Tanqīḥ al-maqāl*, 3:262; Muḥammad Bāqir al-Khwānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 7:216; Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Mudarris, *Rayḥānat al-adab*, 8:240; ‘Abbās Qummī, *Safīnat al-bihār* (Beirut: Dār al-murtaḍā), 2:526-29.

Maytham's Mentors and Disciples

The only mentor mentioned for Maytham is Kamāl al-Dīn 'Alī b. Sulaymān al-Baḥrānī (d. ca. 670/1271). He probably studied under other instructors but, once again, due to the paucity of information on account of the political circumstances of the seventh/thirteenth century, no other mentors have been recorded in the biographical accounts of Maytham. His mentor, 'Alī b. Sulaymān, focused on the rational sciences dealing with philosophy and mysticism, and is credited with the work titled *Ishārāt*, *Miftāḥ al-khayr fī sharḥ Risālat al-ṭayr* and *Sharḥ Qaṣīdah 'ayniyyah* of ibn Sīnā on the soul.

'Alī b. Sulaymān had provided a copy of *Risālat al-'ilm* to Maytham which had been composed by his mentor, Kamāl al-Dīn Abī Ja'far Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Sa'id b. Sa'ādah (d. ca. 640/1242). Maytham took this to Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī along with a letter of presentation in which 'Alī b. Sulaymān praised the latter profusely and requested that he write a commentary on this work. Naṣīr al-Dīn acceded to the request. It is not known when exactly this meeting took place, however, there are reports that Ṭūsī studied *fiqh* under Maytham, and the latter studied philosophy under Ṭūsī.

There is mention of no more than three to four students of Maytham including Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, 'Allāmah Ḥillī, and 'Abd al-Karīm b. Aḥmad b. Ṭāwūs. However, the nature of the mentor-student relationship is not known, once again, because of the paucity of information. al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d.

816/1413) takes pride in being a student of Maytham and having greatly benefited from his scholarship in the traditional (*naqlī*) and rational (*'aqlī*) sciences.⁴⁴⁹

Mentor-Disciple Relationship: Maytham and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī

There has been a lot of speculation on the exact nature of the relationship between Maytham and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī. We can be almost certain that the two met in Baghdad, however, it is unlikely that their acquaintance lasted long enough to develop a student-teacher relationship for the following reasons:

1. Ṭūsī had accompanied Hulagu during the siege of Baghdad in the beginning of Muḥarram 655/1257 and returned to Tabriz, the capital of Iran one year later in 656/1258, which coincides with the fall of Baghdad. However, Maytham came to Baghdad during the reign of 'Alā al-Dīn 'Aṭā' al-Malik al-Juwaynī that began in 661/1262. Thus, there was no possibility of them having met each other between 655/1257 and 661/1262.
2. Ṭūsī was entrusted by Hulagu as his deputy with the mandate of general supervision (*al-taftīsh al-'āmm*) over the affairs of different cities in 662/1263. He made a trip to Iraq in this year but his return date is unknown. He made another trip to Iraq in 672/1273. If the meeting between the two took place between 662/1263 and 672/1273, then at that time Maytham would have been at most 36 years old and Ṭūsī at least 65 years old. It is improbable that, at this advanced age, the latter would have studied *fiqh* under the supervision of Maytham, particularly since he

⁴⁴⁹ *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 5:300; *Majālis al-mu'minīn*, 2:218.

would have been already greatly accomplished. One can conjecture that Ṭūsī may have obtained permission (*ijāzah*), in an honorary form (*tabarruk*), to relate ḥadīth reports through a chain of transmission that Maytham held but Ṭūsī lacked. This was a customary practice at that time, and it continues to this day. Issuance of this type of an *ijāzah* would not constitute a teacher-disciple relationship, however, there are other types of *ijāzāt* that are restricted to the teacher-student relationship.

Alliances with the Rulers

Ṭūsī had established a close relationship with Hulagu and had been entrusted with the *wilāyah* over the *awqāf*, and general supervision over the lands of Iraq in 662/1283. He encouraged and convinced Hulagu to establish a scholarly research center in Marāghah (Zanjān) that was instrumental in gathering scholars from other parts of the Muslim world. One of the scholars who responded Ṭūsī's invitation was Sayyid Abū al-Faḍl b. al-Muḥannā al-Ḥusaynī and his student Shaykh 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Aḥmad al-Shaybānī (Ibn al-Fūtī al-Baghdādī) (d. 732/1330). Ibn al-Muḥannā was successful in exercising great influence over the governor of Basra, 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Ja'far al-Nīshābūrī, and convinced him to give refuge and a post to 'Alā' al-Dīn and Shams al-Dīn, once Iraq had been conquered. This alliance also resulted in the kind and favorable treatment of Shi'ites under his governorship along with the patronage of Shi'ite scholars.

Likewise, Maytham had a close collaborative relationship with 'Izz al-Dīn al-Nīshābūrī on whom he lavished profuse praise in the introduction of his

work, *al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī taḥqīq amr al-imāmah*. Maytham undertook this work at the request of the governor who desired to have a concise treatise on imamate with proofs and explanations along with responses to common objections raised on the issue of imamate. At first, Maytham was reluctant to accept this task due to his hectic travel schedule which was distracting and time-constraining. After further consideration, he accepted this task out of concern that his refusal might be misconstrued by the governor as an act of ingratitude for the numerous favors that he had bestowed on Maytham. In addition, he composed the work *Qawā'id al-marām* at the request of the amīr, Nīshābūrī.

The unabridged commentary of *Nahj al-balāghah* was completed by Maytham in 677/1278 and was composed in honor of the two sons of Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Juwaynī: 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Aṭā' al-Malik al-Juwaynī, who was the governor of Baghdad, and his brother Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Juwaynī, who was his *wazīr* in Baghdad. Maytham employs flamboyant epithets and titles in his introduction to praise both of these individuals.

Major Extant Works of Maytham⁴⁵¹

In accordance with the pledge that Maytham had made with God to defend and only speak for the school of thought that is the truth (*ḥaqq*) and not to allow his personal whims to interfere with his judgment in the matter of

⁴⁵¹ For a detailed list of all the works authored by Maytham including the ones that are most probably lost, see Ali al-Oraibi, "Shi'i Renaissance," Ph.D. dissertation (Montreal: McGill University, 1992), pp. 50-57; Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. 'Alī b. Maytham al-Bahrānī, *al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī taḥqīq amr al-imāmah*, edited with an introduction by Shaykh Yūsufī (Qum: Majma' al-fikr al-Islāmī, 1417/1996), pp. 29-31; Maytham, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, edited with an introduction by al-Ḥātāmī, 5 vols. (Tehran: Mu'assasat al-naṣhr, 1378/1958), pp. 'waw' to 'tā'; Maytham, *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*, edited with an introduction by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī (Mashhad: Majma' al-buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah, 1408/1987), pp. 26-29.

truth,⁴⁵² we find that he wrote a number of treatises and employed a variety of approaches to attain his goal. However, it is evident that he had a bias in favor of the rational sciences as exhibited by the works that he composed.

1. *Qawā'id al-marām fī 'ilm al-kalām* — a text on Shi'ite theology proper with a philosophical slant. The sequence of topics and subjects is similar to what is found in basic Shi'ite theological texts. It was composed upon the request of 'Izz al-Dīn al-Nishābūrī (d. 672/1273) and was dedicated to him. Thus, he must have completed writing it prior to the death of al-Nishābūrī. Ali al-Oraibi argues that this work was written by Maytham prior to *al-Najāh*.⁴⁵³
2. *al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī taḥqīq amr al-imāmah* — a treatise on imamate that was composed at the request of 'Izz al-Dīn al-Nishābūrī for a concise and articulate work on imamate with proofs and responses to objections raised by opponents.
3. *Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* — the unabridged commentary of *Nahj al-Balāghah* which is popularly known as *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*. No title for this work can be gleaned from the manuscript; however, the title for the work has been adopted from the abridged version of *Nahj al-Balāghah* which was called "*Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*." It was completed in 677/1278 in Baghdad and dedicated to 'Atā' Malik al-Juwaynī.

⁴⁵² Maytham, *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, introduction by Maytham, 1:4.

⁴⁵³ Ali al-Oraibi, Ph.D. dissertation, p. 55, footnote no. 148.

4. *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* — the abridged version of *Nahj al-balāghah* that was composed at the request of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Juwaynī for his two young sons. The work was completed in Baghdad in 681/1282.
5. *Tajrīd al-balāghah* — a treatise on rhetoric that was originally part of the introduction to the unabridged version of *Nahj al-balāghah*. Later, a part of it was separated as an independent work and given the title *Tajrīd al-balāghah*.
6. *Sharḥ ‘alā al-mi’ah kalimah* — a commentary on one hundred sayings ascribed to ‘Alī that were compiled by Abū ‘Uthmān ‘Amru b. Baḥr al-Jāhiz. The work was composed by Maytham for the *wazīr* Shahāb al-Dīn Mas‘ūd. No date of completion for this work is provided in the manuscript.
7. *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* — this work is a commentary on *al-Ishārāt* that was composed by his mentor, ‘Alī b. Sulaymān. The approach of the discourse to the subject matter is philosophical and mystical. The work is not printed but a copy of the manuscript can be found in the doctoral dissertation of Ali al-Oraibi.
8. *al-Mi’rāj al-samāwī* — Mullā Ṣadrā quotes from this work and so does Sayyid ‘Alī Khān al-Madanī in his commentary of the supplications (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-sajjādiyyah*) attributed to the fourth Shi‘ite imām. This work of Maytham is no longer extant and seems to have been lost.

Maytham had a mastery of both the traditional sciences and rational sciences such that he is referred to as a *faqīh*, *muftī al-ṭawā'if* and *muḥaddith* along with philosopher, mystic and theologian.⁴⁵⁴ It is reported that Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī characterized the range and depth of Maytham's knowledge in theology and philosophy as akin to the vastness of the sea.⁴⁵⁵ Sulaymān b. 'Abdullāh al-Baḥrānī summarizes the numerous epithets given to Maytham by his peers in the following words: "He was an analytical and meticulous philosopher (*faylasūf* and *ḥakīm*), an exemplary theologian (*mutakallim*), the quintessence of jurists (*fuqahā'*) and traditionists (*muḥaddithūn*), and a divinely gifted scholar (*al-'ālim al-rabbānī*)."⁴⁵⁶ He had a strong liking and proclivity towards the rational sciences, especially mysticism (*'irfān nazārī*). This bias is demonstrated in the extant works that he composed where not a single monograph deals with jurisprudence.

Maytham's excellence in the field of philosophy and mysticism is demonstrated by the fact that Mullā Ṣadrā, in his commentary of *Tajrīd*, quotes from the works of Maytham such as *al-Mi'rāj al-samāwī*, especially in the section dealing with *jawāhir* and *a'rād*.⁴⁵⁷ Further, it is mentioned that Sayyid 'Alī Khān al-Madanī, in his commentary of the supplications (*al-Ṣaḥīfah al-sajjādiyyah*) attributed to the fourth Shi'ite imam, makes reference to Maytham's lost

⁴⁵⁴ *Lu'lu'ah al-Bahrain*, p. 226, *Majālis al-mu'minīn*, pp. 329-330, 'Abbās al-'Arāwī, *Ta'rikh al-'Irāq bayn iḥtilālayn*, 8 volumes, 1:101-02.

⁴⁵⁵ *Majālis al-mu'minīn*, pp. 329-30.

⁴⁵⁶ *al-Kasbkūl*, pp. 41-53.

⁴⁵⁷ *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 7:216; *Majālis al-mu'minīn*, p. 329; and Hādī Amīnī, p. 21. I consulted experts on the writings of Mullā Ṣadrā in Qum, Iran and none had come across a work of Mullā Ṣadrā that was devoted to a commentary of *Tajrīd*. Likewise, the center of research in Tehran devoted to the study of Mullā Ṣadrā's works was not aware of such a monograph authored by him.

manuscript titled *al-Mi'rāj al-samāwī*. In my reading of this work of Madanī titled *Riyāḍ al-sālikīn*, I did not come across any such reference but several citations from *Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* of Maytham.⁴⁵⁸ In addition, Maytham's use of multiple approaches and mastery over the rational and traditional sciences is evident in his unabridged commentary of *Nahj al-balāghah* in which he examines this work from various perspectives including Qur'anic, ḥadīthī, theological, philosophical, mystical, historical, and literary.⁴⁵⁹

Maytham's distinction and pre-eminence in the field of speculative sciences along with that of his mentor, 'Alī b. Sulaymān was not afforded a congenial atmosphere for this scholarship to flourish in that area. A study of the situation of Bahrain at that time reveals that the public, in general, was not receptive to the writings and thoughts of Maytham as he lived a life of isolation (*maqām al-uns*) and as a recluse, keeping his distance from the public.⁴⁶⁰ This is referred to in the petitions that were sent to him from the school of Hilla to respond to their appeal and abandon the life of a recluse, and share his scholarship in the seminary at Hilla. Furthermore, all the extant works that were authored by him were issued in places other than Bahrain, which is perhaps indicative of the non-congenial atmosphere of Bahrain. For instance, *Qawā'id al-marām* was completed in Basra and *Miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn* in Baghdad. The fact that many of his works in mysticism have been lost is indicative of the lack of interest and importance attached to his works. Consequently, we have limited

⁴⁵⁸ Sayyid 'Alī Khān al-Madanī al-Shīrāzī, *Riyāḍ al-sālikīn fī sharḥ al-Ṣaḥīfah al-kāmilah al-sajjādiyyah* (Isfahan: Intishārāt-e risālat, n.d.), p. 34, 186, 381, 442, 477 and 500.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 7:216.

⁴⁶⁰ Hādī Amīnī, pp. 12-13.

information about his students and mentors, and no comprehensive biography about him. Instead, in biographical accounts of Maytham, one finds what is most likely a legendary and mythical anecdote about “*kulī ya kummī* (O my sleeve, eat!).”

Parallel between Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd & Maytham

Based on the written works of Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd and Maytham, it is conjectured that one can be mistaken that the former is of Shi‘ite persuasion and the latter a Sunnite.⁴⁶¹ Although one can perhaps get that impression, it would be a mistake to believe that such is the case. This conclusion is untenable and cannot be supported by their writings, upon close scrutiny.

In the case of Maytham, he is a scrupulous and objective scholar who does not allow prejudice and bigotry to enter his scholarly analysis, but this should not be misinterpreted as an endorsement of the Sunnite world view, especially in the matter of *khilāfab* and imamate. The case in point is his analysis of the sermon of *shiqshiqiyyah* in which he is critical of the extremist positions adopted by both the Sunnite and Shi‘ite scholars. He rebukes the former for rejecting this sermon as not having originated with ‘Alī and ascribing it to the compiler, Sayyid Raḍī, and this, according to him, constitutes a defamation of character of Sayyid Raḍī. He censures the Shi‘ites for exaggerating the authenticity of this sermon by asserting that its validity has reached the stage of *tawātur* (certainty attained through numerous independently verifiable and uninterrupted chains of transmission). In the

⁴⁶¹ Introduction by al-Ḥātāmī in *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāgha*, p. “ṭā,” Ali al-Oraibi, Ph.D. Dissertation, p. 52, 162, 183.

opinion of Maytham, both the groups are guilty of violating the parameters of justice in the sense that the Shi'ites have exceeded the limits (*ifrāt*) and the Sunnites have fallen short (*tafrīt*) of the reality.⁴⁶²

The above style of discourse is commonplace in the works of Maytham and should not be misconstrued as an endorsement or sympathy with the Sunnite world view. He repudiates, with proofs, the claims of the first three caliphs to assume the position of caliphate in the commentary of the sermon of *shiqshiqiyyah*. His stern criticism of the Sunnite caliphs is evident in the discussion dealing with Fadak that was claimed by Fāṭimah as an inheritance from her father, the Prophet. Abū Bakr rejected her assertions based on a ḥadīth that he attributed to the Prophet: "We the prophets do not bequeath anything. Whatever we leave behind is part of *ṣadaqah*."⁴⁶³ Fāṭimah was greatly annoyed and offended by Abū Bakr's stance. She made a point to visit him and delivered an eloquent sermon in which she cites evidence from the Qur'an and precedence for inheritance in the family of the prophets, and a stinging rebuttal of Abū Bakr.⁴⁶⁴

In addition, Maytham is wont to relate the virtues (*faḍā'il*) of 'Alī and his progeny in various places, including the introduction of his unabridged

⁴⁶² *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, 1:251-52.

⁴⁶³ This ḥadīth has been subject to critical analysis by Shi'ite scholars and proven to have been fabricated. See, Sayyid Muḥammad Mūsawī Qazwīnī, *Fadak*, ed. Bāqir al-Maqdisī, introduction by 'Abd al-Fattāh 'Abd al-Maqṣūd, (Cairo: Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Raḍawī, 1977); Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, *Fadak fi al-ta'rikh* (Lebanon: Dār al-ta'aruf li al-maṭbū'āt, 1980); *Ghadīr*, 7:190-96.

⁴⁶⁴ *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, 5:104-106. *Ghadīr*, 7:190-96—the first part of the discussion deals with precedence established by prophets in dealing with inheritance, and the second part is about the differing opinions of the caliphs on the status of Fadak to illustrate that, in all probability, the ḥadīth advanced was fabricated. For instance, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb disagreed with the stance of Abū Bakr on the issue of Fadak.

commentary of *Nahj al-balāghah* where he relates the famous prophetic tradition in which he petitions God to swerve the truth in favor of ‘Alī: “*Allāh-humma adiri al-ḥaqq ma‘a ‘Alī ḥaythu dār.*”⁴⁶⁵

Accordingly, those who claim that Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd can be mistaken as a Shi‘ite may have drawn this conclusion from partial and selective readings of his work on the commentary of *Nahj al-balāghah*, without coming across instances where he vociferously defends and rationalizes the excesses, acts of injustice, and major errors that were committed by the first three caliphs.⁴⁶⁶ Likewise, anyone who says that Maytham can be mistaken to be of Sunnite persuasion has also made this assessment on the basis of partial readings of his works. Maytham is adamant in asserting the exclusive right of ‘Alī for succession, and focuses on providing proofs to demonstrate the non validity and illegitimacy of the first three caliphs, the Umayyads and the Marwanids along with *maṭā‘in* literature on these groups.⁴⁶⁷

General Approaches of Discourse in the Works of Maytham

Maytham had made a pledge to God that in search for truth and reality, he would be objective and balanced in his research method and employ different approaches that would assist him in his goal. In this regard, he generally begins discussion on a subject by first finding textual material in the revelatory sources, and supplements it with rational proofs from philosophy and theoretical

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., 1:80.

⁴⁶⁶ Baḥrānī, Hāshim, *Salās al-ḥadīd ‘alā ‘unuq ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd* (Najaf: n.d.)—the author claims that not only was Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd unsympathetic to the Shi‘ite world view but a strong and prejudiced proponent of the Sunnite school of thought.

⁴⁶⁷ For example, 1:245-248, 1:249-270, 5:104-108.

mysticism (*'irfān nazārī*). He employs rational proofs only as corroborative evidence to revelatory sources, and gives priority to the latter.

The foundation of his method being revelatory sources is evident in the discussion dealing with spiritual and bodily resurrection. He writes that the evidence from the Qur'an and ḥadīth reports is explicit in favor of bodily resurrection, despite the fact that it is not possible to corroborate this through reason and that some philosophers disagree with this notion. In the presence of clear textual evidence for bodily resurrection,⁴⁶⁸ there is no alternative but to surrender (*taqlīd*) to this interpretation and accept that the bodily resurrection can apply to the state of prosperity (*sa'ādah*) or wretchedness (*shaqāwah*) and, as such, these states are not confined to the soul (*rūḥ*). As an example of a philosopher who submits to the revelatory sources, he cites the view of Ibn Sīnā: "*yajibu an ya'lam anna al-ma'ād min-hu mā huwa al-maqbūl min al-shar' wa lā sabīl ilā ithbāti-hi illā min ṭarīq al-sharī'ah wa taṣdīq khabar al-nubuwwah...*"⁴⁶⁹

Maytham's works are replete with discussions on the fundamental doctrinal issues of God, the Day of Judgment (*ma'ād*), prophethood (*nubuwwah*)—*'āmmah* and *khāṣṣah*,⁴⁷⁰ and Imamate. Analysis of his approach on the subject of imamate will follow after this section.

⁴⁶⁸ "The day on which they shall come forth from their graves in haste, as if they were hastening on to a goal, their eyes cast down..." (Q. 70:43-44)

⁴⁶⁹ *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, 2:239.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:201-218.

God

In the discussion pertaining to the names, attributes, and actions of God in relation to creation, Maytham employs both textual and rational proofs.⁴⁷¹

He cites from revelatory sources, i.e. Qur'an and ḥadīth reports, in his commentary of the first sermon contained in *Nahj al-balāghah* that deals with a number of issues including attributes of God, creation of the heavens, earth, throne, angels, and Adam. He provides novel interpretations with respect to the meaning of Adam as the first human being, his descent (*hubūṭ*) from paradise, repentance (*tawbah*), 'aql, the angels, paradise and hell fire.

He views the appellation of Adam as referring to types of souls in the human species (*al-nufūs al-bashariyyah*)⁴⁷² and repentance as a way of restoring one's spiritual state in order to be able to ascend to close proximity to God. Further, the prophets continually sought repentance for their momentary lapses in attention when they would become occupied with mundane matters in which God and His sanctified light were absent.⁴⁷³ The descent of Adam from paradise is interpreted as a spiritual decline from prosperity (*sa'ādah*) to wretchedness (*shaqāwah*); from cognizance of God to forgetfulness, and paradise is interpreted by him as the present-day earth.⁴⁷⁴

The angels are spiritual entities that do not have physical forms (*suwar*) but have different ranks depending on their spiritual state. The different forms (*suwar*) referred to in textual sources are a metaphor that reflects their rank in

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 1:106-235; "al-radd 'alā al-mushabbihah bi-dalīl al-'aql wa al-naql," 2:339-341.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 1:200, 2:380.

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 2:380, 1:171-73.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 2:380 ; 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'i, the exegete, holds the same opinion as Maytham about the paradise in which Adam and Eve were inhabited before being expelled. *Mīzān* (Arabic), 1:126-29.

relation to the differing capacities of attaining the cognizance of God.⁴⁷⁵ Physical features like wings are interpreted as a vehicle through which they attain proper understanding of God (*idrāk*) in accordance with their respective rank: “All praise is due to God, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, the Maker of the angels, messengers flying on wings, two, and three, and four” (Q. 35:1).

At times, Maytham only relates various opinions of scholars on an issue without offering a critique or his own opinion. This is the case with respect to the creation of the heavens and earth.⁴⁷⁶ In other instances, he employs philosophical principles to demonstrate his point. This is found in the discussion dealing with the method of creation where the philosophical principles of *al-fā‘iliyyah fī dhāti-hi*, *imkān al-ashraf*, *imkān al-akhṣa* and *marātib al-wujūd* are used along with a mention of *al-‘uqūl al-fa‘ālah*.⁴⁷⁷ The analogy is made that, just as water is the source of life to every bodily existent, so too is *al-fayḍ al-ilāhī* the point of origin for sustaining every existent in accordance with its capacity: “And we send down water from the cloud according to a measure (*bi-qadar*), then We cause it to settle in the earth, and most surely We are able to carry it away” (Q. 23:18). In a ḥadīth report, the water is equated with knowledge (*‘ilm*) that descends upon the heart in accordance with its capacity to fathom divine majesty and glory.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 2:356.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 1:139.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 1:143.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

The theological treatment of God's existence and His attributes can be found in his work titled *Qawā'id al-marām*.⁴⁷⁹ Lastly, analysis of the names and attributes of God from a philosophical and mystical perspective is undertaken by Maytham in his unpublished work *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*.⁴⁸⁰

Day of Judgment (*ma'ād*)

In the commentary of sermon nineteen of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Maytham engages in a discussion on the *barzakh* (isthmus) and the Day of Judgment when all the veils of deception will be torn away.⁴⁸¹ He employs Qur'anic verses and ḥadīth reports in his exposition.

The theological treatment of resurrection can be found in *Qawā'id al-marām* where he advances his opinion on the nature of the soul.⁴⁸² The philosophical treatment of this subject is contained in his commentary of *Nahj al-balāghah* in the section dealing with the physical (*jismānī*) and spiritual (*rūḥānī*) resurrection.⁴⁸³

Prophethood (*nubuwwah*) — 'āmmah and khāṣṣah

The doctrine of prophethood is examined by dividing it into two components—'āmmah⁴⁸⁴ and khāṣṣah.⁴⁸⁵ Recourse to textual sources is made in his explication. The theological discourse is to be found in *Qawā'id al-marām*⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁷⁹ *Qawā'id al-marām*, pp. 38-102. Ali al-Oraibi, pp. 120-144.

⁴⁸⁰ *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* contained in the Ph.D. dissertation of Ali al-Oraibi, pp. 253-254.

⁴⁸¹ *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, 1:326-330.

⁴⁸² *Qawā'id al-marām*, pp. 150-51.

⁴⁸³ *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah*, 2:239-240.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:198-204.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:204-209.

⁴⁸⁶ *Qawā'id al-marām*, pp. 121-137.

and the philosophical and mystical perspective is evident in the *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* when he deliberates on *wilāyah* and *nubuwwah*.⁴⁸⁷

Maytham's Approach on Imamate

Maytham's approach to imamate is identical to the approach used in deliberating the other fundamental doctrinal issues discussed above by recourse to revelatory sources, i.e. the Qur'an and the ḥadīth corpus as the foundation of his method. This is supplemented with proofs from theological and philosophical perspectives, and conclusions drawn from theoretical mysticism. One can deduce from the titles of his lost works on imamate such as *Risālah fī al-wahy wa al-ilhām* and *al-Mi'rāj al-samāwī* that, in all probability, the approach of discourse in these works was mystical and esoteric.

The following is a glimpse of Maytham's approach to the study of imamate that can be gleaned from his works on imamate:

Mishāb al-sālikīn

This work is a commentary on *Nahj al-balāghah* that primarily employs the Qur'an, ḥadīth, theology, history and literature in the discussion of imamate. Occasional references to philosophical and mystical perspectives are made. It is an original work in the sense that he combines these multiple approaches in a milieu where such subjects were frowned upon and viewed as outside the orbit of Islam. He is perhaps the first Imamite scholar to use multiple approaches in his treatment of the doctrine of imamate and shifts from one method to another with great ease and dexterity.

⁴⁸⁷ See below under the title *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*.

In the introduction, Maytham provides the motive for undertaking this commentary that stems from a desire to elaborate the thoughts of ‘Alī, who was of high rank and stature. Since his statements provide guidance, relate the truth and repel falsehood, they are necessarily of divine origin.⁴⁸⁸ Accordingly, Maytham relates the physical and spiritual virtues (*faḍā’il*) of ‘Alī from the ḥadīth reports and asserts that this is the only possible method of enumerating his virtues because the *al-faḍā’il al-naḥsāniyyah* are privy to God alone who communicates them to the public.⁴⁸⁹

- i. Qur’an and ḥadīth reports — His work is replete with citations from these two fundamental sources that are the foundation of his discourse on imamate.⁴⁹⁰ The rational sciences are employed to corroborate and buttress the conclusions derived from the textual sources.
- ii. Theological (*kalāmī*) — The theological treatment can be detected in the discussion of principle of *lutf* and in the formulation of a syllogism to prove that ‘Alī was the only one entitled to assume succession after the demise of the Prophet.⁴⁹¹
- iii. Philosophical and Mystical — This approach is represented by his use of the philosophical principles of *ashraf* and *akhass* along with

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 1:75.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 1:87-88.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 2:301-03.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 1:80; 4:393-94.

their relationship to the terminus of the chain of prophets (*ghāyah silsilat al-anbiyā*).⁴⁹²

- iv. Historical — A sample of this approach can be found in the discussion dealing with the selection of Abū Bakr as the first caliph, the process of selecting the successor to ‘Umar from the nominating committee of five persons, the excesses during ‘Uthmān’s caliphate, and in the debate with the Kharijites.⁴⁹³ Letters that ‘Alī composed on the ethics of governance for ‘Uthmān b. Ḥunayf, the people of Egypt, and on various other occasions contain a historical treatment of imamate. He drafted an epistle to Mālik al-Ashtar that contains principles and rules of conduct for the ruler that are historical in nature and also contain a discussion on imamate and leadership.⁴⁹⁴

Qawā'id al-marām

This is a theological treatise on major subjects of theology and is similar to the works of his contemporaries such as the work of ‘Allāmah Ḥillī titled *Nahj al-ḥaqq*, and some of his predecessors such as Shaykh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī’s *Tambīd al-uṣūl*. The distinctive feature of his work is the introduction of formal logic in the division of subjects that are deliberated upon from a theological perspective in the works of imamate.⁴⁹⁵ In this work, he only

⁴⁹² Ibid., 2:396-98.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., 2:184-86, 409, 4:99.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid., 5:134-86, 5:98-118.

⁴⁹⁵ *Qawā'id al-marām*, pp. 173-192, “*mā, ḥal, lim, kayf, man.*”

cites the principle of *lutf* to demonstrate the necessity of an inerrant divine guide but expresses his preference for the proof based on *tamkīn* in *al-Najāh*.⁴⁹⁶

al-Najāh fī al-qiyāmah fī tabqīq amr al-imāmah

This work contains similar subjects and a sequence of topics that are normally found in theological treatises on imamate.

In addition to the discourse on imamate, he provides an articulation of the various Shi'ite sects,⁴⁹⁷ their objections to the Twelver Shi'ites, and responses to them.⁴⁹⁸ His discourse on the messianic imām and his responses to common objections raised with issues such as his long concealment and extraordinary life span provide some fresh insight.

The novel component in this work is his articulation of proof for the necessity of imamate that is based on *tamkīn* (enabling one to follow the divine prescriptions by performing that which is lawful and avoiding the unlawful). He prefers this proof over the principle of *lutf* because, according to him, it would be extremely difficult to verify the major premise in the syllogism of the latter which states that it is obligatory upon God to disperse every *lutf*.⁴⁹⁹ The former proof that is based on *tamkīn* is elaborated as follows:

Minor Premise: Imamate is part of *tamkīn*, which is obligatory [upon God].

Major Premise: That which is part of a thing that is obligatory, is itself obligatory.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 175.

⁴⁹⁷ The major sects mentioned are Kaysāniyyah, Zaydiyyah, Nāwūsiyyah, Ismā'īliyyah, Shamṭiyyah, Faṭḥiyyah and Maṭūrah, pp. 192-202.

⁴⁹⁸ *Najāh*, pp. 171-208.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 48.

Conclusion: Therefore, imamate is obligatory [upon God].⁵⁰⁰

The principle of *lutf* is formulated from the perspective of God, i.e. every *lutf* is obligatory to God for the procurement of divine purpose, i.e. to guide mankind towards perfection and prosperity. He guides by sending messengers and imāms. Thus, it is obligatory that He should identify such persons so that the divine purpose of creation can be attained. In contrast, the proof that is based on *tamkīn* is formulated from the perspective of the *mukallaf*, i.e. *taḳlīf* is obligatory for him in order to follow the prescriptions of God by the performance of that which is mandated by God and avoidance of that which is prohibited by Him. Imamite theologians have not embraced the proof based on *tamkīn* and is not mentioned in their works.

Sharḥ al-Ishārāt

This is a commentary on a work authored by his mentor, ‘Alī b. Sulaymān. He demonstrates mastery over the rational sciences and the ability to engage in the discourse on imamate from philosophical and mystical perspectives along with citations from the Qur’an and ḥadīth reports.

- (i) Philosophical and Mystical Perspective on *Wilāyah* — The divine guides are the most virtuous (*ashraf*),⁵⁰¹ the first to be created,⁵⁰² the first intellect,⁵⁰³ *quṭb al-dā’irah al-wujūdiyyah*⁵⁰⁴ and the most

⁵⁰⁰ Ali al-Oraibi, “Rationalism in the School of Bahrain,” in *Shi’ite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions*, editor and translator Lynda Clarke (Binghamton: Global Publications, 2001), p. 333; *Najāh*, p. 48.

⁵⁰¹ Ali al-Oraibi, Ph.D. Dissertation, Appendix, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* (pp. 250-284), p. 247, pp. 276-77.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

perfect form of creation (*al-insān al-kāmil*)⁵⁰⁵ possessing the highest rank of the soul.⁵⁰⁶ As a consequence, the *al-wilāyah al-muṭlaqah* that is bestowed on them is of the highest order and outstrips that endowed on the prophets because the seal of prophethood (*nubuwwah*) and *wilāyah* along with the supreme state of the soul (*nafs*) is in the person of Muḥammad.⁵⁰⁷ The basis of prophethood is *wilāyah*.⁵⁰⁸ Different ranks amongst the prophets are explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an, and it is a function of the various degrees of ascent of each of the prophets to the proximity of the divine Who has no limits.⁵⁰⁹

This all-comprehensive and expansive *wilāyah* is transmitted from Muḥammad to his infallible progeny till it reaches the person of the messianic imam, the Maḥdī who is in concealment.⁵¹⁰ These divine guides are the inheritors of the *wilāyah* of the Prophet both in its exoteric (*zāhir*) and esoteric (*bāṭin*) forms.⁵¹¹ They are the loci of manifestation of the divine names and divine attributes, and are the ultimate purpose of the whole of creation and *quṭb al-dā'irah al-wujūdiyyah*.⁵¹² Every

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 251.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 274.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 247, pp. 278-80.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 279.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 278. "We have made some of these apostles (*rusul*) to excel the others; among them are they to whom God spoke, and some of them He exalted by (many degrees of) rank..." (Q. 2:253)

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p. 282.

⁵¹¹ Ibid., pp. 247-48.

⁵¹² Ibid., p. 281, p. 277.

existent has an affinity and love for them.⁵¹³ They are the vehicle through which divine bounty and grace are diffused to His creation, because the divine guides are *kalimāt al-tāmmah*.⁵¹⁴ They possess *‘ilm ladunnī* and, as a consequence of sound cognizance (*ma‘rifah*) of God, which was made possible due to their connection with the Source (*mabda‘*), they have attained a station of immersion (*istighrāq*) in God.⁵¹⁵ By virtue of being the manifestation of *al-ism al-a‘zam*, they have access to the Source of knowledge and, as a result, they are able to make judgments based on the injunctions of previous divine scriptures.⁵¹⁶

The descent (*hubūt*) of Adam and Eve from the earthly paradise constitutes a spiritual decline of the human species from a rank of nobility that it enjoyed, as reflected in the divine injunction to the angels to prostrate before humans. To restore their spiritual state, there is a need to impose obligations (*taklīf*) and provide guidance to traverse the path of ascent (*al-sayr al-takāmulī*) and attain perfection. This spiritual journey requires the presence of *al-nufūs al-qudsiyyah* or the divine guides.⁵¹⁷

Finally, Maytham is careful not to allow his words to be misconstrued as a rejection or devaluation of the *sharī‘ah* (*al-*

⁵¹³ Ibid., p. 255.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., p. 281, 253.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., p. 258. In the prophetic ḥadīth: “*Alī mamṣūṣ fi dbāt Allāh*,” means that ‘Alī is completely immersed in the cognizance (*ma‘rifah*) of God.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., p. 260.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., p. 283.

sharī'ah al-Muḥammadiyyah). He asserts that it is equally mandatory to follow the exoteric (*zāhir*) and the esoteric (*bāṭin*) teachings of the Prophet. Thus, he is critical of the Sufis who are oblivious and neglectful of fulfilling their religious obligations, such as ritual prayers and fasting. He argues that intellect by itself is not sufficient to lead one to the path of success and prosperity.⁵¹⁸ He also castigates those who espouse the theme of union with God (*ittiḥād*) and incarnation (*ḥulūl*).⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 275-77, p. 267.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 262-63; pp. 274-75.

Conclusion

In the Twelver Shi'ite world view, the necessity for continuous guidance and communication between God and His servants finds expression in the doctrine of imamate. To underline the critical role of the imām, it is related that the earth would be annihilated without the presence of the divine guide and if there were only two persons left on earth, one of them would have to be the imām designated by God. This concept was put to test and challenged during the occultation of the twelfth imām, the Mahdī, because, it was argued, the primary function of guidance had been temporarily suspended till his return. Throughout this long tradition, Imamite scholars have substantiated in a number of ways the perpetual need of guidance, but they have also agreed in the end that the visible presence of the imām was not necessary for humanity to be guided to the path of felicity and prosperity. Furthermore, just as it was mandatory for God to appoint an imām, it was made equally obligatory for the community to recognize the imām and pledge its love, affection and unconditional obedience to him.

This doctrine of imamate has informed all aspects of the Shi'ite religious sciences and world view. Accordingly, scholars have written a multitude of monographs to demonstrate specific orientations and perspectives, and have posited it as the only one valid. However, these various approaches provide a skewed understanding of the doctrine and do not afford a panoramic view of it. In this sense, imamate is at times reduced to an esoteric doctrine and, at other

times, to a political institution. This in spite of the fact that, in actuality, the concepts of *wilāyah*, *mawaddah* and *khilāfah* are so broad and expansive in their meaning that they encompass the different orientations which have been articulated by scholars of all leanings, whether they be traditional, theological, philosophical or mystical.

From the Twelver Shi'ite point of view, the primary ingredients for attaining sound faith are recognition and cognizance (*ma'rifah*) of the divine guide which should generate love and affection (*mawaddah*) for the luminous personality. Love and affection that are not anchored in *ma'rifah* are frowned upon and viewed as blind and superficial, and consequently not worthy of receiving divine reward. The divine guides have always insisted that this love should be objectively verifiable and translated into unconditional obedience (*iṭā'ah*) to them so that they could lead the community to prosperity (*sa'adah*) and perfection (*kamāl*). Obedience to them was equated with obedience to God because, just like the Prophet, they "do not speak out of desire; it is nothing but revelation that is revealed" (Q. 53:3), though it takes a form of inspiration (*ilhām*) rather than revelation. The various degrees of faith (*marātib al-īmān*) are a function of the intensity of love and obedience to the divine guides. In addition, there is a dialectical relationship such that the more one loves and obeys the divine guides, the deeper and more profound become the *ma'rifah* and *īmān*.

These key notions are a recurring theme in works that approach the doctrine of imamate from a Qur'anī, ḥadīthī, theological, philosophical or

mystical perspective. The Imamite scholars have drawn from a single corpus of exegetical material and ḥadīth literature in their exposition of their various orientations. The contribution of this thesis is to underline this point with evidence and documentation to demonstrate the integrity of this tradition. In addition, I have deciphered the approaches and methodologies for each of the distinct treatments on the doctrine of imamate and have subjected them to a critical analysis. A prime example of an imamate scholar in whose work all the approaches merge is Maytham al-Baḥrānī, as illustrated in Chapter 6.

To allow for further research, primary sources for each of the approaches to the study of imamate have been provided according to their chronological appearance at the end of each distinct orientation. Much research is still needed in order to trace the complex doctrinal development, evolution and dynamics in the study of imamate. Separate monographs would be required to study and analyze exhaustively the doctrinal evolution of imamology from the perspective of the Qur'an and ḥadīth, theology, philosophy and mysticism. This, of course, fell outside the purview of the goals set out in this thesis.

Bibliography

- Ābādī, Sayyid Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Fayrūz (d. 1990). *Faḍā'il al-khamsah min al-ṣiḥāḥ al-sittah*. 3 volumes. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī, 1973.
- Abisaab, Rula J. *Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire*. London, N.Y.: I. B. Taurus, 2004.
- Afsaruddin, Asma. *Excellence and Precedence: Medieval Islamic Discourse on Legitimate Leadership*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- al-'Āmilī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥurr (d. 1104/1692). *al-Fawā'id al-Tūsiyyah*. Edited by Sayyid Mahdī Lājawardī Ḥusaynī and Shaykh Muḥammad Dorūdī. Qum: al-Maṭba'ah al-'ilmiyyah, 1403/1983.
- _____. *al-Fuṣūl al-mubimmah*. 3rd print. Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.
- _____. *Ithbāt al-hudāt bi al-nuṣūṣ wa al-mu'jizāt*. 3 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Rasūlī. Qum: al-Maṭba'ah al-'ilmiyyah, n.d.
- _____. *Wasā'il al-shī'ah ilā taḥsīl masā'il al-shar'īyyah*. 20 vols. Beirut: Dār ihyā' turāth al-'Arabī, 1971.
- al-Amīnī al-Najafī, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad (d. 1390/1970). "*al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā*." Unpublished manuscript in author's possession.
- _____. *Fāṭimah al Zabrah*'. Edited with detailed annotations by Muḥammad Amīnī-Najafī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e Istiqlāl, 1997.
- _____. *al-Ghadīr fī al-Kitāb wa al-sunnah wa al-adab*. 11 vols. 3rd print. Tehran: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1987.
- _____. "*Primordial Covenant*." Unpublished manuscript in author's possession.
- _____. *Sīratu-nā wa sunnatu-nā*. 2nd print. Beirut: Dār al-Ghadīr li al-maṭbū'āt and Dār al-kitāb al-Islāmī, 1992.
- _____. *Thamarāt al-asfār*. Unpublished manuscript. It is a collection of ḥadīth reports that he gathered from his travels to Turkey, India, Syria and other countries after inspecting numerous manuscripts.
- Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali. *The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam*. Translated by David Streight. Albany: SUNY, 1994.
- _____. "Only the Man of God is Human: Theology and Mystical Anthropology According to Early Imāmī Exegesis," in *Shi'ism*, 17-39. Edited by Etan Kohlberg. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003.

Āmulī, Sayyid Haydar (787/1385). *Kitāb naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Ed. Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia. Tehran and Paris: Département d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche, 1975.

Arjomand, Said Amir. "Ideological Revolution in Shi'ism," in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, 178-209. Edited by S. A. Arjomand. New York: SUNY, 1988.

_____. *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order, and Societal Change in Shi'ite Islam from the Beginning to 1890*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Asadābādī, al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025). *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-'adl*. 20 volumes. Cairo: Dār al-Miṣriyyah, n.d.

Āshtiyānī, Aḥmad. *al-Wilāyah*. Tehran: author, 1989.

Āshtiyānī, Mīrzā Mahdī. *Asāse tawḥīd dar qā'idah-ye tawḥīd wa waḥdat-e wujūd*. Tehran: University of Tehran, 1951.

Āshtiyānī, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn (d. 2005). *Sharḥ-e muqaddamah-ye Qayṣarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. 5th print. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2001.

al-'Askarī, Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 260/874). *Tafsīr*. Qum: Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī, 1409/1988.

al-Astarābādī al-Najafī, Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī (d. 1557 or 58). *Ta'wīl al-āyāh al-zāhirah fī faḍā'il al-'itrah al-ṭāhirah*. 3 vols. Edited with footnotes by Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī. Qum: Madrasat al-imām al-Mahdī, 1411/1990.

Ayoub, Mahmoud. *Redemptive suffering in Islām: a study of the devotional aspects of 'Āshūrā' in Twelver Shi'ism*. The Hague: Mouton, 1978.

_____. "The speaking Qur'ān and the silent Qur'ān: A study of the principles and development of Imāmī Shi'ī tafsīr," pp. 177-98 in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, 177-98. Edited by Andrew Rippin. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

al-'Ayyāshī, al-Nadr Muḥammad ibn Mas'ūd ibn 'Ayyāsh al-Sulamī (d. 320/932). *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. Edited by Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Maḥallātī. 2 vols. Tehran: al-Maktabah al-'ilmiyyah al-Islāmiyyah, n.d.

al-Baghdādī, 'Abd al-Qāhir (d. 429/1037). *Farq bayn al-firaq*. Beirut: Dār al-ma'rifah, n.d.

al-Bahrānī, al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī (d. 1107/1695). *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 4 vols. Preface by Maḥmūd b. Ja'far al-Mūsawī al-Zarandī. Qum: Mu'assasah Ismā'iliyyān, 1275/1858 {An important work on *ta'wīl* in lithograph form. A

multi-volume critical edition of this work has been published in Lebanon with extensive footnotes}.

_____. *Ghāyat al-marām wa hujjat al-khiṣām fi ta'yīn al-imām min tariq al-khāṣṣ wa al-'āmm*. 7 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Alī 'Āshūr. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-ta'rīkh al-'Arabī, 1422/2001.

_____. *Kashf al-mubimm fi tariq khabar "Ghadīr khum."* Qum: Mu'assasah ihyā' turāth al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Baḥrānī, n.d.

_____. *Madīnat al-ma'ājiz*. 8 volumes. Edited by 'Izzat Allāh al-Mawlā'ī al-Hamadānī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-ma'ārif al-Islāmiyyah, 1413/1992.

al-Baḥrānī, Kamāl al-Dīn Maytham b. 'Alī b. Maytham (d. 699/1299). *Ikhtiyār miṣbāḥ al-sālikīn*. Edited with an introduction by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. Mashhad: Majma' al-buḥūth al-Islāmiyyah, 1408/1987.

_____. *al-Najāh fi al-qiyāmah fi taḥqīq amr al-imāmah*. Edited with introduction by Shaykh Yūsufi. Qum: Majma' al-fikr al-Islāmī, 1417/1996.

_____. *Qawā'id al-marām fi 'ilm al-kalām*. Edited by al-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥusaynī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985.

_____. "Sharḥ al-Ishārāt," in Ali al-Oraibi. "Shī'ī renaissance: a case study of the theosophical school of Bahrain in the 7th/13th century." Ph.D. dissertation, 250-84. Montreal: McGill University, 1992.

_____. *Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghab*. Edited with an introduction by al-Ḥātāmī, 5 vols. Tehran: Mu'assasah al-naṣhr, 1378/1958.

al-Baḥrānī, Yūsuf. *Salāsīl al-ḥadīd 'alā 'unuq ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd*. Najaf, n.d.

al-Barqī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālīd (d. 280/894). *Kitāb al-maḥāsīn*. 2 vols. Edited by al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī. Qum: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1950.

Calder, Norman. "The Structure of Authority in Imāmī Shī'ī Jurisprudence," Ph.D. dissertation. London: SOAS, 1980.

Chodkiewicz, Michel. *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī*, tr. Liadain Sherrard. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993.

Clarke, Lynda G. "Early Doctrine of the Shī'ah, According to the Shī'ī Sources." Ph.D. dissertation. Montreal: McGill University, 1994.

_____. *Shi'ite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions*. Edited and translated by Lynda Clarke. Binghamton: Global Publications, 2001.

- Cooper, John. "Allāma al-Hillī on the Imamate and Ijtihād." Translated and edited by John Cooper in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, 240-49. Edited by S. A. Arjomand. New York: SUNY, 1988.
- Corbin, Henry. "De la philosophie prophétique en Islam Shi'ite." *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 31 (1962):49-116.
- _____. *En Islam iranien: aspects spirituels et philosophiques*. Paris, 1971-72, especially the chapter entitled "Prophétologie et imāmologie," pp. 219-84.
- _____. "Shī'ism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and History." *Religious Studies* 6 (1970): 229-42.
- Crone, Patricia. *God's Rule: Government and Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Crone, Patricia and Hinds, Martin. *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Dabashi, Hamid. *Authority in Islam: From the Rise of Muhammad to the Establishment of the Umayyads*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989.
- _____. *The Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*. New York: New York University Press, 1993.
- al-Dhahabī, al-Hāfiẓ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Uthmān (d. 748/1347). *Ṭuruq ḥadīth "man kuntu mawlā-hu fa-'Alī mawlā-hu."* Edited by 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Qum: Intishārāt-e dalīl, 1421/2000.
- Dīnānī, Ghulām Ḥusayn Ibrāhīmī. *Qawā'id-e kullī-ye falsafī dar falsafah-ye Islāmī*. 3 vols. Tehran: Mu'assasah-ye muṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e farhangī, 1986.
- Eliash, Joseph. "Misconceptions Regarding the Juridical Status of the Iranian Ulama'." *IJMES*, 10 (1979): 9-25.
- Enayat, Hamid. "Iran: Khumayni's Concept of the 'Guardianship of the Jurisconsult,'" in *Islam in the Political Process*, 160-80. Edited by James P. Piscatori. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- al-Fārābī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad (d. 950). *al-Farabi on the Perfect State*. Introduction, translation and commentary by Richard Walzer. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- _____. "Taḥṣīl al-sa'ādah," in *al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah* (16). Frankfurt am Main: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1999.
- al-Futūnī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-'Amilī al-Nabāṭī (d. 1140/1727). *Ḍiyā' al-'ālamayn fī bayān faḍā'il al-a'immaḥ al-muṣṭafayn*. Manuscript form at Mu'assasah āl al-bayt, Qum, Iran.

- _____. *Tafsīr mir'āt al-anwār wa mishkāt al-asrār*. Qum: Mu'assasah Ismā'īliyyān, 1275/1858. {This work is the introductory (*Muqaddamah*) volume to al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Baḥrānī's, *al-Burhān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* but only in the lithograph edition cited above. It is not included in the recent multi-volume edition of *al-Burhān* published in Lebanon}.
- Gulpaygānī, Ṣāfi Luṭf Allāh. *Wilāyat-e takwīnī wa wilāyat-e tashrī'ī*. Tehran: Mu'assasat al-imām al-Mahdī, n.d.
- al-Ḥā'irī, al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī al-Tabrīzī al-Najafī (d. 1362/1943). *Mushajjarah Ijāzāt al-'ulamā' al-Imāmiyyah*. Introduction by Sayyid Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1406/1985. {He provides the tree of *isnād* from one disciple to another, each of whom was authorized (*ijāzah*) to relate ḥadīth reports, till it reaches the first transmitter who had heard the ḥadīth from the divine guides or their companions}.
- Hallaq, Wael B. *Authority, Continuity and Change in Islamic Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- al-Ḥārithī, al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad b. Mu'tamad Khān al-Badkhusḥānī (d. 1126/1714). *Nazal al-abrār bi-mā ṣaḥḥa min manāqib ahl al-bayt al-aṭḥār*. Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. Isfahan: Maktabat al-imām Amīr al-mu'minīn al-'āmmah, 1403/1983.
- al-Hilālī, Sulaym b. Qays al-'Āmirī al-Kūfī (d. 76/695). *Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilālī*. 3 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Anṣārī al-Zanjānī al-Khū'inī. Qum: Dalīl-e mā, 1423/2002. {Volume 1 is devoted to a survey of the author and the book; volume 2 is a study of the text; volume 3 traces the composition of the work and provides a detailed subject index}.
- al-Hillī, al-Ḥasan b. Yūsuf al-Muṭahhar (d. 726/1325). *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ al-Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Edited by Ḥasan Zādeh al-Āmulī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī under the auspices of Jamā'at al-mudarrisīn, 1415/1994.
- _____. *Kashf al-murād fī sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. 2nd print. Edited with footnotes by Ja'far Subḥānī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-Imām al-Ṣādiq, 2003.
- _____. *Nahj al-ḥaqq wa kashf al-ṣidq*. Edited by al-Shaykh 'Ayn Allāh al-Ḥasanī al-Armawī. Qum: Dār al-hijrah, 1986.
- _____. *Talkhīṣ al-Shāfi*. 3rd edition. 4 vols. Edited by Ḥusayn Baḥr al-'Ulūm. Qum: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1974.
- _____. *Tawḍīḥ al-Murād*. Extensive Commentary and footnotes on *Kashf al-Murād* provided by Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Mufid, n.d.

- al-Ḥuwayzi, ‘Abd al-‘Alī b. Jumū‘ah al-‘Arūsī (d. 1112/1700). *Tafsīr nūr al-thaqalayn*. Edited by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Maḥallātī. 4th print. 5 vols. Qum: Mu‘assasah Ismā‘īliyyān, 1412/1991.
- Ibn Abī Ṭālib, ‘Alī (d. 41/661). *Nahj al-balāghah*. Compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī. Translated by Sayed Ali Reza. Rome: European Islamic Cultural Center, 1984.
- Ibn ‘Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn (d. 638/1240). *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited by M. M. al-Ghurāb. Damascus: M. M. al-Ghurāb, 1985.
- _____. Ibn ‘Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn (d. 638/1240). *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Edited with footnotes by Abū al-‘Alā ‘Afīfī. Tehran: Intishārāt al-Zahrā’, 1987.
- _____. *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*. 9 volumes. Edited by Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyyah, 1999.
- Ibn Bābawayh, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (Shaykh Ṣadūq) (d. 381/991). *al-Imāmah wa al-nuṣrah min al-khīrah*. Qum: Madrasat al-Imām al-Mahdī, 1984.
- _____. *Ma‘ānī al-akhbār*. Edited by ‘Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1379/1959.
- _____. *al-Tawḥīd*. Edited with footnotes by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-Ḥusaynī al-Tahrānī. Qum: Jamā‘at al-mudarrisīn, 1416/1995.
- _____. *‘Uyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*. 2 vols. Qum: Dār al-‘ilm, 1957.
- _____. *A Shi‘ite Creed: A translation of Risālat al-i‘tiqādāt*. Translated by Asaf A. A. Fyze. London: Oxford University Press, 1942.
- Ibn Furāt al-Kūfī (d. 352/963). *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*. Edited by Muḥammad al-Kāzim. Qum: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1410/1989.
- Ibn Ishāq, al-Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmad b. ‘Abdullāh b. Aḥmad (Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī) (d. 430/1038). Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī. *al-Nūr al-Mushta‘al min kitāb mā nazala min al-Qur‘ān fī ‘Alī*. Qum: Wizārat al-Irshād al-Islāmī, 1406/1985.
- _____. *Shawāhid al-tanzīl li qarwā‘id al-tafṣīl fī al-āyāt al-nāzilah fī abl al-bayt*. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī. 3 volumes. Tehran: Wizārat al-thaqāfah wa al-irshād al-Islāmī, 1990.
- Ibn al-Maghāzili al-Shāfi‘ī, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Wāsītī (d. 483/1090). *Manāqib ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Bahbūdī. 2nd print. Tehran: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Islāmiyyah, 1402/1982.
- Ibn Shahr Āshūb al-Māzandarānī, Abū Ja‘far Rashīd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (d. 877/1472). *Manāqib āl Abī Ṭālib*. 4 volumes. Najaf: Maṭba‘at al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1376/1956.

- Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037). *al-Shifā'*. 4 volumes in 10. Edited by Ṭahā Ḥusayn. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-'uzmā al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1983-85.
- _____. *Ishārāt wa tanbīhāt*. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2002.
- Ibn Ṭāwūs, 'Alī b. Mūsā (d. 664/1266). *al-Ṭarā'if fī ma'rifah madhāhib al-ṭawā'if*. 2 volumes. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Alī 'Āshūr. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī li al-maṭbū'āt, 1999.
- Ibn Turkah, 'Alī (d. 1446). *Tambīd al-Qawā'id*. 2nd print. Introduction by Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1981.
- Iqbāl, 'Abbās (d. 1955), *Khāndān-e Nawbakhtī*. 3rd print. Tehran: Kitābkhānah-ye Ṭahūrī, 1978.
- Jafri, S. Hussain M. *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam*. London: Longman Group and Librairie du Liban, 1979.
- Kadhīm, Abbas. "The mysterious journey of Moses (Q. 18:60-82): Does it refute or confirm the Shī'ī doctrine of 'ismah?" *International Journal of Shī'ī Studies*, 2 (1): 97-120.
- al-Kanjī al-Shāfi'i, Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Qurashī (d. 658/1259). *Kifāyat al-tālib fī manāqib 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. 3rd print. Tehran: Dār iḥyā' turāth Ahl al-bayt, 1404/1983.
- Karbala'ī, Jawād b. 'Abbās. *al-Anwār al-sāti'ah fī sharḥ ziyārat al-jāmi'ah*. 5 vols. Tehran: al-'alamī, 1990.
- al-Kāshānī, Fayḍ Muḥsin (d. 1091/1680). *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi'*. Edited by al-Shaykh Ḥusayn al-'alamī. 2nd print. 5 vols. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadr, 1416/1995.
- al-Khū'ī, al-Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Mūsawī (d. 1992). *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'an* (The Prolegomena to the Qur'an). Translated by Abdulaziz. A. Sachedina. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- al-Khumaynī, Rūḥ Allāh al-Mūsawī (d. 1989). *Miṣbāḥ al-hidāyah ilā al-khilāfah wa al-wilāyah*. Translated by Sayyid Aḥmad Fihri. Tehran, 1980.
- _____. *Ta'liqāt 'alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* and *Miṣbāḥ al-uns*. Dār al-maḥajjah al-bayḍā' and Dār al-rasūl al-akram, 1422/2001.
- Kohlberg, Etan. "Imam and Community in the Pre-Ghayba Period," in *Authority and Political Culture in Shi'ism*, 178-209. Edited by S. A. Arjomand. New York: SUNY, 1988.
- _____. "The position of the Walad Zinā in Imāmī Shi'ism," in *Belief and Law in Imāmī Shi'ism*, 237-66. Hampshire: Variorum, 1991.

- _____. "Shī'ī Ḥadīth." Chapter in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*. Edited by A. F. L. Beeston et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- _____. "The Term *Muḥaddath* in Twelver Shī'ism," in *Studia Orientalia memoriae D. H. Baneth*, 39-47. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1979.
- al-Kūfī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Thaqafī (d. 283/896). *al-Ghārāt*. 2 volumes. al-Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Muḥaddith. Qum: Bahman, n.d.
- al-Kulaynī Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb b. Ishāq (d. 329/940). *al-Kāfī*. 2nd print. 8 volumes. Edited by 'Alī Akbar Ghaffārī. Tehran: Dār al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1388/1968 {Includes *Uṣūl*, *Furū'*, and *Rawḍah*}.
- _____. *al-Kāfī*. Tehran: WOFIS, 1978-. This work is being translated into English under the supervision of Shaykh Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ja'farī. So far, the English translation goes to the end of Section 1 of *Kitāb al-ḥujjah*. This corresponds to volume 2, p. 189 of the work edited and translated to Persian by Muṣṭafawī.
- _____. *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfī*. 12 volumes. Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'Arabī, 2000. Commentary by Muḥammad Sāliḥ b. Aḥmad Māzandarānī.
- _____. *al-Uṣūl min al-kāfī*, 3 volumes [Arabic with Persian commentary and translation]. Edited and translated by S. Jawād Muṣṭafawī. Tehran: Daftar-e nashr-e farhang-e ahl-e bayt, nd. and the 4th volume is edited and translated by Hāshim Rasūlī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e masjid-e chahardah ma'ṣūm, 1966.
- Lāhījī, 'Abd al-Razzāq Fayyād (d. 1072/1660). *Gawḥar-e murād*. Introduction by Zayn al-'Ābidīn Qurbānī Lāhījī. Tehran: Wizārat-e farhang wa irshād-e Islāmi, 1993.
- al-Lakhnawī, al-Sayyid Mīr Ḥāmid Ḥusayn al-Mūsawī (d. 1306/1888). *'Abaqāt al-anwār fī ithbāt imāmat al-a'imma al-aṭḥār*. Multiple volumes for each separate ḥadīth. Edited by Mawlānā al-Burūjirdī and vocalized by al-Sayyid Hāshim al-'Āmilī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1416/1995-.
- Lalani, Arzina R. *Early Shī'ī Thought: The Teachings of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir*. London: I. B. Taurus and The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2000.
- Landolt, Hermann. "Walāyah," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 15:316-23. 16 volumes. Editor in Chief Mircea Eliade. New York, N.Y.: Macmillan, 1987-.
- Madelung, Wilferd. "Imāmism and Mu'tazilite Theology." *Religious Schools and Sects in Medieval Islam*, chapter 7. London: Variorum Reprints, 1985.
- _____. "al-Kulaynī," in *EI²*, 5:362-3.
- _____. *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran*. Albany: SUNY, 1988.

- _____. *The Succession to Muḥammad*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- al-Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir (d. 1111/1699). *Bihār al-anwār*. 110 volumes. 2nd edition. Lebanon: Mu'assasat al-wafā', 1983.
- _____. *Mir'āt al-'uqūl*, 26 vols. Edited by S. Hāshim al-Rasūlī with introduction by S. Murtaḍā al-'Askarī. Tehran: Dār-al-kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1404/1983.
- al-Mas'ūdī, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (d. 346/957). *Ithbāt al-waṣīyyah li al-Imām 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Qum: al-Raḍī, nd.
- Mavani, Hamid. "Analysis of Khomeini's Proofs for *al-Wilāyah al-Muṭlaqah* (Comprehensive Authority) of the Jurist," in *The Most Learned of the Shi'a: The Institution of the Marja' al-Taqlid*, 183-201. Edited by Linda S. Walbridge. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- _____. "Basis of Leadership: Khumaynī's Claims and the Classical Tradition." Montreal: McGill University, 1992.
- McDermott, Martin J. *The Theology of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd*. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1978.
- al-Milānī, Sayyid 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī. *al-Imāmah fī aḥamm al-kutub al-kalāmiyyah wa 'aqīdat al-Shi'ah al-Imāmiyyah*. Qum: Sayyid al-Shuhadā', 1413/1992. {Contains the following texts and their rebuttal on issues dealing with imamate: *al-Ṭarā'if 'alā sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, *al-Marāṣid 'alā sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, *Risālah fī ṣalāh Abī Bakr*, *Risālah fī ḥadīth al-iqtidā' bi al-Shaykhayn*, *Risālah fī al-Muta'tayn*, *Risālah fī ḥadīth sayyid kuhūl ahl al-jannah and Risālah fī ḥadīth aṣḥābī ka-al-nujūm*}.
- _____. *Muhāḍarāt fī al-i'tiqādāt*, 2 vols. (Qum: Markaz al-abḥāth al-'aqā'idīyyah, n.d.).
- _____. *Nafaḥāt al-azḥār fī khulāṣah "Abaqāt al-anwār."* 20 volumes. n.p.:n.d.
- Modarressi, Hossein. *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shi'ite Islam: Abū Ja'far ibn Qība al-Rāzī and his Contribution to Imāmite Shi'ite Thought*. Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1993.
- _____. *Tradition and Survival: A Bibliographical Survey of Early Shi'ite Literature*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003.
- Morris, James W. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mulla Sadra*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Moussavi, Ahmad Kazemi. *Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam: From the Office of Mufti to the Institution of Marja'*. Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1996.

Mufid, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān (d. 413/1022). *Awā'il al-maqālāt*. Introduction with extensive annotation by Faḍlullāh al-Zanjānī. Edited by 'Abbāsquḷī (Wā'iz Charandānī). Tabriz: Raḍā'ī, 1371/1951.

_____. *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*. Introduction by al-Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī al-Sayyid Ḥasan al-Khurāsānī. Qum, Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.

_____. *Muṣannafāt Shaykh al-Mufīd*, 14 volumes. (Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1992).

_____. *Taṣṣīḥ al-i'tiqād (Sharḥ 'aqā'id al-Ṣadūq)* is included in the above book edited by Zanjānī.

al-Murtadā, Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mūsawī (d. 436/1044). *al-Intiṣār*. Najaf: al-Maṭba'ah al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1971.

_____. *al-Shāfi'ī fi al-imāmah*. 2nd edition. 4 vols. Edited by 'Abd al-Zahrā' al-Ḥusaynī al-Khaṭīb. Tehran: Mu'assasat al-Ṣādiq, 1990.

_____. *Tanzīh al-anbiyā'*. 2nd edition. Edited by Fāris Karīm. Qum: Būstān-e kitāb, 2001.

al-Mūsawī, 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn (d. 1377/1957). *Al-Murāja'āt*. 2nd edition. Edited by Ḥusayn al-Rāḍī. Beirut: al-jāmi'iyyah al-Islāmiyyah, 1402/1982. {It contains a good index to locate the Qur'anic verses and ḥadīths related to imamate: *Sabīl al-najāh fī tatimmat al-murāja'āt*}.

Nanji, Azim. "An Ismā'īlī Theory of *Walāyah* in the *Da'āim al-Islām* of Qādī al-Nu'mān," in *Essays on Islamic Civilization Presented to Niyazi Berkes*. Edited by D. P. Little, 260-73. Leiden, 1976.

al-Nawbakhtī, al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā (died at the beginning of fourth/tenth century). *Firaq al-Shī'ah*. Edited by H. Ritter. Istanbul: Staats Druckerci, 1931.

Newman, Andrew J. *The Formative Period of Twelver Shī'ism: Ḥadīth as Discourse Between Qum and Baghdad*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000.

al-Nisā'ī, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb (d. 303/915). *Khaṣā'is Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib*. Ed. Muḥammad al-Kāzīm al-Maḥmūdī. Qum: Majma' iḥyā' al-thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1419/1998.

Nīshābūrī, Faḍl b. Shādhān (d. 260/874). *al-Īḍāḥ*. Tehran: Dānashghā-ye Tehran, 1984 {S. H. Modarressi is of the view that this work has been wrongly ascribed to Faḍl b. Shādhān and in actuality belongs to Ibn Rustam al-Ṭabari, see *Tradition and Survival*, p. xvii}.

al-Oraibi, Ali. "Rationalism in the School of Bahrain," in *Shi'ite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions*, 331-43. Editor and translator, Lynda Clarke. Binghamton: Global Publications, 2001.

_____. "Shi'i renaissance: a case study of the theosophical school of Bahrain in the 7th/13th century." Ph.D. dissertation. Montreal: McGill University, 1992.

Poonawala, I. "al-Zāhir wa 'l-Bāṭin," in *EI*², 11:389-90.

Qāḍī Nu'mān (d. 363/974). *Da'ā'im al-Islām*. Egypt: Dār al-ma'ārif, n.d.

Al-Qandūzī al-Ḥanafī, Sulaymān b. Ibrāhīm (d. 1293/1876). *Yanābī' al-marwaddah li-dhawī al-qurbā*. Edited with introduction by al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Khurāsān. Najaf: al-Maktabah al-Ḥaydariyyah, 1384/1965. This same work has also been edited by Sayyid 'Alī Jamāl Ashraf al-Ḥusaynī. 3 volumes plus one volume index. n.p.: Dār al-uswah li al-ṭibā'ah wa al-nashr, 1416/1995.

al-Qummī, 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm (d. 329/940), *Tafsīr al-Qummī*. 2 vols. 3rd print. Qum: Mu'assasah dār al-kitāb, 1404/1984. {S. M. Modarressi of the view that this work of exegesis has been wrongly attributed to al-Qummī. See *Tradition and Survival: A Bibliographical Survey of Early Shi'ite Literature*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003, p. xvii}.

Qumshah'i, Muḥammad Riḍā. *Dbayl-e faṣṣ-e Shaythi Fuṣūṣ al-hikam dar mabāḥith-e wilāyat bā risālah-ye marwū' al-khilāfah al-kubrā*. n.p., 1973.

Qumshah'i, Muḥyī al-Dīn Mahdī Ilāhī. *Ḥikmat-e Ilāhī*. 6th print. Tehran: Intishārāt-e Islāmī, 1984.

Rahman, Fazlur. *The Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*. Albany: SUNY, 1975.

Rubin, U. "Pre-Existence and Light: Aspects of the Concept of Nūr Muḥammad." *Israel Oriental Studies*, 5:62-119.

Sabzawārī, Mullā Hādī (b. 1797 or 98). *Asrār al-hikam*. Introduction by Toshiko Izutsu. Tehran: Mawlā, 1985.

_____. *Majmū'e rasā'il*. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1981.

_____. *Metaphysics of Sabzawari*. Translated to English by T. Izutsu and M. Mohaghegh. Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1991.

_____. *Sharḥ al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā*. 2 vols. Qum: Maktabah baṣīratī, n.d.

_____. *Sharḥ Ghurar al-farā'id (Sharḥ-e Manzūmah-ye ḥikmat)*. 2nd edition. Edited by M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu. Tehran: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies and Tehran University, 1981.

- _____. *Sharḥ-e Manzūmah*. 2 volumes. Commentary and Persian translation by Murtaḍā Muṭahharī. Tehran: Intishārāt-e ḥikmat, 1982.
- _____. *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah fī manābij al-sulūkiyyah*. Edited by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī. Mashhad: Markaz-e nashr-e dāneshghāhī, 1967.
- Sachedina, Abdulaziz A. *The Just Ruler (al-sultān al-‘ādil) in Shī‘ite Islam: The Comprehensive Authority of the Jurist in Imamite Jurisprudence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- _____. *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of the Mahdī in Twelver Shi‘ism*. Albany: SUNY, 1981.
- Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (Mullā Ṣadrā) (d. 1050/1641). *al-Ḥikmah al-muta‘āliyah fī al-asfār al-‘aqliyyah al-arba‘ah*. 3rd edition. 4 volumes in 9. Beirut: Dār al-turāth al-iḥyā’ al-‘Arabī, 1981-90.
- _____. *Kasr aṣnām al-jābiliyyah*. Edited by M. T. Dānishpazhūh. Tehran: Dāneshghāh, 1962.
- _____. *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-kāfi and Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*. Tehran: Maktabat al-mahmūdī, 1391/1971. His commentary is partial and ends with *Kitāb al-ḥujjah, Bāb anna al-‘immah wulāt amr Allāh wa khazanab ‘ilmi-hi*.
- _____. *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm ta’līf Ṣadr al-muta‘allibīn*. Compiled by Muḥammad Khwājawī. Qum: 1987.
- Safavi, Seyed G. “Mullā Ṣadrā on Causation.” *Transcendent Philosophy*, volume 3, no. 4 (December 2002).
- al-Ṣaffār, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Qummī (d. 290/902-3). *Baṣā’ir al-darajāt*. Edited by Mīrzā M. Kūchebāghī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-‘uzmā al-Mar‘ashī al-Najafī, 1404/1983. {S. M. Modarressi is of the opinion that a larger part of this work is suspect and in all likelihood had been interpolated. See his *Tradition and Survival*, p. xvi}.
- Shahrastānī, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm (d. 1153/1740). *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad b. Faṭḥ Allāh al-Badrān. Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Azhar, 1371/1951.
- _____. *Muslim Sects and Divisions*. Trans. A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn. London: Kegan Paul International, 1984.
- al-Shaybānī, Zurārah b. A‘yan al-Kūfī, *Musnad Zurārah b. A‘yan* (d. 150/767). Compiled by Bashīr al-Muḥammadī al-Māzandarānī. Qum: Mu‘assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1413/1993.
- Shīrāzī, Rukn al-Dīn Mas‘ūd (Bābā Ruknā) (d. 1367). *Sharḥ-e Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Commentary in Persian. Tehran: McGill University and Tehran University, 1980.

- al-Shushtari, Sayyid Nūr Allāh al-Ḥusayn al-Mar'ashī (d. 1019/1610). *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq wa izhāq al-bāṭil*. 36 volumes (includes *Mulḥaqāt* by Shahāb al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī). Edited by Shahāb al-Dīn al-Najafī. Qum: Maktabah Āyatullāh al-Mar'ashī al-Najafī, 1957-.
- Sibṭ b. al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256). *Tadhkirat al-khawāṣṣ*. Edited by Sayyid Muḥammad Ṣādiq Baḥr al-'Ulūm. Tehran: Maktabah naynawā al-ḥādithah, n.d.
- Ṣubḥānī, Ja'far. *Pīshwā'ī az naẓar-e Islām*. Qum: Intishārāt-e maktab-e Islām, 1993.
- _____. *Wilāyat-e tashrī'ī wa takwīnī dar Qur'ān-e majīd*. Qum: Mu'assasah imām Ṣādiq, 2002.
- Stewart, Devin J. *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1998.
- Suhrawardī, Yaḥyā b. Ḥabash. *Majmū'ab-ye muṣannafāt-e Shaykh-e Isbrāq*. Introduction and annotations by H. Corbin. Tehran: Académie iranienne de philosophie, 1976-77.
- al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far 'Imād al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim (6th/12th century). *Bashārat al-Muṣṭafā li-shī'at al-Murtadā*. Edited by Jawād al-Qayyūmī. Qum: Mu'assasat al-nashr al-Islāmī, 1420/1999.
- al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr. *The History of al-Ṭabarī: The Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah*, tr. I. K. A. Howard. Albany, N.Y.: 1990.
- al-Ṭabarī al-Ṣaghīr, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Rustam (d. 923). *Dalā'il al-imāmah*. Qum: Mu'assasat al-ba'thah, 1413/1992.
- al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 1416/1996). *Abl al-bayt fī maktabat al-'arabiyyah*. Qum: Mu'assasah āl al-bayt, 1417/1997.
- _____. "Mawqif al-Shī'ah min ḥajamāt al-khuṣūm wa khulāṣah 'an kitāb 'Abaqāt al-anwār." *Turāthunā*, issue no. 23, pp. 32-61.
- al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, al-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn (d. 1402/1981). *Dalīl al-mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Index of *al-Mīzān* by Ilyās Kalāntarī. Translated by 'Abbās Tarjumān. Tehran: Intishārāt-e bayān, 1983.
- _____. *al-Mīzān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 2nd edition. 20 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī, 1957-74.
- _____. Persian translation of *al-Mīzān* by S. Muḥammad Bāqir Mūsawī Hamadānī. 4th print. 40 volumes. Tehran: Intishārāt-e Muḥammadī, 1987.
- _____. *al-Mīzān: An Exegesis of the Qur'ān*. Translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi. Tehran: WOFIS, 1983-. Thus far, 12 volumes have been translated which cover up to the end of chapter 5 of the Qur'ān.

- _____. *Shi'ite Islam*, translated from the Persian and edited with an introduction and notes by Seyyed H. Nasr. Albany: SUNY, 1975.
- al-Ṭabrisī, Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl (d. 560/1164). *Majma' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. 10 vols. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-'alamī li al-maṭbū'āt, 1415/1994.
- al-Ṭabrisī, Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan (d. 548/1154). *al-Ihtijāj*. 2 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Kharsān. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Nu'mān, 1966.
- al-Ṭabrisī, al-Nūrī (d. 1320/1902). *Mustadrak al-waṣā'il*. 18 volumes. Qum: Mu'assasah Āl al-bayt li ihyā al-turāth, 1408/1987.
- Tahrānī, Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī (d. 1994). *'Aqā'id al-insān: imāmah*. Qum: Sayyid Hāshim Tahrānī, 1411/1990.
- Takim, Liyakatali. *The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Islam*. (forthcoming from SUNY)
- Taqī, Muḥammad. *Lawāmi'*. 8 volumes. Qum: Maṭbū'āt Ismā'iliyyān, 1994.
- Tucker, William. "Charismatic Leadership and Shi'ite Sectarianism." *Islamic and Middle Eastern Societies*, 29-40 Edited by Robert Olson. Brattleboro: Amana Books, 1987.
- al-Ṭūsī, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 460/1067). *Fihrist kutub al-Shī'ah wa uṣūli-him*. Edited by al-Sayyid 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Qum: Maktabat al-muḥaqqiq al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1420/1999.
- _____. *al-Rasā'il al-'ashar*. Edited by Wā'iz Zadeh al-Khurāsānī. Qum: Jamā'at al-mudarrisīn, 1404/1983.
- _____. "Tambīd al-uṣūl" dar 'ilm-e kalāmī-ye Islāmī. Translated with annotations by 'Abd al-Muḥsin Mishkāt al-Dīnī. Tehran: Anjuman-e Islāmī-ye ḥikmat wa falsafah-ye Iran, 1980.
- al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn (d. 672/1273). *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Edited by Muḥammad Jawād al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī. Tehran: Markaz al-nashr, 1987.
- _____. *Talkhīṣ al-muḥaṣṣal*. 2nd edition. Dār al-aḍwā', 1985.
- _____. *Sharḥ jāmi' Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. Translated and vocalized by Aḥmad Amīnī Najafī. Qum: Murtaḍā, 1999 [contains Arabic text with full vocalization, Persian translation and footnotes from three major works: *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Kashf al-murād* by 'Allāmah Ḥillī and *Tawḍīḥ al-murād* by Sayyid Hāshim Ḥusaynī Tahrānī. So far, only the section of imamate has been published].

Tustarī, Muḥammad Taqī. *al-Akbbār al-dakhīlah*. So far, five volumes have been published. Footnotes by 'Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī. Tehran: Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, 1976.

Vaglieri, Veccia. "Ghadīr Khumm." *EI*². 2:993-4.

Yunus, Muhammad Rafii . "The Necessity of Imāmah According to Twelver Shi'ism: With Special Reference to *Tajrīd al-I'tiqād* of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī." M.A. Thesis. Montreal: McGill University, 1976.

al-Zarandī, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad (d. 750/1349). *Naẓm durar al-simṭayn fi fadā'il al-muṣṭafā wa al-murtaḍā wa al-batūl wa al-sibṭayn*. Edited by Muḥammad Hādī al-Amīnī. Tehran: Maktabah naynawā al-ḥādīthah, n.d.

Zedler, Beatrice. "The Ayatollah Khomeini and his Concept of an Islamic Republic." *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 21 (1981): 83-98.

حضرة المرجع الكبير زعيم الحوزة العلمية سماحة آية الله العظمى الشيخ الوحيد الخراساني دام ظله الشريف.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بعد الدعاء لكم بدوام العافية وطول العمر:

نعرض بين يديكم نماذج من مقولات انتشرت حول العقائد والمعارف الشيعية كالامامة وما يتعلق بالصديقة الطاهرة الشهيدة فاطمة الزهراء عليها السلام، نرجو التفضل ببيان نظركم الشريف الذي يعبر عن نظر الطائفة المحقة في هذه الموارد:

١ - في معرض الحديث عن المرأة: «و هذا ما نلاحظه في بعض التجارب التاريخية التي عاشت فيها بعض النساء في ظروف متوازنة من خلال الظروف الملائمة لنشأتها العقلية والثقافية والاجتماعية . فقد استطاعت ان تؤكد موقعها الفاعل و مواقفها الثابتة المرتكزة الى قاعدة الفكر والايان، و هذا ما حدثنا الله عنه في شخصية مريم و امرأة فرعون و ما حدثنا التاريخ عنه في شخصية خديجة الكبرى ام المؤمنين (رض) و فاطمة الزهراء(ع) و السيدة زينب ابنة علي (ع).

ان المواقف التي تمثلت في حياة هؤلاء النسوة العظيمات تؤكد الوعي الكامل المنفتح على التضايح الكبرى التي ملأت حياتهن على مستوى حركة القوة في الوعي والمسؤولية والمواجهة للتحديات المحيطة بهن في الساحة العامة .. و قد لا يملك الانسان ان يفرق بأية ميزة عقلية او ايمانية في التضايح المشتركة بينهن و بين الرجال الذين عاشوا في مرحلتهم.

و اذا كان بعض الناس يتحدث عن بعض الخصوصيات غير العادية في شخصيات هؤلاء النساء فاننا لا نجد هناك خصوصية الا الظروف الطبيعية التي كفلت لهن امكانات النمو الروحي و العقلي و الالتزام العملي بالمستوى الذي تتوازن فيه عناصر الشخصية بشكل طبيعي في مسألة النمو الذاتي. و لا نستطيع اطلاق الحديث المسؤول القائل بوجود عناصر غيبية متميزة تخرجهن عن مستوى المرأة العادي، لان ذلك لا يخضع لاي اثبات قطعي.

٢ - في معرض الحديث عن حديث الغدير: «ان مشكلتنا هي ان حديث الغدير هو من الاحاديث المروية بشكل مكثف من السنة و الشيعة، و لذلك فان الكثير من اخواننا المسلمين السنة يناقشون الدلالة و لا يناقشون السند في الوقت الذي لا بد ان تدرس القضية من خلال ذلك ايضاً».

٣ - و ايضاً في معرض الحديث عن الغدير: «بيمة الغدير مما يذكره السنة و الشيعة لكن دخل بعض الناس على الخط كما يقرأ في كلمة (مولي) من كنت مولاه فعلى مولاه يعني ناصره، فالقضية ربما كانت من خلال طيبة الكلمات مجالاً لان النبي (ص) مثلاً باذهان الناس يصير شك اما لماذا لم يكتب النبي(ص) كتاباً كان النبي ذاك الوقت يريد للتجربة ان تتحرك».

فمع الالتفات الى تأكيد هذا النص على أن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله لم يبلغ قضية خلافة على عليه السلام بيان يقطع الشك ألا يعد هذا انحرافاً عن المذهب؟

مولانا الاجل: ما هو الحكم الشرعي فيمن يطلق هذه المقولات ثم يرجع عنها حينما يواجه باستنكار من الحوزات العلمية و جمهور المؤمنين ثم اذا هدأت الامور عاد الى مقولاته الاولى مدعي انه (لم يكن اعتذاراً و لكن كان مواجهة للحملة الظالمة التي كادت ان تتحول الى فتنة)؟

و ما هو حكم من يؤيد هذه الانكار و يدافع عن قائلها و يدعو اليه و ما هو الموقف الشرعي من هذه المقولات؟ هل يلزم السكوت حذراً من الفتنة ام لا؟

جمع من علماء الحوزة العلمية بقم

دمتم ذخراً للاسلام و المسلمين و كهفناً للمؤمنين

١٤١٨/٥/٢٥

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى شَأْنُهُ وَ تَقَدَّسَتْ أَسْمَاؤُهُ

المقالات المذكورة اضلالٌ من سبيل الله و افسادٌ في العقائد الحقّة

١ - ما ذا يريدون من الصديقة المظلومة الشهيدة ادم يكفروا ما جرى عليها من الاولين حتى تصدق الآخرون

لاغتصاب مقاماتها الخبيثة الثابتة بالضرر الصحيح الصريح وتسام عليها اعلام العلماء وفقهاء الفرقة المحقة . وماذا يحصل لهم من الخط من قدسيتها التي لا يدركها الا الرايخون في العلوم العقلية والنقلية ، سوى انكسار قلوب ائمة الهدى ، وابتهاج نفوس ائمة الضلالة والردى ، والذي يهتون الخطيب قوله تعالى (دريدون ليطفئوا نور السرايا فواهم والله متم نوره ولو كره الكافرون) //

٢ - اما فتح باب البحث في سند حديث الغدير المقطوع الصدور من كبار الجنائيات . ماذا يطلبون من الخدمة لأعداء الفرقة الناجية بايجاد التزلزل في اركان المذهب وتضييع حق سيد الطالبيين كبرت كلمة تخرج من افواههم مفادها ان النبي صلى الله عليه وآله لم يبلغ خلافة علي عليه السلام ببيان قاطع للشك كيف وقد بعثه الله لاجراج الناس من الظلمات الى النور وانقاذ عباده من الجهل والريية خصوصا في مسألة الخلافة والامامة التي بها اكمال الدين واتمام النعمة مع ان القاء الشك في ناقص الغرض من الخلق والبعثة . ماهذه الجسارة على مرتبة النامية بانه التي الامة في الحيرة والاد للبرية ان تتحرك نعم قد تحركت البرية الى ماجرى على الصديقة الشهيد والصديق الشهيد والسبط الاكبر والاقا الدم الذي بكت عليه اطلال العرش وما يرى وما لا يرى وما وقع من الفتن في الملل والامة ، والاشياء تنتهي الى اسبق عللها ، وليس هذا الا اخادض و النبوة واطفاء نور الولاية تكاد السموات يفتقرن منه وتفتق الارض وتخر الجبال هذا .

٣ - واما اثاره الفتن بالقائ تلك الشبهات فهو من اعظم المرمات ولا يكفي التراجع لدى بعض الناس فان التوبة من كل ذنب بحسبه . فان تابوا بما يناسب ذنوبهم والافلا رب في ارض من الضالين المضلين وسنغير بالله ان يكون التراجع كما في السؤال خوفاً ونفاقاً (فلما رأوا بأسنا قالوا آمنا ، واذ قالوا اللو آمنوا قالوا آمنا واذ خلوا الى شياطينهم قالوا انا معكم انما نحن مستترزون ، وكل من ايدهم باي نحو كان فقد اعان على هدم مباني الشريعة الغراء .

٤ - واما السكوت خوفاً من الفتنة فاية فتنة فيا اذا ظهرت البدع في العالم ان يظن العالم علمه ، والعجب انه اذا قيل نبيا ما يبس كرامتنا فلا نرى فتنة فيما يحدث من الاضطراب في الامة فاذا اهبت مقدسات الوجود نتذرع عن السكوت بخوف الفتنة ، منهم بدأت الفتنة واليه تعود .

الشيخ
سيد المرعشي

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

حضرة المرجع الكبير زعيم الحوزة العلمية سماحة آية الله العظمى الشيخ الميرزا جواد التبريزي دام ظله الشريف.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

بعد الدعاء لكم بدوام العافية وطول العمر:

نعرض بين يديكم نماذج من مقولات انتشرت حول العقائد والمعارف الشيعية كالامامة وما يتعلق بالصديقة الطاهرة الشهيدة فاطمة الزهراء عليها السلام، نرجو التفضل ببيان نظركم الشريف الذي يعبر عن نظر الطائفة المحقة في هذه الموارد:

١- في معرض الحديث عن المرأة: وهذا ما نلاحظه في بعض التجارب التاريخية التي عاشت فيها بعض النساء في ظروف متوازنة من خلال الظروف الملائمة لنشاطها العقلية والثقافية والاجتماعية. فقد استطاعت ان تؤكد موقعها الفاعل و مواقعها الثابتة المرئكة الى قاعدة الفكر والايمان، وهذا ما حدثنا الله عنه في شخصية مريم وامرأة فرعون و ماحدثنا التاريخ عنه في شخصية خديجة الكبرى ام المؤمنين (رض) و فاطمة الزهراء (ع) و السيدة زينب ابنة علي (ع).

ان المواقف التي تمثلت في حياة هؤلاء النسوة العظيمات تؤكد الوعي الكامل المنفتح على القضايا الكبرى التي ملأت حياتهن على مستوى حركة القوة في الوعي والمسؤولية والمواجهة للتحديات المحيطة بهن في الساحة العامة.. وقد لا يملك الانسان ان يفرق بأية ميزة عقلية او ايمانية في القضايا المشتركة بينهن وبين الرجال الذين عاشوا في مرحلتهم.

و اذا كان بعض الناس يتحدث عن بعض الخصوصيات غير العادية في شخصيات هؤلاء النساء فاننا لا نجد هناك خصوصية الا الظروف الطبيعية التي كفلت لهن امكانيات النمو الروحي والعقلي والالتزام العملي بالمستوى الذي تتوازن فيه عناصر الشخصية بشكل طبيعي في مسألة النمو الذاتي. ولا نستطيع اطلاق الحديث المسؤول القائل بوجود عناصر غيبية مميزة تخرجهن عن مستوى المرأة العادي، لان ذلك لا يخضع لاي اثبات قطعي.

٢- في معرض الحديث عن حديث الغدير: ان مشكلتنا هي ان (حديث الغدير) هو من الاحاديث المروية بشكل مكثف من السنة والشيعة، ولذلك فان الكثير من اخواننا المسلمين السنة يناقشون الدلالة ولا يناقشون السند في الوقت الذي لا بد ان ندرس القضية من خلال ذلك ايضاً.

٣- و ايضاً في معرض الحديث عن الغدير: بيعة الغدير مما يذكره السنة والشيعة لكن دخل بعض الناس على الخط كما يقرأ في كلمة (مولي) فمن يكتف مولا، فعلى مولا، يعني ناصر، فالقضية ربما كانت من خلال طبيعة الكلمات مجالاً لان النبي (ص) مثلاً باذمان الناس يصير شك اما لماذا لم يكتب النبي (ص) كتاباً كان النبي ذاك الوقت يريد للتجربة ان تتحرك.

فمع الالتفات الى تأكيد هذا النص على أن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله لم يبلغ قضية خلافة علي عليه السلام بيان يقطع الشك ألا يعد هذا انحرافاً عن المذهب؟

مولانا الاجل: ما هو الحكم الشرعي فيمن يطلق هذه المقولات ثم يرجع عنها حينما يواجه باستنكار من الحوزات العلمية و جمهور المؤمنين ثم اذا هدأت الامور عاد الى مقولاته الاولى مدعي انه (لم يكن اعتذاراً و لكن كان مواجهة للحملة الظالمة التي كادت ان تتحول الى فتنة)؟

وما هو حكم من يؤيد هذه الانتكار ويدافع عن قائلها ويدعو اليه و ما هو الموقف الشرعي من هذه المقولات؟ هل يلزم الشكوت حذراً من الفتنة ام لا؟

جمع من علماء الحوزة العلمية يقيم

دمتم ذخيراً للإسلام والمسلمين وكهفياً للمؤمنين

١٤١٨/٥/٢٥

باسمه تعالى

المقالات المذكورة خلاف المسلمات بل ضرورات المذهب الحق وقائلها خارج عن طريقة المذهب الاثني عشري وقد اجبنا في استفتاءات متعددة حول هذه الامور وغيرها من القضايا بما وسع المقام ونقول هنا على الاجمال: ان الصديقة الطاهرة الزهراء عليها السلام حوراء صديقة

على ما هو مقتضى الآيات الكريمة كآية التطهير وآية الباهلة وسورة الدھر وغير ذلك
 وقد صرح عن أئمتنا^{عليهم السلام} أنها صديقة شخصية ميزها الله في خلقها عن سائر النساء لعلمه
 بأنه لولا هذه الكرامة في خلقها أيضاً لامتازت عن سائر النساء كما هو الحال في خلق
 الأئمة الأطهار صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين . وما يقال بخلاف ذلك باطل مناف للآيات
 والأخبار الماثورة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله والأئمة الأطهار عليهم السلام .

وأما قضية الغدير فشهرتها بين الفريقين وكرها من الأمور المسلمة والمروية عندهم بطرق
 متعددة بحيث تصبح من المتواترات إجمالاً منعت إلى يومنا هذا من المناقشة في سندها .
 ودلائلها على نصب مولانا أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام ولياً على المسلمين عامة وإعطائه عذر
 الولاية التي هي عدل ولاية النبي صلى الله عليه وآله من ناصية الزعامة على الرعية بأمر من الله
 تامة على من يجد من نفسه أدنى جرأة على الاعتراف بالحق .

ومن يتكلم أو يتفوه بخلاف ذلك فلا يكون مراده إلا إيهال المؤمنين الضعفاء ،
 ومن يؤيد هذه المقالات ويساهم في نشرها بأي نحو ويعاون قائلها بأي شكل من
 الأشكال يدخل كصاحبها في عنوان من يشري مرضاة أعدائنا بسخط الخالق .
 ولا يخفى أن إلقاء هذه الشبهات والمقالات الباطلة التي أجبنا عنها موجب لانفعال
 المؤمنين والمسلمين عن قضاياهم المصرية في مواجهة أعداء الإسلام كما بدت معالم
 ذلك اليوم .

