A Critique of the Works of Three Orientalists on Imam al-Kazim (a)

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The purpose of this paper is to investigate three works, namely: “Imam al-Kazim” by Etan Kohlberg from the Encyclopedia of Islam, the section on Imam al-Kazim in Shi‘a Denomination by Dwight Donaldson, and Shi‘ism by Heinz Halm. These three works are fairly comprehensive ones revolving around the Imam’s lifetime—from his birth to his martyrdom.

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Abstract

For decades, orientalists have carried out studies on Islam with various motivations. However, western academic and systematic research on Shi‘ism is not older than a century. In recent decades, western Shi‘a studies have increased significantly, but their studies on the Imams are stagnant and are limited to few encyclopedic articles and books on the history of Shi‘ism that discuss the Imams when the occasion

arose.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate three works, namely: “Imam al-Kazim” by Etan Kohlberg from the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, the section on Imam al-Kazim in *Shi‘a Denomination* by Dwight Donaldson, and *Shi‘ism* by Heinz Halm. These three works are fairly comprehensive ones revolving around the Imam’s lifetime—from his birth to his martyrdom.

The issue of Imam al-Kazim’s successor—that is, the disagreement among the Shi‘as over who succeeded the Imam and the formation of various sects, the social and political problems in his time, the Imam’s encounter with the caliphs and the his repeated imprisonment, the investigation of various reports of the Imam’s martyrdom and its consequences, and the investigation of the emergence of the Waqifites after the Imam’s martyrdom – these are among the positive points mentioned in these western studies.

On the other hand, the Imam’s interaction with other sects, his stance on uprisings of the Alawites, his socio-political positions, particularly with the caliphs, and the Shi‘as’ communication with the Imam, especially regarding scientific and cultural issues, are among the topics not addressed by the abovementioned orientalists.

Introduction

Compared to western studies on Shi’ism, their studies on Shi‘a Imams do not have a long record. The oldest materials that specifically and scientifically deal with the Shi‘a Imams can be found either in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* or in Donaldson’s *Shi‘a Denomination*. The early studies on Shi‘ism and the Imams to introduce Shi‘ism and its tenets were done largely on the basis of Sunni sources which are not without inaccuracies in its content.

Of course, in the recent decades, considering the change in the western approach to Shi‘a studies and their reliance on Shi‘a sources, this shortcoming can be seen less frequently. Recently, due to the specificity of these studies, their address of challenging issues, and their new research methods, they have had useful and significant findings about the history of Shi‘a Imams and their roles.

Imam al-Kazim is the seventh Imam of Twelver Shi‘ism. Due to some problems in his lifetime, Shi‘as were faced with a new condition. A new branching in Shi‘ism and the formation of the Ismailiyyah sect (those who believed in Imamate of the eldest son of Imam al-Sadiq, Isma‘ilis) are among the most important social issues.

Orientalists, those who studied various topics related to Islam systematically and from an outsider’s perspective, have also addressed the personality of Imam al-Kazim from various perspectives as well. Considering the position and authority of orientalists in the scientific circles, it is necessary to examine their studies to familiarize ourselves on their views and findings of the Shi‘a Imams, and to critique them

from the Shi‘a thinkers’ perspective if necessary.

This study addresses the western researchers’ studies on Imam al-Kazim and his life. Despite the large bulk of orientalists’ research on Shi ‘ism in recent decades, particularly after the victory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, few works on Shi‘a Imams are available. The orientalists’ works on Shi‘a Imams and their lifetime are limited to articles in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* and some books and monographs on Shi‘ism.

About the 7th Imam, the following can be referred to: The article ‘Imam al-Kazim’ by Etan Kohlberg in *Leiden Encyclopedia of Islam*, second edition; *Shi‘a Denomination* by Donaldson, which deals with the life of the Shi‘a Imams in some chapters, including chapter 14 on Imam al-Kazim; and the article ‘Imam Musa Al-Kazim and the Sufi Hadiths in the Islamic Culture’ by Hamid Algar.

Of course, there are numerous articles on other issues in which Imam al-Kazim was referred to as necessitated by the topic at hand; for example, the articles ‘Haroon-a-Rashid’, ‘Al-Kazimayn’, ‘Husayn ibn ‘Ali Sahib-e Fakhkf’, and ‘Hadi Abbasi (169-170)’. Likewise, some other books on the broad issues of Shi‘a history have a brief discussion on the Imam’s life, for example, the book *Shi‘ism* by Heinz Halm, *An Introduction to Shi‘a Islam* by Mojan Mu’min, and *Shi‘ism throughout History* by Husayn Muhammad Ja‘fari.

Shi‘a Imams in Encyclopedias of Islam

The entries of Shi‘a Imams in *Encyclopedias of Islam* are considered an area of Shi‘a studies in the West. The compilation of small and large encyclopedias of Islam dates to more than 100 years ago. The first English encyclopedia of Islamic information is the *Dictionary of Islam*, compiled by American priest, orientalist, and Islamic researcher, Thomas Patrick Hughes, in India.[2]

Following that, the first steps toward *The Encyclopedia of Islam*[3] were taken in the late 1900s. In recent centuries, the Leiden University in the Netherlands has been a prominent centre of the oriental and Islamic studies. In 1895, in cooperation with the Academies International Union and the Royal Academy of the Netherlands, it launched some plans for the publication of a comprehensive and detailed Encyclopedia of Islam simultaneously in English, French, and German.

Its English version, which was the outcome of Islamic research for more than two centuries, was published between 1913 to 1938 in four volumes. The compilation of its second edition containing numerous revisions started in 1950 under the supervision of Joseph Schacht, Levy Provencal, Kramers and Gabe, and its first collection was published in 1954. The following can be referred to as the newest dictionaries and encyclopedias of Islam in English.[4]

1. The Concise *Encyclopedia of Islam*[5]

2. Islamic Desk Reference[6]

3. A Popular Dictionary of Islam[7]

4. The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World[8]

Among the articles in the above-mentioned encyclopedias, the article 'Imam al-Kazim' in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* directly deals with the seventh Imam's life.

The Personal Life of Imam al-Kazim in the Orientalists' Works

A Concise Introduction to the Imam

The article 'Imam al-Kazim' in *Encyclopedia of Islam* (EL2) which deals with different aspects of the Imam's life, was written by Etan Kohlberg,[9] and studied in a university of Israel and Oxford university. His thesis title in Oxford was the "Attitude of Twelvers Shi'a to the Prophet's companions."[10] Kohlberg's main area of research was the sources, theories and history of Shi'ism, particularly Twelver Shi'ism. He was a professor of Arabic language and literature in Asian-African Institute of Anthropology College of Jerusalem Hebraic University.

'Ibn Tawoos Library and his Life' was his most well-known Shi'a research, and was translated into Farsi. He also wrote 'Aqidah and Jurisprudence in Twelver Shi'ism', and the entries 'Imam Sajjad', 'Imam Baqir', 'Muslim ibn 'Aqil', 'Return', 'Envoy', 'Martyr', 'the Second Martyr', 'Sulayman ibn Surad Khaza'', and 'Amin-ul-Islam Tabarsi' in *Encyclopedia of Islam*.

After referring to the Imam's titles as the First Abul-Hasan, Abu Ibrahim, and Abd-e Salih, the author considered the Imam's exact date of birth as Safar 7th 128 A.H.[11] Of course, he referred other dates of birth, for example, Dhil-Hajjah 127 or 129 A.H. According to him, the Imam's mother was named Hamidah (or Humaidah), the daughter of Sa'id Barbariyyah (or Andulisiyah) Umme Walad. She was bought from a barber slaver, and she was frequently known as "Musaffat," or "Cleansed."

In his book *Shi'a Denomination*, Donaldson[12] introduced the Imam in more detail. Through historical comparison, he considered the birth of Imam al-Kazim to happen amid conflict between the Umayyads and the Abbasids and pointed out that in the reign of Abul-Abbas Saffah,[13] he was only four years old.

Comparing the reign of various Abbasid caliphs with events during the Imam's life, Donaldson also stated that for 20 years Imam al-Kazim was trained by his father, Imam al-Sadiq, who was martyred 10 years before the end of long rule of Mansur.

Then he referred to the Abbasid Caliphs contemporary with the Imam as follows: the final ten years of Mansur's rule, ten years of Mahdi's rule, one year during Hadi's rule, about 12 years of the Haroon-u-Rashid's[14] rule. He also considered the Imam's mother as a barbarian slave-girl named Umme Walad, and considered her like Khayzaran, the influential wife of the Abbasid Mahdi.[15]

Imam al-Kazim's Descendants

According to the existing sources, Kohlberg considered the number of the Imam's children to vary between 33 and 60. He also referred to a narration in which the Imam declared his daughters' marriage forbidden (for some unstated reasons).

Except for Umme Salamah, who married Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad in Egypt, the rest of his daughters did not marry.[16] Quoting from the book Jowharah al-'Ilahi, he said that Imam al-Kazim's descendants, who are known as "Musawi," now constitute 70% of Sadats[17] in Iran.[18]

Imam Musa al-Kazim's Scientific and Cultural Life in Orientalist Works

Orientalists and the Moral and Spiritual Ranks of the Imam

An important issue in the Imam's life is his moral and spiritual ranks, and this was not overlooked by orientalists, particularly Kohlberg. As for his spiritual rank, Kohlberg wrote that the Imam was known for his asceticism and piety. Then referring to the meeting between the Imam and Shaqiq ibn Ibrahim Balkhi[19] in 149 A.H.[20] in Qadisiyyah, he quoted Shaqiq as saying, Imam is a friend (Wali)] of God from among Saints (abdaal).[21]

The author also referred to the Imam's asceticism and extraordinary acts such as his talking in the cradle, knowing the language of birds and animals and all human languages.[22] Referring to the article by Hamid Algar, he addressed the way the Imam treated the famous Sufis contemporary with him such as Ma'ruf Karkhi,[23] and Bushr Haffi (227A.H. / 841 A.D.).[24]

As for the Imam's personality, Donaldson wrote that the Imam was calm and patient and was known as Abu Salih and al-Kazim. Depicting the Imam's inclination to the acts of worship, he narrated a hadith that once at the sunset, the Imam entered Masjid-u-Nabi and prostrated before God, a prostration that lasted from that evening to the next morning.

Likewise, he quoted ibn Khallakan about Imam al-Kazim's generosity as saying that when the Imam was told about an afflicted man, the Imam gave that man 1000 dinars in a bag. The Imam was known to give away 200, 300, or 400 dirhams in bags in Medina. This might have arisen the Abbasid Mahdi's suspicion of him.[25]

Donaldson also referred to the extraordinary acts and virtues of the Imam and his first extraordinary act, among the 21 acts attributed to him, that is, Abdullah's claiming to be an Imam. In this event, on the Imam's order, when firewood was collected and set on fire, the Imam went into the fire and came out intact.

Afterward, he wanted Abdullah to do so if he truly considered himself an Imam. Upon hearing this, Abdullah's face went pale, and he left.[26] He also referred to another extraordinary act of the seventh Imam, in which Imam al-Sadiq told Ya'qub ibn Siraj to say "Salam" to his master Imam al-Kazim; when Ya'qub did so, the Imam told him, "Change the name you chose yesterday for your daughter because it enrages God." Imam al-Sadiq also told him, "Do what Musa told you because it is advisable to do so."[27]

Likewise, he pointed out the Imam's extraordinary acts in healing the sick. Once he saw some children gathering round their mother crying. When he asked for the reason, she said, "The cow we made our living from died." Imam performed a two-Ra'kat prayer and put his hands on the cow and it became alive. The woman cried, "Look! He is Jesus Christ."[28]

Orientalists and the Imam's Scientific Position

Orientalists did not overlook Imam al-Kazim's scientific position which shows its importance in their works. In his article, Kohlberg referred to two instances of the Imam's capability.

1. The Imam's debate with Abu Hanifeh, which ended in Abu Hanifeh's silence [and the Imam's success].

2. The Imam's discussion with Christians, who approached to talk about religious issues and eventually converted to Islam. In the end of his article, Kohlberg referred to the way the Imam interacted with the Ghullat (Extremists) and considered his role as significant in fostering the their ideas.[29] According to him, Mufaddal ibn 'Umar Ja'fi visited the Imam in the Baghdad prison, took care of him, and claimed the Imam called him his second father.[30] Kohlberg also referred to Muhammad ibn Bashir, the founder of Bashiriyyah, who believed in divinity of the Imam and claimed the Imam had not died but disappeared and would return along with Imam al-Mahdi.

In the end, he discussed the Sunni view of the Imam's position. Sunni scholars consider the Imam as a trustworthy hadith narrator, but believe that the Imam narrated only a few hadiths. He pointed out that there is a book entitled Musnad of Imam al-Kazim and written by Abu-Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah Shafe'i Bazzaz.[31]

Of course, the Shi'as attribute many works to the Imam, and Kohlberg referred to some such as "Supplication, Answer to the Legal Questions, and Wasiyyah fi al-'Aql", addressed to Hisham ibn Hakam, etc.[32] When investigating the scientific position of the Imam, these orientalists have not addressed the Imam's debates and his scientific role.

Imam al-Kazim's socio-political life from the orientalists' perspective

According to Kohlberg, there is not much information about the Imam's early life. Citing from a book by Zaidi Nasir Atroosh[33] and quoting Wilfred Madelung, Wibe talked of the Imam's participation in Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah's uprising against the Abbasids in 145 A.H. (762 A.D.)[34] and claimed that this

can be also found in the Islamic sources such as Maqatil a-Talibin.[35]

Donaldson referred to the Imam's encountering Haroon-a-Rashid and depicted the Imam's firmness and awe and how Imam took opportunities to advance the causes of Islam. It is narrated that once both Imam al-Kazim and Haroon were in Masjid-a-Nabi at the Prophet's shrine when Haroon resented the Imam's appropriate response to him. To show his kinship with the Prophet, he said, "Peace be upon you, the Prophet! O' my cousin!" But the Imam said, "Peace be upon you, O my father!" Embarrassed, Haroon-a-Rashid said, "O Abul-Hasan! What an honour you enjoy!"[36]

The orientalists' idea about the Imam's successor

Disagreement on the successor to Imam al-Sadiq and the resulting divergence in Shi'ism was addressed by researchers and orientalists. Influenced by Isma'ili sources, Donaldson believed that Imam al-Sadiq appointed his son, Ismail, as his successor, but his death before the father's demise grieved the Shi'as, and this caused an area of contention about the nature of Imamate.

He also discussed the emergence of two Isma'illiyyah sects and their beliefs. One group denied the death of Isma'il and thought he disappeared and would return, and God would hide him until his reappearance. Another group accepted his death and considered his son [Muhammad ibn Isma'il] as the Imam. Both groups who believe in the outward cessation of Imamate by death of Isma'il or his son are known as Sab'iyyah [those who have seven Imams].[37]

According to him, in the Twelver Shi'ism, it is believed while Imam al-Sadiq introduced his eldest son, Ismail, as his successor, because he found him always drunk, he appointed his fourth child, Musa, as the next Imam.[38] According to ibn Khaldun, the conflict resulting from this measure split Shi'ism deeply and led to the formation of various sects.[39]

In this regard, Kohlberg also believed that Imam al-Sadiq's eldest son, Isma'il, who was appointed as his successor[40] died before the sixth Imam's martyrdom. His second son, 'Abdullah, also died shortly after his father. However, both had some followers which formed Ismailiyyah and Fatahiyyah.[41]

He also mentioned another group called Sumitiyyah (or Samittiyah or Shumitiyyah) who believed in the Imamate of another son of Imam al-Sadiq, Muhammad.[42] He also referred to Twelver Shi'a's beliefs,[43] writing: "When a child, he was introduced as the successor by his holy father,[44] and such Shi'as as Husham ibn Hakam supported his Imamate,[45] but some other Shi'as refused to accept his Imamate for a while.[46]

Kohlberg also included the measure of the Abbasid caliph, Mansur, who upon hearing the news of Imam al-Sadiq's martyrdom sent some spies to Medina to find his real successor and to kill him. He also underlined Imam al-Sadiq's prediction and solution; the sixth Imam introduced five successors (including Mansur himself and Imam Musa al-Kazim), and in this way he foiled Mansur's plot.[47]

The Imam's policies and the caliphs' measures

According to Kohlberg, Imam al-Kazim adopted the policy of silence; like his father, he disseminated Shi'a beliefs and principles among his students, but he was not immune from Abbasid persecution. First, he was arrested on Abbasid Mahdi's orders. Shortly after, because of Mahdi's dream in which Imam Ali rebuked him for the arrest of Imam al-Kazim, the seventh Imam was set free.[48]

Through the comparative, historical study of the available sources and according to a hadith stating that after being taken to Baghdad, the Imam was observed by Musaayib ibn Zuhair Zabbi,[49] Kohlberg stated that the date of the Imam's arrest cannot be between 163 and 166 A.H., that is, the years Musayyib was the governor of Khurasan. However, according to less reliable narrations, Musayyib was appointed as its governor in 166 A.H.[50] Thus, according to Kohlberg, the Imam was imprisoned for a short time.[51]

According to Kohlberg, the next arrest of the Imam occurred after the uprising of Husayn ibn Ali, Sahib-e Fakh, had been suppressed. Although the Imam did not support this uprising, the Abbasid caliph, Hadi, accused Imam al-Kazim of provoking the uprising and plotted to kill him, but the judge Abu-Yusuf Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim dissuaded him from this decision, and shortly after Hadi died.

Referring to Mahj-u-Da'awat by ibn Tawus, Kohlberg stated that the supplication known as "Jowshan"—to give thanks for his release from the prison—was left by the Imam.[52] Correctly, he pointed out that the Imam had stayed in Medina until Haroon came to power, and Haroon[53] imprisoned the Imam for nine years.[54]

Donaldson also referred to Haroon's unkindness to the Imam, stating that during his caliphate, the Imam was unfairly under suspicion. Kohlberg referred to different accounts of why the Imam was treated unkindly and ended up being arrested, including the following:

1. After Haroon came to know the views of Husham ibn Hakam (i.e., the Imam's prominent student), he ordered his men to arrest the Imam because he found these views dangerous.

2. The Imam was the victim of the plot of Abbasid court, particularly Yahya ibn Khalid Barmaki. According to this account, when Haroon put his son, Muhammad (Amin) under the auspices of Ja'far ibn Muhammad Ash'ath[55] and later the governor of Khurasan until 173 A.H. (790 A.D.), Harun's vizier, Yahya ibn Barmaki, feared that Amin would become caliph, Ja'far ibn Muhammad would then rise in rank, and consequently, Barmakis' pre-eminent position would be threatened. Thus, Yahya decided to discredit Ja'far by disclosing his relationship with the Alawids. In so doing, he received help from the Imam's nephew who was also Imam al-Kazim's confidant, that is, Muhammad (or Ali) ibn Isma'il ibn Ja'far, who gave Yahya some information about the monetary network of the Alawids. He gave some reports to Haroon about Ja'far's Shi'a identity, his keeping in touch with the Imam, and even his sending some gifts from all over the world to the Imam.[56]

3. The caliph was informed that people believed in the Imamate of Imam al-Kazim and that he intended to rise against Haroon. Of course, Kohlberg did not refer to the source of such narrations and raised this possibility based on his information. He also mentioned that Haroon took the opportunity of ‘Umrah[57] or Tamatu‘ Hajj[58] and ordered his men to arrest the Imam. According to some sources, the Imam was sent directly to Baghdad. According to some more reliable narrations, first the Imam was sent to Basrah and was watched by its governor, ‘Isa ibn Ja‘far ibn Mansur. He refused to obey Haroon’s order to kill the Imam and sent him to Baghdad. There, the responsibility of watching the Imam was given to Fadl ibn Rabi‘, who was appointed as Hajib in 179 A.H. and treated Imam al-Kazim respectfully. It is narrated that in this period, Haroon released the Imam for a while because of his dream but arrested him again and assigned Fadl ibn Rabi‘ to watch him.

Another orientalist who studied Shi‘ism, Halm, said regarding the political situation of the Imam’s time and the caliphs’ policies that the increasing number of Shi‘as in Iraq who mainly gathered around Imam Husayn’s household worried the Abbasids. With caution, they brought all potential claimants to power to the court and put them under house arrest.

According to some, the first person who faced such fate was Imam Musa ibn Ja‘far.[59] He also pointed out that in 177 A.H. (793 A.D.) Haroon took the Imam to Iraq and started watching him first in Basrah and then in Baghdad.[60]

During his stay in Baghdad, the Imam could keep in contact with some of his followers, including ‘Ali ibn Yaqtin,[61] who had a high official position during the caliphate of Mahdi, Hadi, and Haroon. The Imam wanted him to cooperate with the caliphate and use his influence to help Shi‘as and solve their problems.[62]

Kohlberg stated that ‘Ali ibn Yaqtin acted as the monetary agent of Imam al-Kazim and sent valuable gifts to him.[63]

The Imam’s martyrdom and its consequences

There are different accounts of how Imam al-Kazim was martyred. Without referring to how he was martyred, Halm merely raised the possibility of his being poisoned on Haroon-u-Rashid’s order in 183 A.H. (799 A.D.).[64]

However, with a thorough investigation, Kohlberg referred to various views and concluded that after Haroon had been informed of the Imam’s favourable conditions, he wrote a letter to Fadl, ordering him to kill the Imam.

According to some narrations, Fadl disobeyed Haroon and was whipped 100 times as a result, and the Imam was given to the police head, Sindi ibn Shahak (the grandfather of Kushajam, the poet), and he martyred the Imam by making him eat the poisonous dates.

Another narration attributed the Imam's martyrdom to Fadl. According to the third account, they wrapped a carpet around Imam al-Kazim and trampled on him until he passed away.[65]

According to Kohlberg, Tabari referred to the Imam's martyrdom without explaining it, which implies that he passed away naturally.[66] This is the view of most Sunni writers which received attention from the contemporary researchers.[67] According to Kohlberg, the Imam was martyred on 25 or 26 Rajab 183 A.H. (August or September 799 A.D.).[68]

The Imam was buried in Quraysh Tombs three miles west of Baghdad, which along with Najaf, Karbala, and Samarra, is considered as a sacred place for Shi'as.[69] His shrine was renovated many times throughout the Abbasid dynasty, particularly during the Safavid Era.[70]

The orientalists' doubt about the Imam's knowledge about his martyrdom

According to Kohlberg, what can be found about how Imam al-Kazim was martyred in Shi'a sources, made Imami theologians face theological (kalami) doubts. According to him, "If the Imam had known everything, including when and how he would be killed but had not done anything to prevent it, could he be considered 'the contributor to his death?'"[71]

This way, he intended to challenge the Imam's knowledge in Shi'a theology (kalam) and depict it as vague by referring to concise and unconvincing responses by some Shi'as. Investigating the answer by Shi'a theologians to this doubt, he referred to three responses in the available sources:

1. A response attributed to Imam al-Rida is that Imam al-Kazim was aware of his upcoming demise and thought of the necessary precautions, but in a critical moment, God made him forget it (القى على قلبه النسيان).[72]

2. According to an account, three days in a row, Fadl ibn Yahya Barmaki brought poisonous fruits to the Imam, though he did not touch them. On the fourth day, the Imam said, "O God! You know that if I had eaten them before, I would have contributed to my death." Then he ate the fruits and became sick. They had a doctor visit him, but the Imam refused to see him. At the doctor's insistence, the Imam finally showed him his palm, which had turned green due to poison. The doctor told the Abbasids that the Imam knew he had been poisoned.[73] This implies that the Imam knew the exact date of his martyrdom, and despite this knowledge, he accepted to eat the poisonous fruit. Kohlberg added that Sindi ibn Shahak brought 80 chiefs of Baghdad and made them testify that the Imam had been treated properly. In the end of that visit, the Imam told them, "They had me eat seven (or nine) poisonous dates, I will become sick and pale-faced tomorrow, and I will pass away the day after tomorrow."[74]

3. In another interpretation, the Imam was forced to eat the dates. Referring to some Shi'a accounts, Kohlberg considered Imam al-Kazim's martyrdom as the outcome of the wrong behaviour of his society. Citing Kulayni, he wrote, "God was angry with the Shi'as and told the Imam to choose between his being sacrificed for the protection of the Shi'as and Shi'as' being killed.[75] Likewise, in Mir'at -ul -'Uqul,

‘Allameh Majlisi talked of God’s anger at the Shi‘as for their disobedience and disloyalty to the Imam and considered the Shi‘as’ quitting dissimulation as the reason behind the disclosure of the Imam’s identity and ultimately his arrest.[76] After the Imam’s martyrdom, Sindi (or Haroon) gathered the Hashimite and Talibi representatives and other prominent figures in Baghdad, removed the cover over the Imam’s dead body, and forced them to admit there was no sign of murder or crime. Then his pure body was washed legally, enshrouded and buried in the cemetery of the Arab nobles in Northwest Baghdad (across from showaynizi or Quraysh Tombs) in Bab-u-Tin, which were later known as al-Kazimiyyah.[77] Halm also referred to the burial place of the Imam in the cemetery of the Arab nobles in Northern Baghdad, and the fact that the Shi‘as visit his and his grandson’s holy shrine, al-Kazimayn, now a great holy shrine in Iraq.[78]

Shi‘a division after the Imam’s martyrdom

Another issue raised in the article is the divide created among the Shi‘as after the Imam’s martyrdom. According to Kohlberg, the Imam’s demise led to the split within Shi‘ism; they denied the 7th Imam’s demise, believed he disappeared and would return as Imam al-Mahdi.

They are called “Waqifah” since they considered Imamate to have ended with Imam al-Kazim and argued against the transfer of Imamate to his offspring. Kohlberg pointed out that pejoratively they are known as Mamturah (short for Kilab Mamturah, meaning “cats that became drenched in the rain”).

Investigating Waqifiyyah further, Kohlberg wrote that many Waqifis were Kufi who defended the theory of the 7th Imam’s occultation in specific texts. The youngest Waqifi, Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Sama‘i Sayrafi, died in 263 A.H. (876 A.D.).

Halm also believed that Imam al-Kazim’s martyrdom led to a split within Shi‘ism, and its teachings include some principles later completed in the Twelver Shi‘ism. He regarded the Waqifiyyah as those who believed Imam al-Kazim had not passed away but disappeared and they waited for his reappearance as the Mahdi.

He considered Waqifiyyah as the oldest example of the Seven-Imam Shi‘ism that was integrated into the Twelver Shi‘ism in the late 3rd century A.H. (the 9th century A.D.), and that Twelver Shi‘ism adopted the Waqifi model of the last Imam’s occultation.[79]

Kohlberg did not agree with this analysis and maintained that the Twelver Shi‘a teachings of the minor and major occultations and Mahdism cannot have Waqifi roots.[80] According to him, this divide was possibly due to monetary rather than religious considerations because the 7th Imam had deputies in various areas, and after his martyrdom, some deputies refused to hand the money to Imam al-Rida, so they considered Imam al-Kazim as the last Imam.

Among them are Mansur ibn Yunus, ‘Ali ibn Hamzah Bata’ini (who had 30000 dirhams), Ziyad ibn Marwan al-Qandi (who had 70000 dinars), and ‘Utham ibn ‘Isa Rawasi (who, in addition to having a

huge sum of money, had five or six slaves bought with the Imam's money).[81]

Conclusion

Compared to their Shi'a studies, orientalists conducted few studies on the Shi'a Imams, while most of their works were devoted to the socio-political issues and Shi'a sects. The orientalists' studies on Shi'i Imams should be found in—and are limited to—the entries of "Imams" in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, other issues related to the Imams (e.g., 'Ashura, Mahdism, Najaf, Najaf, Mashhad, etc.), or/and some books on Shi'a history in which on some occasions, the Imams' lives are discussed.

Investigating Imam al-Kazim's life and its consequences, these researchers sought to provide a complete picture of his life. The wide range of these studies and references to the original sources (particularly in Kohlberg's article) are among the positive points of such research, especially the later studies.

As a result of such references and their wide range, some important issues of this historical period received attention; for example, issues such as the Imamate of Imam al-Kazim, which were challenged by some Shi'as after Imam al-Sadiq's martyrdom and which led to the emergence of these sects: Isma'iliyyah, Sumaytiyyah, Fatahiyyah, and Nawusiyyah.

Some of the Imam's virtues and extraordinary acts, the uprising of Husayn ibn Ali—Sahib Fakh, frequent arrests of the Imam and their reasons, 'Ali ibn Yaqtin and the Imam's permission to him to cooperate with the government, investigation of numerous accounts of the Imam's martyrdom in the available sources and its consequences, and the examination of reasons for the emergence of the Waqifiyyah after the Imam's martyrdom.

However, the orientalists have yet to investigate the Imam's personality and events during his Imamate, which lasted the longest. The Imam and the Shi'as faced various trends that did not receive the orientalists' due attention; for example, the consequences of the split within the Shi'a society, the emergence of the Isma'illiyyah sect and the Imam's interaction with this group, the Alawids' uprisings and the Imam's reaction to them, a comprehensive investigation of the Imam's socio-political stances and his interaction with the caliphs and its changes, the Shi'as' communication with the Imam as their guide, the scientific-cultural conditions of that period, and the Imam's role in this respect are all the important issues of the Imam's time, which were either disregarded or depicted imperfectly.

About the Imam's scientific-intellectual life, there are some profound descriptions of him by the previous Imams or the scholars such as "the Knower of all the Scholars' Knowledge" (عالم علم العلماء) by Imam al-Sadiq,[82] and "the most knowledgeable jurist of his time".[83]

Such a fully qualified person gives some comprehensive guidance to his Shi'as which cannot be found in the western orientalists' writings. Likewise, the Imam's leadership style; for example, his permitting some

elite companions, such as ‘Ali ibn Taqtin,84 to cooperate with the government with the aim of supporting needy Shi‘as, and in contrast, prohibiting some other companions from it because their cooperation with the government did not benefit the Shi‘as. These were among his strategies to guide Shi‘as which require more attention.

1. Tarikhe Islam (The History of Islam), Issue 53, Spring 2013, pp. 127–152.
2. In 1885 A.D. (1303 A.H.)
3. Encyclopedia of Islam.
4. Murtada As‘adi, English Encyclopedias of Islam, Cultural Keyhan, June & July 1995, issue no. 127.
5. Another English encyclopedia of Islam in one volume was published in 1989 in London. This work which should not be confused with The Abridged Encyclopedia of Islam published in Leiden which was compiled by a Sunni Western Muslim called Cyril Glasse with Saudi Arabia’s support. It is not a specialised encyclopedia, only to familiarise all non–Muslims with some facts in Islam, so it is not without its mistakes.
6. “Islamic Desk Reference” by van Donzel, one of the editors of the 2nd edition of Leiden Encyclopedias of Islam in one volume. He summarised the entries, articles, and materials of both the first and the second editions of Leiden Encyclopedias of Islam in order to meet the urgent needs of the novice foreign students and reviewers. This work was published in 1994 A.D. by the “Braille Leiden Publications”. The Arayeh publication published it in offset form in Iran, too.
7. “A Popular Dictionary of Islam” by Ian Richard Netton was published in 1992 A.D. in London by Curzon. It includes a little information on Islamic concepts, people and topics, for example, the Quranic chapters, the prominent Islamic figures in the history, the people in the Quran, the most important events in the history of Islam, etc. Each topic has been presented in many lines and extensively so that all people could use it.
8. “The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World” edited by John Esposito is a very important work in four folio volumes in two columns. It was published in 1995 A.D. by Oxford University. The Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 A.D. which was a turning point in the Islamic studies and research on Islamic countries proved to the westerners how little information and understanding they have about Islam and Islamic societies. The main goal of the compilers of this encyclopedia was to define the position and significance of Islam in politics, culture, and economy of the Islamic countries.
9. Born in 1943 AD
10. The Attitude of the Imami–Shi‘as to the Companions of the Prophet, thesis, 1972 A.D.
11. November 8th 754 AD
12. The first serious and somehow thorough attempt to introduce Shi‘ism was made in 1933 A.D. Dwight M. Donaldson was a British researcher who lived in Mashshad, Iran for 16 years. His most important Shi‘a studies are “Shi‘ism or the History of Islam in Iran and Iraq” (London, 1933 A.D.), “The Idea of Imamate from Shi‘a and Salman Farsi’s Perspectives”, and “Prayer Niche in Imam Rida’s Holy Shrine in Mashhad”. According to Dr. Nasr, his book, “Shi‘a Denomination” is still a reference in Shi‘a studies. According to Donaldson, his reason for his Shi‘a research was the word by Edward Brown in his book “The History of the Persian Literature in the Modern Era”, p.418), he complained about the lack or shortage of Western sources on Shi‘ism. Thus, Donaldson started to provide information on Shi‘ism for those who have no knowledge of it.
13. The first Abbasid caliph
14. Donaldson, Shi‘a Denomination, translated by Dr. Abbas Ahmad–wand, in press edition, chapter 14, Imam Al–Kazim, p. 190.
15. Kulayni, Osul al–Kafi, the 4th ed., Tehran: Dar–ul–Kutub al–Islamiyyah, 1365 solar, vol. 1, p.476, “And his mother was Umme Wald called Hamidah.”
16. Ya‘qubi, Ya‘qubi History, translated by Ibrahim Ayati, the 6th ed., Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications, 1371 solar, vol. 2, p.415.
17. Or those who are ‘Sayyid’, a title given to the descendants of Prophet Muhammad through his grandsons.
18. E. Kohlberg, EI2, vol.7, p. 648; Amir Tahiri, The spirit of Allah, London, 1985, pp. 26–70.
19. Demise: 194 A.H./809 A.D.
20. 766 A.D.

21. Tabari, Dala'il-ul-Ai'mmah, Qum: Dar-ul-Dhakha'ir lil-Matbu'at, 1383 A.H., p.155.

22. See Mufid, al-Irshad fi Ma'rafah Hujaj-ullah 'Ala-'Ibad, Qum, The World Congress of Shaikh Mufid Millennium, 1413 A.H., vol. 2, p. 289, the section Taraf min al-Akhbar 'an Mananqib Abi Ja'far.

23. Demise 200 A.H. / 815 A.D.

24. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, P647: H. Algar, Imam Musa al-Al-Kazim and Sufi Tradition in Islamic Culture, I xiv [1990 A.D.], 1-14.

25. Donaldson, op. cit., p.194.

26. ibid., p.192.

27. ibid., p.192.

28. ibid., p.192.

29. This part of Kohlberg's article deals with Ghullat (the extremists)' relations with the 7th Imam. Of course, he did not investigate them but vaguely addressed the role of these relations in strengthening the extremists' thoughts, and this can be criticised. Considering the Imams' encountering the extremists and rejecting their extreme thoughts, it cannot be accepted that the extremists' relations with the 7th Imam could positively contribute to the extremist thoughts. No doubt, the extremist ideas were rejected by the Imams and Shi'as.

30. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Kazim, EL2, p.647.

31. Demise: 354 A.H. / 965 A.H.

32. Kulayni, op. cit., vol.1, pp.13-20; ibn Shu'bah Harrani, Tuhaf-ul-Oqul, Qum: the Society of the Seminary Instructors, 1404 A.H., pp. 283-297.

33. Demise: 304 A.H. / 917 A.D.

34. W. Madelung. Der Imam al-Qasim ibn Ibrahim, Berlin 1965 A.D., p.160.

35. Ab-ul-Faraj Isfahany, Maqatil-a-Talibin, researched by Sayyid Ahmad Saqar, Beirut: Dar-ul-Ma'rafah, no date. Investigating Maqatil-a-Talibin, the author of this article could not find anything clearly indicating this. Perhaps Madelung interpreted the Imam's conversation with Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah as follows: Considering Imam Sadiq's explicit opposition to this uprising, it is improbable that Imam Al-Kazim took part in it.

36. Donaldson, op. cit., p.196.

37. ibid., p.191.

38. The early Imami sources indicate that Imam Al-Kazim's was appointed as Imam since his young age, not after Imam Sadiq had found out Isma'il used to drink wine, but there is no authority for this in Imami sources (Kulayni, op. cit., vol.1, p. 246; Shaikh Mufid, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 219; Tabarsi, A'lam-ul-Wara bi A'lam-ul-Huda, Qum: Dar-ul-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, no date, p.299). In another narration in A'lam-ul-Wara, it is written that:

بهذا الاسناد.. عن المفضل بن عمر قال كنا عند ابي عبد الله فدخل ابو ابراهيم و هو غلام فقال لي ابو عبد الله استوص به و ضع أمره عند من تثق به من اصحابك.

Also, according to another narration,

عن صفوان الجمال عن ابي عبد الله قال: قال له منصورين بن حازم بأبي انت و أمي ان الأنفس يغدى عليها و يراح فاذا كان ذلك فمن قال أبو عبد الله اذا كان ذلك فهو صاحبكم و ضرب على منكب أبي الحسن الأيمن و كان يومئذ خماسيا و عبد الله بن جعفر جالس معنا

39. ibn Khaldun, An Introduction to ibn Khaldun, Qum, Ayatullah Mar'ashi Najafi Library, 1404 A.H., part 2, p.355.

40. Influenced by Isma'ili sources, the view was advanced. According to Imami Shi'a beliefs, after Isma'il's demise, Imam Sadiq asked everybody to attest to Imamate of Imam Al-Kazim so that there would be no doubt about Imamate. He also talked of Imamate of Imam Al-Kazim on various occasions. See Ikhtiyar Ma'rafah a-Rijal, no place of publication, no date, p.355; Kulayni, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 246; Shaikh Mufid, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 219.

41. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, p. 545.

42. ibid., EL2, p. 645.

43. In this period, perhaps the followers of Imam Sadiq were not still referred to as "Ithna-'Ashari". The reason behind this title was that this group believed in the Imams which were introduced by the previous ones and which continued up to Imam Mahdi.

44. For more information, see Shaikh Tusi, op. cit..; Kulayni, op. cit.; Shaikh Mufid, op. cit., vol. 2 p.219; Tabari, op. cit., p. 299; ibn Sabbagh Maliki, al-Fosiul-ul-Muhimmah fi Ma'rafah-al-A'mmah, no place and no date of publication, vol.2,

pp.933-934.

45. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, p. 645.

46. The author refers to Zurarah's measure to send his son to Medina to get news on Imam Sadiq's martyrdom and his successor; this, of course, did not mean not accepting or doubting Imam Al-Kazim. Rather, the aim of this trip was to know the conditions better and to make sure about the selection of the true Imam.

47. Kulayni, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 310

هذا كتاب محمد بن سليمان يخبرنا أن جعفر بن محمد قد مات فإنا لله و إنا إليه راجعون ثلاثا و أين مثل جعفر ثم قال لي اكتب فكتبت صدر الكتاب ثم قال اكتب إن كان أوصى الى رجل بعينه فقدمه و اضرب عنقه فرجع الجواب إليه أنه أوصى إلى خمسة أحدهم أبو جعفر المنصور و محمد بن سليمان و عبد الله و موسى ابني جعفر و حميدة فقال المنصور ليس إلي قتل هؤلاء سبيل.

48. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, p.645.

49. Demise: 175 A.H./ 791 A.D.

50. See Khatib al-Baghdadi, History of Baghdad, no place and date of publication, vol. 13, p. 137.

51. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, p.645.

52. ibid., p.646.

53. 170-193 A. H./ 786-809 A.D.

54. ibid., p.646.

55. The head of Khatam bureau from 170 to 171 A.H. (787-788 A.D.)

56. ibid., p.646.

57. Rajab 179 A.H./ September-October 795 A.D. or Ramadan 179 A.H./ November-December 795 A.D.

58. 179 A.H. / 796 A.D.

59. Heinz Halm, Shi'ism, translated by Mohammad Taghi Akbari, Qum: Adyan, 1385 solar, p. 69.

60. ibid.

61. Demise: 182 A.H. / 798 A.D.

62. ibid.

63. W. Madelung, A Treatise of the Sharif al-Murtada on the Legality of Working for Government, in BSOAS, xlii [1980 A.D.],pp. 17-19.

64. Heinz Halm, op. cit., p. 70.

65. E. Kohlberg, Musa al-Al-Kazim, EL2, p.645.

66. Tabari, The History of the Prophets and the Kings, vol. 3, p. 649.

67. F. 'Umar in the article titled "Harun-a-Rashid", A. Clot, Haroun al- Rachid et le temps de Mille et Une Unite, Paris EL 1986 A.D., 2 , 91.

68. Other possible dates, according to him, are 181 A.H. (797 A.D.), Rajab 182 A.H. (798 A.D.), Rajab A.H. (July or August 800 A.D.), 186 A.H. (804 A.D.) or 188 A.H. (804 A.D.)

69. EL2, vo. 1, pp 854- 856: It is connected with the west side of Baghdad, about three miles away. At the present day Al-Kazimayn is one of the four greatest sanctuaries of the Shi'a.

70. A. Duri, EL2, vol.1, pp.894-908.

71. ibid., p.647.

72. Saffar Qummi, Basa'ir-u-Darajat fi Fada'il Ale Muhammad. Qum: Ayatollah Mar'ashi NajafiLibrary, 1404 A.H., p.438, section

حيث ما بعثه إليه يحيى بن خالد برطب وريحان مسمومين علم به قال نعم قلت فاكله وهو يعلم فيكون معينا على نفسه فقال لا يعلم قبل ذلك ليتقدم فيما يحتاج إليه فإذا جاء الوقت القى الله على قلبه النسيان ليقضى فيه الحكم.

Majlisi, Bihar-ul-Anwar, Beirut: al-Wafa, 1404 A.H., vol. 27, p 285.

73. Sheikh Saduq, Oyun Akhbar-a-Rida, no place and date of publication, vol. 1, pp. 86-88.

74. Kulayni, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 259; Shaikh Saduq, op. cit., p. 79.

75. Kulayni, op. cit., p. 260,

عن أبي الحسن موسى (ع) قال إن الله عز و جل غضب على الشيعة فخيرني نفسي او هم فوقيتهم و الله بنفسي

76. Allمmah Majlisi, Mir'at-ul -Oqul, no place and date of publication, vol. 3, p. 126.

77. Kulayni, op. cit., vol.1, p. 476, فحبسه عند السندي بن شاهك فتوفي في حبسه و دفن ببغداد في مقبرة قريش

Shaikh Mufid, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 240.

نودي هذا موسى بن جعفر قد مات فانظروا اليه فجعل الناس يفرجون في وجهه و هو ميت و قد كان قوم زعموا في ايام موسى انه القائم المنتظر و جعلوا حبسه هو الغيبة المذكورة للقائم فأمى يحيى بن خالد أن ينادي عليه عند موته هذا موسى بن جعفر الذي تزعم الرافضة

Le Strange, Baghdad, pp. 160–5; A. Duri, Baghdad, EL2, vol. 1, pp.894–908.

78. Heinz Halm, op. cit., p. 70.

79. ibid.

80. The issue of Mahdism had been first raised in the first century about Muhammad al–Hanafiyyah. Thus, it cannot be accepted that Ithna ‘Ashari Shi‘as adopted Mahdism from Waqifiyyah.

81. For more information, see Shaikh Tusi, op. cit., pp. 499–500; Shaikh Saduq, op. cit., vol.1, p. 92.

82. Majlisi, Bihar–ul–Anwar, op. cit., vol. 48, p. 24.

83. Shaikh Mufid, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 225.

84. Majlisi, op. cit., vol. 28, p. 136.

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