

Part 3– The Sunni Point of View

18. Sunni views on the caliphate

The majority of Sunnis today are the Ash'arites. They, as well as the Mu'tazilites, believe that the institution of *Imamate*/Caliphate is necessary, and it is incumbent (*wajib*) on men to appoint a caliph. The Mu'tazilites hold that it is incumbent according to reason; the Ash'arites believe it is incumbent according to tradition.

An-Nasaf; writes in his *al-Aqai'id*, "The Muslims cannot do without an Imam who shall occupy himself with the enforcing of their decisions, and in implementing their *hudud* (penal code) and guarding their frontiers, and equipping their armies, and receiving their alms, and putting down robberies and thieving and highwayman, and maintaining the Friday and *'id* prayers, and removing quarrels that fall between people, and receiving evidence bearing on legal claims, and marrying minors who have no guardians and dividing booty."¹

"The Sunnites want an earthly ruler.... while the Shi'ites look for one who can establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and bring an end to all the evils of the world."²

Accordingly, the Sunnis recognize four principles for appointing a caliph.

a) *Ijma'*; that is, consensus of men of power and position on a certain point. The agreement of all the followers of the Prophet is not necessary, nor is it essential to secure the consent of all the persons of power and position in the *ummah*.

b) Nomination by the previous caliph.

c) *Shura*; that is, selection by a committee.

d) Military power; that is, if anyone acquires power by military force he will become a caliph.

The author of *Sharhu 'l-maqasid* has explained that when an Imam dies and a person possessing the

requisite qualifications claims that office (without the oath of allegiance–*bay'ah*–having been taken for him and without his having been nominated to succeed), his claim to caliphate will be recognized provided his power subdues the people; and apparently the same will be the case when the new caliph happens to be ignorant or immoral. And similarly when a caliph has thus established himself by superior force but is afterwards subdued by another person, he will be deposed and the conqueror will be recognized as Imam or caliph.[3](#)

19. Qualifications of a Caliph

The Sunnis consider ten conditions necessary for a caliph:–

1. that he be Muslim;
2. that he be of age, (i.e., of puberty);
3. that he be male
4. that he be of sound mind;
5. that he be courageous;
6. that he be free, not a slave;
7. that he be accessible and not be concealed or hidden;
8. that he be able to conduct battles and beware of warlike tactics;
9. that he be just–*'adil*;
10. that he be able to judge and pass verdicts on points of laws and religion, that is, he be a *mujtahid*. [4](#)

But the last two conditions are in theory only. As quoted in the previous chapter, even an ignorant and immoral person can become a caliph. Therefore, the conditions for 'justice' and 'religious knowledge' are without base.

They hold that infallibility (*'ismah*) is not necessary for caliphate. The words of Abu Bakr which he spoke from the pulpit before the Companions of the Prophet, are cited in support of that view: "O people! " he said, "I have been made ruler over you although I am no better than you; so, if I perform my duties well, help me; and if I go wrong, you should set me right. You should know that Satan comes to me now and then. So if I am angry, keep aloof from me."[5](#)

at-Taftazani says in *Sharh Aqai'di 'n-Nasafi* "An Imam is not to be deposed from *Imamate* on account of immorality or tyranny."[6](#)

20. Abu Bakr's rise to power

All the above-mentioned principles are derived, not from an *ayah* or *hadith*, but from the events and happenings after the death of the Holy Prophet.

According to the Sunnis, the first four Caliphs are called *al-khulafai'u'r-rashidun* (the rightly-guided Caliphs). Now let us examine how *al khilaifatu 'r-rashidah* came into being .

Immediately after the death of the Prophet the Muslims of Medina known as *ansar* (Helpers) gathered in the *saqifah* (covered porch) of Banu Sa'idah. According to the author of *Ghiyathu 'l lugha't*, it was a secret location where the Arabs used to gather for their evil activities. ⁷Here Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah, who was then ailing, was led to a stately chair and made to sit upon it, wrapped in a blanket, so that he might be elected as the Caliph.

Sa'd then delivered a speech in which he recounted the virtues of the *ansar* and told them to take over the caliphate before anyone else could do so. The *ansar* agreed and said that they wanted him to be the Caliph. But then among themselves, they began to ask: "What reply should we give to the *muhajirun* (emigrants from Mecca) of the Quraysh if they oppose this move and put forth their own claim?

A group said: "We shall tell them, let us have one leader from among you and one from us." Sa'd said: "This is the first weakness you have shown."

Someone informed 'Umar ibn al-Khattab of this gathering saying: "If at all you desire to acquire the dignity of rulership you should reach the *saqifah* before it is too late and difficult for you to change what is being decided there." On receiving this news, 'Umar, along with Abu Bakr, rushed to the *saqifah*. Abu 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah also accompanied them.

at-Tabari, Ibnu 'l-Athir, Ibn Qutaybah⁸ and others proceed with their narrations stating that having reached the *saqifah*, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubaydah had hardly taken their seats when Thabit ibn Qays stood up and began enumerating the virtues of the *ansar* and suggested that the office of the caliphate should be offered to someone from the *ansar*.

'Umar is reported to have said later on: "When the speaker of the *ansar* finished his speech, I made an attempt to speak as already I had thought over some important points, but Abu Bakr beckoned me to keep quiet. Therefore, I remained silent. Abu Bakr had more competence and knowledge than myself. He then said the same things I had thought of and expressed them even better."

According to *Rawdatu 's-safa'*, Abu Bakr addressed the assembly at the *saqifah* thus: "Assembly of the *ansar*! We acknowledge your good qualities and virtues. We have also not forgotten your struggles and endeavours for promoting the cause of Islam. But the honour and respect the Quraysh have among the Arabs is not enjoyed by any other tribe, and the Arabs will not submit to anyone other than the Quraysh."

In *as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, it is added:

"However, it is a fact that we the *muhajirun* were the first to accept the Islamic creed. The Prophet of Islam was from our tribe. We are the relatives of the Apostle ... and therefore we are the people who are entitled to the caliphate... It will be advisable to have the leadership among us and for you to take the ministry. We will not act unless we consult with you." [10](#)

Heated arguments started, during which 'Umar cried: "By Allah, I will kill him who Opposes us now." al-Hubab ibn al-Mundhir ibn Zayd, an *ansari* from the Khazraj tribe, challenged him saying: "By Allah, we will not allow anyone to rule over us as a caliph. One leader must come from you and one from us." Abu Bakr said: 'No, this cannot be; it is our right to be the rulers and yours to be our ministers." al-Hubab said: "O *ansar*! Do not submit yourselves to what these people say. Be firm . . . By Allah, if anyone dares to oppose me now, I will cut his nose with my sword." 'Umar remarked: "By Allah, duality is not advisable in the caliphate. There cannot be two kings in one regime, and the Arabs will not agree to your leadership, because the Apostle was not from your tribe."

At-Tabari and Ibnu 'l-Athir both state that there was a fairly prolonged exchange of words between al-Hubab and 'Umar on this matter. 'Umar cursed al-Hubab: "May Allah kill you." al-Hubab retorted: "May Allah kill you."

'Umar then crossed over and stood at the head of Said ibn 'Ubadah and said to him: "We want to break every limb of yours." Infuriated by this threat, Said got up and caught 'Umar's beard. 'Umar said: "If you pull out even one hair, you will see that all will not be well with you." Then Abu Bakr pleaded with 'Umar to be calm and civil. 'Umar turned his face from Sa'd who was saying: "By Allah, had I strength enough just to stand, you would have heard the lions roar in every corner of Medina and hidden yourselves in holes. By Allah, we would have made you join again with those people among whom you were only a follower and not a leader."

Ibn Qutaybah says that when Bashir ibn Sa'd, the chief of the tribe of Aws, saw that the *ansar* were uniting behind Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah, the chief of the Khazraj, he was overcome with envy and stood up supporting the claim of the Qurayshite *muhajirun*.

In the midst of this melee, 'Umar said to Abu Bakr: "Hold out your hand so that I may give my *bay'ah* (i.e., pledge of loyalty)." Abu Bakr said: "No, you give me your hand so that I may give my *bay'ah*, because you are stronger than me and more suitable to the caliphate."

'Umar took the hand of Abu Bakr and pledged allegiance to him saying: "My strength is not of any value when compared to your merits and seniority. And if it is of any value then my strength added to yours will successfully manage the caliphate."

Bashir ibn Sa'd followed suit. Khazrajites cried to him that he was doing it out of envy for Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah. Then the tribe of Aws talked amongst themselves that if Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah was made caliph that

day, the tribe of Khazraj would always feel themselves superior to the Aws, and no one from the Aws would ever achieve that dignity. Therefore, they all pledged their allegiance to Abu Bakr.

Someone from the Khazraj tribe took out his sword but was overcome by the others.

Amidst all this unseemly wrangling, 'Ali and his friends attended to the washing of the body of the Holy Prophet and the proper observances regarding burial. By the time these were over, Abu Bakr had achieved a *fait accompli*.

Ibn-Qutaybah writes: "When Abu Bakr had taken the caliphate, 'Ali was dragged to Abu Bakr as he repeatedly declared, 'I am the slave of Allah and the brother of the Messenger of Allah.' Then 'Ali was commanded to take the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr. 'Ali said: 'I have more rights to the caliphate than anyone of you. I will not pledge obedience to you. As a matter of fact, you should give the pledge of obedience to me. You called the *ansar* to give their bay'ah on the ground that you had blood relations with the Messenger of Allah.

You are usurping the caliphate from us, the members of his house. Did you not reason with the *ansar* that you have better rights to the caliphate than they because the Apostle was of your kinship, and they handed over the government to you and accepted your leadership? Therefore, the very reason put forth by you before the *ansar* is now forwarded by me. Our relations with the Apostle in life as well as in death are much closer than those of anyone of you. If you are faithful to your argument, you should do justice; otherwise you know that you have knowingly moved towards tyranny.'

"Umar said, 'Unless you give bay'ah, you will not be released.' 'Ali cried, Milk out as much as you can for the udders are in your hand. Make it as strong as possible today, for he is going to hand it over to you tomorrow. 'Umar, I will not yield to your commands: I shall not pledge loyalty to him.' Ultimately Abu Bakr said, 'O 'Ali! If you do not desire to give your bay'ah, I am not going to force you for the same.' "

21. Short review

Several aspects of the above-mentioned events deserve more attention:

1. It was the tradition of the Arabs that once a person was declared, even by a small group, to be the chief of the tribe, others did not like to oppose him, and willy-nilly followed suit. This tradition was in the mind of 'Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, when he told 'Ali: "Give me your hand so that I may pledge allegiance to you . . . because once this thing is taken over no one will ask him to relinquish it."

And it was this tradition which prompted Sa'd to exhort the *ansar* to 'take over the caliphate before anyone else could do so.'

And it was because of this tradition that 'Umar was told to reach *saqifah* 'before it was too late and difficult for him to change what was being decided there.' And it was because of this custom that once

some people accepted Abu Bakr as Caliph, the majority of the Muslims in Medina followed suit.

2. 'Ali was well-aware of this custom. Then why did he refuse to extend his hand to accept the bay'ah of 'Abbas, telling him, "Who else, other than I, can call for such pledge of allegiance?"¹¹

It was because 'Ali knew that the *khalifah* (caliphate) of the Holy Prophet was not the chieftainship of the tribe. It was not based on the declaration of allegiance by the public. It was a responsibility given by Allah, not by the people. And as he had already been publicly appointed by Allah through the Prophet to the *Imamate*, there was no need for him to rush to the public to seek their allegiance. He did not want the people to think that his *Imamate* was based on the bay'ah of men; if the people came to him on the basis of the declaration of Ghadir Khumm, well and good; if they did not, it was their loss, not his.

3. Now we turn to the events of *saqifah*: During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, the Mosque of the Prophet was the centre of all Islamic activities. It was here that decisions of war and peace were made, deputations were received, sermons were delivered and cases were decided. And when the news spread of the death of the Holy Prophet, the Muslims assembled in that very mosque.

Then why did the partisans of Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah decide to go three miles outside Medina to meet in saqifah which was not a place of good repute? Was it not because they wanted to usurp the Caliphate without the knowledge of other people and then present Sa'd as the accepted Caliph?

Keeping in view the declaration of Ghadir Khumm and the tribal custom of Arabia there can be no other explanation.

4. When 'Umar and Abu Bakr came to know of that gathering, they were in the mosque. A majority of the Muslim were at the mosque. Why did they not inform any other person about that gathering? Why did they, together with Abu 'Ubaydah, slip out secretly? Was it because 'Ali and Banu Hashim were present in the mosque and in the house of the Prophet, and 'Umar and Abu Bakr did not want them to know of the plot? Was it because they were afraid that if 'Ali came to know of that meeting of *saqifah*, and if by a remote chance he decided to go there himself, no one else would have had a chance to succeed?

5. When Abu Bakr was extolling the virtues of *muhajirun* as being from the tribe of the Holy Prophet, did he not know that there were other people with much more stronger right to that claim because they were members of the very family of the Holy Prophet and his own flesh and blood?

It was this aspect of the pretence that prompted 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) to comment: "They argued by the strength of the tree (tribe) and then destroyed the fruit (i.e., the family of the Prophet)." ¹²

Looking dispassionately at this event, we are unable to call it an 'election', because the voters (all the Muslims scattered throughout Arabia, or, at least, all the Muslims of Medina) did not even know that there was to be an election, let alone when or where it was to be held. Aside from the voters, even prospective candidates were unaware of what was happening at *saqifah*. Again we are reminded of the

words of al-Imam 'A1i in connection with the two points mentioned above:

If you claim to have secured authority over the Muslims' affairs by consultation,

How did it happen when those to be consulted were absent!

And if you have scored over your opponents by (the Prophet's) kinship,

Then someone else has greater right on the Prophet and is nearer to him [13](#).

And we cannot call it even a 'selection' because a majority of the prominent Companions of the Holy Prophet had no knowledge of these events. 'Ali, 'Abbas, 'Uthman, Talhah, azZubayr, Sa'd ibn Ab; Waqqas, Salman al-Farisi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Miqdad, 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf—none of them were consulted or even informed.

The only argument which can be offered for this caliphate is this: "Whatever the legal position of the events of *saqifah*, as Abu Bakr succeeded (because of tribal custom) in taking the reins of power in his hands, he was a 'constitutional' Caliph."

In simple language, Abu Bakr became a constitutional Caliph because he succeeded in his bid for power. Thus, the Muslims who have been taught to glorify this event are inadvertently taught that the only thing which counts is the 'power'. Once you are secure in the seat of power, everything is all right. You will become the 'constitutional' head of state.

In the end, I should quote a comment of 'Umar himself, who was the author of this caliphate. He said in a lecture during his caliphate:

I have been informed that someone said: "When 'Umar dies, I will pledge allegiance to so-and-so." Well no one should be misled like this, thinking that although the allegiance of Abu Bakr was by surprise, it became all right. Of course, it was by surprise, but Allah saved us from its evils. Now if anyone wishes to copy it I will cut his throat. [14](#)

22. Nomination of 'Umar

The majority of Sunnis believe that what happened at *saqifah* was a manifestation of the "democratic" spirit of Islam. In view of that belief it was reasonable to expect the 'democratic election' (whatever it's meaning in the context of *saqifah*) to continue as the basis of Islamic caliphate. But this was not to be.

Abu Bakr was indebted to 'Umar for establishing his caliphate and he knew that if the masses were given freedom of choice, 'Umar had no chance. (He was known as "rude and of harsh nature.") Therefore, he decided to nominate his own successor—'Umar.

at-Tabari writes: "Abu Bakr called 'Uthman —when the former was dying—and told him to write an

appointment order, and dictated to him: 'In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. This is the order of 'Abdullah ibn Abi Quhafah (i.e., Abu Bakr) to the Muslims. Whereas...' Then he fell unconscious. 'Uthman added the words: 'I appoint 'Umar ibn al-Khattab as my successor among you.'

"Then Abu Bakr regained his consciousness and told 'Uthman to read the order to him. 'Uthman read it; Abu Bakr said, Allahu Akbar', and was pleased and commented, 'I think you were afraid that people would disagree amongst themselves if I died in that state.' 'Uthman replied, 'Yes.' Abu Bakr said: ' May Allah reward you on behalf of Islam and the Muslims.'¹⁵ Thus, the appointment letter was completed and Abu Bakr ordered it to be read before the Muslims.

Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid al-Mu'tazili writes that when Abu Bakr regained his consciousness and the scribe read what he had written and Abu Bakr heard the name of 'Umar, he asked him, "How did you write this?" The scribe said, "You could not pass him over." Abu Bakr replied, "You are right."¹⁶

Shortly afterwards Abu Bakr died:

'Umar gained the caliphate by this appointment. Here one is reminded of a tragedy which occurred three or five days before the death of the Holy Prophet.

In the *Sahih* of Muslim there is a tradition narrated by Ibn 'Abbas that: "Three days before the Prophet's death 'Umar ibn al-Khattab and other Companions were present at his side. The Apostle said, 'Now let me write something for you by way of a will so that you are not mislead after me.' 'Umar said, 'The Apostle is talking in delirium; the Book of Allah is sufficient for us.' 'Umar's statement caused a furor among those present there. Some were saying that the Apostle's command should be obeyed so that he might write whatever he desired for their betterment others sided with 'Umar. When the tension and uproar increased the Apostle said, 'Go away from me. '"¹⁷

A few Qur'anic injunctions should be mentioned here:

Muslims should not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet . . . lest your deeds become null while you perceive not (49:2).

The Holy Prophet's words were "revelation" from Allah:

Nor does he speak out of (his) desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed (53: 3-4).

And Muslims were expected to follow his command without any 'ifs' and 'buts':

Whatever the Apostle gives you, take it; and from whatever he forbids you, keep back. (59 :7)

And when such an Apostle, five days before his death wished to write a directive to save Muslims from going astray, he was accused of 'talking in delirium'.

When Abu Bakr who had no such Divine protection from error, began dictation of the appointment letter

in such critical condition that he fell unconscious before naming his successor, 'Umar did not say that he was talking in delirium!

No one can be sure of what it was the Holy Prophet wanted to write. But the phrase he used gives us an idea. On several occasions the Holy Prophet had declared:

O People! Verily, I am leaving behind among you Two Precious Things, the Book of Allah and My Descendants who are my family members. So long as you keep hold of them sincerely, you will never go astray after me.

When he used the same phrase five days before his death (".. Let me write something for you by way of a will so that you are not misled after me"), it was easy enough to understand that the Holy Prophet was going to write what he had been telling them all along about the Qur'an and his *Ahlu 'l-bayt* (as).

Perhaps 'Umar guessed as much; as is apparent from his claim: "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us." He wanted to make it known to the Prophet that he would not follow 'the Two Precious Things '. One was enough for him.

And he himself admitted it in a talk with 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, in which he, inter alia said: "And surely he (the Prophet) intended during his illness to declare his ('Ali's) name, so I prevented it."[18](#)

Perhaps the word "delirium" would have served his purpose even if the Prophet had written the directive. 'Umar and his partisans would have claimed that as it was written "in delirium" it had no validity.

23. Ash-Sura: The committee

After ruling for about ten years, 'Umar was fatally wounded by a Zoroastrian slave, Firuz.

'Umar was very much indebted to 'Uthman (because of the appointment letter) but did not wish to openly nominate him as his successor; nor did he allow the Muslims to exercise their free will after him. He ingeniously invented a third system.

He said, "Verily the Apostle of Allah died and he was pleased with these six people from the Quraysh: 'Ali, 'Uthman, Talhah, az-Zubayr, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas and 'Abdu r-Rahman ibn 'Awf. And I have decided to make it (the selection of caliph) a matter of consultation among them, so that they may select one from among themselves."

They were called when he was nearing death. When he looked at them, he asked, "so, every one of you wants to become caliph after me?" No one answered. He repeated the question. Then az-Zubayr said, "And what is there to disqualify us? You got it (the caliphate) and managed it; and we are not inferior to you in the Quraysh either in precedence or in relation (to the Holy Prophet)."

'Umar asked, "Should not I tell you about yourselves?"

Az-Zubayr said, "Tell us, because even if we ask you not to tell, you will not listen. Then 'Umar began enumerating the bad character points of az-Zubayr, Talhah, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and 'Abdu 'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf. Then he faced 'Ali and said, "By Allah you deserved it had it not been that you are of humorous nature. However, by Allah, if you people made him your ruler, he would surely lead you towards clear truth and on the enlightened path."

Then he looked towards 'Uthman and said, "Take it from me. It is as though I am seeing that the Quraysh have put this necklace (caliphate) around your neck because of your love; then you have put the *Banu Umayyah* and *Banu Abi Mu'ayt* ('Uthman's tribe) on the shoulders of the people (as rulers) and have given them exclusively the booty (of the Muslims); thereupon a group from the wolves of Arab have come to you and have slaughtered you in your bed.

"By Allah if the Quraysh give the caliphate to you, you will surely give exclusive rights to the *Banu Umayyah*; and if you do so, the Muslims will surely kill you." Then he caught the forehead of 'Uthman and said: "So if it happens, remember my words; because it is bound to happen."

Then 'Umar called Abu Talhah al-Ansari and told him that after his ('Umar's) burial, he was to collect fifty people from the *ansar*, armed with swords, and gather the six above-mentioned candidate-voters in a house to select one from among themselves as the caliph. If five agree and one disagrees, he should be beheaded; if four agree and two disagree, those two should be beheaded; if there is a division of three and three, the choice of the group of 'Abdu 'r Rahman ibn 'Awf should prevail and if the other three do not agree to it they should be beheaded. And if three days pass and they are unable to reach a decision, all of them should be beheaded and the Muslims should be left free to select their caliph." [19](#)

The Shi'ite author Qutbu 'd-Din ar-Rawandi narrates that when 'Umar decreed that the group of 'Abdu 'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf would prevail, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas told 'Ali, "Again this is lost to us. This man wants 'Uthman to be the caliph." 'Ali replied, "I also know this; still I will sit with them in the *shura*', because 'Umar by this arrangement has, at least publicly, accepted that I deserve the caliphate, while before he was asserting that *nubuwwah* (prophethood) and imamah could not be joined in one family. Therefore, I will participate in the shura to show the people the contradiction of his actions and his words." [20](#)

Why were Ibn 'Abbas and 'Ali sure that 'Umar wanted 'Uthman to be the caliph? It was because of the constitution of the *shura* and its terms of reference.

'Abdu 'r-Rahman was married to 'Uthman's sister; and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas and 'Abdu'r Rahman were cousins.

Seeing the hold which family ties had in Arabia, it was unthinkable that Sa'd would oppose 'Abdu 'r-Rahman or that 'Abdu 'r-Rahman would ignore 'Uthman. So three votes were safely in the custody of 'Uthman, including the deciding vote of 'Abdu'r-Rahman.

Talhah (ibn 'Ubaydillah) was from the clan of Abu Bakr, and since the day of *saqifah* the *Banu Hashim*

and *Banu Taym* felt nothing but enmity towards each other. On a personal level, 'Ali had killed his uncle; 'Umayr ibn 'Uthman, his brother Malik ibn 'Ubaydillah and his nephew 'Uthman ibn Malik in the battle of Badr.^{[21](#)}

It was impossible for him to support 'Ali. az-Zubayr was the son of Safiyyah, 'Ali's aunt, and after saqifah, he had taken out his sword to fight those who had entered the house of 'Ali to take him to Abu Bakr. And it was reasonable to expect him to favour 'Ali. But on the other hand, he could be tempted to stand for the caliphate himself.

Thus, the most 'Ali could hope for was that az-Zubayr was in his favour. Still four would have gone against him and he would have lost. Even if Talhah had favoured 'Ali, he could not be caliph because in case of equal division, the opinion of 'Abdu'r-Rahman would have been upheld.^{[22](#)}

After this study of the terms of reference, what happened in the *shura* is of academic interest only. Talhah withdrew in favour of 'Uthman; prompting az-Zubayr to withdraw in favour of 'Ali(as), and Sa'd in favour of 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf.

On the third day, 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf withdrew his name and told 'Ali that he would make him caliph if; 'Ali pledged to follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Holy Prophet and the system of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. 'Abdu'r-Rahman knew very well what his reply would be. 'Ali (as) said, "I follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Holy Prophet and my own beliefs."

Then 'Abdu'r-Rahman put the same conditions to 'Uthman, who readily accepted. Thus, 'Abdu'r-Rahman declared 'Uthman to be the caliph.

'Ali (as) told 'Abdu'r-Rahman: "By Allah, you did not do it but with the same hope which he ('Umar) had from his friend." (He meant that 'Abdu'r-Rahman had made 'Uthman caliph hoping that 'Uthman would nominate him as his successor.)

Then 'Ali said, "May Allah create enmity between you two." After a few years 'Abdu'r Rahman and 'Uthman grew to hate each others; they did not talk to each other till 'Abdu'r Rahman died.

'Uthman, the third Caliph, was killed by the Muslims who were not happy with his nepotism. The circumstances did not provide him the opportunity to choose his own successor. Muslims were, for the first time, really free to select or elect a caliph of their choice; they flocked to the door of 'Ali (as) .

But during the twenty-five years which had passed since the death of the Holy Prophet, the nature and outlook of the Muslims had changed to such an extent that many prominent people found 'Ali's administration (which was based on absolute justice and equality, just like the government of the Holy Prophet) unbearable; they could not think of themselves as being treated equal to non-Arab Muslims. So first Talhah, az-Zubayr and 'A'ishah revolted; then Mu'awiyah stood against 'Ali (as).

After the martyrdom of 'Ali (as), al-Imam Hasan wanted to continue the war with Mu'awiyah. But most of

his officers were, meanwhile, bribed by Mu'awiyah; and many were the commanders who, when sent ahead to intercept Mu'awiyah, changed sides and went over to the enemy. In this situation, al-Imam Hasan (as) had to accept the offer of Mu'awiyah to conclude a treaty.

After this treaty, the Sunnis claimed that military power is a valid way of acquiring constitutional caliphate.

Thus, the four 'constitutional' ways of caliphate came into being.

25. General review

In the realm of politics, usually the constitution of a country is prepared beforehand. And when time comes to elect a government or enact legislation, every function is carried out according to the provisions of the constitution. Whatever conforms with it, is held valid and legal; whatever is contrary to it, is rejected as invalid and illegal.

Since, according to the Sunni point of view, it was the duty of the *ummah* to appoint a caliph, it was necessary for Allah and His Prophet to provide them with a constitution (with details of the procedure for election of such a caliph). And if that was not done, then the Muslims themselves should have approved the constitutional measures in advance before proceeding to elect a caliph.

But strangely enough this was not done. And now we find a unique 'unsettled constitution' in which actions do not follow a constitution because there is none; rather the constitution follows the circumstances.

The best argument put forward by the Sunnis to support their claim is that the Muslims of the first era considered it their duty to appoint a caliph, and that they regarded it so important that they neglected to attend the funeral of the Holy Prophet and went to *saqifah* of Banu Sa'idah to settle the question of the caliphate. From that event they concluded that the appointment of a caliph was the duty of the *ummah*.

But they fail to understand that it is the validity of that very so-called 'election' which is challenged by the Shi'ahs.

The Shi'ahs claims that that event was illegal; the Sunnis claim that it was legal and correct. How can the Sunnis put their claim as their argument and proof?

To put their claim as proof is like saying: "This action of mine is legal because I have done it." Which court of justice would uphold such an argument?

26. The practical side

Leaving aside the academic side of these methods, let us see what effects they had on the Muslim

leadership and Muslim mentality.

Within thirty years after the death of the Holy Prophet every conceivable way of acquiring power was used and canonized: election, selection, nomination and military power. The result, is that today every Muslim ruler aspires to occupy the seat of the *khilafah* and "spiritual leadership" of the Muslims; and it is this basic defect of the Muslims' outlook which has always been, and is today the underlying cause of political instability in the Muslim world. Every Muslim ruler who, as a Muslim, has been taught that "military supremacy" is a constitutional way to *khilafah*, tries to weaken other Muslim rulers so that he himself may emerge as the most supreme among the Muslim rulers. In this way, this "constitution" has directly contributed to the weakness of the Muslims in the world.

Apart from that, let us see once again how 'all-encompassing' these methods proved immediately after they were invented. This four-sided boundary of caliphate is so unsafe that anyone may enter into it, irrespective of his knowledge or character. The first caliph after Mu'awiyah was his son, Yazid, who was 'nominated' by Mu'awiyah and had undisputed "military power".

Muslims had given their *bay'ah* during the lifetime of Mu'awiyah; thus, there was *ijma'* also. So he was a "constitutional caliph". But what were his beliefs and character? Yazid was a man who bluntly refused to believe in the Holy Prophet. He frankly stated his beliefs in his poem quoted previously that: "Banu Hashim had staged a play to obtain the kingdom; actually there was neither any news (from God) nor any revelation."[23](#)

Neither did he believe in the Day of Judgment: "O my beloved! Do not believe in meeting me after death, because what they have told you about our being raised after death for judgment is only a myth which makes the heart forget the pleasures of this real world."[24](#)

After assuming the caliphate, he openly made fun of Islamic prayers; and showed his disrespect for religion by putting the robes of religious scholars on dogs and monkeys. Gambling and playing with bears were his favourite pastimes. He spent all his time drinking (wine), regardless of place or time and without any hesitation. He had no respect for any woman, even those of the prohibited degrees such as step-mother, sister, aunt and daughter. They were just like any other woman in his eyes.

He sent his army to Medina. That holy city of the Prophet was freely looted. Three hundred girls, apart from other women, were criminally assaulted by his soldiers. Three hundred *qurra'* (reciters) of the Qur'an and seven hundred Companions of the Prophet were brutally murdered.

The Holy Mosque of the Prophet remained closed for many days; the army of Yazid used it as their stable. Dogs made it their shelter and the pulpit of the Prophet was defiled.

Finally, the Commander of the army compelled the people of Medina to submit before Yazid by giving their *bay'ah* in these words: "We are the slaves of Yazid; it is up to him whether he gives us back our freedom or sells us in the slaves' market." Those who wanted to swear allegiance on the condition that

Yazid should follow the instruction of the Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet were put to death.^{[25](#)} It may not be out of place to mention that the Prophet once said: "May Allah curse him who frightens the people of Medina!"

Then the army, on the order of Yazid, proceeded to Mecca. That holiest city of Allah was besieged. They could not enter the city, so they used *manjaniq* (catapult: an ancient military device used to throw heavy stones towards distant targets). With this, they threw stones and flaming torches towards the Ka'bah. The *kiswah* (canopy of the Ka'bah) was burnt and a portion of that holiest of buildings was damaged.^{[26](#)}

27. Al-Walid and Harun Ar-Rashid

But this was not an exception; it sadly proved to be the general rule. al-Walid ibn Yazid ibn 'Abdi 'l-Malik was another caliph from the Banu Umayyah. He was a drunkard. One night he was drinking with one of his concubines, till they heard the adhan (call for prayer) of the dawn prayer. He swore that the concubine would lead in the prayer. She wore the robe of the caliph and led in the prayer in the same condition of drunkenness.^{[27](#)}

One day he molested his teenage daughter in the presence of her servant woman. She said that (it was not Islam) it was the religion of the Majus. al-Walid recited a couplet: "A man who cares for the (tongues of) people, dies in sorrow; the daring man gets all the pleasures."^{[28](#)}

Harun ar Rashid, the famous Caliph of *One Thousand and One Nights* who is thought as one of the greatest caliphs, wanted to sleep with one of his late father's concubines. The woman rightly pointed out that this would be incest since she was in a position like his mother. Harun ar-Rashid called al-Qadi Abu Yusuf and told him to help him find a way to satisfy his lust. The Qadi said: "She is just a slave woman.

Should you accept whatever she says? No.

Do not accept her words as true. "

So the Caliph satisfied his desire.

Ibn Mubarak comments: "I do not know who among these three was more surprising: the Caliph who put his hand into the blood and property of the Muslims and did not respect his step-mother; or the slave woman who refused to grant the desire of the Caliph; or the Qadi who allowed the Caliph to dishonour his father and sleep with that concubine who was his step-mother."^{[29](#)}

28. Effects on the beliefs of the justice of God and 'ismah of the

prophets

It has been explained that the Sunni beliefs regarding "constitutional caliphate" weakened the Muslims politically and compelled them to obey anyone who succeeded in his bid for power irrespective of his qualifications or character.

As though it was not enough, it compelled them to change their total religious outlook and beliefs.

First of all, an overwhelming majority of the caliphs were devoid of any sense of religious propriety or piety. To justify the caliphate of such people, they claimed that even the prophets used to commit sins. Thus, the belief in the *'ismah* (sinlessness) of the prophets was changed.[30](#)

As there were perhaps hundreds of people more knowledgeable, more pious and more qualified for the caliphate than the caliph on the throne, they were compelled to say that there was nothing wrong with giving preference to an inferior person over a superior and more qualified one.

When it was pointed out by the Shi'ahs that it was 'evil' according to reason to give preference to an inferior person when a superior person was available, the Sunnis declared that nothing was good or evil in itself, whatever Allah orders becomes good; whatever He forbids, becomes evil.[31](#)

As for 'reason', they denied that it exists anywhere in the religion. It is not possible to go into further detail to show how the belief in the Sunnis' 'constitutional caliphate' affected the whole fabric of Islamic theology, but the following short explanation may suffice for the time being. It is clear that to protect the caliphs, not only the prophets were deprived of their *'ismah*, but even Allah was deprived of His 'Justice'. From this vantage point, we may easily understand the full significance of the verse revealed at Ghadir Khumm:

O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; (i.e., the Caliphate of 'Ali – a.s.) and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message (at all); and Allah will protect you from the people ... (5:67).

The purity of Islamic beliefs and deeds depended upon the Caliphate of 'Ali (as); if that one message was not delivered, then it would be as though no message were delivered at all. The safety of the whole religion depended upon the Caliphate of 'Ali after the Holy Prophet.

29. Is Shi'ism Undemocratic?

Our opponents look at the succession of the early caliphs and Imams and then claim that Shi'ism is undemocratic. All the Twelve Imams were of one family while the first four Caliphs were of different clans. They conclude that the Sunni school of thought is democratic in principle, which is supposed to be the best system of governance. Shi'ism, in their opinion, is based on hereditary rule and therefore not a good system.

Firstly, no system of government is good or bad of itself; it is as good or bad as the person who holds the reins of the government in his hands. Accordingly, the Shi'ite belief that an Imam is *ma'sum*, free from every shortcoming and defect and superior in virtue, means that his rule would be the most perfect and just. On one side is the uncompromising justice of al-Imam 'Ali (as), the first Imam, during his short term of *Imamate*; on the other, the accepted *hadith* of the Prophet about the last Imam, al-Mahdi that "he will fill the earth with justice and equity as it will be full of oppression and injustice."[32](#) Our premise is not merely an abstraction.

Secondly, we should bear in mind that all the Sunni caliphs from Abu Bakr to the last 'Abbasid caliph al-Musta'sim Billah (killed by Hulagu Khan in 656/1258) were from the Quraysh. Does it not mean that one family had ruled over all Muslims from eastern China to Spain for six and a half centuries?

Thirdly, the Sunni system of the caliphate, as already mentioned, was never based on democracy. The first Caliph was thrust upon the Muslims of Medina by a handful of the Companions; the second was nominated by the first; the third was selected nominally by five people, but actually by one. Mu'awiyah took the caliphate by military overthrow. Before him it was, at best, oligarchy; after him it became monarchy.

So much for the democracy of the constitutional principles utilized. What of the performance of those early governments from the point of view of the equality which democracy implies?

'Umar made a decision that a non-Arab cannot inherit from an Arab unless that heir was born in Arabia.[33](#) Again, the Sunni law going back to early times, for the most part, does not allow a non-Arab man to marry an Arab woman, nor is a non-Qurayshite or non-Hashimite man allowed to marry a Qurayshite or Hashimite woman, respectively. According to the Shafi'ite law, a slave, even a freed one, may not marry a free woman.[34](#) This is in spite of the well-known declaration of the Prophet that: "There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for a white man over a black, nor for a black over a white, except by piety. People are from Adam and Adam was from dust."[35](#)

Also, it is in spite of the precedents the Prophet established when he married his cousin to Zayd ibn al-Harithah, a freed slave, and gave the sister of 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn 'Awf (a Qurayshite) in marriage to Bilal, a freed Ethiopian slave.[36](#)

The Shi'ite *shari'ah* clearly states: "It is allowed to marry a free woman to a slave, an Arab woman to a non-Arab, a Hashimite woman to a non-Hashimite and vice versa. Likewise, it is allowed to marry women of learned or wealthy families to men of little learning or wealth or of undignified professions."[37](#)

In the matter of distribution of war-booty, the Prophet had established a system of equality; it was to be distributed equally to all who had participated in a particular battle. Abu Bakr continued that system, but 'Umar in 15 A.H., just four years after the Prophet's death, changed the system. He fixed annual stipends for various people, clans and tribes: 'Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, was allotted 12,000 or 25,000 dmars

per year; 'A'ishah, 12,000; other wives of the Prophet, 10,000 each; the participants in the battle of Badr, 5,000 each; those who joined between Badr and Hdaybiyyah, 4,000 each; those who joined after Hdaybiyyah and before Qadisiyyah, 3,000 each. The amount gradually decreased to two dinars per year. [38](#)

This system corrupted the Muslim community to such an extent that wealth became their sole aim in life and the only benefit of their religion. Their outlook became materialistic and, as mentioned earlier, they could not tolerate the system of equal distribution which 'Ali reinstated in the first speech he gave after taking over the caliphate[39](#).

'Ali is quoted to have said: Well, any man from the *muhajirun* and the *ansar*, from the Companions of the Prophet, who thinks that he is superior to others because of his companionship (let him remember that) the shining superiority is tomorrow before Allah, and its reward and wages are with Allah. (He should not expect its reward in this world.) Any man who answered the call of Allah and His Prophet, and accepted the truth of our religion and entered into it, and faced towards our qiblah, is entitled to all the rights of Islam and bound by its limits. You are the servants of Allah; and all property is the property of Allah; it will be divided among you equally; there is no preference in it for one against the other.

Those who during the twenty years preceding 'Ali's caliphate had grown used to the unfair distribution, advised and requested 'Ali to compromise; and when he proved unrelenting on matters of Islamic principle, they conspired against him.

After the victory of the Umayyads this inequality between Muslims was carried further. Even if someone accepted Islam, he or she was not accorded the rights of the Muslims. In some way their condition was worse than that of their compatriot non-Muslims. The latter were obliged to pay only *jizyah*[40](#), but the Muslims had to pay that and the *zakat* (the tax paid by the Muslims). During the Umayyad period (except for two and a half years during 'Umar ibn 'Abdi'l-'Aziz's reign), *jizyah* was levied on all non Arabs including the Muslims. [41](#)

It is not difficult to imagine how little this policy helped the cause of Islam. For centuries entire countries whose cities and capitals were "Islamic", refused to convert. Even the Berbers (who responded after initial resistance to the Arab invasion and served so brilliantly in Spain and on into France), as a whole were not converted until the establishment of the first Shi'ite kingdom in al-Maghrib. When Idris ibn 'Abdillah, a great –grandson of al Imam Hasan and the founder of the Idrisid dynasty (789 985 A.D.), marched against them, most were non-Muslims. This was the result of the ill-treatment in earlier times. We hear that when Yazid ibn 'Abdi'l Malik occupied the Umayyad throne and assigned Yazid ibn Abi Muslim Dinar as Governor of al-Maghrib, the latter re-levied *jizyah* on those who had become Muslims and ordered them back to the villages where they had lived before their conversion.[42](#) The Idrisid change of policy and the extension of full Islamic rights to all the Muslims brought the conversion of the Berbers.

This exaltation of Arabism is seen to be even more deeply interwoven in the decision of those early rulers that if a subject in a conquered country accepted Islam, he could not be accepted as a Muslim or accorded his Islamic rights unless he attached himself as a client to some Arab tribe. Such clients were called *mawali*. Even then they were objects of ridicule and unequal treatment by their aristocratic patrons and at the same time continued to be exploited by the growing bureaucracy.

By restricting the right of rule to the twelve infallible Imams. Allah cut at the roots of strife, dissension, chaos and false electioneering, as well as social and racial inequality.

30. A Dynastic rule?

Some say that the Shi'ite school holds that the Holy Prophet wanted to establish a dynastic monarchy for his family (in which he obviously failed) .

They imply that as the Holy Prophet was far above such selfish motives, the Shi'ite school must be wrong. But these very people say that the Holy Prophet said: "The Imams will be from the Quraysh." Will they say that this *hadith* means that the Holy Prophet wanted to establish a kingdom for his tribe? Will they say that the Holy Prophet said these words because of "selfish motives"?

It was explained above that Abu Bakr silenced the *ansar* of Medina by saying that as the Holy Prophet was from the Quraysh, the Arabs would not accept any non-Qurayshite as caliph. This argument silenced the *ansar*.

By the same argument, if a member of the family of the Holy Prophet (like 'Ali) were made caliph, all would have obeyed him and there would have been no strife or difficulty. This aspect of the appointment of 'Ali (as), has been recognized also by some non-Muslim writers. Mr. Sedillot has written:

"Had the principle of hereditary succession (in favour of 'Ali-a.s.) been recognized at the outset, it would have prevented the rise of those disastrous pretensions which engulfed Islam in the blood of Muslims.... The husband of Fatimah united in his person the right of succession as the lawful heir of the Prophet, as well as the right of election. "[43](#)

The fact is that such objectors have completely missed the point. The Shi'ahs has never claimed that "inheritance" has anything to do with the *Imamate*. As explained earlier, an Imam must be *ma'sum*, superior to all the *ummah* in virtue and *mansur min Allah* (appointed by Allah).

But it was one of the bounties of Allah, bestowed on Prophet Ibrahim and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon them and their progeny) that, in reality and practice, all the Imams who followed them came from their own family; that all those who had necessary qualifications for the *Imamate* were of their progeny.

[1.](#) at-Taftazani: Sharh 'Aqa'id'i'n-Nasafi, p.185.

[2.](#) Miller,W.M.: tr. of al-Babu 'l-hadi 'ashar, notes,

[3.](#) at-Taftazani: Sharhu 'l-maqasidi' t-talibi'n, (vol. 2, p. 272). See also al-Hafiz 'Ali' Muhammad and Amiru 'd-Din: Fulku 'n-

najat fi 'l-imamah wa 's-salat, vol. 1 p. 203.

4. at-Taftazani, op. cit.

5. as-Suyuti, Tarikhu 'l-Khulafa', p.71.

6. at-Taftazani: op. cit.

7. Ghiyathu 'd-Din: Ghiyathu 'l-lughat, p. 228.

8. at-Tabari: at-Tarikh, vol.4, p.1820; Ibnu'l-Athir: al-Kamil, ed. C.J.Tornberg, Leiden,1897, vol.2, pp. 325ff; Ibn Qutaybah: al-Imamah wa's-siyasah, Cairo, 387/1967, vol. 1, pp. 18ff.

9. Mir Khwand: Rawdatu 's-safa', vol 2, p. 221

10. al-Halabi: as-Sirah, vol. 3, p. 357.

11. Ibn Qutaybah: al-imamah wa 's-siyasah, vol. 1, p. 4; al-Mawardi: al-Ahkamu 's-sultaniyyah, p. 7.

12. ar -Radi (ed): Nah ju 'l -balaghah, (Subhi as.Salih's edition), Beirut, p. 98.

13. Ibid., Saying no.190, [pp.502-3] . The words of 'Ali have been quoted by ash-Sharif ar-Radi under Saying no. 190 which runs as follows: "How strange? Could the caliphate be through the (Prophet's) companionship but not through (his) companionship plus (his) kinship?" It is surprising to note that Subhi as-Salih's edition and Muhammad 'Abduh's edition (Beirut,1973) have omitted the wordings "but not through (his) companionship!" For a complete version of this saying, see Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid's Sharh (Cairo,1959),vol. 18, p.416.

14. al-Bukhari: as-Sahih, ("Kitabu 'l-Muhakibin"), Cairo, (n.d.), vol.8, p.210; at-Tabari: at-Tarikh, vol.4, p.1821.

15. at-Tabari: at-Tarikh, pp. 2138-9

16. Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid: Sharh., vol. 1, pp.163-5.

17. Muslim: as-Sahih, ("Kitabu 'l-Wasiyyah", Babu 't-tarki 'lwasiyyah), vol. 5, pp.75-6; al-Bukhari: as-Sahih, (Cairo, 1958), vol. 1, ("Kitabu 'l-Ilm") pp.38-9; vol.4, p.85; vol.6, pp.11-2; vol.7, ("Kitabu 't-Tib"), pp.155-6; vol. 9, ("Kitabu 'l' tisam bi 'l - Kitab wa 's-Sunnah"), p. 137. It is interesting to note that where Bukhari gives remark of the Prophet speaking in delirium, he omits the name of the speaker; and where he paraphrases that remark in more polite language, he mentions the name of the speaker - 'Umar - clearly. Ibn Sa'd: at-Tabaqat, vol. 2, pp.242, 324f, 336, 368; Ahmad: al-Musnad, vol. I, pp .232,239, 324f, 336,355

18. Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid: Sharh, vol. 12, p. 21, (quoting from Tari'kh Baghdad of al-Khatib al-Baghdad;).

19. Ibid., vol. I, pp.185-8; see also Ibn Qutaybah: al-Imamah wa 's-siyasah, vol. 1, pp. 23-7; and at-Tabari:at-Tarikh,(Egypt,n.d.),vol.5,pp.33-41.

20. Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid: Sharh, p.189

21. ash-Shaykh al-Mufid: al-Irshad, (with Persian tr. Of Sh. Muhammad Baqir Sa'idi Khurasani), p.65. [See also Eng . tr. of I. K.A. Howard, p .47 .]

22. This analysis is attributed to 'Ali (as), himself by at-Tabari in at-Tarikh, p.35; (see note 19, above). In that report, the dialogue is said to be between 'Ali (as) and his uncle 'Abbas.

23. See note 9 of Part One.

24. Sibt ibn al-Jawzi: Tadhkirah, p. 291

25. as-Suyuti: Tanrikhu 'l-khulafa', p. 209, [see also Eng. tr. Major,H.S.Jarrett, p.213]; Abu'l-Fida': at-Tarikh, vol.I, p.192; Sibt ibn al-Jawzi: Tadhkirah, p. 288; Mir Khwand: Rawdatu 's-safa', vol. 3, p. 66; Ibn Hajar al-Haytami: as-Sawa'iqu 'l-muhriqah, p. 79.

26. Ibid.

27. ad-Diyar Bakri: Tarikhu 'l-khamis, (vol. 2, p. 3 20), as quoted by Nawwab Ahmad Husayn Khan of Payanwan in his Tari'kh Ahmadi, p. 328 [Ibn Shakir: Fawatu 'l-wafayat, vol.4, pp.255-9]

28. as-Suyuti: Tari'khu 'l-khulafa', p. 291.

29. Ibid.

30. See the author's Prophethood, pp.9-18.

31. See the author's Justice of God, pp.1-2

32. Abu Dawud: as-Sunan, vol.4,pp.106-9;Ahmad: al-Musnad, vol.I, pp.377,430; vol.3, p.28; al-Hakim: al-Mustadrak, vol. 4, pp. 557, 865

33. Malik:al-Muwatta',vol.2,p.60.

- [34.](#) al-Jaziri: al-Fiqh 'ala 'l-madhahibi 'l-arba'ah, vol. 4, p.60.
- [35.](#) as-Suyuti: ad-Durru'l-manthur, vol.6, p.98.
- [36.](#) Ibnu 'l-Qayyim: Zadu 'l-ma'ad, vol. 4, p. 22
- [37.](#) al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli: Shara'i'u 'l-Islam, ("Kitabu 'n-Nikah"), vol. 5, p. 300; al-Hakim: Minhaju 's.-salihin, ("Kitabu 'n-Nikah"), vol. 2, p . 279
- [38.](#) at-Tabari: at-Tarikh, (Annales I), vol.5, pp.2411 –4; Nicholson,R.A.: A Literary History of theArabs
- [39.](#) Ibn Abi 'l-Hadid: Sharh, vol.7, pp.35–7; see also al-Imam 'Ali's Sermon no. 126 in Nahju 'l-balaghah
- [40.](#) Jizyah: poll-tax or tilthes, payable by non-Muslims in the realm of Islam. (pub)
- [41.](#) at-Tabari: at-Tarikh, (Annales II), vol. 3, pp. 1354, 1367
- [42.](#) al-Amin: Islamic Shi'ite Encyclopedia, vo1. 1, pp. 38 41
- [43.](#) Sedillot, L.P.E.A., Histoire des Arabes, (Arabic tr.), pp.126–7.]

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