Shiism and Its Types during the Early Centuries

Part 1

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Shi'ism and Its Types during the Early Centuries Part 1

By Rasul Ja'fariyan

This is the first part, entitled "Gunneh-ha-ye mukhtalif-a Tashayyu'wa `awamil-e gustarish-e an," from the author's study on the history of Shi`ism in Iran until the Safavid era, *Ta'rikh-a Tashayyu' dar iran, az aghaz ta qarn-e dahum-e hijri* (Qum: Intisharat-a Ansariyan, 1375/ [1996])

Preface

The literal meaning of *shi 'ah is* follower and supporter, and only when accompanied by a qualifier that does it signify the followers of a certain person. During the days when the word was used only in its common literal sense it was usually used along with the names of Ali (`a), 'Uthman or Mu'awiyah. Hence there would be the *"shi'ah* of Ali," the *"shi'ah* of `Uthman" and the *"shi`ah* of Mu'awiyah."

After some time the word *shi'ah* came to be used specifically as a term for the followers of Imam Ali (`a) and during this period the article *"al'* in the word *"al-shi`ah"* clearly denoted the followers of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). It is difficult to determine the exact time since when the term *al-shi'ah* acquired currency as a name for the followers of Imam Ali (*'a*).

1Perhaps the letter written, on the occasion martyrdom of Imam Hasan (*'a*), by the Shi'is of Kufah under the lead of Sulayman ibn Surad as a message of condolence to Imam Husayn (*'a*) *is* the earliest documented instance of its use as a term. Ya'qubi has cited the text of this letter. In it the Sh'is of Kufah wrote:

ما أعظم ما أصيب به هذه الأمة عامة و أنت و هذه الشيعة خاصة

"How great is [the calamity] which has struck this ummah in general ('ammah), you, and the Shi'ah in particular (khassah)!"2

Here, one may as well note the use of the word *'ammah* as a kind of term used in opposition to *khassah* as the term for the Shi'ah.

Another point which is important for understanding the development of the term *shi'ah is* to know whom it excluded. In other words, who were those who stood in contradistinction to the Shi`ah of Ali. There is indisputable evidence provided by older and recent research that there existed two distinct factions during the era of the Messenger of God (S). The first consisted of the Quraysh who were not on good terms with the Banu Hashim since before the advent of Islam. The second faction was that of the supporters of Ali consisting of the Hashimis and their supporters from among the Muhajirin and the Ansar, such as Abu Dharr, Ammar, Miqdad and Salman.

Al-Farsi concedes the existence of these two factions before the episode of Saqifah. 3 The extent of their political differences, which had religious roots from the very beginning, increased with time. For instance, some of the Companions from the very early days did not recognize a role for the Prophet's *Sunnah* by the side of the Qur'an.

This belief was the important characteristic of the Qurayshi faction. Denial of the religious authority of the Prophet's prescriptions and prohibition on the writing and narration of *hadith* are clearly visible elements in the stance of the leaders of this faction right from the Prophet's days.

Without doubt one can say that the Companions of the Prophet (S) formed two different groups from this angle: those who believed in the necessity of following the Prophet (S) in all aspects and those who did not consider it obligatory to follow the Prophet (S) in matters relating to government and political affairs. The pre-Islamic influence of the Quraysh, along with other factors, led the latter group to acquire power.

A little later when Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf laid down the condition that he would deliver the office of the caliphate to the candidate who would follow the practice (*sirah*) of the Shaykhayn (i.e. Abu Bakr and 'Umar) and Imam Ali insisted that he would base his policy only on the Qur'an, the *sirah* of the Prophet and his own judgments (*ijtihad*) it was obvious that the religious difference was gradually expanding.

Until the time when `Umar was in the office of the caliphate, the generality of people, excepting the

followers of Imam Ali, followed the decrees (*fatwa*) of the State, not attaching much significance to the difference that existed at that time between the practice of the Prophet (S) and that of others.

But when `Uthman, besides allegations of political and financial misdemeanor, was accused of acts that were considered to be religiously deviant (*bid'ah*) and he was challenged by a large number of Companions, the problem arose as to whom the people should regard as a competent religious authority. In other words, who were they to emulate?

If we note that it was the opponents of the Qurayshi faction who led the movement against `Uthman, we can understand better the connection between differences on political and religious issues.

'Uthman was killed at the end of 35 H. /656 and Ali assumed the duties of caliphate. Now the leader of the anti-Qurayshi faction, who incidentally had no role in the revolt against `Uthman and whose counsel went unheeded by the extremists, had assumed the office of the caliphate.

From the very beginning, Syria, which led one wing of the Qurayshi faction, did not recognize his caliphate. Other leaders of the Qurayshi faction were Talhah and Zubayr who were also disgruntled with the rule of Imam Ali (*'a*). They made Basrah their base and as a consequence of this rebellion the Imam was compelled to shift his capital to Kufah. In Madinah itself a number of Companions, albeit very small, refused to give allegiance to the Imam. They were the `neutralists' (*Qa'idin*).

Aside from political issues, an important problem was the clarification of religious issues concerning controversial matters especially in relation to emergent issues. It was for this reason that two political and, as a consequence, religious factions emerged. There were those who accepted Imam Ali's religious authority and considered it a religious obligation to follow him; they were those who were not acceptable to the `Uthmanid party now represented by Syria and Basrah.

The second group consisted of those who were not prepared to accept the Imam's rule and opposed him with the motive of avenging `Uthman's death. All that which went into forming the attitudes of the opponents, acquiring a more developed form in the course of time, came to be called the `Uthmani creed. This creed stood in contrast to the `Alawid faction to which the term Shi`ah came to be applied shortly afterwards.

During the developments of the period of the Imam's caliphate, a group became the followers and supporters of Imam *M* and gradually came to be called *al-Shi'ah* or *Shi'is*. As against them a group of people became partisans of `Uthman and the `Uthmanid faction and they came to be known as *al-'Uthmaniyyah* or *'Uthmanis.* For this reason the `Uthmaniyyah became the name for the religious approach that opposed Shi`ism.

In the course of time it came to represent the religion of the common people who took their religious beliefs and practices from the Umayyad rulers. The Umayyads considered themselves as the continuation of the earlier caliphs and considered Imam Ali (*'a*) as standing in contradistinction to them.

During this period, the term *shi'ah* generally stood in contrast to the term *'Uthmaniyyah.* However, the term *shi'ah* was not used in a univocal sense in all its applications. Among the "Shi`is" there were those who were named so merely because they were against 'Uthman and supported the Imam as the legitimate caliph.Many of them also accepted the preceding caliphs and, as will be seen, they too were called `Shi'is' by extremist `Uthmanis.

However, among these undifferentiated Shi`is there were those who considered the Imamate as the sole right of Imam Ali (*'a*) as someone who had been appointed by the Prophet (S) to that office which they viewed as vested with a kind of Divine right. They did not consider it necessary to refrain from cooperating with the earlier caliphs, for the Imam himself had maintained silence in those circumstances for the sake of Islam, as was repeatedly pointed out by him.

In the course of their support of the `Uthmani creed, the Umayyads basically did not recognize the caliphate of Imam Ali (*'a*), and they propagated this notion throughout the greater part of Muslim society. However, this attitude did not find many supporters in Iraq, with the exception of Basrah. On the contrary, whenever there arose any opportunity the Iraqis would display, on the political scene, their belief in the right of the Alawids.

Beside the Shi'i and the 'Uthmani tendencies, there was a third one which related to the so-called *Qa'idin,* and Nashi' Akbar considers them as consisting of two groups with two different tendencies. According to him, one of them was the Hulaysiyyah, who believed that one should withdraw into political seclusion during tines of social turmoil (*fitnah*). They considered both the warring groups as misguided and destined for hell, and considered keeping aloof (*qu'ud*) from war as piety (*din*) and entry into it as `*fitnah.* 'Abd Allah ibn `Umar, Muhammad ibn Muslimah and Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas belonged to this group.

The second group of the *Qa'idin* was that of the "Mu'tazilah" who believed that one of the two warring groups was in the right but it could not be clearly identified. Abu Musa Ash'ari, Abu Said Khudri and Abu Mas'ud Ansari belonged to this group. According to Nashi' Akbar, they were the ones who were known as Mu'tazilah, and later on Wasil ibn Ata' and Amr ibn `Ubayd had a similar attitude regarding Talhah and Zubayr.4

An important concept employed by these two groups in their analysis of the state of affairs was that of *fttnah,* and they believed that during times of *fitnah* "it is better for one to be among those who get killed rather than being one of the killers." 5 The Hijaz did not take sides in the conflict between the pro-Alid and pro-Umayyad parties, but it staged a movement which may be called "the movement of the Companion's descendants" (*abna' al-sahabah*).

Iraqi Shi ism

With attention to what has been stated it may be said that in the early Islamic centuries the term Shi'ism (*tashayyu'*) had a wider meaning than is current today. The term '*tashayyu'* today would be referred to in

the old jargon of the `Uthmanis as *`Rafd.'* In that period the term *Shi `ah* in its general use was applied to those who preferred Imam Ali (*'a*) to `Uthman.

In addition those who preferred him to the other two caliphs or basically believed in his Imamate and that of his descendants were also called `Shi`ah.' In the sense of a general tendency a `Shi'ah' was someone who preferred Imam 'Ali to the other caliphs, while a `Rafidi' was someone who rejected the caliphate of Abu Bakr and `Umar and believed in the Imamate of Imam 'Ali (*'a*) as something ordained by God. `Shi`ism' in the above sense of a general tendency may be called `Iraqi Shi'ism.'

The *Sunni's* viewpoint is, giving preference to Imam Ali (*'a*) over `Uthman which has been considered a heretical belief (*bid'ah*). 6 Some extreme Sunnis are even of the view that such a preference of the Imam over `Uthman *is rafd.* Hence they have said, `Someone who says, "Abu Bakr, `Umar, Ali and then `Uthman" (in a descending order or merit) is a *rafidi* or a heretic (*mubtadi*). 7

The people of Kufah were Shi'ah as they accepted this descending order of merit for the caliphs (*Ahl al-Kufah yaqulun: Abu Bakr wa 'Umar wa 'Ali*). 8 It was said about the people of Wasit that they were Shi'ah (*kana 'ammatu ahl a-Wasit yatashayyi'un*). 9 It is stated in *Masail al-Imamah* that the Ahl al-Hadith from among the Kufans, such as Waki' ibn Jarrah and Fadl ibn Dukayn, were `Shi'is' because they believed in Ali's merit over `Uthman and considered Ali's caliphate to be legitimate (*Yaz'amuna anna afdal al-nas bad al-Nabi* [*s*] *Abu Bakr thummah 'Umar thumma 'Ali, thumma 'Uthman, yuqaddimuna Aliyan 'ala 'Uthman wa hadha tashayyu' ashab al-hadith min al-Kufiyyin wa yuthbituna imamata 'Ali*).

As against this viewpoint was that of the Ahl al-Hadith of Basrah who preferred `Uthman to Imam Ali, followed by the rest of the participants of the council (*shura*) constituted by 'Umar (*afdal al-ummah bad al-Nabi* [*s*] *Abu Bakr, thumma 'Umar thumma 'Uthman, thumma 'Ali, thumma yasuwwuna bayna baqiyyat al-shura*). This was the case at a time when the leading scholars (*mashayiq*) *of* Ahl al-Hadith at Baghdad basically did not accept the caliphate of Imam Ali (*'a*) (*wa amma mashayikh: ashab al-hadith min al-Baghdaiyyin fa innahum la yuthbituna imamata 'Ali; minhum Ibn Main wa Abu Khaythamah, wa Muhammad ibn Hanbal, kanu yahdhifuna Aliyan min al-imamah wa yaz'amuna anna wilayatahu kanat ftnah*). 10

Another witness is that of Yahya ibn Main, one of the prominent figures of the Ahl al-Hadith during the 3rd/9th century: He is cited as having said: "I say: Abu Bakr, `Umar, then `Uthman." 11 Ahmad ibn Hanbal was somewhat moderate and he would say "We do not find fault with someone who considers Ali as the fourth caliph" (*la nu'ibu man rabba'a bi Ali*). 12 In this regard there were many who were opposed to Ahmad ibn Hanba1. 13

It appears that towards the end of his life Ahmad ibn Hanbal had become firmer in his belief in the legitimacy of the caliphate of Ali (*'a*) as the fourth caliph, and accordingly he would say that someone who did hot consider Ali as the fourth caliph was more is error than an. ass (*man lam yurabbi' bi Aliyin fa-huwa adallu min himari ahlih*). 14 Someone who found fault with Mu'awiyah and Amr ibn `As was

presumed to be a *rafidi*. [15]Ahmad ibn Hanbal was told about someone who preferred Ali (*'a*) to Abu Bakr and `Umar.

He disapproved of such a belief and said, "I fear that he might be a *rafidi"* (*Akhsha an yakuna rafidiyan*). [16] Ahmad ibn Hanbal's son says, "I asked my father as to who the *rafidis* were. He replied, `It is someone who abuses and curses Abu Bakr and `Umar (*al-ladhi yashtumu wa yasubbu Aba Bakrin wa 'Umar*). ' "[17] In connection with the meaning of *rafd* one may refer to the forgeries that have been attributed to the Prophet (S) concerning the *rawafid.* [18]

An important term that must be considered for explanation of a significant part of Shi'i inclinations during this period is that of "Iraqi Shi'is." This name applies to those who despite their Shi`i inclinations and their narration of the virtues and merits (*fada'il*) of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and hostility towards the Umayyads-and later on towards the Abbasids-do not belong to any of the Shi'i sects, including Zaydi, Imami and the Isma'ili sects.

Certainly individuals of this type could be Mu`tazilites, but this name does not describe all of them and it might be said that there were those who were `Iraqi Shi'is' without being Mu'tazilis. In view of the large number of this type of persons among Iraqi traditionists (*muhaddithin*) it must be said that this is an acceptable name for them which solves the problem of explaining the religious tendency of this type of individuals.

In any case, it should be noted that while referring to Shi`ism of Kufah, or basically to that of Iraq, it must be made clear whether the individual or tendency concerned is of the type associated with mere preference (*tafdil*) for Imam Ali (*'a*) over `Uthman or that of Shi'ism in its doctrinal Imami sense.

There were many in Kufah who were Shi'is only in the former sense and were very attached to the *Ahl al-Bayt* and many of them were narrators of the *fada'il* of Imam Ali and other figures of the *Ahl al-Bayt.* These persons must not be considered Sunnis in its technical sense although many of them consider the first two caliphs to have been legitimate. In other words, their narrations must be studied with attention to their strong Shi'i inclinations.

Naturally, the `Uthmaniyyah, who were the progenitors of the later Sunnis, had a character different from that of this group and they were not on good terms with one another. It is for this reason that in *rijal* works of the Ahl al-Hadith and the Hanbalis the allegation of *tashayyu',* in the sense of narration of the *fada'il* of the *Ahl al-Bayt*, is considered one of the marks of discredit (*qadh*). They are "Iraqi Shi`is" whose names are not mentioned in Shi`i works of *rijal.*

Nevertheless, many of these persons have been considered trustworthy (*thiqah*) narrators by staunch Hanbalis and writers belonging to Ahl al-Hadith. For instance, concerning Dawud ibn Abi Awf, who has been considered a *thiqah* narrator by Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Yahya ibn Main, it has been said: "He is a Shi`i, and most of what he narrates is concerning the *fada'il* of the *Ahl al-Bayt"* (*Shi'i, 'ammatu ma yarwihi fi fadi'il Ahl al-Bayt*). Thereafter Dhahabi cites an example of his narrations which is a hadith of

the Prophet (S) addressed to Ali (*'a*)*:*

اما انك يابن ابي طالب و شيعتك في الجنه

"O Ibn Abi Talib, indeed you and your shi'ah shall be in paradise."

Following this hadith is a statement against the *rafidis* attributed to the Prophet (S). 19

Examples of the phrases and statements concerning Shi'is and cited by al-Dhahabi from experts of *rijal* of early centuries will serve to elucidate the use of the terms *shi'ah* and *rafidi* during that era. These expressions become harsher in accordance with the higher degree of the Shi'i tendency of the individual concerned. The expressions cited here are from Dhahabi's *Mizan al-i.'tidal* and are cited with the related volume and page number.

Concerning 'Ubayd Allah ibn Musa, who was also one of al-Bukhari's teachers (*mashayikh*), it is said: "a fiery Shi`i" (*kana Shi'i mutaharriqa*) (iii, 16).

About Adi ibn Thabit it is said, "*An extremist Shi`i, an extremist rafidi"* (*Shi'i mufrit, rafidiyun ghali*) (*iii, 62*).

About Ali' ibn Salih al Taymi al-Kufi: *"A mellowed Shi`i"* (*kana min 'atq al-shi'ah*) (*iii, 101*).

Concerning Ala' ibn Abi al-Abbas it is said: *"An extreme Shi`i"* (*Shi'i ghali*) (*iii, 102*).

Concerning Ali ibn Thabit al-Jazari it is said*: "He was one of the confirmed Shi'is, but does not go to the extremes"* (*kana min man yaskunu fi tashyyu'ihi wa la yaghlu*) (*iii, 116*).

Concerning Ali ibn Musa al-Simsar it is said: *"In him are Shi'i leanings tending towards rafd"* (*fihi tashayyu' yafdi ila al-rafd*) (*iii, 158*).

Concerning Ali ibn Hashim ibn Burayd it is said: *"He was extreme in his Shi`i leanings"* (*kana mufritan fi al-tashayyu*) (*iii, 160*).

About Amr ibn Shamir al-Ju`fi it is said: *"a rafidi who reviles the Companions"* (*rafidiyyun yashtammu al-sahabah*) (*iii, 368*).

About `Isa ibn Qirtas it is said, *"He was one of the extremists in rafd'* (*kana min al-ghulat fi al-rafd*) (*iii, 322*).

About `Isa ibn Mihran al-Musta'tif it is said, *"a rafidi, a monstrous liar, fiery in his rafd, was one of tile devils of the rafidis and their leaders"* (*rafidi, kadhdhab jabal, muhtariq fi al-rafd, kana min shayatin al-rafidah wa maraddatihim*) (*iii, 324*). Najashi has also mentioned him. 20

Concerning Fudayl ibn Marzuq al-Kufi it is said: *"He possessed Shi'i leanings but did not revile* [*the*

three caliphs" (*kana yatashayyi ' min ghayri sabb*) (*iii, 362*).

Concerning Fitr ibn Khalifah it is said, *"Fitr was considered trustworthy by Yahya ibn Main, but he was an extreme khashabi.* 21*"* (*kana Fitru 'inda Yahya thiqah, wa lakinnahu khashabiyyun mufrit*) (*iii, 364*).

Concerning Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, the famous historian, it is said: *"He had mild Shi'i leanings and an attachment for the Ahl al-Bayt which is not harmful"* (*fihi tashayyu' yasir wa muwalat la tadur*) (*iii, 498*).

Sunni scholars and traditionalists were accused of Shi'i tendencies on the slightest grounds. For instance, Daraqutni was accused of Shi'i inclinations merely for collecting the *diwans* of poets including that of Sayyid Himyari. 22

The following remark is made about Sayyid Murtada, the great Shi'i scholar*: "A staunch rafidi"* (*Shi'i jald*) (*iii, 523*).

Concerning Zurarah ibn Ayan, an eminent Shi'i figure, it is said: *"He practised rafd"* (*kana yatrafad*) (*ii, 68*).

Of Salim ibn Abi Hafasah, an Imami, it is said, *'An extremist in tashayyu',* he used to say, "O assassin of Na'thal (i.e. `Uthman), I am at your service! O destroyer of Banu Umayyah, I am at your service!" He was one of the leaders of the detractors of Abu Bakr and `Umar" (*mufrit fi al-tashayyu' yaqul: Labbayka qatila Na'thal, labbayka muhlik Bani Umayyah, wa kana min ru'us man yatanaqqasu Aba Bakr wa 'Umar*) (ii, 110).

Concerning Abbad ibn Abd al-Samad, who is referred to as *ghali fi al-tashayyu',* it is stated, *"Most of his narrations are about the fada'il'* (*'ammatu and yarwihi fi al fada'il*) (*ii, 369*).

Concerning Abbad ibn Ya'qub it is stated, *"He is one of exreme Shi'is, a leader of heresy"*. He would abuse the forebears and `Uthman and he would say, `God is too just to let Talhah and Zubayr into paradise: they went to war against Ali after having sworn allegiance to him' (ii, 379).

About Abd al-Ralunan ibn Yusuf ibn Kharash it is stated, *"He practised Shi'ism, and narrated the vices of the Shaykhayn and was a rafidi"* and Abdan says, `I asked Ibn Kharash concerning the hadith, "We [prophets] do not leave any inheritance, whatever we leave behind is charity (*sadaqah*)*."* He said, `It is false (*batil*)*."* (ii, 600)

The following passage from Dhahabi also helps define `mild' Shi'i leanings. After denying that Muhammad ibn Ziyad, one of the shaykhs of Bukhari who has been accused of hostility (*nasb*) *towards* the *Ahl al-Bayt*, was a *nasibi,* he says:

"It is usual among the Syrians to exclude [from the list of legitimate caliphs] Amir al-Mu`minin Ali, may God be pleased with him, since the days of Siffin, in the same way that among the Kufans there is an

antipathy toward `Uthman and a love for Ali, and their forebears used to be his *shi'ah and* his partisans. Furthermore, there is a group among the Shi`is of Iraq who befriend Ali as well as `Uthman but they prefer Ali to `Uthman and do not have friendly feelings towards those who fought 'Ali, though they do invoke God's forgiveness for them. That is a light form of *tashayyu."* 23

He also considers the term "extremist Shi'i" (*Shi'i ghali*) to have had a different sense formerly He writes:

In former days "Shi'i *ghali"* used to mean someone who finds fault with `Uthman, Zubayr, Talhah, Mu'awiyah and those who fought against 'Ali, may God be pleased with him, and someone who abuses them. And in our times and in our usage a *ghali* is someone who considers those figures to be unbelievers and disowns the Shaykhayn i.e. Abu Bakr and `Umar). 24

It may be said that basically one rarely finds a Kufan without "Shi`i" leanings. 25 That which is meant by this term is a general sense covering a range from the lowest to the highest degree.

Yahya ibn Main cites Abd Allah ibn Mubarak as having said, "Anyone who desires martyrdom should enter the Dar al-Bittikh in Kufah and invoke God's mercy for `Uthman." 26 According to another report some Kufans professed their superiority over the Basrans in these words in al-Ma'mun's presence:

قد علم الناس انه ليس في الأرض بلد اجمع أهله على حب بني هاشم إلا الكوفه و ما قتل احد من بني هاشم في شرق و لا غرب إلا و حوله قتلى من اهل الكوفه تختلط دمائهم بدمه

"Everyone knows that aside from Kufah there is no town on earth's surface whose people should be united in their love of Banu Hashim, and no individual belonging to Banu Hashim has ever been slain in the east or the west without the corpses of Kufans lying about him with their blood mingling with his blood." 27

In a tradition narrated from Imam Sadiq (*'a*) it is said:

ان الله عرض ولايتنا على أهل الامصار فلم يقبلها الا أهل الكوفه

"Indeed God presented our wilayah to the people of every town but none of them accepted it except the people of Kufah." 28

Sa'id ibn Abi Arubah says, "I arrived in Baghdad and sat in a session of Abu Hanifah's lectures. One day he had mentioned `Uthman and invoked God's mercy for him. I said to him, `May God have mercy on you to'. I have not heard anyone except you invoking mercy upon `Uthman in this city."' 29

There were so many virtues (*fada'il*) recounted concerning Kufah, and later on Qum, that Sa'd ibn Abd Allah al-Ash`ari compiled a book named *Fadl Qum wa al-Kufah.* 30

Shi ism in the Sense of Love of Ahl al-Bayt

There is another form of Shi`ism which led to allegations of Shi'i leanings due to the attachment for the *Ahl al-Bayt.* In this regard the preference for Ali (*tafdil*) might also be sometimes present, but in general an attachment is professed for the *Ahl al-Bayt* on account of the existing traditions which stress the necessity of loving the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*), the Prophet's family.

Such an inclination is also called *tashayyu'* by the followers of the `Uthmani creed, even if there were no trace of *tafdil* or any other tendency in a person's religious attitude. There is a tradition narrated from Imam Hasan al-Askari (*'a*) concerning the difference between creedal Shi`ism and Shi`ism in the sense of attachment and love for the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*). When asked about the difference between the `Shi'ah' and the *'Muhibbin'* (those who love die *Ahl al-Bayt*), the Imam replied:

> ما الفرق بين الشيعة و المحبين؟ قال: شيعتنا هم الذين يتَّبِعونَ آثارنا و يطيعون في جميع أوامرنا و نواهينا و من خالفنا في كثير مما فرضه الله فليس من شيعتنا

"Our shi'ah are those who follow in our steps and obey us in all things that we command or forbid, and anyone who opposes us in many of the things that God has made obligatory is not one of our shi'ah." 31

Writing about certain verses of Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Husayn Hamdan, known as Khabbaz Baldi, which indicate his Shi'i leanings, Afandi writes: "It is clear that which can be inferred from his verses is only his love (*tawalla*) and attachment [for the *Ahl al-Bayt*], but there is no indication of hostility and disavowal (*tabarra*) [in relation to the caliphs] which is the main characteristic of *tashayyu'* (*wa huwa al-'umdah fi al-tashayyu'*)"32

Shi'ism in this sense is found in plenty in the sources and here we may mention some examples of it. Perhaps the most prominent of such cases is that of Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (150-204/767-819). Verses have been narrated from him which confirm such an inclination and it appears that he was accused not only of *tashayyu'* but also *rafd* for his religious attitude. Among his verses that relate to this topic are the following:

> قالوا ترفَّضْتَ، قلتُ: كلا ما الرفض ديني و لا اعتقادي
>
> لاكـن توليـت غيـر شك خيـر إمـامٍ و خيـــر هـــادي
>
> إن كـان حُـبُّ الولي رفْضاً فـإنَّ رفـضـي الـى العبـــاد

“They say, 'You have become a rafidi,' and I say, `No, not at all. Rafd is neither my religion nor my creed. But I am devoted to the best of the Imams and the best of guides, and should the love of the Wali be rafd, then indeed my rafd is”33

In other verses he declares:

إذا نحن فضَّلنا عليّاً فإننا روافض بالتفضيل عند ذوي الجهل
وفضل أبي بكر إذا ما ذكرتُهُ رُمِيتُ بِنَصْب عند ذكري للفضل
فلا زِلتُ ذا رفضٍ ونَصْبٍ كلاهما بِحُبَيْهُما حتَّى أُوسَّد في الرَّمْلِ

“When we prefer Ali we are called rafidis by the ignorant for our favouring him (tafdil),
And when I mention the virtues of Abu Bakr, I am accused of nasb for my mention of virtue.
So shall I abide in rafd and nasb for the love of those two, until I am laid to rest in my grave.”

In some other verses he says:

يا آل بيت رسول الله حبكم فرض من الله في القرآن أنزله
يكفيكم من عظيم الفخر أنكم من لم يصل عليكم لا صلاة له

“O Progeny of the Messenger of Allah, God has made your love an obligation in the Qur'an that He has revealed.
The great honor suffices you that prayers made without invoking blessings on you are invalid”.34

These verses disclose a kind of *“tafdili rafd”* in the words of Shafi'i himself.

Yet their import is not contrary to his Sunnism (*tasannun*) which is something different from the `Uthmani creed. At the same time certain verses have been attributed to him whose authenticity needs to be established. One of them is as follows:

رضيتُ علياً لي إماماً و نسلِهِ

“Happy am I with Ali and his descendants as my Imams.” 35

In the same *diwan* there are verses in eulogy of the four caliphs. 36 Also elegiac verses about Imam Husayn (*'a*) have been narrated from him, among which are the following:

تزلزلت الدنيا لآل محمدٍ و كادت لهم صمّ الجبال تذوبُ

لئن كان ذنبي حب آل محمد فذلك ذنب لست منه اتوب

هم شفعائي يوم حشري و موقفي اذا كثرتني يوم ذاك ذنوبي

“The earth quaked for the sake of the Progeny of Muhammad, And the mountains almost melted in grief for them. If the love of the Progeny of Muhammad is my sin, It is a sin for which I am never going to repent.
They are my intercessors on my resurrection and in the halts of the Hereafter, when my sins overwhelm me by their great number”37

Badi` Hamadani had a similar tendency and as cited by Abd al–Jalil Razi he recited the following verse at the tomb of Ali ibn Musa al–Rida (*'a*):

أنا مع اعتقاداي في التسنن رافضي في ولائك و اشتغلت بهؤلاء الناس فلستُ اغفل عن أولئك

“Despite my belief in tasannun, I am a rafidi in my attachment (wila) to you,
And my devotion to these does not make me neglect those.” 38

This inclination continued to grow during the 5th/11th century and afterwards, and even among the Hanbalis, who had a strong 'Uthmani bias during the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries, one finds those who were strongly attached to the *Ahl al–Bayt*. That which is important is, that this attachment opened the door to Shi'ism and it could pave the way for the spread of Shi`ism in the long run. Elsewhere we have discussed this issue.

Creedal Shi`ism

Concerning the dissociation of the Shi'i sect from the Sunni community one may say that the area of divergence grew gradually and from political issues it extended to matters pertaining to religion and culture. During the early years the main problem was that of government and the conflict between the State's religious policies and attitudes and the demands of the Shi'ah led to a divergence in the realm of ideas. These differences could relate to legal and doctrinal issues as well as to political notions.

It should be noted that among the followers of Imam Ali (*'a*) there were different groups that were attached to him for different reasons. Among them there were those who considered him a worthy ruler but who in the course of time came to follow other Companions, including those who were associated with the ruling regime as well as others. Later we find the clear instance of Zaydi Shi`is who followed Hanafi *fiqh* or independent persons among the Companions and the *Tabi'in* living in Iraq.

In view of that which has been said, this phenomenon was a Shi'ism of the political type and a variety of

Iraqi Shi'ism. Naturally, such persons did not acquire their religious knowledge solely from the *Ahl al-Bayt;* they could be Mu'tazilis or followers of some other tendency. Among those who were Mu'tazilis from a doctrinal point of view, and among those who were Hanafis from a ritual and legal point of view, there were not few those who had a kind of pro-Ali or Shi'i inclination. Abu Hanifah himself was one of such individuals due to his support of Zayd ibn Ali and al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah.

As against this, there existed another tendency which consisted of total obedience to the Imams of the *Ahl al-Bayt.* The Shi'is who possessed this tendency followed the Imams in all matters of doctrine and law, and in the field of hadith they considered only the narrations of the Imams as authoritative. Although this tendency might not have been completely manifest until the last quarter of the 1st/7th century when doctrinal and legal issues became the prime issues of the day in Muslim society, yet it is evident that the movement that emerged under this name during the time of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (*'a*) has had its historical roots and background.

This tendency may be called creedal Shi'ism (*tashayyu' i'tiqadi*). The roots of this tendency lie in a special conception of Imamate in which the Imam has a particular spiritual and intellectual station. The function of the Imam, apart from governing the society, consists of interpreting and expounding the religion and it derives from his special relationship with the Messenger of God (S). The followers of this tendency generally referred to the office of the Imam with such expressions as *wisayah, wilayah* and *imamah,* not with the term *khilafah.* Of course, in this case there were possible differences in the understanding of the Imamate and related beliefs and its deviant form is represented by the tendency called *ghuluww.*

An important point in this regard relates to the historical background of creedal Shi`ism and its roots. Here we will undertake a study of this issue.

Among the definitions that have been suggested for creedal Shi'ism, perhaps the best one is the one given by Aban ibn Taghlib, who said, "The Shi'ah are those who followed Ali (*'a*) when the people differed concerning the Messenger of Allah (S), and who followed Ja'far ibn Muhammad (*'a*) when people differed concerning Ali (*'a*)" (*al-Shi'atu al-ladhina idha ikhtalafa al-nasu 'an Rasulillah, sallallahu alayhi wa alih, akhadhu bi qawli Aliyyin, 'alayhi al-salam, wa idha ikhtalfa al-nasu 'an Aliyyin akhadhu bi qawli Ja far ibn Muhammad, 'alayhi al-salam*). 39

A creedal Shi'i considers the office of the Imamate as a continuation of prophet hood, though without the element of new revelation, and considers the statements of the Infallible Imams (*'a*) as decisive in all matters and as the final judge in respect of all opinions advanced by various individuals and creeds. Such an approach differs altogether from the kind of Shi'i tendency that prefers Imam Ali to 'Uthman or even to all other caliphs. This approach had precedents among the followers of the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*a*) since the very beginning.

Among followers of Imam Ali (*'a*) there were many who had more than an ordinary kind of attachment for

the Imam and who believed him to possess a Divine office of Imamate. Aside from the extent to which these cases delineate the character of the belief in the Imam, one may infer from them the belief that the office of Imamate derived from a designation by God and the Prophet.

After swearing allegiance to Imam Ali (*'a*) Khuzaymah ibn Thabit is reported to have said, "We have elected someone who was chosen for us by the Messenger of God (S).40 In reply to `Umar's remark that the reason why the Quraysh did not choose Ali (*'a*) for the caliphate was that they did not like prophethood and caliphate to be in one family, Ibn Abbas said to him, "They were averse to [submit to] what God had revealed." 41

Darimiyyah Hujuniyyah, while describing for Mu'awiyah the reasons for favouring Ali (*'a*) said: "I favour Ali for his love of the poor, his generosity towards strangers, his religious learning, his sacrificing character and for his having been designated for *wilayah* by the Messenger of Allah."42

According to a report cited by Tabari, after the Battle of Siffin when Ali (*'a*) returned to Kufah and the Khawarij broke away from him, the Shi'ah remained steadfast on Ali's side and declared that they were bound to him by yet another oath of allegiance: to befriend his friends and to regard his enemies as their own enemies (*Nahnu awliya' man walayta wa a'da'u man 'adayt*).43

Iskaf says, "The common people swore allegiance to Ali (*'a*) on the basis of the Book and the *Sunnah* and the *Shi'ah of 'Ali* on the basis of friendship of his friends and enmity of his enemies." 44The stress on such an allegiance as a *second* allegiance in addition to the first one as well as its content indicate the Shi'i character of this group.

Abu Dharr, who died during the days of `Uthmam's rule, invited the people to follow the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*) and he would refer to the Prophet's family in such words:

"O people! The Family of Muhammad are the progeny of Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the elect of the progeny of Ismail, and the guiding and pure kindred of Muhammad. [In relation to the Ummah] reckon them to be like the head in relation to the body or rather as eyes in relation to the head, for, indeed, they are for you like the elevated heaven, the firmly established mountains, the radiant sun and the olive tree whose oil gives light and whose fire is blessed."

He would say; "Muhammad was the heir of Adam and the prophets were not superior to him, and 'Ali ibn Abi Talib is the designated successor (*wasi*) of Muhammad (S) and heir to his knowledge." He would address the people saying, "You, who are a community that has remained in perplexity after the Messenger, had you given preferred one who has been preferred by God and had you set back those who have been set back by God, and had you placed the *wilayah* and succession in the family of your Prophet you would have enjoyed all kinds of bounties from all sides."45

Elsewhere it has been narrated that Aba Dharr said, "O people! There will appear heresies in the future. When they visit you hold on to the Book of God and to Ali."46 When Abu Dharr was being banished to

Rabdhah, Ali (*'a*) and his sons came out to bid him farewell. Abu Dharr looked at the Imam and said, “When I see you and your sons, I remember what the Prophet (S) had said about you and that makes me cry”47

Salman also felt sorry that the people did not drew benefit from Ali's presence while he was alive and in their midst, and he would say, “By God, after him there will be no one who may inform you about the secrets of your Apostle.” 48

Miqdad also narrated from the Prophet that he had said, “The ma'rijah of the Household of Muhammad amounts to deliverance from hellfire; the love of the Household of Muhammad amount to secure passage over the Sirat; the *wilayah* of the Household of Muhammad is amnesty from chastisement.”49

Ammar Yasir also narrated the Prophet's tradition, “This is my counsel to someone who has faith in God and who affirms me through the *wilayah* of Ali ibn Abi Talib: one who loves him loves me, and one who loves me loves God.”50

Traditions of this kind which indicate Shi'i convictions have been narrated in a large number from Abu Dharr, Salman, Ammar and Miqdad. In defining the term `Shi'ah' Abu Hatin al-Razi says, “It is the appellation of those who were attached to Ali (*'a*) during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (S), such as Salman, Abu Dharr Ghifari, Miqdad ibn al-Aswad and Ammar ibn Yasir and others. Concerning these four, the Messenger of Allah (S) had declared, `The paradise is eager for four men: Salman, Abu Dharr, Miqdad, and Ammar.”'51

Umm Sinan, daughter of Khaythamah ibn Kharashah, portrays Ali (*'a*) in these verses:

قد كنت بعد محمدٍ خلفاً لنا أوصى إليك بنا فكنت وفياً

“After Muhammad you were for us his heir, He had exhorted you concerning us, and you were faithful (to his exhortations)” 52

Umm al-Khayr is reported to have made this statement while encouraging Ali's troops during the Battle of Siffin

هَلِمُوا رحمكم الله إلى الإمام العدل و التقي الوفي و الصديق الوصِي

“May God have mercy on you. Rally to the help of the just and pious Imam, the faithful and truthful successor (wasi)” 53

The fact that these persons and many others like them among the Shi'i followers of Imam Ali (*'a*) considered him to be *wasi* means that their notion of his station went- far beyond the title of *khalifah*

acquired by him through the allegiance (*bay'ah*) given him by the people. There are many verses in the sources ascribed to such Shi`is as Hujr ibn Adi, Ibn Tayhan, Ibn Ajlan and others wherein this term is employed.54

While summoning the people for *bay'ah* with Imam Ali (*'a*), Maik Ashtar referred to him in these words:

هذا وصي الاوصيا و وارث علم الأنبياء

"This is the wasi of the awsiya' and the heir to the knowledge of the prophets." 55

He recited these verses during the Battle of Siffin:

من رأى عزَّةَ الوصيِّ عليِّ أنَّهُ في دجى الحنادس نور

"One who sees the dignity of 'Ali, the Wasi, has a light in the dark of night" 56

Umm Araban recited this verse to mourn Ali's martyrdom:

و كنا قبل مقتله بخير نرى مولى رسول الله فينا

"We dwelt in welfare before his assassination
As we saw the mawla of the Apostle of God in our midst." 57

There are many verses from some of the Companions of the Prophet (S) who were among supporters of Imam Ali (*'a*) that refer to the tradition of Ghadir and interpret it in the sense of leadership and *wilayah*. Among them are couplets belonging to Qays ibn Sa'd ibn `Ubadah, Hassan ibn Thabit as well as verses composed by Imam Ali (`a) himself.58Abu al-Aswad Du'ali declares in a verse:

أحبُّ محمداً حبَّاً شَديداً و عباساً و حمزة و الوصيَّا

"I love Muhammad intensely, Abbas, too, and Hamzah, and the Wasi." 59

Qays ibn Sa`d says concerning the episode of Ghadir:

عليٌّ إمامنا و إمام لسوانا أتى به التنزيل

يوم قال النبي من كنت مولاه فهذا مولاه خطب جليل

إنَّ ما قال النبي على الأمة حتمٌ ما فيه قال و قيل

“Ali is our Imam and the Imam of others as well, and this has been declared by revelation,
The day when the Prophet said in a glorious sermon: “He is the mawla of everyone whose Mawla I am. Indeed, what the Prophet has proclaimed to the Ummah is conclusive, and there is no place in it for hearsay.”60

Hassan ibn Thabit recited these verses on the day of Ghadir:

يناديهم يوم الغدير نبيهم بخم و اَسْمِع بالرسول مناديا

فقال له قم يا علي فإنني جعلتك من بعدي إماماً و هادياً

“Their Prophet calls out to them on the day of Ghadir at Khumm, and I listen and call out with the Prophet:
He said to him, O Ali, rise, I have made you the Imam after me and the guide.” 61

These citations indicate the development of an attitude which recognizes Imam Ali (`a) as an Imam and leader appointed by the Apostle of God (S). They consider the Imam's authority to derive from his *wisayah* or designation by the Prophet (S) and call upon others to follow him as the Prophet's veritable successor.

Hence Ibn Tayhan would declare, “Indeed our imam and *wasi* is the *wasi* of the Apostle of Allah (S),” and Ibn Ajlan asked rhetorically, “How can we disperse while our leader is the wasi?” 62Hujr ibn Adi would say, “*Wilayah* was in him after the Apostle of God (S) and he made him his own *wasi* after himself.” 63A man named Zadan Farrukh who had recently embraced Islam encountered the Khawarij on his way. Asked concerning Ali (*'a*), he told them, “He is the commander of the faithful, the *wasi* of the Apostle of God and the master of all men.”64 They killed him.

In a famous letter written to Mu'awiyah, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr referred to Ali (*'a*) as the “heir of the Apostle of Allah and his *wasi.”* 65 `Ubadah ibn Samit is also reported to have recited verses–during the days of the episode of Saqifah in which he referred to the *wasiyyah* concerning Ali (*'a*). 66

The efforts of Imam Ali (*'a*) himself during the days of his caliphate were one of the main causes of propagation of the notion of Imamate as a Divine office. In one of the verses that he composed concerning the event and tradition of Ghadir, he interprets it as ordaining his *wilayah* over the people:

فأوجب لي ولايته عليكم رسول الله يوم غدير خم

“On the day of Ghadir Khumm, the Apostle of God made my wilayah incumbent upon you”. 67

In an elaborate letter that the Imam wrote to Mu'awiyah, he deals with this matter iii detail. This letter reveals interesting points concerning the Imam's role in propagation of the Shi'i concept of *wilayah.* As this letter has an important place from the viewpoint of Imami ideas, we shall cite here its main parts:

God, the Exalted, says,

“Obey God and the Apostle and those who have authority among you” (4:59).

This verse is about us *Ahl al-Bayt,* not you. Then He forbade conflict and disunity and enjoined submission and unity. You are the same people who professed faith in that before God and the Apostle.

God has informed you that ***“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, He is the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets”*** (33:40). And He has said, **“If *he dies or is killed will you turn back on your heels?”*** (3:144). And you, Mu`awiyah, and your companions, have turned your backs and apostatized, breaking the covenant you had made with God and breaking the allegiance, although that does not harm God.

O Mu'awiyah, don't you know that the Imams are from amongst us, not from among you? God has informed you that those who possess authority should be ***those who derive knowledge*** (a reference to 4:83), and He has also informed that in all matters that there is disagreement amongst you, you should refer to God and His Apostle and to those who possess authority and possess knowledge.

Hence anyone who is loyal to his covenant will find God to be faithful to His covenant. We are the progeny of Abraham who are the envied ones and you are the jealous ones (a reference to 4:54). *It* was a group of Israelites who said to their prophet, ***“Appoint a king over us so we may fight in the way of God”*** (2:246). When God sent Said as king, they were jealous of him and they said, ***“How can he have sovereignty over us?”*** (2:247) and they imagined that they were more worthy of kingship than him.

All these are things that have occurred in the past and now I describe them for you and its interpretation is with us and whoever belies it will be disappointed. We see their example amongst you. You should know that we, *Ahl al-Bayt,* are the same progeny of Abraham who are objects of others' envy. We have been victims of jealousy like our fathers before us.

God, the Exalted, has mentioned `the family (*al*) of Abraham, “the family of Lut, “the family of Moses,' `the family of Aaron' and `the family of David;' and we are the *Al* of our Apostle, Muhammad (S). O Mu'awiyah, don't you know that God has said, ***“The nearest to Abraham are those who follow him and this Apostle and the believers, and God is the helper of the believers”?*** (3:68). We are the blood relations (*ulu al-arham*) mentioned in the verse: ***“The Apostle has a greater right over the believers than themselves, and his wives are mothers of the believers, and the blood relations have a greater right in the Book of God than the believers and the emigrants”?*** (33:6).

We are the *Ahl al-Bayt* whom God has chosen and elected, and He has placed the prophethood in our midst and to us belong the Book, wisdom and knowledge. The House of God, the *hijr* of Ismail and the *maqam* of Abraham belong to us. Hence it is we who are worthy of rule. Woe to you, O Mu'awiyah! We are worthier of Abraham. We are his *al,* and the *al* of `Imran have a greater right to `Imran, and the *al* of Muhammad have a greater right to Muhammad. We are the *Ahl al-Bavt* from whom God, the Exalted, ***"has removed all impurity and purified them with a thorough purification"*** (33:33).

Every apostle has an invitation exclusive to himself and his children and family, and every apostle made a *wasiyyah* in favour of his family. Don't you know that Abraham made his *wasiyyah* for Jacob, and when Jacob's death drew near he made *wasiyyah* to his sons, and Muhammad (S) made his *wasiyyah* to his family. This was the *sunnah* of Abraham and other apostles, and Muhammad emulated them with the command of God.

The Book of God was revealed to us and the Apostle of Allah was raised from our midst and the scripture's verses were recited to us. We are the relatives of the Book and we are the witnesses over it; we are the callers who summon to it and we are the ones who establish it. So *what saying will you believe after this?* O Mu'awiyah! Do you seek a god other than Allah? A scripture other than the Book of God, or a *qiblah* other than the House of God, the home of Ismail and the station of our father Abraham? Are you after some creed other than the creed of Abraham? Or is it that you seek a king and a sovereign other than God? God has placed this sovereignty and kingdom amongst us.

You have made-manifest your enmity towards us and disclosed you animosity and jealousy. You have openly violated the covenant of God and you distort His signs and you alter the words of God that He said to Abraham: ***"God has chosen for you this creed"*** (2:132). Do you turn your back to the creed of Abraham, whereas God, the Exalted, *has chosen him in this world and he is among the righteous in the Hereafter?* Do you seek a judgment other than the judgment of God or an Imam outside our family? The Imamate belongs to Abraham and his seed, to the believers who follow them and who do not abandon his creed, and he said, ***"Whoever follows me is mine."*** (14:36)

In reply to the Imam, Mu'awiyah is indignant at the Imam's considering himself to be the descendant of all the prophets. He writes: "Not sufficing with the kinship with Muhammad you have claimed kinship with all the prophets." Then he adds: "You should know that Muhammad was one of the apostles who had been sent to all mankind. He delivered the message of his Lord and beyond that he did not own anything. Now tell us, where is the merit in your relationship? And what is the merit in your right? Where in the Book of God do you find your name mentioned? Where in the Qur'an is mentioned anything about your kingdom, your imamate and your superiority? Yes, we do follow the imams and caliphs who have gone before us, and you too used to follow them." Then he refers to himself as 'Uthman' as his heir.

In his reply the Imam accuses him of enmity towards the prophets and of the love of his pagan forebears. There he adds:

You should know that we are the family of the Apostle of Allah (S). The unbeliever does not befriend us and the believer does not harbour our enmity in his heart. You have denied the Imamate of Muhammad (S) and you imagine that he is an apostle and not an Imam. This denial leads you to deny the Imamate of all the apostles. But we bear witness that he was an apostle and an Imam. As to your denial of my relationship with the Messenger of Allah and my right, indeed our share and our right is there in the Book of God, and God has mentioned us along with the Apostle in the context of the division [of the spoils of war), where He has said: ***"Whenever you take any spoils of war, a fifth of it belongs to the Apostle and the kinsmen."*** (8:41) And in another place He says, *"Give the kindred their right"* (30:38). ***Don't you see that our share has been mentioned along with the share of God and the share of the Apostle and your share has been mentioned along with the outsiders? You deny my Imamate and my authority don't you see that God, the Exalted, has given us merit over the entire world's people?*** (3:33). If you can separate us from Abraham (`*a*), Ismail, Muhammad and the *Al* of Muhammad in the Book of God, try to do so.68

This letter has been cited by Abu Ishaq al-Thaqafi, the 3rd/9th century Shi'i historian (d. 283/). The doctrine of Imamate as a Divine office is quite evident in this letter of the Imam (a), and the various aspects of the argument on which it is based are quite clear. It's most significant part is that which asserts a relationship between prophet hood, *wasiyyah,* and Imamate and affirms them as deriving from an original tradition in the history of the prophets.

Mu'awiyah's denial of the Imamate of the Apostle of God (S) is also a noteworthy point in this correspondence. In any case, Imam Ali (*'a*) made a great effort ill many of his speeches and sermons to establish the preeminence of the *Ahl al-Bayt* over others and to establish their Divine right. In asserting such a right he considered it to be an inalienable element of the Imamate, and, naturally, he did not recognize such a right for the other caliphs.

The characteristics of Shi'i thinking are quite evident in many passages narrated from the Imam Ali (*'a*). In one of his sermons he declares concerning the *Ahl al-Bayt* (*'a*):

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ و أَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ؟ وَالأَعْلاَمُ قَائِمَةٌ، وَالآيَاتُ وَاضِحَةٌ، وَالْمَنَارُ مَنْصُوبَةٌ، فَأَيْنَ يُتَاهُ بِكُم؟ بَلْ كَيْفَ تَعْمَهُونَ وَبَيْنَكُمْ عِتْرَةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ؟ وَهُمْ أَزِمَّةُ الْحَقِّ وَ أَعْلاَمُ الدِّينِ وَأَلْسِنَةُ الصِّدْقِ؟ فأَنْزِلُوهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَنَازِلِ القُرْآنِ، وَرِدُوهُمْ وُرُودَ الْهِيمِ الْعِطَاش

"They have been entrusted with the secret of the Apostle, and whoever takes refuge in them finds the way to the truth. They are the repository of the knowledge of the Apostle and the exponents of the laws of the Shari`ah. The Qur'an and the Sunnah are secure with them, and they, like a high mountain, are the sentinels of the faith. By their means, Islam is kept straight, steady, and stable". 69

In another place he says,

“Where are you going and where are you being led away? The waymarks are established the signs are clear, and the lighthouses stand raised. So where are you being misled and how do you go astray? The Household of your Prophet is in your midst and they are the guardians of the truth, the standards of religion, and the tongues of truthfulness. So place them in the best stations of the Qur'an and turn to them like thirty camels approaching their watering place.” 70

In another passage he declares:

نَحنُ شَجَرَةُ النُبُوُّه:، وَ مَحَطَّ الرِسالَةِ، وَ مُخْتَلَفُ الْمَلائِكَةِ، وَ مَعادِنَ الْعِلْمِ، وَ يَنَابِيعُ الحِكَمِ. نَاصِرُنَا وَ مُحِبُّنَا يَنْتَظِرُ الرَّحْمَةَ، وَ عَدُوُّنَا وَ مُبْغِضُنَا يَنْتَظِرُ الْسَطْوَةَ

“We are the tree of prophet hood and the place of descent of Messenger hood, the place of frequenting of angels, the mines of knowledge, and the mainspring of wisdom. Our friend and supporter are hopeful of receiving divine mercy and one who regards us with enmity and hostility awaits Divine vengeance”. 71

هُمْ عَيْشُ الْعِلْمِ وَ مَوْتُ الْجَهْلِ. يُخْبِرُكُمْ حِلْمُهُمْ عَنْ عِلْمِهِمْ. وَ ظَاهِرُهُمْ عَنْ بَاطِنِهِمْ وَ صَمْتُهُمْ عَنْ حِكَمِ مَنْطِقِهِمْ. لا يُخَالِفُونَ وَ لاَ يَخْتَلِفُوُنَ فِيْهِ. هُمْ دَعَائِمُ الإِسْلامِ وَ وَلاَئِجُ الْإِعْتِصامِ. بِهِمْ عَادَ الحَقُّ إِلُى نِصابِهِ، وِ أْنْزاحَ الْباطِلُ عَنْ مُقامِهِ، وَ انْقَطَعَ لِسَانُهُ عَنْ مَنْبَتِهِ. عَقَلُوا الدِّينَ عَقْلَ وعَايَةٍ، لا عَقْلَ سَمَاعٍ وَ رِوايَةٍ. فَإِنَّ رُواةَ الْعِلْمِ كَثِيْرٌ وَ رُعاتِهِ قَلِيلُ.

“They (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt) are life for knowledge and death for ignorance. Their temperance will inform you of their learning, their exterior of their interior, and their silence of the wisdom of their speech. They do not oppose the truth, nor do they disagree regarding it. They are the pillars of Islam and its sanctuaries. Through them the truth is restored to its proper place and falsehood is forced to withdraw froth its position, its tongue being cut off from the root. They have understood the religion through the spirit of understanding and observance, not through audition and narration. Indeed, the narrators of knowledge are many, but few are those who observe it”.72

ألا إنَّ أبرارَ عِتْرَتي و أَطَايِبَ أُرُومَتِي أحلمُ الناسِ صغاراً، و أعلم الناسِ كِباراً. ألا وَ إنَّا أهل بيتٍ مِنْ عِلْمُ اللّهِ عَلِمْنَا، و بِحُكْمِ اللّهِ حَكَمْنَا، و مِنْ قَوْلِ صادقٍ سَمِعْنا فإِن تَتّبِعُوا آثارَنَا تَهْتَدُوا بِبَصائِرِنَا، و إِن لَمْ تفعلوا يُهْلِكُكُمُ اللّه بأيدينا. مَعَنا راية الحقِ، مَن تَبِعَهَا لَحِقَ و مَن تَأَخَرَ عَنْها غَرِقَ.

“Indeed, the virtuous of my kindred and the pure ones of my lineage are the wisest of men in their childhood and the most learned of them in their grown up years. Indeed, we belong to a household whose knowledge derives from God's knowledge and whose judgments derive from the judgment of God, and we have heard the speech of the truthful one. So if you follow in our footsteps, you will be guided by our insights, and if you do not do so, God will destroy you at our hands. With us is the banner of the truth: whoever follows it will reach the shore safely, and whoever forsakes it will be drowned”. 73

نَحْنُ الشِّعَارُ وَ الْأَصْحَابُ، وَ الْخَزَنَةُ وَ الْأَبْوابُ. وَ لا تُؤْتَى الْبُيُوتُ إِلَّا مِنْ أَبْوابِهَا فَمَنْ أَتاها مِنْ غَيْرِ أَبْوابِهَا سُمِّيَ سَارِقاً... فِيهِم كَرائِم القُرْآنِ، وَ هُمْ كُنُوزُ الرَّحْمنِ. إِنْ نَطَقُوا صَدَقُوا، وَ إِن صَمَتُوا لَمْ يُسْبَقُوا.

"We are the intimate ones, the companions (of the Prophet), the treasures and the doors (of Divine knowledge). ***Houses may not be entered except through their doors*** (2:189), and one who enters them from a place other than the door is called a thief . . . . The Qur'anic verses mentioning noble stations are about them (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt), and they are the treasurers of the All-beneficent. When they speak, they speak the truth; and when they are silent, no one may get ahead of them."74

أَيْنَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمُوا أَنَّهُمُ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ دُونَنَا، كَذِباً وَ بَغياً عَلَيْنَا أَنْ رَفَعَنَا اللهُ وَ وَضَعَهُم، وَ أَعْطَانا وَ حَرَمَهُمْ، ... وَ أَدْخَلَنَا وَ أَخْرَجَهُمْ. بِنا يُسْتَعْطَى الهُدَى وَ يُسْتَجْلَى العَمَى... إِنَّ الْأَئِمَةَ مِن قُرَيْشٍ غُرِسُوا في هذَا الْبَطْنِ مِنْ هَاشِمٍ.. لا تَصْلُحُ عَلى سِواهُمْ، ولا تُصْلُحُ الوُلاةُ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ.

"Where are those who falsely and insolently claimed that they are `ones who are firmly rooted in knowledge' (al-rasikhuna fi al-ilm; ref. to 3:7; 4:162) and not we? Because God has raised us in station and kept them low; He has bestowed upon us and deprived them; He has allowed us entry and kept them out. Through us, guidance is sought and blindness is turned into vision... Surely the Imams are from the Quraysh, planted in this lineage in Hashim's descent. Others are not entitled to it (Imamate), nor is anyone besides them competent to assume leadership." 75

لا يُقَاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ مِنْ هذهِ الأُمَةِ أَحَدٌ وَ لا يُسَوَّى بِهِمْ مَنْ جَرَتْ نِعْمَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَبَداً. هُمْ أَسَاسُ ... الدِّينِ، وَ عِمَادُ الْيَقِينِ. إِلَيْهِمْ يَفِيءُ الْغَالِي. وَ بِهِمْ يُلْحَقُ التَّالِي. وَ لَهُمْ خَصَائِصُ حَقَّ الوِلاَيَةِ، وَ فِيهِمُ الْوَصِيَّةُ وَ الْوِرَاثَةُ.

"No one from this ummah can be compared to the Household of Muhammad, may God's benedictions be upon him and his Household and one who benefits from their bounties can never equal them. They are the foundation of the religion and the pillars of certainty. To them the extremist must return and with them must catch up he who lags behind. They possess the prerequisites of the right of wilayah, and to them belong the wasiyyah and the inheritance." 76

وَ إِنَّما الْأَئِمَةُ قُوَّامُ الله على خَلْقِهِ، وَ عُرَفَاؤُهُ عَلى عِبادِهِ، وَ لا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ عَرَفَهُمْ وَ عَرَفُوهُ، وَ لا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ ... إِلَّا مَنْ أَنْكَرُوهُ.

"Certainly the Imams are caretakers (quwwam, pl. of qa'im) appointed by God over His creatures, and the dispensers of the knowledge of the Divine to God's servants. None shall enter paradise except one who acknowledges them and is acknowledged by them, and none shall enter Hellfire except one who does not acknowledge them and is not acknowledged by them." 77

أُنْظُرُوا أَهْلَ بَيْتَ نَبِيِّكُمْ فَالْزَمُوا سَمْتَهُم وَ اتَّبِعُوا أَثَرَهُمْ فَلَنْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ هُدىً، وَ لَنْ يُعِيدُكُمْ في رَدىً. فَإِن لَبَدُوا، وَ إِنْ نَهَضُوا فَانْهَضُوا. وَ لاَ تَسْبِقُوهُمْ فَتَضِلُّوا، وَ لا تَتَأَخَّرُوا عَنْهُمْ فَتَهْلِكُوا.

"Look at the Ahl at-Bayt of your Prophet and stick to their path. Follow their footsteps, for they will never lead you out of righteousness or land you into destruction. If they stand, you too stand up, and if they rise you also rise up. Do not overtake them, nor fall behind them, for that would destroy you". 78

In these passages, as in his letter cited earlier, the Imam considers the Imamate and the kind of leadership that it signifies as a kind of prophetic inheritance. This inheritance is not one which pertains only to the right of temporal authority, but is also accompanied with *wasiyyah,* wisdom, inner purity and infallibility.

It is a tradition that the Qur'an attributes to the prophets when it refers to the office that Abraham sought for his progeny and concerning which God declared that His covenant does not include the unjust (2:124). The Qur'an speaks of the prophets as belonging to one another's seed (*dhurriyyah*), although the concept of being chosen (*ijtiba*) plays a central role in the matted79

Some of the Sunnis imagine the Shi'i concept of Imamate to mean something of the sort of an ordinary hereditary right, and hence they have accused the Shi'ah of considering Imamate to be hereditary, whereas in the Shi'i conception Imamate derives from designation (*nass*). This designation acquires its meaning within the framework of a divine conception of inheritance which emanates from the Qur'an itself.

In a letter in which he refers to the dispute with the Quraysh and his insistence on demanding his own right, Imam Ali (*'a*) writes, "Am I being ambitious when I demand my inheritance and ask for the restoration of the right that God and His Apostle have granted me?" 80 In this statement inheritance and right are mentioned side by side.

More important than the passages cited above is the incident which occurred during the first days of his entry into Kufah after the Battle of the Camel. At that time, as mentioned by scores of Sunni sources, Imam Ali (*'a*) summoned the people of Kufah and the Companions of the Prophet (S) who were accompanying him, to assemble in the mosque of Kufah. There, he asked those who had witnessed the event of Ghadir and heard the declaration made by the Prophet to stand up and bear testimony.

A large number of people, among them twelve Companions who had fought by the Prophet's side at Badr, bore testimony. 81 Invoking the witness of the Hadith of Ghadir in a general gathering had no purpose other than to publicly establish his divine right to *wilayah*. 82 The Qur'anic concept of *hujjah* (*lit*. proof, testament) also affirms the viewpoint of Imam Ali (*'a*) concerning *wilayah*. It is a concept that the Imam applies to the prophets as well as to others who, without being prophets, are assigned by God to guide mankind.

In one of his sermons he says, “At no time has God left His creatures without a messenger, or without making a scripture accessible to them, or without appointing a *hujjah* over then.” 83 Elsewhere he says,

> لا تَخْلُوا الْأَرْضُ مِنْ قَائمٍ لله بِحُجَّةٍ، إِمَّا ظَاهِراً مَشْهُوراً أَوْ خَائِفاً مَغْمُوراً، لَئِلَّا تَبْطُلَ حُجَجُ الله وَ بَيِّناتُهُ. وَكَمْ ذَا؟ وَ ... أَيْنَ أولئِكَ؟ أُولئِكَ وَ الله الأَقَلُّونَ عَدَداً وَ الْأَعظَمُونَ عِنْدَ الله قَدْراً. يَحْفَظُ اللهُ بِهِمْ حُجَجَهُ وَ بَيِّنَاتِهِ حَتَّى يُودِعُوها نُظَرَاءَهُمْ وَ يَزْرَعُوها في قُلُوبِ أَشْباهِهِمْ. هَجَمَ بِهِمْ العِلْمُ عَلَى حَقيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَ باشَرُوُا رُوحَ الْيَقِين. اسْتَلانُوا ما اسْتَعْوَرَهُ الْمُتْرِفُونَ، وَ أَنِسُوا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَ صَحِبُوا الدُّنْيا بِأَبْدانٍ أَرْواحُهَا مُعَلَّقَة بِالْمَحَلّ الأَعْلَى. أُولئِكَ خُلَفاءِ اللهِ في أَرْضِهِ وَ الدُّعَاةُ إِلى دِينِهِ.

“The earth is never devoid of someone who is an upholder of God's proof. He is either manifest and well-known, or afraid and concealed, so that God's proofs and His clear signs are not invalidated. How many are they, and where are they? By God, they are few in number, but great in esteem near God. Through them God maintains His testaments and signs, until they entrust them to others like themselves and plant them in the hearts of their likes. Knowledge has led them to the reality of understanding, and they have attained the spirit of certitude. That which is hard upon seekers of comfort comes easy to them. They endear what the ignorant regard with aversion. They live in the world with their bodies, but their spirits are in a higher realm. They are the vicegerents of God in His earth and His callers to His faith.” 84

In another instance, in a letter to one of his officers assigned for the collection of zakat, in which the Imam sets forth the manner in which the latter is to approach the people, he writes to him to make the following announcement while approaching the tribes:

> عِباد الله! أَرْسَلَنِي وَلِيُ اللهِ وَ خَلِيفَتُهُ لآخُذَ مِنْكُمْ حَقَّ اللهِ في أَمْوالِكُمْ

O creatures of God! The waft of God and His vicegerent has sent me to take from you God's due pertaining to your property. 85

The expressions *“waliullah”* and *“khalifatulluh,”* applied by the Imam to himself, are entirely Shi`i conceptions.

In any case, the conception of *wilayah is* one that grew during the caliphate of Imam Ali (`a) and it characterizes the Shi'i viewpoint concerning Imamate. 86 In the course of several sermons that he delivered during the period of his caliphate the Imam makes prophesies of future events, which are traditionally known as *malahim wa al-fitan.* In these statements, the like of which were never heard from any other caliph, he would make prophesies about the future, though of course not as a political analyst.

The attraction of the Imam's personality for the mystics and the sufis had roots in his profoundly pious and ascetic life-style and thinking. It led to a conception of his personality that introduced him as

someone who was a perfect instance of the high spiritual station of *wilayah.* The conception of *wilayah* as a preeminent spiritual station has roots in the statements and conduct of the Imam himself, who would make declarations from the *minbar* (pulpit) formally claiming to possess the knowledge of everything and asking the people to question him about anything before the time when he would not be in their midst. 87

At the conclusion of the citation of these precedents it would be appropriate to mention an important episode. When `A'ishah was preparing to stage a rebellion against Imam Ali, Umm Salamah, one of the most dignified wife of the Prophet (S), tried to persuade her against carrying out her plans.

Abd Allah ibn Zubayr objected to her and said, “You have been an enemy of the family of Zubayr since past days.” Umm Salamah said to him, “Do you think that the people will follow Talhah and your father while Ali is still in their midst about whom the Messenger of Allah (S) said, “Ali is the *wali* of every believer, man and woman, after me.” Abd Allah said, “We have not heard any such thing from the Messenger of God.” Umm Salamah said to him, “If you haven't, your aunt, `A’ishah certainly has. I myself heard the Messenger of Allah say:

عليٌ خَلِيفَتي عَلَيْكُمْ في حَياتِي و مَمَاتِي فَمَنْ عَصَاهُ فَقَدْ عَصَانِي

“Ali is my successor (khalifah) amongst you, in my life and after my death; whoever disobeys him disobeys me.”

`A'ishah too confirmed that she had heard such a statement from the Prophet (S). 88

On the basis of what has been mentioned, one may say in explanation of certain statements of Imam Ali (a) in the *Nahj al-balaghah* which refer to the allegiance of the Muhajirun and the Ansars that the popular principle of caliphal election until that time was the allegiance of the Muhajirun and the Ansars, an allegiance which was also pledged by them to the Imam.

The Imam was forced to take recourse to this principle in defense against the opposition of those who had broken the allegiance they had sworn him (*nakithin*) and those who had rebelled against him (*qasitin*). As a result of this argument of the Imam, many people accepted his leadership and went to war against his enemies.

Verses have been narrated from one of the Imam's supporters in affirmation of the validity of his caliphate and the people's commitment to him. Their author compares the covenant that the people made with him to those made with the first two caliphs:

له في رقاب النـاس عهدٌ و ذِمــةٌ كعهدِ ابي حفصٍ و عهدِ ابي بكرِ

فبايع و لا ترجع على العقبِ كافراً أُعيذُكَ بالله العزيز من الكفر

“The people have made with him a pledge and a covenant,
Like the covenant made with Abu Hafs (i.e. `Umar) and Abu Bakr.
So pledge allegiance to him and do not turn back an apostate,
I exhort you to take refuge its Allah from apostasy”. 89

However, the Imam himself did not consider such an approach as the basis of the legitimacy of his Imamate, nor was such a basis subscribed to by his close companions, who considered his Imamate to be something that lay beyond the allegiance of the Muhajirun and the Ansar.

That which is certain is that, as was mentioned earlier, Shi'ism grew in its extent and character during the events that occurred in the aftermath of the assassination of `Uthman and the caliphate of Imam Ali. Earlier, only a few of the Prophet's Companions possessed such a tendency. But for reasons that were mentioned, Shi'ism spread in Iraq. This tendency is called an Alit and Shi'i tendency.

Its weak degree involved the rejection of `Uthman and affirmation of the caliphate of Imam 'Ali (*'a*), and in its most developed form it meant the affirmation of the Imamate of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (*'a*) after the Messenger of God (S) and his superiority over other caliphs. There were as well certain extremist tendencies that emerged during this period about whose exact extent and character there is a difference of opinion. 90

Another trend that emerged and grew during this period was the Uthmanid tendency It emerged during the events of the Battles of the Camel and Siffin. Although the protagonists of this trend faced a defeat during the Battle of the Camel, but its effects remained in Basrah, and the people of this city were known for their `Uthmanid affiliations.91

Another branch of this trend came to dominate Syria (al-Sham) during the Umayyad era and it came to rule over Iraq. The rule of the Umayyads was an expression of the domination of the `Uthmanid creed. This creed did not acknowledge the legitimacy of the caliphate of Imam Ali (`a), and its argument was that the third caliph was killed by the Imam or at his instigation.

Moreover, it asserted that there was not a general consensus of the people about his caliphate. This belief was prevalent among the `Uthmaniyyah, who were the prototypes of the latter-day Ahl al-Sunnah. During that era, the terms the Shi`ah and the `Uthmaniyyah stood in contrast to one another.

The Uthmaniyyah believed that Mu'awiyah was the next legitimate caliph after 'Uthman. The basis of his legitimacy, as they claimed, was Mu'awiyah's kinship with `Uthman and his claim to be the next of kin in this case of homicide (*wali al-dam*). 92The two cities of Basrah and Kufah with their `Uthmanid and Shi'i inclinations were considered rival towns.

Another interesting aspect of the Battle of the Camel was the greater prominence acquired by Shi'ism in

contrast to the `Uthmanid creed. During the course of the battle, Amr ibn Yathribi, who killed Zayd ibn Suhan, a companion of the Imam, said that he had killed the latter in a state when he was an follower of "the creed of `Ali" (*din–i 'Ali*). On the other hand, Ammar Yasir, addressing Amr, said these verses during that battle:

((لاَ تَبْرَمِ الْعَرْصَةَ يابْنَ الْيَثْرِبِي حَتَّى أقاتلَكَ على ((دِينِ علي

نَحنُ وَ بيتُ الله أولى بالنبي

"O Son of Yathribi, I will not leave the field
Until I fight you while I am on the creed of 'Ali.
We and the House of God are nearer to the Prophet." 93

The term "creed of `Uthman" (*din–i 'Uthman*) emerged in opposition to the term "creed of 'Ali." A poet belonging to Syria declared concerning the Syrian troops:

ثمانين ألف ((دينُ عثمان)) دينهم كتائب فيها جبرئيل يقودها

"Eighty thousand strong whose creed is the creed of `Uthman,
Squadrons, amongst whom is Gabriel who leads them on." 94

Another Syrian poet who was at Siffin introduced himself in these words:

((أنا ابن ارباب الملوك غسَّان و الدائن اليوم بـ((دين عثمان

"I am a descendant of the lords of the princes of Ghassan,
And today I am a follower of the creed of `Uthman." 95

Rifa'ah ibn Shaadad also declared in a couplet:

أنا ابن شدَّاد على ((دِينِ عَلي)) لَسْتُ لعثمان بن أروى بِوَلي

"I am the son of Shaddad, on the creed of `Ali,
I am not a friend of `Uthman, son of Arwa." 96

It has also been stated concerning the Syrian troops that they were eighty thousand soldiers who "followed the creed of `Uthman." 97

After the martyrdom of Imam `Ali (*'a*), the people of Iraq pledged their allegiance to Imam Hasan. Among them were Shi`is who actually had belief in the Imamate of Imam al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (*'a*) and they swore allegiance to him on that basis. Of course, in these circumstances there existed in general two tendencies, Shi'i and `Uthmanid.

The religious tendency of the people of Kufah was predominantly Shi'i, in the sense that they did not acknowledge `Uthman and affirmed the caliphate of Imam Ali (*'a*). During the five years of the Imam's rule they had been influenced by him and his companions. They followed the Alid tendency in religion and disdained the 'Uthmanid tenets. Opposition to `Uthman and his ill fame in this city was such since the era of Imam Ali that Jarir ibn Abd Allah al-Bajali said, "I would not stay in a town where they formally denounce `Uthman." 98

To the point that is relevant to the notion of Shi'i Imamate, there is evidence that Imam Ali designated his son as his successor, although the Sunni writers have not referred to it as signifying successor ship. 99 In this regard, a tradition has been narrated from the Messenger of God (S) that is cited in many sources. It reports the Prophet (S) as stating:

ألحسن و الحسين إمامانِ، قاما أو قعدا

"Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are two Imams, whether they are active rulers or not". 100

The said tradition is clear evidence that there was a designation in favor of the Imamate of these two brothers. In this regard, there are also historical reports that corroborate the Shi`i viewpoint concerning the Imamate of Imam al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (*'a*)

Nasr ibn Muzahim reports that during the time of Imam Ali himself Awar al-Shanni said addressing the Imam,

زَاد الله في هُداك و سُرورك، نَظرتَ بنور الله، فَقدَّمْتَ رِجالاً، و أَخَّرْتَ رِجالاً، فَعَلَيْكَ أن تَقول و علينا أن نَفْعَل، أنتَ ألإمام، فإن هَلَكْتَ فهذان من بَعْدِكَ- يعني حسناً و حسيناً.

"May God increase you in guidance and felicity. You have seen with the light of God, and given preference to some men and set back other men. It is for you to command, and for us to obey. You are an Imam, and if you die, after you the Imamate will lie with these two (i.e. al-Hasan and al-Husayn)".

Then he said to Imam Ali (a), "Listen to some verses that I have sung:

أبا حَسنِ أنتَ شَمسُ النَّهارِ و هذان في الحادِثاتِ القَمَرْ

أأنت و هذان حتَّى المماتِ بِمنْزلة السَّمع بعد البَصَرْ

و أنتــم أنــاسٌ لكم سُورةٌ يَقصِّرُ عنها أكفُّ البَــشَرِ

يخبِّرنا الناسُ عن فضــلِكم و فضلُكُم اليوم فوق الخَبَرْ

"O Abu al-Hasan, you are the resplendent midday sun,
And these two (sons of yours) are like moons in times of crisis.
You and these two, until the last breath, are like our hearing and sight.
You are men of a high station,
Whose heights are beyond the aspirations of men.
People inform us concerning your merit,
Yet, your merit today is so great as to lie beyond reporting." 101

Mundhir ibn Jarad is also reported as having said to the Imam in Siffin,

فان تهلك فهذان الحسن و الحسين أئمتنا من بعدك

"If your die, these two, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, will be our imams after you". 102

Thus it becomes clear that since the day of Imam Ali (`a) his companions considered the Imamate as belonging to al-Hasan and al-Husayn after him. We know that after the martyrdom of Imam Hasan, the Shi'is of Kufah sent a message extending their support to Imam Husayn. Abd Allah ibn Abbas also summoned the people to pledge allegiance to Imam Hasan, declaring, "He is the son of your Apostle and the *wasi* of your Imam. Pledge your allegiance to him." 103

Imam Hasan, too, in a letter to Mu'awiyah wrote, "When my father was about to die, he entrusted this affair (*amr*) to me." 104 Haytham ibn Adi has narrated from many of his teachers (*mashayikh*) that they said that Hasan ibn Ali was the *wasi* of his father. 105Abu al-Aswad Du'ah too, who was in Kufah at the time when allegiance was being sworn to Imam Hasan (`a), said, "He has acquired the *wisayah* and Imamah from his father."106The people are also reported as having said to the Imam, "You are the successor and wasi of your father and we shall obey you." 107

In any case, on the whole it may be conceded that Imam Ali introduced his eldest son as someone whose succession was favoured by him. 108 One Friday when the Imam was unwell, he ordered Imam Hasan to lead the prayers. 109

Aside from the fact that the Shi`is of Kufah were drawn to Imam Hasan on the basis of their religious

sentiments, one must take note of the peculiar Shi'i notions of *Ahl al-Bayt* and the station of Imamate at this stage. As reported by all the relevant sources, Imam Hasan stated in his first sermon:

> أيها الناس، من عرفني فقد عرفني، و من لم يعرفني فأنا الحسن بن محمدـ صلَّى الله عليه و آله و سلَّمـ أنا ابن البشير، أنا ابن النذير، أنا ابن الدَّاعي إلى الله عزَّ و جلَّ بإذنهِ و أنا ابن السراج المُنير، و أنا مِن أهل البيت الَّذين أذهب الله عنهُم الرِّجْس وَ طَهَّرَهُمْ تَطهيراً، و الَّذينَ إفْتَرَضَ اللهُ مَوَدَّتُهُمْ في كتابه إذ يقول: (مَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا) فإقتراف الحسنة مَوَدَّتنا أهل البيت.

"Anyone who knows me knows me. And if anyone does not know me, let him know that I am Hasan, son of the Messenger of Allah. I am the son of the bringer of good tidings and the warner. I am the son of him who invited the people to God with His command. I am the son of the shining lamp. I belong to a household from which God has kept of all uncleanliness and filth and He has purified them with a thorough purification–they are the ones loving whom has been made obligatory by God in His Book, where He says, ***"and anyone who does good We shall increase in his goodness"***(42:23). Hence the `good work' is like loving us, the People of the Household". 110

Mas'udi reports part of one of the sermons of Imam Hasan in his history. In it the Imam is reported as declaring:

> نحنُ حزبُ اللهِ المفلحون و عترةِ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله و سلَّم الأقربون وأهل بيته الطاهرون الأطيبون وأحد الثقلين الّذين خلَّفَهما رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله و سلَّم، و الثاني كتابُ الله الّذي فيه تفصيل كل شيء لا يأتيه الباطل من بين يديه، ولا من خلفه، ... فأطيعونا، فإنّ طاعتنا مفروضةً إذ كانت بطاعة الله و الرسول و أُلي الأمر مقرونة: (فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍفَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّـهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّـهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا﴾ (ولو ردّوه إلى الرسول وإلى اولي الأمر منهم لعلمه الّذين يستنبطونه منهم ولو لا فضل الله عليكم ورحمته لاتّبعتم الشيطان إلاّ قليلاً)

"We are the felicitous party of God. We are the kindred of the Messenger of God (S). We are the people of the pure Household, the pure ones, and one of the two precious things (thaqalayn) that the Messenger of God left behind amongst you, the other being the Book of God, into which falsehood cannot enter. So obey us, for obedience to us, as those in authority (uli al-amr), is obligatory, for it is appended to the obedience to God and obedience to the Messenger of God, as the Book of God declares, ***"If you dispute concerning anything, then rifer it to Allah and His Messenger and those in authority amongst you***" (4:59). ***When there comes to them a matter, be it of security or fear, they broadcast it; if they had referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those of them whose task is to investigate would have known the matter.*** (4:83)." 111

Hilal ibn Yasaf say, "I was present at the sermon of Imam Hasan ibn Ali when he said, "O people of Kufah, fear God regarding us. We are your leaders and your guests. We are a household concerning whom God has said, `*Verily, God wills to keep uncleanliness away from you O people of the house and*

*to purify you with a thorough purification."*112. It seems that it was after this sermon that Imam Hasan was wounded in an assassination attempt at Sabat.

Similar was the situation during the time of Imam Husayn (*'a*)*;* that is, a part of the Shi'is were creedal Shi'is, while others consisted of those who preferred the `Alids over other groups and were strongly opposed to those who followed the `Utlunanid faction. It may be said that those who embraced martyrdom with Imam Husayn (*'a*) at Karbala' were Shi'is who considered the Imamate to be the sole right of Imam 'Ali and his sons. The Imam himself, in several instances, summoned the people to "restore the right to those who were most worthy of it" and to assist him, as the Umayyads had usurped the right that belonged to him.113
In one case, he declared,

أيها الناس أنا ابن بنت رسول الله و نحن أولى بولاية هذه الأمور عليكم من هؤلاء المدعين ما ليس لهم

"O people I am the son of the Messenger of Allah and we have a greater right to govern your affairs than those who claim that which is not their right." 114

In another place, he declared:

و أنا أحقُّ من غيري لقرابتي من رسول الله

"I have a greater right (to the caliphate) than anyone else by virtue of my relationship with the Messenger of Allah." 115

Besides the Imam himself, his companions expressed such a belief on various occasions. Muslim ibn Ziyad declared, "By God, Mu`awiyah is not a rightful caliph, but he has prevailed over the Messenger's successor with his cunning and usurped the caliphate." 116 Abd al-Rahman ibn Abd Allah al Yazani, one of the companions of Imam Husayn at Karbala', declared:

أنا بن عبدالله من آل يزن ديني على دين حسين و حسنْ

"I am son of Abd Allah, from the house of Yazan,
My creed is the creed of Husayn and Hasan." 117

Similarly, Hajjaj ibn Masraq said addressing Imam Husayn:

ثمَّ أباك ذي الندى عليَّاً ذلك الذي نعرفه وصياً

“Thereafter your magnanimous father, 'Ali, He it is whom we know to be the wasi.” 118

Hilal ibn Nafi` Bajali declared in a verse:

أنا الغــلام التممــي البجــلي ديني على دين حسين و علي

“I am a youth belonging to Ranu Tamim and a Bajali,
My creed is the same as that of Husayn and Ali.” 119

`Uthman ibn Abi ibn Abi Talib also delcared in these verses:

إنِّــي أنا عثمان ذو المفاخر شيخي عليٌّ ذو الفعال الطاهر

و ابـن عمّ النَّبـي الطاهـر أخــو حســين خيرة الأخائر

و سيد الكبــار و الاصـاغر بعد الرســول و الوصيِّ الناصر

“Indeed, I am `Uthman, possessor of several honours:
My master is `Ali, man of sublime feats,
I am son of the Prophet's cousin,
And brother of Husayn, the chosen one among the elect,
The chief of the great ones and the humble,
After the Messenger and his wasi and helper”.120

Nafi` ibn Hilal would say,

أنا الجملي أنا على دين علي

“I am a Jamali and I am on the creed of 'Ali.”

In response to him someone from the opposite camp called out:

أنا على دين عثمان

“I am on the creed of `Uthman.” 121

In these verses, as well as those which have been narrated from Abbas ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib, one can

well discern the Shi`i belief of the Imam's companions, something which possesses doctrinal dimensions and is far different from mere political support and favor.

During the *life of* Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (*'a*) the creedal Shi'as was clearly recognizable. Ibn Ziyad is reported as having told Amr ibn Hurayth, "I do not fear any danger for him (i.e. Yazid) from Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr; rather, I fear for him, from the quarter of the Turabiyyah, the Shi`ah of Abu Turab Ali ibn Abi Talib. ` 122

During this period, the slogan of the Tawwabin was restoration of the rule of the Household of the Messenger of Allah. `Ubayd Allah ibn Abd Allah, while recounting the preeminence of the Household of the Prophet (S) and the insult which was dealt to them in the events of Karbala', pointed out the way to repentance in these words:

> أنا أدعوكم إلى كتاب الله و سنة نبيّه و الطلب بدماء أهل بيته و إلى جهاد المحلين و المارقين فَإن قُتِلنا فما عند اللهِ خير للأبرار و إن ظهرنا، رددنا هذا ألأمر إلى أهل بيت نبيّنا.

"I summon you to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the His Prophet, to avenge the blood of his household, and to jihad against those who permit what is unlawful and the renegades. Should we be killed, that which is with is God is better for the virtuous, and should we be victorious we shall restore this affair to the household of our Prophet." 123

The slogan of the Tawwabun was that in case of victory they would restore the Prophet's family's right to rule:

> نُرد ألأمر إلى أهل بيت نبيّنا الذين أتانا من قبلهم بالنِّعمة و الكرامه.

"We shall restore the affair to the household of our Prophet, through whom God has blessed us and honored us." 124

By the time of the uprising of Mukhtar, creedal Shi'ism had become not only well established in Kufah, the emergence of the *ghulat* had become an issue. The criticism of Kufan nobility against the Shi'ism of Mukhtar and his supporters was that they showed disaffection towards "the righteous predecessors" (*aslafuna al-salihin*) 125 . Probably what they meant was the Shiis' condemnation of many Companions of the Prophet (S) for their deviant actions.

Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Sajjad (*'a*) in his supplications presents creedal Shi`ism in quite distinct and clear terms. In his supplications there is hardly any which does not invoke blessings on 'Muhammad and the Household of Muhammad.' The employment of this expression clearly indicates its connotations. One finds such expressions as:

محمد و آلهِ الطيبين الطاهرين ألأخيار ألأنجبين.

“Muhammad and his Household, the pure ones and the good ones, the elect and the chosen,

Repeatedly in his supplications.” 126

The Imam's emphasis on mentioning the Prophet's progeny by the side of the Prophet's' name, in accordance with the command of God to invoke blessings upon the Prophet (S), has a great importance for the expression of Shi'i belief. Before citing some of the relevant statements from the Imam's supplications, it would be proper to mention a narration concerning the affirmation of the linkage between the Prophet and his Household. The Imam would say,

إن الله فرضَ على العالم الصَّلاة على رسول الله، صلَّى الله عليه و آله و سلم، و قرننا به فمن صلَّى على رسول الله، صلَّى الله عليه و آله و سلم،و لم يُصلِّي علينا لقي الله تعالى و قد بتر الصلاة عليه و ترك أوامره.

“God has made it obligatory upon the whole world to invoke blessings upon the Prophet (S), and He has united us with him. Someone who invokes blessings upon the Prophet (S) but does not invoke blessings upon us, his invocation of blessings is deficient and incomplete and such a one has forsaken God's commands.” 127

The raising of the issue of Imamate in the supplications of Imam Sajjad (`a) is a clear instance of the explication the Sht'j concept of Imamate in supplications. In them the concept of Imamate, aside from the aspect of worthiness for caliphate and leadership, is projected in its most sublime form as a divine office held by the infallible Imams as heirs to the knowledge of the prophets, especially that of the Noble Messenger (S). Here we will mention some of such statements from the supplications. In some of them, Imam Sajjad (*'a*) declares:

رَبِّ صَلِّ عَلى أطايِبِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ الَّذِينَ اْخْتَرْتَهُمْ لِأَمْرِكَ، وَ جَعَلْتَهُمْ خَزَنَةَ عِلْمِكَ، و حَفَظَةَ دِيْنِكَ، وَ خُلَفائَكَ في أَرْضِكَ، وَ حُجَجَكَ عَلى عِبادِكَ، وَ طَهَّرْتَهُمْ مِنَ الرِّجْسِ وَ الدَّنَسِ تَطْهِيراً بِإِرادَتِكَ، وَ جَعَلْتَهُمُ الوَسِيْلَةَ إِلَيْكَ، وَ الْمَسْلَكَ إلى جَنَّتِكَ.

“My Lord, bless the best of his (i.e. the Prophet's) Household, those whom Thou hast chosen for Thy affair, appointed the treasurers of Thy knowledge, the guardians of Thy religion, Thy vicegerents in thy earth, and Thy arguments against Thy servants, purified from uncleanliness and defilement with a thorough purification by Thy desire, and made the mediation to Thee and the road to Thy paradise.” 128

اللَّهُمَّ إنَّ هذا الْمَقامَ لِخُلَفائِكَ وَ أَصْفِيائِكَ وَ مَواضِعَ أُمَنائِكَ فِي الدَّرَجَةِ الرَّفِيعَةِ الَّتي اخْتَصَصْتَهُم بِها قَدْ ابْتَزُّوها... حَتَّى عادَ صَفْوَتُكَ وَ خُلَفائِكَ مَغْلُوبينَ، مَقْهُورينَ مُبْتَزِّينَ...

“O God, this station belongs to Thy vicegerents, Thy chosen, while the places of Thy trusted ones in the elevated degree which Thou hast singled out for them have been forcibly stripped! [But Thou art the Ordainer of that Thy command is not overcome, the inevitable in Thy governing is not overstepped! However Thou willest and whenever Thou willest! In that which Thou knowest best, Thou art not accused for Thy creation or Thy will!] Then Thy selected friends, Thy vicegerents, were overcome, vanquished, forcibly stripped; [they see Thy decree replaced, Thy Book discarded, Thy obligation distorted from the aims of Thy laws, and the Sunnah of Thy Prophet abandoned!] O God, curse their enemies among those of old and the later folk, and all those pleased with their acts, and their adherents and followers.” 129

وَ صَلِّ عَلى خِيْرَتِكَ اللَّهُمَ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عِتْرَتِهِ الصَّفْوَةِ مِنْ بَرِيَّتِكَ الطَّاهِرِينَ وَ اجْعَلْنا لَهُمْ سامِعِينَ وَ مُطِعِينَ كَما أَمَرْتَ.

“And bless Thy chosen, O God, from Thy creation, Muhammad and his descendants, the friends selected from among Thy creatures, the pure, and make its listeners to them and obeyers, as Thou have commanded.”130

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ أَيَّدْتَ دينَكَ فى كُلِّ أَوانٍ بِإِمامٍ أَقَمْتَهُ عَلَماً لِعِبادِكَ وَ مَناراً فى بِلادِكَ بَعْدَ أَنْ وَصَلْتَ حَبْلَهُ بِحَبْلِكَ وَ جَعَلْتَهُ الذَّرِيعَةَ إِلى رِضْوانِكَ وَ افْتَرَضْتَ طاعَتَهُ وَ حَذَّرْتَ مَعْصِيَتَهُ وَ أَمَرْتَ بِإِمْتِثالِ أوامِرِهِ وَ الْإِنْتِهاءِ عِنْدَ نَهيِهِ وَ اَلَّا يَتَقَدَّمَهُ مُتَقَدِّمٌ وَ لا يَتَأَخَّرَ عَنْهُ مُتَأَخِّرٌ فَهُوَ عِصْمَةٌ لِلَّائِذِينَ وَ كَهْفُ المُؤمِنينَ وَ عُرْوَةُ المُتَمَسِّكينَ وَ بَهاءُ العالَمينَ...

“O God, surely Thou hast confirmed Thy religion in all times with an Imam whom Thou hast set up as a guidepost to Thy servants and .lighthouse in Thy lands, after his cord has been joined to Thy cord! Thou hast appointed him the means to Thy good pleasure, made obeying him obligatory, cautioned against disobeying him, and commanded following his commands, abandoning his prohibitions, and that no forward-goer go ahead of him or back-keeper keep back from him! So he is the sanctuary of the shelter-seekers, the cave of the faithful, the handhold of the adherents, and the radiance of the worlds.”131

وَ أَقِمْ بِهِ كِتابَكَ وَ حُدُدَكَ وَ شَرائِعَكَ وَ سُنَنَ رَسُولِكَ صَلَواتُكَ اللَّهمَ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ وَ أَحْيِي بِهِ ما أَماتَهُ الظالِمُونَ مِنْ مَعالِمِ دِيْنِكَ وَ اْجْلُ بِهِ صَداَءَ الْجَوْرِ عَنْ طَرِيقَتِكَ، وَ أَبِنْ بِهِ الضَّرَّاءَ مِنْ سَبِيلِكَ، وَ أَزِلْ بِهِ النَّاكِبِين عَنْ صِراطِكَ وَ اْمْحُقْ بِهِ بُغاةَ قَصْدِكَ عِوَجاً... و اْجْعَلْنا لَهُ سامِعين

“Through him, establish Thy book, Thy bounds, Thy laws, and the norms of Thy Messenger's sunnah (Thy blessing, O God be upon him and his Household), revive the guideposts of Thy religion, deadened by the wrongdoers, burnish the rust of injustice from Thy way, sift the adversity from Thy road, eliminate those who deviate from Thy path, and erase those who seek crookedness in Thy straightness! Make him

mild toward Thy friends, stretch forth his hand over Thy enemies, give us his clemency, his mercy, his tenderness, his sympathy, and make us his hearers and obeyers, strivers toward his good pleasure, assistants in helping him and defending him, and brought near through that to Thee and Thy Messenger (Thy blessings, O God', be upon him and his Household)." 132

From the passages that have been cited, it becomes clear that the Imam was intent on propagating the Shi'i belief in Imamate as the most important of Shi'i conceptions. Similar statements concerning the high station of the *Ahl al-Bayt* are found in Imam Ali's statements in the *Nahj al-balaghah.*

The original Shi'i doctrine and beliefs that were prevalent among the generality of the Shi`ah were inspired by teachings whose groundwork was laid by the Imams. In the period under discussion, Imam Muhammad Baqir (*'a*) and Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (*'a*) were exponents of this original tendency.

The followers of Imam Muhammad Baqir consisted of a large number of narrators of traditions whose names are collected in Shi'i works of *rijal* such as the *Rijal of* Shaykh Tusi. 133. One of the implications of the belief in the divine office of the Imamate was that only the traditions narrated through the Imams were to be considered as reliable in matters of law and *Shari'ah.* In other words, the Imams employed all their efforts to introduce the *Ahl al-Bayt* as the sole authority to lead the people in religious and political life.

The notion *of* obligatory obedience to the Imam was central to this outlook and it implied the necessity *of* referring to the teachings *of* the *Ahl al-Bayt* in all affairs as set forth in the statements of the Imams from Imam M onwards. Earlier we have reviewed the statements of Imam Ali (*'a*) regarding the station of the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

Towards the end of the first century and the beginning of the second, when Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and Imam Ja`far al-Sadiq assumed the leadership of the Shi'ah, there emerged various creeds and sects each of which claimed the leadership of Muslims. Most of them acknowledged the political authority of the ruling caliphs so as to secure the people's religious leadership for themselves. But the Shi'i Imams in their statements stressed the principle, which is also mentioned in the *hadith al-Thaqalayn,* a famous tradition of the prophet that the only valid source of the Shari *'ah* were the Qur'an and the *Ahl al-Bayt*.

In the statements of Imam Baqir (*'a*) there are many instances in which the people are summoned to acquire their religious teachings from the *Ahl al-Bayt* as the sole source of authentic *Sunnah* and *hadith.* In a tradition it is reported that Imam Baqir (*'a*) said to Salamah ibn Kuhayl and Hakam ibn `Uyaynah:

شرقاً أو غرباً فلا تجدان علماً صحيحاً إلا شيئاً خرج من عندنا

"You will not find in the east or the west any sound piece of knowledge except that which is drawn from us". 134

In another statement referring to al-Hasan al-Basri, who was a well-known scholar of those times, the Imam said:

فَلْيَذْهَبِ الْحَسن- يعني البصري- يميناً و شمالاً فوالله ما يوجد العلم إلا هاهنا

"Let Hasan go wherever he may, by God, he would not find knowledge anywhere except here." 135

In another tradition it is stated:

فَلْيَذْهَبِ الناس حيث شاءوا، فوالله ليس الأمرُ إلا من هاهنا.

"Let they people go wherever they may want, but, by God, the affair lies nowhere but here (i.e. his house)." 136

These statements expressly call upon the people to consider the *Ahl al-Bayt* as the sole authority on religious teachings. The acceptance of such summons meant the acceptance of Shi`ism. In another statement Imam Muhammad Baqir declares:

آل محمد أبواب الله و الدعاة إلى الجنَّة و القادَة اليها

"The Household of Muhammad are the doors leading to Allah, who call the people to paradise and lead them towards it." 137

In another tradition he states:

كل شيءٍ لم يخرج من هذا البيت فهو وبالٌ

"Everything that does not derive from this house is disastrous." 138

Our purpose behind citing these statements is to make clear the decisive role that they played in the development of Shi`ism from a historical point of view.

Similarly in another statement Imam Muhammad Baqir is reported to have declared:

أيها الناس! أين تذهبون و أين يراد بكم؟ بنا هدى الله أوَّلكم و بنا ختم آخركم

"O people, where are you going, and where are you being led away? It is through us that God guided the first of you and it will be through us that the last one of you will be guided." 139

When Hashim, the Umayyad ruler, came to Madinah, among things that the Imam said to him was the following:

ألحمدُ لله الذي بعثَ محمداً بالحق نبياً و أكرمنا به، فنحنُ صفوة الله على خلقه و خيرَته على عباده و خلفاءه، فالسعيد من أتَّبَعَنا و الشَّقي من عادانا و خالفنا

"All praise belongs to God who sent Muhammad with the truth as the prophet, and honoured us through him. We are those whom God has elected over His creatures and chosen over His servants and (we are) His vicegerents. The felicitous are those who follow us and the wretched are those who oppose us and are hostile to us." 140

It was on account of these statements that Hisham summoned the Imam to Syria. In the traditions of Imam Sadiq (*'a*) too one finds a large number of statements which introduce the *Ahl al-Bayt* and their traditions as the sole means of guidance. In one of them the Imam declares:

أيَّتُها العصابة! عليكم بآثار رسول الله، صلى الله عليه و آله، و سنَّته و آثار الأئمة الهُداةِ من أهل بيت رسول الله

"O people! Take care to follow the legacy of the Apostle of Allah (S) and his Sunnah and the legacy of the Imams of guidance from the Household of the Apostle of Allah (S)." 141

In another statement addressing Yunus ibn Dabyan, the Imam says:

يا يونس! إن أردت العلم الصحيح فعندنا أهل البيت فإنّا ورثنا و اوتينا شرع الحكمة و فصل الخطاب

"O Yunus, if you seek authentic knowledge, it is with us, the people of the Prophet's household, for we have inherited it and have been bestowed with the canon of wisdom as well as conclusive judgment." 142

Imam Sadiq declares in another tradition:

إن عندنا ما لا نحتاج معه الى الناس و إنَّ الناس ليحتاجون الينا و إنَّ عندنا كتاباً بإملاءِ رسول اللهِ و خطُّ عليٍ، صحيفة فيها كل حلال و حرام.

"Verily, in our possession is that by virtue of which we do not stand in need of the people and the people stand in need of us. Verily, in our possession is a book (sahifah) dictated by the Apostle of Allah and in the handwriting of Ali, in which is mentioned everything pertaining to what is lawful and unlawful." 143

These statements reiterate what Imam Ali used to declare in his sermons addressed to the people of

Kufah:

أهل الكوفة! سلونا عما قال الله و رسوله، فإنّا أهل البيت أعلم بما قال الله و رسوله

“O people of Kufah! Question us concerning what Allah and His Apostle have said, for we, the people of the Prophet's household, know better than anyone what Allah and His Apostle have said”. 144

These citations indicate that from a historical point of view there existed a consistent religious drive that was pursued by the Imams of the Prophet's family which introduced the *Ahl al-Bayt* as the hub of the religious life of Muslims.

Here it is necessary to point out that due to the existence of *taqiyyah* (secrecy) during the larger part of the lives of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq, on account of hostile regimes as well as the harassment of the common people, there arose several difficulties for the Shi'ah which will pointed out in the discussion on the so-called extremist Shi'is (*ghulat*), problems which were faced by the Imams themselves due to the particular political circumstances of the times, which cannot be elaborated here.

The campaign to propagate the religious authority of the *Ahl al-Bayt* also faced problems arising from the emergence of claimants from among those who had family ties with the Imams and the Banu Hashim, who rose in opposition to the pious and learned Imams of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and created difficulties for them. Conflicting factions within the Alids opened the way for the spread of this deviation, leading to schism within the ranks of the Shi'ah on the one hand and, on the other, to separation of certain groups from the true Imams.

In this discussion concerning creedal Shi'ism one must also mention those who do not form a part of the Imami Shi'ah despite absence of belief in the legitimacy of the first two caliphs and faith in the Imam’s obedience to whom is obligatory. Among them is the sect of the Kaysaniyyah, who will be discussed ii the next section on *ghuluww.* At times, the *ghuluww* tendency was of such a character as to place the doctrines of a sect not only beyond the frontiers of Shi'ism but beyond the pale of Islam as well.

To be continued-insha' Allah...

1. It goes without mentioning that the expression “Shi'ah of Ali” occurs in some traditions of the Prophet (S).
2. M-Ya'qubi, Ta'rikh, vol. 1, p. 228.
3. Muqaddimah fi ta'rikh al-Islam, p. 48.
4. Masail al-Imamah, pp. 16-17; see also Murji'ah, ta'rikh wa andisheh, pp. 19-26; al-Zinah, p. 273; al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, vol. 5, pp. 57-58
5. Masail al-Imamah, p. 16
6. Khallal, al-Sunnah, p. 380.
7. Ibid., p. 381.
8. Ibid.., p. 393.
9. Ibid., p. 394.
10. Masa'il al-Imamah, pp. 65-66.

11. Khallal, al-Sunnah, pp. 398, 404; see also pp. 384, 396, 401-403
12. Ibid., pp. 404, 410.
13. Ibid., pp. 224-226.
14. Ibid., p. 421 (footnote).
15. Ibid., pp. 447
16. Ibid., pp. 489.
17. Ibid., pp. 492.
18. Ibn Abi `Asim, al-Sunnah, p. 460.
19. Al-Dhahabi Mizan al-i'tiddl, vol 2, p. 18.
20. Rijal al-Najashi, p. 297, no. 807
21. Mizan al-I'tidal, vol. 1, p. 432. Yahya ibn Main defines khashabi in these words:

خشبي ينسبون ألى زيد بن علي لما صلب عليها

"The Khashabis are those attributed to the planks of wood [khashabah] on which Zayd ibn Ali was crucified."

22. Lisan al-mizan, vol 6, p. 249.
23. Mizan al-I'tidal, vol 3, p. 552.
24. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 6; Dhahabi is mistaken concerning the takfir.
25. Al-Ma'rifah wa al-ta'rikh, vol 2, p. 806.
26. Yahya ibn Main, Ta'rikh, vol 3, p. 394.
27. Ibn Faqih Hamadaani, Akhbar al-buldan, p. 30.
28. Basa'ir al-darajat, pp. 76-77.
29. Ibu Abd al-Barr, al-Intifa', p. 13; Ta'rikh at-madahib al-Islamiyyah, p. 361.
30. Rijal e-Najashi, p. 177.
31. Tafsir al-Imam al-'Askari ('a), p. 316, no. 161.
32. Ta'liqah Amal al-'amil, pp. 239. 240.
33. Diwan al-Imam al-Shafi'i, p. 38.
34. Ibid., p. 74.
35. Zafarat al-thaqalayn, vol 1, p. 291 (from Rashfat al-sadi, p. 24, 'Abaqat al-anwar, the part on "Hadith al-'Thaqalayn," pp. 51, 911).
36. Diwan al-Imam al-Shafi'i, p. 57.
37. Zafarat al-thaqalayn, vol 1, p. 291 (from Mi'raj al-wusul fi ma'rifat Al al-Rasul, MS; Yanabi' al-muwaddah, vol. 2, p. 356; Ibn Shahr Ashub, al-Manaqib, vo1 3, p. 269; Fara'id al-simtayn, vol 2, p. 266).
38. Naqd, p. 218.
39. Rijal al-Najashi, p. 12.
40. Al-Mi'yar wa al-muwazanah, p. 51.
41. Al-Idah, p. 88; Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al balaghah, vol 12, p. 53.
42. At- Wafidat min al-nisa 'ala Muawiyah, p. 41.
43. Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol 5, p. 64; Ansab al-ashraf, vol 2, 348.
44. Al-Mi'yar wa al-muwazanah, p. 194.
45. Nathr al-durar, vol 2, p. 77; Tarikh al-Ya'qubi, vol 2, p. 171.
46. Ansab al-ashraf vol 2, p. 118.
47. Ta'rikh al-Ya'qubi, vol. 2, p. 173.
48. Ansaab al-ashraf vol. 2, p. 183.
49. Ibn Majah, Sunan, vol. 2, p. 1270, No. 3862.
50. Al-Muwafaqiyat, p. 312; Dhakha'ir al-'uqba, p. 95.
51. Kitab al-zinah, p. 259.
52. Al-Wafidat, p. 24.

53. Ibid., p. 29; Balaghat al-nisa', p. 67; Ta'rikh Dimashq, “tarajim al-nisa',” p. 531.
54. Waq'at Siffin, pp. 18, 23, 24, 46, 381, 385, 416, 436; Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, vol. 1, pp. 143-150; Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Dimashq, vol. 11, p. 229; al-Fusul al-mukhtarah, pp. 217-218; sec also Nahj al-sabaghah, vol. 3, pp. 55-57; Ansab al-ashraf vol 2, p. 246; al-Futah, vol 2, p. 484, vol 3, pp. 246, 270.
55. Tarikh al-Ya'qubi, vol. 2, p. 179.
56. Al-Futuh, vol. 3, p. 226
57. Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Maqtal 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a), in the journal Turathuna, no. 12, p. 126.
58. See al-Ghadir, vol 2, pp. 25, 34, 78, which cites it from various sources; al-Muqni' fi al-Imamah, pp. 75-76 and the footnote, where are cited various sources. In Ta'rikh al-Ya'qubi, vol 2, p. 128, and al-Muqni', p. 233 and other sources this couplet is narrated from Hassan ibn Thabit:

حفظتَ رسول الله فينا و عهدَه إليكَ و من أولى به منك، مَنْ و مَنْ
ألستَ أخاهُ في الإخاءِ و وصيّهُ و أعْلم فِهْرٍ بالكتاب و بالسُنن

“You have fulfilled the Apostle of Allah's instructions concerning us and the covenant he had made with you. And who is more closely related to him than you. Who? Who?

Are you not his brother and his wasi, and the most learned in the Scripture and the laws?”

59. Diwan Abu al-Aswad al-Duali, pp. 153, 293.
60. Al-Ghadir, vol 2, p. 48.
61. Ibid., vol 2, p. 34.
62. Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-baldghah, vol 1, pp. 143, 149.
63. Ibid., vol 1, p. 145.
64. Al-Ghadir, p. 123.
65. Waq'at Siffin, pp. 118-119; for several instances of the use of the term wisayah see Maalim al-madrasatayn, vol. 1, pp. 295, 328.
66. Al-Muqni' fi al-imamah, p. 125, for other verse on this topic see ibid., pp. 126-127.
67. Al-Ghadir, vol. 2, p. 25, from Nahj al-balaghah, vol 2, p. 377, Tadhkirat al-khawass, p. 62, 62 and other sources.
68. Al-Ghadir, pp. 67-71, Jala al-Din Urumawi' s edition vol 1, pp. 195-204.
69. Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi' al-abrar, iii, 536.
70. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 87.
71. Ibid. sermon 109
72. Ibid. sermon 239
73. Nathr al-durr, i 272; 'Uyun al-akhbar, ii, 236; al-'Iqd al farid (Dar al-I-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah), iv, 157; Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, i, 276; al-Jahiz, al-Bayan um al-tabyin, ii, 52.
74. Nah al-balaghah, sermon 154
75. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 144.
76. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 2.
77. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 152.
78. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 97.
79. See, for instance, verses 6:84-87; 4:38; 19:58; 29:27; 57:26.
80. Al Thaqafi, al-Gharat, p. 111
81. Allamah Amini, al-Ghadir, i, 66 from numerous Sunni sources; see also al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf, ii, 156
82. In the Battle of the Camel, the Imam invoked the testimony of the Hadith Ghadir in his confrontation with Talhah, see Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Dimashq, ii, 204
83. Nahj al-balaghah, sermon 1
84. Ibid., short sayings 147.
85. Ibid., letter 25
86. According to Shi'i belief, this notion already existed during the lifetime of the Prophet (S).

87. See Mahmudi, Nahj al-sa'adah fi mustadrak Nahj al-ballaghah, ii, 314,
88. Ibn Atham al-Kufi, al-Futuh, ii, 282-283.
89. Nasr ibn Muzahim, Waq'at Siffin, p. 46.
90. See Ibn Abi al-Dunya, Maqtal al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin ('a), 92
91. It has been said concerning Basrah that "It is a piece of Syria (al-Sham) in our midst," (qit'atun min ash-Sham nazalat baynana), see Ibn Sad, al-Tabaqat al-kubra, vi, 333.
92. Al-Gharat, p. 70.
93. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Jamal, p. 346
94. Waqa'at Siffin, p. 556
95. Ta'rikh al-Tabari, v, 43.
96. Ansab al-ashraf, v, 232.
97. See Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Dimashq, viii, 52.
98. Ibid., vi, 30, vii, 282.
99. Ibn Abi al-Dunya has cited a report to the effect that Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a) did not designate a successor; see Maqtal al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin ('a), 61
100. Al-Tabrisi, Majma' al-bayan, ii, 403; al-Irbili, Kashf al-ghummah, ii, 159; al-Mufid, al-Irshad, 220.
101. Waqa'at Siffin, pp. 424-425; al-Tabaqat al-kubra, iii, 34
102. Al-Futuh, iii, 147.
103. Al-Irshad, ii, 8; in the text cited in Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, xvi, 30-31 and Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, 33, the word wasi does not occur
104. Al-Futuh, iv, 151. In the Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, 36, and Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, xvi, 24 the wording is as follows: "wallani al-Muslimuna al-amr min ba'dihi" The difference between the two versions is quite evident.
105. Al-'Iqd al farid, iv, 474
106. Al-Aghani, xi, 116.
107. Bihar al-anwar, xl, 43.
108. See al-Murtada al-Amili, al-Hayat al-siyasiyyah li al-Imam al-Hasan ('a), 48-49.
109. Al-Mas`udi, Muruj al-dhahab, ii, 431.
110. Maqatil al-Talibiyyin, 33; Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, xvi, 30-31; Ibn Sa'd, Tarjumah al-Imam al-Hasan, 167; Ansab al-ashraf, iii, 28; Hayat al-Sahabah, iii, 526-527.
111. Muruj al-dhahab, ii, 432; this is a reference to verse 4:83.
112. Ibn Sad, Tarjumah al-Imam al-Hasan, 167
113. Ansab al-ashraf, iii, 170; al-Futuh, v, 135.
114. Al-Futuh, v, 135.
115. Ibid., v, 144-145.
116. Ibid., v, 98.
117. Ibid., v, 194.
118. Ibid., v, 199.
119. Ibid., v, 201.
120. Ibid., v, 206.
121. Ta'rikh al-Tabari, iv, 331, 336.
122. Al-Futuh, v, 268-269.
123. Ta'rikh al-Tabari, iv, 433.
124. Ta'rikh al-Tabari, iv, 464; Ansab al-ashraf, v, 210; Miskawayh, Tajarib al-umam, ii, 109; the wording cited by Ibn Atham, al-Futuh, vi, 82, is as follows: "halumma ila ta'at Ahl al-Bayt al-nubuwwah."
125. Ta'rikh al-Tabari, iv, 518.
126. Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah, supplication 6, verse 24.
127. Ta'rikh Jurjan, p. 188.
128. Al-Sahifah al-Sajjddiyyah, supplication 47, verse 56.

129. Ibid., supplication 48, verses 9-10.
130. Ibid., supplication 34, verse 5.
131. Ibid., supplication 47, verse 61.
132. Ibid., supplication 47, verses 63-64.
133. Al-Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Rijal, pp. 102-142.
134. Al-Shaykh al-Tusi, Rijal a-Kashshi, 209-210; al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, i, 309 al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-darajat, 9.
135. Al-Kafi, i, 51, al-Hurr al-`Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, xviii, 42
136. Al-Kafi, i, 399; Basa'ir al-darajat, 12.
137. Al-Ayyashi, Tafsir, i, 86;Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, xviii, 9.
138. Allamah Tabatabai, al-Mizan, iii, 176 from al-Kafi.
139. ` Al-Kafi, i, 478.
140. Al-Tabari, Dala'il al-Imamah,104, Bihar al-Anwar, xlvi, 306
141. Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, xviii, 23, 61
142. Ibid., xviii, 48
143. Al-Kafi, i, 241
144. Al-Marifah wa al ta'arikh, ii, 759

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