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Shi'ite Authorities in the Age of Major Occultation Part 1: Sheikh Mufid

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Abstract

Sheikh Mufid, a highly distinguished theologian and jurist, was the founder of developing the tradition in the fields of theology (*kalam*) and legal studies (*fiqh*). His role included establishing an independent identity of the school of Ahlul Bayt, created a model for the development of Shi'i fiqh, and formulated a method in theology and legal studies based on logical coherence between reason and revelation. This paper offers an explanation of Sheikh Mufid's efforts to revive the principles of fiqh and kalam, a brief history of the political situation during his time, and his status with prominent scholars and the Ahlul Bayt.

Introduction

Every year, Shi'a Muslims revere Muhammad ibn Muhammad in Nu'man, known as Sheikh al-Mufid, a prominent personality in the growth and achievement of legal studies (*fiqh*), theology (*kalam*), and religion of the Ahlul-Bayt. Sheikh Mufid was born in a Shi'i family in 336 AH. Sheikh Tusi, (d. 460 AH) introduced his mentor Sheikh al Mufid, in his al Fihrist thus: Muhammad b. Muhammad b. al-No'man, al-Mufid, had the kunya Abu Abdillah, and was well known as Ibn-al-Muallim. He was among the Imamiyya theologians, and was its final authority in his time. And he was a jurist (Faqih) of the advanced order, a man of polite demeanor, he was insightful and quick at repartee. Indeed, Sheikh Mufid dedicated his whole life to studying and promoting Islamic values. Shi'i jurists and theologians continue to benefit from his influence until today.

Tributes by other scholars

A very practical way to understand the real status of a scholar is to refer to the words of other great scholars about him. Of course, this task becomes very easy when the scholar at issue is Sheikh Mufid, who as *Najjashi* said “was too famous to be introduced.”Najjashi, Rijal, p. 399; Cf. Sheikh Muhammad Tustari, Qamus ar-Rijal, vol. 9, p. 552. It is common for ordinary people to admire scholars. However, it is more valued when a scholar is praised by other scholars. Ibn Nadim stated regarding Sheikh Mufid in his book, *Fihrist*: In our age, the authority of theology and the leadership of Shi‘a theologians exclusively belong to him. In theology, he is superior to others. He is intelligent, bright, and sharp. I saw him having advantage over others in leading discussions and debates.Muhammad ibn Ishaq al-Nadim, al-Fihrist, p. 332 & 365, with little changes in phrases, Tustari, ibid. Ibn Nadim is not the only one to find Sheikh Mufid’s life worthy of praise. Yafi‘i wrote about the Sheikh: He is one of the Twelvers’ dignitaries and he is the master of jurisprudence, theology and principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*). He would discuss and debate with the followers of every belief. He had a remarkable and worthy position in the Buyid government. He used to give charity very often and prayed a lot and practiced fasting frequently. He was a man of modesty and midnight prayer. He wore rough and coarse clothes. He wrote more than 200 books. More than 80,000 Shi‘ites attended his funeral.Mir’at al-Jinan, vol. 3, p. 28. In addition to his great knowledge, Sheikh Mufid has also been praised for his spirituality. Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalani wrote: 80,000 people embraced Shi‘a because of him. He was a true worshipper and ascetic. Sheikh Mufid was a man of midnight prayer. He was steadfast in acquiring knowledge. Little after the beginning of the night, he would wake up and begin prayer, then he would study and read the Qur’an.Ibn Hajar, Shahab ad-Din ‘Abulfadl’ Ahmad ibn ‘Ali ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Lisan al-Mizan, vol. 5, p. 368; Cf.: Muhammad Mahdi Bahr al-‘Ulum al-Tabatabai, Fawa'id ar-Rijaliyyah (Sayyid Bahr al-‘Ulum), p. 312. About the greatness of Sheikh Mufid, it would be enough to mention that the Nasibi Khatib Baghdadi wrote about him out of anger, enmity, intense hatred, weakness and inferiority concerning the scientific influence of Sheikh that: "Sheikh is extremist Shi’a and teaches their religion. He wrote many books to defend Shi‘ite beliefs. He is the person who derided the Companions [of the Prophet] and their Successors among the jurisprudents and the general authorities. He was one of the leaders of the Wrong by whom lots of people were killed until he died and Muslims became tranquil (cited from Ibn Hajar, Ibid. [Cf. Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 3, p. 231, cited from Tustari, Ibid, p. 555]) The Sheikh was so important that counting the important events of the year 413 AH Ibn Kathir Shami wrote: The great sheikh and Shi‘ite scholar passed away in that year. He was one of the major Shi‘ite authors and supporters of their seminaries. He had credit and influence among the kings of neighboring regions. Sharif Radi and Murtada were his students. They composed some couplets in his grief after he passed away.‘Abulfida’ ibn Kathir ad-Damishqi, al-Bidaya wan- Nihaya, vol. 12, p. 15.

Sheikh Mufid’s devotion to the Ahlul Bayt

Sheikh Mufid was supported by Imam Mahdi to the extent that he was among the few people who

received letters (*tawqi'*) from the Imam. During his leadership, Sheikh Mufid pleased the Imam with his actions. Upon reading the letters, the Imam illustrated he was satisfied with Sheikh Mufid. In one of these letters, after starting the letter in the name of God, the Imam wrote:

أما بعد سلام عليك أيها الولي المخلص في الدين

Peace be with you, O' my friend, the pure in his faith. In another letter to Sheikh Mufid, the Imam wrote:

سلام الله عليك أيها الناصر للحق الداعي إليه بكلمة الصدق

Peace be with you, O' the supporter of the Truth and the one inviter to Him through true speech.Tabarsi, al–'Ihtijaj, vol. 2, pp. 597 & 600; Cf. Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi Bahrul 'Ulum, Fawa'idur Rijaliyyah, vol. 3 & 4, pp. 317–320 and Muhammad Taqi Tustari, Qamusur Rijal, vol. 9, p. 533. Tabarsi quoted the text of Imam of Time's (aj) blessed letter to Sheikh Mufid, as follows: "In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful, Peace be with you, O' my friend, [who is] devoted to religion. Indeed, we praise Allah: there is no other god but Him and we implore Him to send peace upon our master, the messenger of Allah, Muhammad and his family – May Allah give you enduring divine success – to aid the truth. We inform you that we have become permitted to honor you by corresponding with you and ordering you to carry out the obligations on our behalf regarding our friends now and before you. May Allah powerful through their obedience and suffices their important issues through supervising and preserving them. May Allah approve you by His support. Be careful about what I inform you of and about observing your duties and passing it to one about whom you are sure and God willing, I will inform you about his signs. Though, we are far from tyrants and the Almighty determines for us, what suffices us and the faithful, until the world is at oppressors' hands; but meanwhile, we are aware of your status and conditions and there is nothing about you hidden to us. Any of you must do what makes us contented and avoids of what causes our repugnance and wrath; since our action [uprising] will be done suddenly when repentance is of no use and remorsefulness of sin do not make one free from our retribution. Allah gives you promotion and knowledge and grants you success out of His favours. Imam has written in another letter: In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful. God's blessings be upon you whom are the aid of the Truth and inviter to Him. O' One who invites to Allah through truth and honesty. Indeed, we praise Allah who has no equal. May Allah, the Almighty, supports you by His aid; One who approved passed friends of us. We promise you that any faithful brothers of us who is wary of God and delivers the portion of the needy in his property to them, will be safe from the troubles of the misguiders and darkness shaded on peoples; and anyone who is miserly and mean towards Allah's blessings and does not give them to those whom he should bond with them, will be wretched in this world and in the Resurrection. And if Allah makes our Shi'as successful in His obedience and in being united and in fulfilling their commitments, the blessing of our visit would not delay because of them. And this visit is because of the truth of their knowledge and sincerity which they have about us; so nothing makes them far from us except the reprehensible actions

they do and we disapprove them and we would not choose for them. والله المستعان وهو حسبنا ونعم الوكيل وصلواته على سيدنا البشير النذير محمد وآله الطاهرين و "And God is the [our] resort and Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the excellent trustee, may His blessings be upon our master, the bearer of good news and the warner: Muhammad and his pure family and…" (About this, see also Sheikh ‘Abbas Qummi, Fawa’id al Razawiyyah, vol. 2, p. 128) Some believe that during the thirty years of Sheikh Mufid's leadership, he received thirty letters from Imam Mahdi. The Imam’s use of the phrase “Dear committed brother, Sheikh Mufid” conveyed the high position of the Sheikh before Imam Mahdi (aj).

Ahlul Bayt’s support for Sheikh Mufid

In addition to receiving these precious letters, he was supported in other ways as well. In an anecdote, once a person from a village in the neighborhood asked the Sheikh to advise him on the death of a lady in their village – and that lady died while delivering her child. The Sheikh told him to bury the lady with her baby. The man expressed his gratitude towards the Sheikh and left. On his way, someone called him and said that the Sheikh has sent you a message: first take the baby out from the mother’s womb and then bury her. Indeed, the child is still alive. A few years later, that man and the child came to the Sheikh again and thanked him for sending that message. The Sheikh was excited upon realizing that the man with the message was sent by Imam Mahdi. The Sheikh understood his mistake, and sadly went to his house, closed the door, and decided not to issue fatwas anymore; but the Imam wrote a letter to him and stated: You should issue fatwas and will support you.Tunkabuni, Qisasul ‘Ulama', p. 399. In another narration, the Sheikh saw Lady Fatima in his dream. Holding Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn’s hands, she approached the Sheikh and said, "O Sheikh, teach them jurisprudence.” Stunned by what he had seen, he woke up. That morning, when he went to the mosque of Karkh district in Baghdad, he saw that the mother of Sayyed Murtadha and Sayyed Radhi holding their hands and came to the Sheikh accompanied by her servants. She then asked him to teach them jurisprudence. Thus, his dream was actualized.Ibn Abil– Hadid, Sharh Nahj al–Balagha, vol. 1, p. 4. Quoted from Tustari, Qamus ar–Rijal, vol. 9, p. 554. After the Sheikh passed away, the following couplets were written by Imam Mahdi about him, a couplet that was then carved on his grave: *“Be not heard the voice of the person who announced your death; For the day of your death is overwhelming for the Household. Though you are covered underneath the soil, The knowledge and Godliness have resided in you. The Uprising Mahdi is pleased ever since you began teaching lessons"*Quoted from ‘Afandi, Riyadul– ‘Ulama, vol. 5, p. 172; Majalisul–Mu’minin, vol. 1, p. 477. The Sheikh ‘Abbas Qummi, al–Konya wal–‘Alqab, vol. 3, p. 165; Cf. Tustari, Qamus ar–Rijal, vol. 9, p. 554.

Teachers

His father, al–Mu‘allim, brought him to Baghdad to study. He participated in the classes of many Shi‘ite and Sunni scholars. Among the Shi‘ite theologians, Abu ‘Ali Iskafi, Abu ‘Abdullah Marzbani, Abu ‘Abdullah Basri and Abulhasan Ali ibn Isa Rummani were his teachers.‘Abdullah Ni‘mah, Falsafeh ye

Shi‘e, p. 363. Joel Kremer, Ihya ye Farhangi dar Ali Buyeh, p. 111. Ibn Qulavayh Qummi, Abi Ja‘far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babiwayh (Saduq) ibn Walid Qummi, Abi Muhammad Hasan ibn Hamzah ‘Alawi, the famous jurisprudent, Ibn Junayd ‘Iskafi, and Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Dawud, were also among his famous teachers.Sayyid Muhammad Mahdi Bahr al-‘Ulum Tabataba'i, Op. Cit, p. 313- 314.

Students

Among his distinguished students were Sayyid Mortada Alam al-Huda and his brother Sayyid Radi, Sheikh Tusi, Najjashi Abuya‘li Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Hamzah Al-Ja‘fari and Abuya’li Sallar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Ad-Daylami, Abulfaraj Ali ibn Al-Husayn Al-Hamdani,Ibid. and Muhammad ibn Ali al-KarajakiSayyid Muhsin ‘Amin, A‘yan ash-Shi‘a, vol. 9, p. 421. and others.

Publications

Sheikh Mufid wrote many valuable books in the fields of ethics, history, and jurisprudence according to the needs of the society. His books were used in scientific and religious discussion circles. He wrote *Awa’il al-Maqalat fi al-Madhahib wa al-Mukhtarat*, *Al-Nukat al-I‘tiqadiyyah* and *Ajwibat al-Masa’il al-Sarawiyyah* on theology. The last one is a compilation of Sheikh Mufid’s answers to the people of Sari. This has been recently published in a collection called *‘Uddat al-Rasa’il*. In his works, he made the society of that time familiar with the Islamic political philosophy through explaining the principles of Imamate and leadership in Islam. On jurisprudence, he wrote the books *al-Muqni‘a*, *Al-A‘lam*, *Al-Masa’ilu Haghaniyyah*, etc. He wrote *Al-Amali* on hadith and Islamic ethics. *Al-‘Irshad* and *al-Jamal* are his historical books. He wrote *Al-Tazkiratu bi Usul al-Fiqh* on principles of jurisprudence. Part of his *al-‘Irshad* and other books like *al-Fusul al-‘Asahrah fi al-Ghaybah*, *Al- Jawabat fi Khuruj al-Mahdi*, and *Al-Kabir fi al-Ghaybah* were written about Imam Mahdi’s occultation. Many of his books were to strengthen the principles of the Twelver beliefs, even *Muqni‘ah*, which is his most important jurisprudential book. He discussed doctrinal issues in the first part and mentioned what Muslims must know and then he talked about jurisprudential issues. Sheikh Mufid wrote books on Imamate and political philosophy in Islam such as *Al-Ifsah fi al-Imamah*, *Al-Fusul al-Mukhtarah*, *Tafdil Amir al-Mu’minin ‘ala Sa’ir al-Sahabah*, *An-Nass ‘ala ‘Amir al-Mu’minin bi al-Khilafah*, *Imamat-u Amir al-Mu’minin min al-Qur’an*, *Al-Ikhtisas*, etc. As mentioned earlier, it is said that he wrote 200 books during his life. Sayyid Muhsin ‘Amin mentioned 195 of them.Cf. ibid, pp. 423 – 424; Najjashi, Rijal, p. 399 – 403; Muhammad Ali Tabrizi, Rayhanah, vol. 4, p. 60.

Mufid’s efforts to revive the principles of jurisprudence

After the occultation of Imam Mahdi, for about one or two centuries, Shi‘ite jurisprudents solved their issues only by referring to the text of hadiths and the Qur’an. However, as time passed, the emergence of new issues motivated them to use principles of jurisprudence to solve their issues. Ibn Abi ‘AqilAlso known as Hasan ibn ‘Ali al-‘Ummani, one of the Shi’a theologians who wrote al-Mutamassik bi Habl-i

Alir-Rasul and Muhammad ibn Junayd Iskafi(412 – 336) himself was one of the Sheikh Mufid's teachers and wrote the book Tahzib Ahkam ash-Shari'ah in 20 volumes were among the pioneers of this science. Ibn Ali 'Aqil taught Sheikh Mufid's teacher, Abulqasim Ja'far ibn Muhammad Quluwayh Qummi and ibn Junayd Iskafi directly taught the Sheikh. These two honorable men refined jurisprudence, using interpretive reasoning (*ijtihad*) methods. They acted upon principles of jurisprudence and rational proofs in Shi'ite jurisprudence and began interpretive reasoning (*ijtihad*).Ali Davani, The Millennial Commemoration of Sheikh Tusi, the lecture of Seyyed Muhammad Kazim Imam, p. 382, A Summary. They both influenced Mufid's way of thinking. He benefitted from their ideas and wrote a book on the principles of jurisprudence based on their fundamentals; he used the interpretive reasoning of principles of jurisprudence in deduction of rulings. His famous book on jurisprudence is called *al-Muqni'ah*.About this, Cf. Ali Davani, Mafakher-e Islam, vol. 3, p. 242; The Millennial Commemoration of Sheikh Tusi, pp. 384 – 386.

Mufid's role in promoting kalam

The Sheikh wrote in a simple style. He wrote *Tashihul I'teqad* (*Correction of Beliefs*) as a commentary on Sheikh Saduq's *Risaleh-ye I'tiqadat*Husayn Modarresi Tabataba'i, Muqaddameh-ei bar Fiqh-e Shi'i, p. 46. (*An Essay Concerning Beliefs*) and opened the doors of reasoning to prove the justifiability of Shi'ite ideology. Theology is the most important science every Muslim needs to be able to defend his religion. This science studies God's existence and attributes, His great actions such as creation of the universe, and sending messengers and the Books. It also discusses issues such as faith and disbelief, power and capability of acting, determinism and free will, excommunication and frustration (of the acceptance of actions), Imamate, and intercession. After the development of Islam and after Muslims met the Egyptians, Roman, and Iranian nations, and the Jews, Christian, Magus, and Zoroastrian scholars found access to their scientific sources, Muslims began to translate some of the Greek, Syrian, and Pahlavi books starting from the second century (AH) and changed its style using reason and philosophy. In this way, differences in religious doctrines emerged, particularly in issues such as justice and other attributes of the God, the seeing and transcendence of God, imamate, and intercession. As a result, the Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite schools were formed. Because the Mu'tazilites were followers of rational and philosophical rules, and Asha'arites focused on the outward sense of the verses and traditions, the two groups denounced one another. The Mu'tazilites who preceded had prominent figures who created the two Islamic cities of Basra and Baghdad and propagated their religion. This infiltrated the political sphere, which resulted the Abbasid caliphs: Mansur and Ma'mun's interest in I'tizal; both acknowledged the high authorities of that sect. At this time, Shi'a theologians felt responsible for the situation, and by the command of the Imam Mahdi (aj) they began to engage in discussions and debates with both the Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites which were the paths of extremism and wastage. Sheikh Mufid accelerated that theological movement. His debates are found in sources such as *Al-Ifsah fi al-Imamah* and *Al-Irshad fi al-Fada'il* and *Majalis al-Manat* and *Al-Imami*. He wrote books and treatises on kalam, especially the concept of imamate. Although the Shi'ites collaborated with the Mu'tazilites on issues such

as justice and the creation of the most fittings, the createdness of the Qur'an and the necessity of appointing the Imam, they also differed in issues such as the knowledge and infallibility of the Imams and the way in which they are appointed by God. At that time, Sheikh Mufid, a person with high eagerness, held debates with Ali ibn 'Isa Rummani, and Judges Abubakr Baqilani and Abdul Jabbar Mu'tazili. He wrote about 200 books verifying Shi'i Islam.

Sheikh Mufid's Debates

Sheikh Mufid was an alert scholar who fought with deviations of thought and religious innovations. He had expertise in various disciplines such as theology, jurisprudence, and Qur'anic sciences. Having acquired information about different religions and beliefs from their own words and works helped him offer Shi'a beliefs and opinions in the best possible way. Knowing his period of history and deviational groups and their beliefs, he began theological debates for restoring the rights of the Shi'a. He benefited from the help of the Buyids in his path as the Sheikh's debates with the judge Abdul Jabbar gained him 'Adud ad-Dawla Daylami's respect. It is said in Rijalthe science of the biographies of narrators. by Sayyid Bahr al-'Ulum's that when Sheikh Mufid came to Baghdad from his birth town, 'Ukbura, he attended the class of Judge Abdul Jabbar. One day, in the class Sheikh Mufid stated a very nice point. Judge Abdul Jabbar was so stunned by the Sheikh's point that he asked for the Sheikh's name and invited him to sit in his place and said, "You are truly *mufid* (beneficial)." The scholars and students who were in the class became astonished. The judge addressed the students, "Now, we are desperate to answer him. You answer him so that he goes and sits in his seat." 'Adud ad- Dawla Daylami heard about this and thanked the great service of this Godly man by awarding him a slave, a gown, a turban, a special horse with a golden saddle and bridle, and a hundred caliph's golden dinars, each of which was equal to ten dinars (9-gram gold coins). He also ordered that they give the attendees of the Sheikh's class ten manAn old scale of measurement equal to about 3 kg. bread and five man meat every day. After this event, the Sheikh was nicknamed Mufid and was soon publicized. After that, the kings of neighboring regions realized the aspiration and scientific superiority of Sheikh Mufid. He lived in an era when he could freely defend Shiite beliefs. Thus, he took advantage of every opportunity and debated with scholars of other sects. He persuaded them and was usually disliked by some for doing so. However, due to his political authority, they could not protest against him. Sometimes they would wish for his death. It is written in Ibn Kathir Shami's chronology that Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu'man Abu Abdullah entitled as ibn al-Mu'allim was the Sheikh of the Shi'as and an author of their beliefs and their supporter. The kings of the neighboring regions believed in him. Because vast majority held Shi'a beliefs, many scholars from the tribe attended his circles and benefited from him. He eloquently defeated his opponent scholars. Therefore, those who opposed Sheikh Mufid cursed him because they were defeated in their debates with him. Furthermore, due to their arrogance, they would not relinquish the ideologies of their predecessors. Their arrogance was to the extent that according to Ibn Kathir Shami, after Sheikh's demise, one of those scholars ornamented his house out of happiness, called his followers to congratulate him, and told them that his own death was no longer hard for him

since he finally saw Sheikh Mufid's death. However, some of these scholars after being defeated in debates by the Sheikh confessed to the Sheikh's skills and knowledge in different fields of science, since they did not want to become notorious or to be left alone.Quoted from the book Majalisul-Mu'menin Mufid's debates show that he used the open political atmosphere resulted from relationships with the Buyid dynasty to strengthen and promote the Shi'a organizations.

The political situation during Sheikh Mufid's time

Sheikh Mufid was contemporary with some Abbasid caliphs like Ta'i' Abbasi and 'Adud ad-Dawla. As mentioned before, the Buyid brothers Mu'izz ad-Dawla Ahmad in Baghdad, 'Imad ad-Dawla Ali in Fars, and Rukn ad-Dawla Hasan ruled in Rey. Rukn ad-Dawla's son was 'Imad ad-Dawla and was contemporary with Sheikh Mufid. After him 'Adud ad-Dawla, his nephew, went to Shiraz to rule after him.Muhammad ibn Khund shah ibn Muhammad known as Mir Khand, Tarikh-e Rawdat al-Safa, vol. 4, p. 45, cited by Abbas Parviz, Tarikh-e Dayalameh va Ghaznaviyan, p. 60. 'Adud ad-Dawla himself was a scholar who would communicate with other scholars in various fields. He tried to build many buildings and established the 'Adudi hospital in Baghdad and employed physicians there. He established different constructions, such as digging wells and repairing paths in his dominion, especially in Baghdad and Shiraz. He ruled for 34 years and left behind many constructions, the most important of which was the shrine of Imam Ali in Najaf, Iraq until his death in 372 AH. As mentioned, 'Adud ad-Dawla's father was Rukn ad-Dawla who had a warm relationship with Sheikh Saduq. Moreover, his uncles and other members of his family, and all of his companions such as Sahib ibn 'Ubbad were devotees of the Prophet's descendants; naturally, his father and close relatives' beliefs influenced him. 'Adud ad-Dawla had a special respect for Imam Ali. To build the Imam's holy shrine, he and his troops stayed in Najaf for one year and donated money to build a splendid constructionCf. Aqili, Atharul-Wuzara', p. 197, and Irshad- e Daylami, a book of the 8th century AH, vol. 2, p. 225, cited from Ali Asghar Faqihi, Shahanshahiy-e 'Adud ad-Dawla, p. 128 & 130. and assigned endowments for it. This building went under construction until 735 AH.Ibn Zuhrah, Ghayatul- Ikhtisar fil- Buyutat al-Alawiyyatul- Mahfuzatu minal- Ghubar, a book of the 8th century AH, p. 161, cited item, p. 132. 'Adud ad-Dawla deeply respected Sheikh Mufid and used to set aside great gifts for him.Rawdatul- Jannat, p. 538, cited item, p. 133. He prepared the grounds for the Sheikh to preach Shi'a beliefs. The vast parts of the Islamic lands became the territory of 'Adud ad- Dawla. According to Tha'alibi, in our time, the ruler who repossessed nine countries of great rulers was 'Adud ad-Dawla and Abu Shuja' Fana Khusru.Tha'alibi, At-Ta'iful-Ma'arif, p. 83, cited item, p. 198. Not only did he possess the territories of Imad ad-Dawla, Rukn ad-Dawla, and Mu'izz ad-Dawla, but he also annexed other islands to his domain. Upon scrutinizing the writings of Ibn Juzi, Abul Mahasin (Ibn Tughri Bardi) and Ibn Imad, it can be implied that rulers of Egypt were to adhere to the rules commanded by 'Adud ad- Dawla and other Buyid rulers. All people were to strictly obey him.Ibn Khalkan, Wafayatul- A'yan, vol. 1, p. 454, cited item, p. 200. Abul Mahasin says: In 338, Anjavi, the son of Akhshid, ruler of Egypt sent gifts for 'Adud ad-Dawla and made some requests about his government.Jamaluddin Abul Mahasin Yusuf ibn Taghari Bardi al-Atabaki, al- Nujumuz-

Zahirha Fi Mulukil- Misr wal- Qahirah, vol. 3, p. 298. Ibn ‘Imad Hanbali, Shadharatuz- Dhahab fil Akhbar min Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 68, cited item. Moreover, ‘Adud ad-Dawla repossessed Sham. The governor of Damascus, the Turk Abu Mansur Iftakin, who was Mu‘izz ad-Dawla’s slave before, wrote to ‘Adud ad-Dawla that Sham was conquered and asked for permission to attack Egypt. ‘Adud ad-Dawla established many bureaus in his government, one of which was the bureau of inspectors. At that time, inspectorship was among the most important positions and jobs, since they had full law enforcement authority and they could interfere in various issues. They were chosen from among those who were distinguished, those who would not be affected by anything and anyone in performing their duties. An inspector was one who would enjoin people to good and forbid them from evil. Such a person, along with his assistants, would walk around in the lanes and bazaars day and night and took proper action in any case. For example, if they saw a person quietly reading the verses of the Qur’an in his prayer while he should read aloud, they would remind him of that. Or if they saw that the prayer leader prolonging his prayer more than usual, and this may irritate the weak or the sick, they would forbid him from that. If they saw people not attending the Friday or communal prayer, they invited them to it. Anytime they saw someone yelling in the streets or bazaars while drunk, they would perform discretionary punishment or a legal punishment on him. They always took action when needed and the people did not dare defy their commands. These cases included shortchanging or blocking part of a lane or bazaar, bothering a neighbor, loading his animal more than he can handle, or loading a ship more than its normal capacity where it would likely sink, or waited at the judge’s house and the judge did not come out on time.Darbareh-ye Ahkam-e Hasabeh va Muhtasab: Cf. Al-Qadi Abi Ya‘la Muhammad ibn al-Hussayn al-Farra’, Ahkamus- Sultaniyyah, vol. 2, from p. 240 on; Ibn ‘Abdirabih Andulusi, Aqdul- Farid lil- Mulk al-Sa‘id, p. 175 on, cited from Faqihi, ibid, pp. 228 & 229. The chieftainship (*niqabat*) of the Alawites was common from the second period of the Abbasid caliphate (after Mu‘tasim). One of the descendants of the Prophet, called Sayyid, from the family of Talib, was chosen by the caliph to look after the affairs of the descendants of the Prophet, who were Shi‘a, and anything related to the Alawites was done through the “Chief” (*naqib*). This was a kind of privilege and respect granted to the Alawites. In addition to the capital, ‘Adud ad-Dawla assigned chiefs of the Alawites in other cities as well in 263 AH. He assigned Abul Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Ishaq Alawi in Baghdad and Wasit and Abul Fath Ahmad ibn Umar ibn Yahya in Kufa and Abul Hasan Ahmad ibn al-Qasim al-Muhammadi in Basra and Ahwaz.Cf. Shahanshahi-ye ‘Adud ad-Dawla, p. 228. One of the political events during the period of Sheikh Mufid occurred when Baha’ ad-Dawla Daylami discharged Ta’i‘ Abbasi and recalled Qadir. In 381 AH, he became the caliph by the allegiance of his companions and relatives.Hamdullah Mustowfi Qazvini, Tarikh-e Gozideh, p. 349. According to Hamdullah Mustowfi, in 375 AH, Ismailis took possession of Sham and Hejaz from Abbasids (Cf. Ibn al-‘Ibri, Mukhtasar Tarikh al-Duwal, p 243 & 248). At the time of Qadir, caliphate flourished. He could refresh the declining glory and majesty. Later, the Buyid Dynasty became extremely weak. After Baha’ ad-Dawla Daylami, his son, Sultan ad-Dawla, became his successor in Baghdad. In 411 AH, the Baghdad army revolted against Sultan ad-Dawla and dismissed him and made his younger brother, Abu Ali Mushrif ad-Dawla, his successor. After his death, his son, Abu Tahir Jalal ad-Dawla became the ruler of Iraq and Khurasan. He did not go to Baghdad and stayed

in Basra. Residents of Baghdad sermonized in the name of ‘Abu Kalijar, son of Sultan ad-Dawla, but Abu Kalijar was faced with some obstacles; therefore, there was no emir in Baghdad for two years. At the same time, a group of residents in Baghdad supported Abu Kalijar, while some others were followers of Jalal ad-Dawla. Finally, in 418 AH, he went to Baghdad and officially began his ruling. At the time of the caliphate of Qadir, the local emirs, with the intention of expanding their territories, repeatedly invaded, plundered, and killed in the cities of Islamic countries.Cited from Bayat, Tarikh-e Iran az Zuhur-e Islam ta Dayalameh, pp. 146 &147. According to Hamdullah Mustowfi, in 399 AH, Sham was taken out of Hakim ibn ‘Aziz Isma‘ili’s hands and repossessed by Bani Kilab tribe. From Egypt, the Fatimi ruler wrote letters to Baha’ ad-Dawla, Ibn Abi ash-Shawk, Qarwash ibn Muqallid ‘Aqili, ruler of Mosul and Ali ibn Mu’ayyid and Mansur ibn Husayn and Hasan ibn Sammak al-Hifali which were powerful emirs and invited them to Batinis. They accepted his invitation (but the Aqili ruler of Mosul recognized Abbasids as ruler through the advices of some of his friends and relatives) Tarikh-e Gozideh, p. 350. At the same time, the Shi‘a were being attacked by extremists in Baghdad. They repeatedly invaded Karkh (residence of Sheikh Mufid and the Shi‘a) and burned it. In such a turbulent situation, Sheikh Mufid patiently tolerated the hardships although he was sometimes required to leave the city. Despite these sufferings, he successfully led the Shi‘a.

Religious Challenges in Sheikh Mufid’s Time

During the period of the Buyid Dynasty, the Hanbalis played the role of political and religious party. Their main stronghold was in Baghdad, in Bab al-Basra neighborhood and the Great Mosque of Mansur where well-known propagators spoke. From Bab al-Basra, some attacked the Shi‘a who were mainly inhabited in the Bab al-Taq neighborhood on the right side of the river and in the Karkh locality in the left side. The Shi‘as’ stronghold was the Buratha Mosque. During this period, the Hanbali school went through two distinctive phases: the first was when the caliph al-Radi (323/935) reacted to their harsh actions and charged the Hanbalis as violators of religion and the second was when the caliph al-Qadir (441/1018) recognized the Hanbali school as the official religion of the government. In this period, Tabari, the great historian and commentator of the Qur’an, was charged with infidelity and was buried secretly in the doorway of his own house.Yaqut ibn ‘Abdullah Rumi, Irshad al-Arib Ila Ma‘rifat al-Adib, vol. 6, p. 423; Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil, vol. 80, pp. 98 & 99; Ibn Athir, Bidayah, vol. 11, p. 132, No. 45-46. Quoted from Joel Kremer, ibid., pp. 103 & 104. The Hanbalis’ disturbance forced the caliph Muqtadir to order the destruction of the Buratha Mosque in 313/925 because of the accusations that some of the companions of the Prophet were cursed by some Shi‘a worshippers in that mosque or because of some of the actions of some extremists. But the extremism of Barbahari and his followers in oppressing people for various accusations caused the caliph al-Radi to warn the Hanbalis and condemn them for spreading doubtful beliefs and offending Muslims, accusing the Shi‘a of apostasy, inviting Muslims to respect the tomb of ibn Hanbal and yet prohibit the people’s pilgrimage to the graves of the Shi‘a infallible Imams.Miskawayh, Tajaribul Umam, Vol. 1, pp. 322 & 323. Ibn Athir, al-Kamil, vol. 8, pp. 229 – 231; idem, Bidayah, vol. 11, pp. 181 & 182, cited idem; Cf. Howzah Magazine (No. 54), Bahman & Isfand, the

millennial commemoration of Sheikh Mufid, p. 4 (This matter shows that even before Buyid rule Shiites had a good situation and influence in Baghdad somehow.) Finally, the Abbasid caliph condemned Barbahari's actions and issued the command of imprisoning his followers. This event occurred before the ruling of the Buyid Dynasty in Baghdad. After an increase of violence and issuance of the order of the caliph al- Radi, in 323/935, the tensions were temporarily appeased. But later, at the time of Bajkum the enmity blazed again. When he repaired and equipped the Mosque of Buratha in a reply to the request of the Shi'a, Bajkum had to stop the resistance of the Hanbalis. After Bajkum was killed in a fight with Kurds, his Hanbali oppositions continued their severe rebellion and savagery and plundered Darb al-'Awn, the financial center of city where many Jews lived and tried to destroy the Buratha Mosque. Caliph al-Muttaqi, who had once decorated this mosque, protected it and imprisoned many Hanbalis. He also commanded the detention of the leader of the Shi'as of Bab al-Taq (943 CE/ 332 AH) and in this way he opposed the instruction of Nasir al-Dawlah for supporting the Shi'a. It has been suggested that one cause of dismissal of Mustakfi was his order to arrest the leader of the Shi'a and his refusal to release him despite the command of the caliph.Joel Kremer, 'Ehya-e Farhangi dar Ahd-e 'Al-e Buyeh, p. 104. Joel Kremer says: In the Buyid period, the special relation of the Hanafi school with the Abbasids became weak, and Abubakr Razi, the Imam of the Hanafis, refused being appointed as the high judge by the command of the caliph al-Muti' who considered Razi to be a puppet of Buyids.Abubakr Razi, one of the students of Karkhi, d. 370 AH / 981 CE, Cezgin, AS, vol. 1, pp. 444- 445, cited item, p. 107. But the Shafi'is wanted to fill the gap made by resignation of the Hanafis. The Hanafis were generally stricter than Shafi'is in religious issues. Tanukhi, the famous Hanafi judge was a stubborn opponent of the Shafi'is. The Shafi'is had many followers in Eastern part and the Buyids supported their goals in the Mesopotamia. At the beginning of the Buyid period, 'Utbat ibn Abdullah was the supreme judge of Baghdad. In Basra, there were many Malikis and Baqilani, the famous theologian of Asharis and Malikis, was from Basra. Abubakr Abhari Maliki (d. 375 AH / 985 CE) taught in the mosque of Mansur in Baghdad. The Zahirites were mostly residents of Mesopotamia and Iran and they were few; but their judge and some of their clerics were in Baghdad. The Jaririds titled after the founder of their school, Muhammad ibn Jarir Tabari, had some famous scientists such as Mu'afa ibn Zakarya (d. 390 AH / 999 CE) whose slave, Jariri had a public debate with one of the leaders of the Akhawanus- Safa. During the period of Buyids, Mu'awiyya, worshipping became widespread in some regions. At that time, the Kharijites were not so active. There is clear evidence that they were living in the regions far from the capital Baghdad in Azerbaijan, Sistan, Oman, and Hadramut. The Kharijites rose up after the death of Mu'izz ad-Dawla in Nazwa and there selected an Imam called Hafs ibn Rashid as their leader and an emir called Ward ibn Ziyad, but Mutahhar ibn Abdullah, the vizier of 'Adud ad-Dawla suppressed this rising.Ibid., p. 109. The dominant theological school during the time of the Buyids was Mutazilite. Abu Bakr Baqilani masterfully defended the Ash'ari ideas at the same time. The Mutazilites and Ash'arites moved their center of activities from Basra to Baghdad. Mutazilite school of Basra and Baghdad had a branch in Rey. The Ash'arites were always considered as Sunnites and Mu'tazilite were divided into two: Sunnis and Shi'as, most of whom were Zaydis. In Baghdad, there were three Mu'tazilite branches: the old branch whose founder was Abulhasan Khayyat, and the BahshamiyyahBahshamiyyah was titled

after its founder Abu Hashim Juba'i. , founded by Abu Hashim Juba'i, and the Akhshidiyyah, established by Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Akhshid. These groups accused each other of atheism and apostasy, and this difference of opinion was used by their opponents among the hadith scholars and philosophers. Abu Hashim Juba'i (d. 321 AH / 933 CE), son of Abu Ali Juba'i (d. 303 AH / 915 CE) transferred the Basra branch to Baghdad. Bahshamiyyah had many followers such as Abu Abdullah Basri (d. 369 AH / 980 CE) who was followed by many people such as the famous judge, Abdul Jabbar. The vizier Sahib ibn 'UbbadHowever, there are evidences that Sahib accepted Shi'a because of his relationship with important Shiite personalities such as Sheikh Saduq; therefore, it is said that half of his poetry was eulogy of Muhammad's family and also Sheikh Saduq dedicated his book 'Uyun-u Akhbur ar-Rida to him. was one of the devoted Mutazilites and a student of Abu Hashim and Abu Ishaq Nasibayni who invited Abdul Jabbar to Rey. Therefore Baghdad and Basra schools had a branch in Rey. This school kept its close relationship with the Zaydis and many of them, such as Abu Abdullah Da'i studied in the class of Abu Abdullah Basri. Some of the Zaydi Imams were students of Abdul Jabbar. At the end of the 4th century AH / 10th century CE, Mutazilite's influence in Zaydi Shi'a reached its climax. Akhshidiyyah had a considerable difference of opinion with Bahshamiyyah. Ali ibn 'Isa Rummani was one of the tenacious defenders of Bahshamiyyah, the competitor of Abu Abdullah Basri (Bahshami) and wrote a book on rejection of Juba'i. Meanwhile, the Buyids tried to reconcile them.Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn al-Murtada, Tabaqatul Mu'tazilah, p. 107, cited item, p. 119. In the 3rd century AH / 9th century CE, some of Mutazilites were influenced by the Shi'a. They had relationship with the famous and the Shi'a family of Nowbakhti who combined the Mutazilite theology with the Shi'ite ideological system in issues such as divine attributes and justice and will, while they kept the opposition of the Shi'a ideology to Mu'tazilite principles. Shi'ite hadiths scholars of Qom reacted in opposition with the Nowbakhtis' tendency toward Mutazilites, in which Abu Ja'far ibn Babiwayh was their leader. Abulhasan Karkhi, the famous Baghdadi teacher (d. 340/952) combined Hanafi jurisprudence with Mu'tazilite theology and Abu Abdullah Basri and Abu Abdullah Da'i were among his students in jurisprudence. Abulhasan Hasani (one of the Alawis) also taught jurisprudence and theology....Ibid., p. 112 & 115; Abu Mansur Tha'alabi, Yatimatu Dahr, vol. 3, p. 197; ibid, p. 121. At the time of the caliphate of Qadir when the power of Buyids was weakening and a new authority of Sunnis was going to begin, Mutazilite actions and influences decreased. In 409 AH/1018 CE, caliph announced that the believing in non-eternality of the Qur'an is a form of atheism deserving death and used his power to prevent the appointment of Mutazilites as judge and witness and deputy.Cf. Ibn Jowzi, al-Muntazam, vol. 15, p. 128. Generally, the 4th century AH was the climax of religious oppositions and conflicts. In the meantime, the conflicts between the Shi'a and opponents is an important part of this period. Therefore, the responsibility of Sheikh Mufid in presenting pure Islam in different fields especially in ideology and theology was very burdensome; therefore, as a devoted and effortful soldier he would defend the intellectual borders of Islam and Shi'a viciously despite all dangers threatening him. While tolerating dangers of attacks of opponents and accepting the pain of exile, first he started stating the principles of justice of Shiite attitudes against the non-Shi'ites and second, among different schools of Shi'a, especially the Isma'iliyyahs and the Zaydis justified the Twelver Shi'a schools and taught students such as Sayyid Murtada Alam al-Huda, Sayyid Radi and Sheikh Tusi, both of which

followed him during their own lives.

The Domination of Sheikh Mufid's Religio-Political Thought

In his youth, Sheikh Mufid benefited from the knowledge of the Imams regardless of all the dangers that threatened him. He held scientific and theoretical circles. He would defend the truth of the Imams' authority in mystical, religious, political, and judicial fields without any dissimulation. He also challenged the deviants and the misguided. Presentation of Islamic position concerning government in that deviant and despotic society was among his most considerable political activities. Such issues questioned the legitimacy of the government. To play his role in the political activities of that time, Sheikh Mufid, the intellectual leader of the Shi'a, highlighted the issue of Imamate and leadership and for the first time, raised the issue of guardianship (*wilayah*) of the highest jurisprudent, and introduced it as a divine authority in the shadow of the Buyids' temporary supports while he was facing the dangers of deviant oppositions who were intellectually dependent on the tyrant Abbasid Caliphate. The notion of wilayah was derived from the Imams' speeches, and was supported by of other great Shi'a scholars. It prepared the ground for fulfilling jurisprudential management of social and political aspects of the society at special historical periods of the political life of the Shi'a among which are the periods of jurisprudential management of jurisprudents such as Sayyid Murtada and Sayyid Radi, Allamah Hilli, Khajeh Nasirid-Din-e Tusi, Muhaqqiq Karaki, the Sheikh Baha'i, Allamah Majlisi and at last, the comprehensive management of Imam Khomeini over the notion of *wilayah*. Through presentation of the issue of wilayah in his jurisprudential books, especially in *al-Muqni'ah*, Sheikh Mufid made an abundant and noticeable effort in reinforcing the principles and basics of Shi'ism. This holy notion made him one of the most hated Shi'a jurisprudent by the scholars of other schools of thought. Although his scientific awe, grandeur, and reverence humbled his opponents, they desired his death because of their feelings of inferiority.Cf. Ahmad Azari Qummi, Velayat-e Faqih az Didgah-e Foqahay-e Islam, p. 167. Sheikh Mufid interpreted wilayah as the authority of the jurists to serve as political leaders. In his book *al-Muqni'ah*, he introduced the jurisprudents as the supervisors of the issues which sultans are in charge of them.Cf. Sheikh Mufid, Muqni'ah, pp. 537- 616 & 643. Cited from Azari Qummi, ibid, p. 184. Sheikh Mufid frequently used the words *Imam*, *sultan*, and *jurisprudent* and clarified the responsibilities of those who held these titles. Sheikh Mufid entered the term "*Sultan*" in the Shiite jurisprudential dictionary for the first time, because the powerful Abbasid emirs, such as the Samanids and Buyids, considered the word *sultan* and *caliph* as synonyms in Sunni terminology, and had chosen the title *sultan* to be distinguished from Abbasid caliphs. It is obvious that by the term *sultan*, the Sheikh meant a just sultan or the sultan of Islam, i.e. those who are appointed by God, such Imams of the Shi'a and the emirs appointed by them. "Jurisprudent" is the third title used in Sheikh Mufid's interpretations and he mentioned the following responsibilities for him which is similar to an Imam's: 1. Collecting legal alms and passing them to those deserving them 2. Establishing the law of God if at all possible 3. Judging the disputes in society 4. Establishing the Friday congregational prayer and the Eids.In his valuable book, Muqni'ah, Sheikh Mufid says, "Upholding the law is assigned to the sultan of Islam, i.e. Imams whom are

appointed by Allah, the Almighty. Their honor have appointed Shiite jurisprudents as rulers and have granted them the permission to decide about these issues; so whereas they can observe the law about their slave or children and they are not afraid of a tyrant sultan, they must do it and in the case of any harm to their own self or their religion, they are absolved from this responsibility. Shi'ite jurisprudents can be the Imam or hand it over to whom they appoint in daily prayers, prayers of Eids, the prayers due to the eclipse of the sun or the moon, if they are safe from the harm of mischief-makers. They can judge in disputes and reconcile the parties in case of lack of clear evidences and uphold whatever is referred to a judge in Islam; since Imams have assigned these duties to them." Sheikh Mufid also considered the gathering of legal alms and passing them to those who deserved them as a task of jurisprudents to supervise. (Regarding this, refer to: Muqni'ah, pp. 252, 812, 164 & 178; Cf. Hawzah magazine, The millennial commemoration of Sheikh Mufid, 1992 AD, issue No. 54, pp. 89 – 94). Overall, Sheikh Mufid believed that the guardianship and sultanate of jurisprudents is equivalent to the absolute guardianship and government of Prophet Muhammad and the Imams, and with this guardianship, people must be absolutely obedient to them.Cf. Azari Qummi, ibid, p. 178.

His Death

At the time of 'Adud ad-Dawla, Sheikh Mufid lived with respect and grandeur. At the age of about thirty years old, he spoke, debated, and discussed with scholars, but neither his freedom nor opportunities lasted long. The jealousy of the opponents and sometimes hatred of ill-wishers disturbed the calmness and security of Sheikh Mufid and eventually led to him being captured and exiled.As-sayyid Ja'far Murtada, Sira'ul Hurriyyah fi Asrel- Mufid, p 22; Rasul Ja'fariyan, Tarikh Tashayyu' dar Iran, vol. 1, p. 365. Despite the Buyid's Shi'a government, Sheikh Mufid was exiled from Baghdad twice after internal disputes between Sunnis and Shi'ites (1002 CE / 393 AH & 1007 CE / 398 AH).Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil, vol. 9, p 126, 146, 147, below the events of two aforesaid years, cited by Ju'il Kurmir, 'Ehyay- e Farhangi dar Ahd-e Al- e Buye, p 111; Cf. Jafariyan, loc cit. Once he was exiled in 393 AH when there was a riot in Baghdad and Baha al-Dawlah sent his major commander to Baghdad. He forbade the Sunnis and Shi'ites from expressing their religious opinions and for this reason, he exiled Sheikh Mufid. Again in 409 AH, Sultan al-Dawlah appointed Ibn Sahlan, son of Baha al-Dawlah as governor of Baghdad. Upon arrival in Baghdad, Sahlan exiled Sheikh Mufid.Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fit- Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 5, cited by Ahmad Luqmani, Sheikh Mufid (Mualim Ommat), pp. 29, 128. Earlier in 391 AH Sunnites attacked to Karkh neighborhood by the help of anti-Shi'ite Turks of Baghdad (Cf. Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil, vol. 9, p. 76, cited from Hawzeh magazine (54), ibid, p 15). And in 413 AH, he bid farewell to this world. Sheikh Mufid died on the eve of Friday, 3rd of Ramadhan, 413 AH. His student Syed Murtadha prayed the Salaat of Mayyit for him, in the presence of nearly eighty thousand people, a crowd never seen before in any funeral in Baghdad. Sheikh Tusi (d. 460 AH) describes this event in al-Fihrist: "The day of his death drew the largest crowd ever seen in any funeral, and both, friends and foes, wept uncontrollably". Al-Mufid remained buried in his own house for two years; afterwards, his body was relocated to Kadhimain, Iraq, where it was buried near his mentor, Ja'far b. Qawlayh's grave facing the 9th Imam, Imam

Muhammad Taqi al-Jawad. Today, the thousands of pilgrims who visit the holy shrines in Kadhimain continue to visit his grave.

Conclusion

Sheikh Mufid's contributions to Shi'ism continues to serve as the foundation of Shi'a doctrines ten centuries after his demise. Numerous scholars praised him as a result of his great influence on the society of his time, and scholars praise him until today. The Sheikh fulfilled the needs of the society in the fields of ethics, history, and jurisprudence and familiarized others with the principles of Imamate and leadership in Islam. Many of his publications strengthened the principles of Twelver beliefs. Additionally, he revived the principles of Islamic law with the emergence of contemporary issues. His role in promoting theology with his publications and expertise in debate offered a moderate view as opposed to the extreme positions of the Mu'tazilies and Ash'arites. The ruler of his time, Sultan Adud al-Dawla, gave the Sheikh the opportunity to spread this vast knowledge. With the emergence of the caliphate of Qadir and their oppressive rule, Sheikh Mufid patiently endured the hardships and adamantly led the Shi'a. As a result of his high morals and spirituality, he pleased the Ahlul Bayt with his actions and they continuously supported him throughout his endeavors.

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