CRISIS AND CONSOLIDATION IN THE FORMATIVE PERIOD OF SHI'ITE ISLAM

Abū Ja'far ibn Qība al-Rāzī and His Contribution to Imāmīte Shi'ite Thought

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Preface

The years 260-329/874-941, known among the Shi'ites as the period of Minor Occultation, comprised undoubtedly the most difficult and critical period in the history of Imāmī Shi'ism. It began with the death of the eleventh Imam, Ḥasan al-'Askari, of no apparent successor, thus creating a total doctrinal chaos in the Imāmī Shi'ite community, particularly in Mesopotamia. That resulted in turn in internal conflicts, many desertions and conversions, and the emergence of numerous splinter groups and subsects within the Imāmī community. The situation encouraged other groups such as the Mu'tazilites and Zaydites to criticize and attack more aggressively the traditional Imāmī doctrines, which were now more vulnerable than ever before. Continuation of the old internal disagreements and schisms in the Imāmī community itself over some of the main theoretical issues, such as the validity of reason, the nature of the Imām, and the scope of his authority, only further complicated the situation. Beyond these elements, political suppression of the Shi'ite community, which reached its peak during the reign of the Abbasid Murawakkil (232-247/847-861) and continued throughout most parts of the period of Minor Occultation, added to the tension. The need for reconstruction of some of the fundamental principles of the doctrine, such as the question of why humanity should always need an Imām, was real and pressing.

The Imāmī theologians of that period thus had the difficult task of defending the doctrine against attack while trying to offer new interpretations of fundamental principles to accommodate new realities and developments. Gradually, in this period, which continued for most of one century, Imāmī Shi'ism developed into what later came to be known as Twelver Shi'ism with its special theological analyses and points of view. Abū Ja'far b. Qība al-Rāzī, one of the most prominent and active Imāmī theologians of this period, had a major role in all of these reconstructions and developments.
The present work attempts to shed light on some aspects of the Imamite doctrine during the period of Minor Occultation and on the contributions of Abū Ja'far b. Qiba to the formation of the developed Imamite doctrine. The second part of this volume contains the texts of three short works of this scholar together with their English translation.

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PART ONE

Imāmite Shi‘ism in the Late Third/Ninth Century
From Responsibilities to Rights

Affection for the household of the Prophet is an old phenomenon in Islam that dates back to the time of the Prophet himself. Among his companions some were especially devoted to his family. Historical accounts suggest that after the death of the Prophet, when succession to his position was contested, those companions upheld the priority of the House of the Prophet, represented at the time by 'Ali b. Abi Taib, first cousin of the Prophet and husband of his beloved daughter, Fatima, and supported him as the most eligible candidate. This opinion failed, however, to get enough support as did the suggestion that the leadership of the Muslim community be divided between the Emigrants (Muhajirun) and the Medineans (Ansar). Instead, the Quraysh, the powerful tribe of the Prophet, managed to appoint one of their seniors from another clan to the position. 'Ali did eventually assume the caliphate twenty-five years later but for less than five years; he was assassinated in 40/661. With the failure of the brief rule of his son, Hasan al-Mujtaba, political leadership passed from the Prophet's family to the Umayyad clan, which had been among the most bitter enemies of the Prophet until the last years of his life. The circle of followers that gathered around 'Ali, especially from the time of Uthman, the third caliph, expanded immensely during the short period of 'Ali's caliphate, which was marked by fervent religiosity. During the reign of Muawiya (41-60/661-680), the followers of 'Ali comprised a distinct group within the larger Muslim community and were severely persecuted by the government. In the course of their involvement in subsequent issues, such as the rise and fall of Husayn in 61/680, the revolt of the Tawwabin (the Penitents) in 64-65/683-684, and the rise of Mukhtar al-Thaqafi in Kufa in 66-67/686-687, they emerged as an active anti-Umayyad group that supported the 'Alids as the legitimate rulers of the Muslim state.'

The Shi’ite movement would eventually become one of the two main divisions of Islam. Until the end of the first century of the Hijra, however, it did not distinguish itself from the main body of the Muslim community except by the mentioned political tendency. As Islamic legal schools began to form early in the second/eighth century, Shi’ism gradually became a distinct legal school, most of whose members followed the teachings and legal opinions of the most learned member of the House of the Prophet at the time, Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Baqir (d. 114/733). Soon, during the explosion of theological debates in Islamic society and the emergence of different schools of kalām, the Shi’ite movement gradually began to take specific positions on various theological topics, mainly following the positions of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and his son, Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (d. 148/765). By the time of the Abbasid revolution in 132/749, the Shi’ite movement had thus grown into a complete and independent political, legal, and theological school.

After the death of ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭalib, his two sons by Fatima, Hasan and Husayn, became the focus of devotion for those who supported the claim of the House of the Prophet to leadership of the Muslim community. After the death of these two, the son of Husayn, ‘Ali Zayn al-Abidin, came to be recognized by most of the community as the head of the Prophet’s House. One radical splinter sect, the Shi’ites of Kufa who supported Mukhtar al-Thaqafi in his revolt against the Umayyads, however, chose a third son of ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭalib, Muhammad b. al-Hanaﬁyya, as their spiritual leader. This group, which came to be known as the Kaysanites,3 did not survive beyond the second/eighth century. After ‘Ali Zayn al-Abidin, his son, Muhammad al-Baqir,4 and then Muhammad’s son, Ja’far al-Sadiq, each enjoyed in turn wide public recognition as the head of the House of the Prophet.5 In the time of Ja’far al-Sadiq, however, a further split divided the Shi’ite community into two camps, Zaydites and Ja’farites. The Ja’farites later came to be known as the Imams.

After Ja’far al-Sadiq, the majority of his followers continued to recognize, as a general rule, the most distinguished (usually the eldest) son of the previous Imam of his descendant as the next Imam. The common belief was that each Imam designated his successor from among his male descendants through testament (waṣiyyya), sometimes also called explicit designation (naṣi). The list of the Imams came, therefore, to be a chain of fathers and sons (except for the second and third Imams, Hasan and Husayn, who were brothers) as follows:

1. ‘Ali b. Abī Ṭalib (d. 114/733)
3. Husayn b. ‘Ali al-Shahid (d. 151/768)
5. Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Baqir (d. 114/733)
6. Ja’far b. Muhammad al-Sadiq (d. 148/765)
7. Mūsā b. Ja’far al-Kāzim (d. 183/799)
8. ‘Ali b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (d. 230/848)

2. See Kastsh: 425 quoting Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq as saying: “Before Abū Ja’far [Muhammad al-Baqir] the Shi’ites did not know what they needed from among the lawful and unlawful except for what they had learned from the people [the overwhelmingly Sunnite community], until Abū Ja’far came among. He opened [the way for them], explained [religion] to them, and taught them.” See also ‘Ayyāšt: 1:252–3, where a similar report says: “Before Abū Ja’far, the Shi’ites did not know the [right way to perform the ceremonies for the pilgrimage to Mecca (haji)] nor what was lawful and unlawful until he emerged and performed the pilgrimage for them, explaining to them how to do it as well as to the lawful and unlawful until they no longer needed the people [the Sunnites] [for these things]. And whereas they had previously learned from the people, the people now learned from them.”

3. See the article “Kaysaniyya” in EI, 4:836–8 (by W. Madelung).
4. This, of course, did not mean that all Shi’ites who gathered around Muhammad al-Baqir and followed him considered him to be an Imam in the same sense that the title later implied (see below, chapter 3).
5. These facts are well attested by the letter that the second Abbasid caliph, Ma’mūr (r. 136–158/754–775) wrote to Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Hasan al-Nafs al-Zakiyya (d. 145/762) in which he said: “No one born from among you [the ‘Alids] after the death of the Prophet was more virtuous than ‘Ali b. al-Husayn. . . . After him, no one among you was like his son, Muhammad b. ‘Ali . . . , nor like his [Muhammad b. ‘Ali’s] son, Ja’far” (Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihi, 5:82–3; Mubarrad, Kāmil, 4:119; Ţabarî, 7:569–70).
with the Umayyads grew ever more pervasive, many hoped that future time, a revolutionary leader from the House of the Prophet would rise up, overthrow the unjust government, and establish the already well established in the Muslim community that at some it seems that by the late first-early eighth century, the belief was that the reign of justice and truth. This millenarian figure was called by the Shi'ites the qa'im, "the one who rises up." On the other hand, many Muslims, including many orthodox Sunnites, maintained that the 'Alid Imams possessed a legitimacy that the reigning caliphs lacked. The Shi'ites believed that when the time came, the true Imam would take up arms, expel the usurpers, and regain his proper place. Many Shi'ites hoped that when this occurred, they would be the reigning party and would finally be free from the persecution they had so long endured. On the other hand, it seems that by the late first/early eighth century, the belief was already well established in the Muslim community that at some future time, a revolutionary leader from the House of the Prophet would rise up, overthrow the unjust government, and establish the rule of justice and truth. This millenarian figure was called by the Shi'ites the qa'im, "the one who rises up."

In the early second century of the Hijra, as popular discontent with the Umayyads grew ever more pervasive, many hoped that Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, would lead an insurrection. He did not do so. This stance surprised Shi'ites whose conceptions of the Imam of the House of the Prophet required him to take action when conditions were propitious. When asked why despite his many followers in Iraq he had not led the awaited rising, he excused himself by saying that he was not the awaited qa'im and that the qa'im would appear in the future when the time was right for such a step. Two decades later, however, his son, Ja'far al-Sadiq, also failed to act at a time that many considered ideal for the Imam, if he had sincerely wished to do so. He did not act, and the disillusionment engendered led the Shi'ites to reexamine long-established beliefs.

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq was the most respected member of the House of the Prophet during the time of upheaval that saw the overthrow of the century-old Umayyad rule. Ja'far was an obvious candidate to succeed the Umayyads as leader of the Islamic state, and many expected him to step forward into the role. Iraq was full of his followers. A passionate follower told him that "half of the world" supported his stance surprised Shi'ites whose conceptions of the Imam of the House of the Prophet required him to take action when conditions were propitious. When asked why despite his many followers in Iraq he had not led the awaited rising, he excused himself by saying that he was not the awaited qa'im and that the qa'im would appear in the future when the time was right for such a step. Two decades later, however, his son, Ja'far al-Sadiq, also failed to act at a time that many considered ideal for the Imam, if he had sincerely wished to do so. He did not act, and the disillusionment engendered led the Shi'ites to reexamine long-established beliefs.

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The Imám, however, remained quiet and did not enter any political activity. He also forbade his followers to engage in any political activity or to join any armed group, make Shi'ite propaganda, or recruit new members into the Shi'ite community. Possibly along the same line, he at times did not even like to be called the Imám. He explicitly told his people that he was not the qa'im, and that there would be no change in the political status of the Shi'ite community during his generation. Some Shi'ites thereupon turned to the more active and politically ambitious Hasanid branch of the House of the Prophet and joined the revolt of Muhammad b. 'Abd Allâh al-Nafs al-Zakiyya who was widely believed to be the long awaited savior. The belief that the qa'im would imminently appear was by now so strongly held that people continued to look for him even after al-Nafs al-Zakiyya had been defeated and killed (145/762); according to some, the qa'im was to appear as soon as fifteen days after the killing of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya. It did not come to pass.

Other groups of Shi'ites did not consider the principal role of the Imám to be political. They instead viewed him as the most learned man from among the descendants of the Prophet who was to teach people what was lawful and what was not and to exhort learned man from among the descendants of the Prophet who was the head of religion. In this manner, the community changed the emphasis of the institution of Imámate from political to religious authority. Hishâm b. al-Hâkam's theory of the Imám's divine protection against sin and error (isna') was a major contribution to further accommodate the shift. In their times, Muḥammad al-Baqir and Ja'far al-Sâdiq were each venerated by the entire Muslim community as profoundly learned men and indisputable authorities on the shari'a. In the view of the followers of the Imâms, however, their knowledge was qualitatively different from that of other learned men for it was the knowledge of the House of the Prophet, which derived ultimately from the Prophet himself. It was, therefore, unquestionable truth and indisputable authority, representing in effect a part of the revelation that the Prophet had received from God.

While these changes were taking place, new opinions and ideas were put forward by a new extremist wing of the Imâmite tradition, which had links to the now-vanished Kayšânîte movement from falsity, to protect the religion from being distorted and corrupted by the ignorant and misguided, and to reestablish whatever truth suffered distortion or corruption at their hands. He guarded the integrity of the religion: if the people added anything to it he would reject it, and if they omitted anything he would restore it. Society needed an Imâm to whom they could refer problems they encountered in religious practice, an Imám who would act as the ultimate authority in explicating the law of God and the true meaning of the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition so that differences of opinion among the believers could be removed by following his instructions in every question.

Even for those who emphasized the political role of the Imâm, Ja'far al-Sâdiq's failure to assume an active political role resulted in a major reconsideration of the institution of Imámate. The Imâm was no longer the long-awaited savior; at least, this was no longer considered to be his major role. Now, for them like the others, the Imâm was the head of religion. In this manner, the community changed the emphasis of the institution of Imámate from political to religious authority. Hishâm b. al-Hâkam's theory of the Imám's divine protection against sin and error (isna') was a major contribution to further accommodate the shift. In their times, Muḥammad al-Baqir and Ja'far al-Sâdiq were each venerated by the entire Muslim community as profoundly learned men and indisputable authorities on the shari'a. In the view of the followers of the Imâms, however, their knowledge was qualitatively different from that of other learned men for it was the knowledge of the House of the Prophet, which derived ultimately from the Prophet himself. It was, therefore, unquestionable truth and indisputable authority, representing in effect a part of the revelation that the Prophet had received from God.
of the late first/seventh century. The extremists emphasized the supernatural qualities of the Imam, maintraining that he was the centerpiece of the universe: "If the earth were left without an Imam for even one minute, its entire structure would collapse." The result, nevertheless, was the same—a downgrading of the political aspect of the institution of Imamate.

The old expectations were, however, renewed during the time of Ja'far al-Sadiq's successor, Musa al-Kazim. The circulation of a hadith among the Shi'ites of his time that suggested that the seventh Imam would be the qa'im created widespread expectations within the Shi'ite community that it was Musa who would establish the rule of truth. The establishment of the institution of representation, which he initiated and which, as will be seen below, provided him with a chain of representatives across the Muslim world who systematically collected religious funds and donations on his behalf and sent them to him in Medina, made those expectations look more realistic than at any time before. He personally was a brave person, outspoken against the government and daring to challenge the caliph in his presence. Many people, later even some Sunnites, considered him to be the legitimate caliph, which was tantamount to declaring the Caliph of Baghdad illegitimate. The situation provoked the suspicion of his contemporary caliph, Harun al-Rashid (r. 170-193/786-809). Musa was arrested in Medina and brought to Iraq, where he was imprisoned for several years before he was put to death in 183/799. Some of his partisans were also arrested and ruthlessly tortured. The announcement of his death in jail was a strong blow to the Shi'ites' hopes and expectations. For many years thereafter, most refused to believe he had really died, hoping that someday he would reappear to inaugurate the rule of truth. The belief that he was the qa'im, based on a hadith that was widely known in his time, could not so quickly disappear.

The political component of the Imamate was once more renewed in 201/817 when the Abbasid Ma'mun (r. 198-218/813-833) designated Imam 'Ali al-Rida as his heir apparent, but the Shi'ites' hopes were dashed once again by the death of 'Ali al-Rida in 203/818. The ninth and tenth Imams succeeded their fathers when they were very young, which led to controversy in the Shi'ite community after the death of 'Ali al-Rida as to whether a child of seven years was legally qualified or knowledgeable enough to become an Imam.

The solution that was offered and that was widely and well received by the Imamiite community strengthened the extremists' ideas about the nature of the Imamate and further downgraded the political aspect of the office. This solution involved the suggestion that the Imam became the Imam through divine grace and that knowledge or political status were mere contingent effects of the possession of the divine light and not essential elements of the Imamate.

By this time, however, the Shi'ite community was already well established both socially and doctrinally. A vast body of theological and legal literature existed—quotations from the Imams Muhammed al-Baqir and Ja'far al-Sadiq and, to a lesser extent, from Musa al-Kazim compiled in books and collections by Shi'ite scholars—that made the Shi'ite community self-sufficient except in odd cases where a new question arose or reports conflicted or opinions regarding interpretation differed. The office of Imamate now also regularly received the gifts, aims, and charitable donations and endowments that faithful Shi'ites regularly sent to the Holy Threshold (al-nabiy al-muqaddasa), the house of the Imam. For the last few decades of the period of Minor Occultation this situation remained unchanged. The faithful Shi'ites in this period changed the balance of demand 42 and that was widely well received by the Imamiite community strengthened the extremists' ideas about the nature of the Imamate and further downgraded the political aspect of the office. This solution involved the suggestion that the Imam became the Imam through divine grace and that knowledge or political status were mere contingent effects of the possession of the divine light and not essential elements of the Imamate.

42. In the beginning there was an idea that he would return within eight months (Kashshi: 406). The time limit was later modified.

43. See below, chapter 2.
and expectation to the benefit of the Imām. They no longer asked the Imām to rise against the political system. With the caliphs in firm control this would have been an unthinkable task. They faithfully fulfilled their duties toward the Imām and did not neglect his rights. The list of the payments made by the faithful to the Imām now included the khums, a tax of 20 percent levied on the incomes of all Shi'ites. The Imāms Muhammad al-Baqir⁴⁵ and Ja'far al-Sādiq⁴⁶ had previously not collected this tax from their followers. The belief was widespread that this levy would be instituted by the qā'īm when he came to establish his rule of justice.⁴⁷ The systematic collection⁴⁸ of the levy as a mandatory tax seems to have started in 220/835 when Imām Muhammad al-Jawād ordered his financial representatives to collect the khums on certain kinds of income.⁴⁹ In the same document, he emphasized that he was collecting the khums in that one year, which happened to be the last year of his life, because of a certain reason he did not want to specify (perhaps the financial need of some members of the House of the Prophet at the time). As attested by historical reports, however, the collection of this tax by local representatives of the Imām became a quite well-established practice during the latter part of the incumbency of the next Imām, 'Alī al-Hādī.⁵⁰

The Imāms reportedly had received funds from their followers from the time of Ja'far al-Sādiq.⁵¹ In the beginning, these consisted mainly of the obligatory alms (zaqāqī) that many Shi'ites chose to give to the Imām,⁵² voluntary donations and endowments (nadhūr, waqf, etc.), and gifts.⁵³ Shi'ites originally gave their donations to Ja'far al-Sādiq in person. In 147/765, the Abbasid caliph Maṣūr ordered Ja'far to come to court where he took him to task on a number of points, among them that the people of Iraq had chosen Ja'far as their Imām and paid their obligatory alms to him.⁵⁴ According to another report, the caliph also accused Ja'far of receiving kharāj, administrative taxes, from his followers.⁵⁵

Ja'far al-Sādiq does not, however, appear to have appointed representatives to collect taxes for him.⁵⁶ The system by which agents (wukalā', sing. wukāl) of the Imāms collected religious funds—which had already grown into an elaborate and well-organized institution by the middle of the third/nineth century—was established by Ja'far's son, Mūsā al-Kāzīm. Mūsā's representatives served in all the major Shi'ite communities in Egypt,⁵⁷ Kufa,⁵⁸

52. See Tusi, Tahdhib, 4:60, 91.
54. Ibn Ta'lab: 82. See also Kulaynī, 6:446.
55. See Majlisi, 47:187. The same charge was made against his son, Mūsā al-Kāzīm, during his Imāmate. See Kashshāi: 265; Ibn Bābawayh, 'Uyūn, 1:81.
56. Ghayba: 210, reports that Nasr b. Qābūs al-Lakhmī and 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hajjāj acted as financial representatives of Ja'far al-Sādiq, but there is no evidence in the early Shi'ite literature to support this claim. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hajjāj was later an agent of Mūsā al-Kāzīm (Hīnayārī: 191; Kashshāi: 431. See also ibid.: 265, 269, where the Imām is said to have sent a message to another disciple of his through 'Abd al-Rahmān b. al-Hajjāj). According to another report (Kulaynī, 6:446; Ibn Tawūs, Muḥaj al-da'awat: 198), Ja'far's servant, Mu'allā b. Khunays, also collected donations on the Imām's behalf. This obviously does not mean that he was a financial representative (wukāl) in the sense understood in the later history of the Imāmate administration.
57. Kashshāi: 397–8; Ghayba: 43.
Baghdad, Medina and elsewhere. At the time of his death, Mūsā’s agents had large sums for him in their possession, from ten to thirty thousand dinārs. These funds came from a variety of levies, including the zakāh. Imām ‘Alī al-Ridā continued his father’s initiatives, appointing his own representatives in various places. The new financial institution continued to grow under later Imāms. It seems that Muhammad al-Jawād periodically sent special envoys to the Shi‘ite communities to collect the levies and donations, including funds that had been gathered during the year by his numerous local representatives.

The Imāmate’s financial administration was further developed into a very well-organized institution in the time of Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī as attested by references in early sources about how the institution worked. The Imām regularly sent letters to local Shi‘ite communities and urged the faithful to fulfill their financial obligations toward the Imām by regular payment of his rights to his representatives. This payment was “an obedience to God that guaranteed lawfulness and cleanliness for their wealth and the protection of God for their lives.” The revenues of the office of the Imāmate had increased dramatically with the addition of the khums tax, which the Imām’s agents systematically collected from the faithful as his right. Because it was a new imposition, there were questions about the scope of the “right.” Three main representatives of ‘Alī al-Hādī reported to him that they had faced questions from the Shi‘ite community about the right of the Imām that the representatives did not know how to answer.

In 233/848 Imām ‘Alī al-Hādī was brought to the capital Sāmarrā’ on orders of Caliph Mutawakkil and put under constant observation. His activities were severely restricted there, and for the rest of his life the Imām’s financial representatives were the main channel through which he kept contact with his followers in other parts of the Shi‘ite world. The Shi‘ite community experienced

73. They were Abū ‘Alī b. Rāshīd, who was appointed as the Imām’s chief representative in Iraq in 232/846–847 (Kashshi: 513–14; see also Kulaynī, 7:59; Tusi, Tahdhib, 9:234) to replace ‘Alī b. al-Husayn b. ‘Abd Rabbih, who had died three years before (Kashshi: 510); ‘Alī b. Mahziyār, who followed ‘Abd Allāh b. Jundub as chief representative in Awāz (ibid.: 549); and ‘Abd Allāh b. Muhammad al-Hamadānī, the sole representative in Hamadān (ibid.: 608, 611–12; Najēshī: 344). The Imām, of course, had many other financial agents in other parts of the Shi‘ite world (see, for instance, Kashshi: 512–14). It is worth noting that almost all Imāmīte notables that were described by the last Imāms as trustworthy or reliable were financial representatives and agents (see, for instance, Kashshi: 557 where al-Ghāib al-‘alī [‘Alī b. Ja‘far b. Hamnān, ‘Alī al-Hādī’s principal agent; see Kashshi: 523, 527, 606–8; Ghayba: 212], ‘Abd Allāh b. Nāḥāj al-Nakha’ī [the Imām’s financial representative in Kūfah; see Kashshi: 514, 525, 572, 612; Najēshī: 102; Tusi, Tahdhib, 9:195–96; idem, Istibsdā, 4:123; Ghayba: 212], ‘Abd Allāh b. Muhammad al-Hamadānī [mentioned above, the Imām’s representative in Hamadān] and Ahmad b. Ḥasan al-As‘ārī al-Qummi [the agent in charge of the endowments made for the Imāms in Qum; see Ḥasan al-Qummi: 211; Ghayba: 212] are described as ibtiṣa [trustworthy]). Many of the Imām’s agents were not scholars, a point certainly true with ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘īd al-‘Amrī and his son, Muhammad (see below), who were described by ‘Alī al-Hādī and Ḥasan al-‘Askārī as reliable and trustworthy (Ghayba: 146–7, 215–20). The word ibtiṣa in these cases means financial trustworthy, al-ibtiṣa al-mu‘āmūn ‘alā mālī ‘alāb (ibid.: 216). The description was meant to direct the faithful to these agents for the payment of their donations and religious dues and not for doctrinal and legal questions and as sources of religious knowledge, as many Shi‘ite scholars of the past (see, for instance, Ḥurr al-‘Amīlī, 18:100) and modern scholars of the field (such as Kohlberg, “Imām and Community”: 38–9) have thought.

74. Kulaynī, 1:547; Tusi, Tahdhib, 4:123.
75. See Kashshi: 509, 580–1.
severe persecution during Mutawakkil's reign. He purged Shi'ites from all administrative positions and ostracized them socially. The shrine of Husayn in Karbalā', a major center for Shi'ite gathering and pilgrimage, was razed to the ground. Many Shi'ite notables, including some of the Imam's representatives, were imprisoned or put to death.

The Zaydite branch of Shi'ism was by now a well-established school of thought and a major rival of Imámite Shi'ism. In a treatise from that period entitled al-Radd 'ala l-rāwāfīd, the Zaydite author who was a contemporary of Imám 'Alī al-Hādī criticized him for levying the khums on the general income of all Shi'ites, for appointing financial representatives in all towns to collect funds, and for, he claimed, "using the money for himself rather than distributing it to the needy." Similar criticism was launched a few decades later by Abū Zayd al-'Alawi in his Kitāb al-Ishbād, among others, which was answered by the Imámite authors.

The emphasis on the financial right of the Imam in the Shi'ite community continued through the incumbency of the next Imam, Hasan al-'Askari, and into the period of the Minor Occultation. Some of the letters that Hasan al-'Askari wrote to his local representatives are preserved as well. In these letters, the Imam attaches major significance to the regular collection of religious funds, obviously because of the pressing needs of the office to meet the needs of Shi'ite society, which was passing through a very difficult time. In an untraditionally long letter that the Imam wrote to one of the notables in the Shi'ite community of Nishāpūr, he complained that the community there was not paying its dues to the Imam as properly as they had during the time of his father. He equated any notables in the Shi'ite community of Nishāpūr, was during whose time that if it was not for the fact that he did not want them to become subject to God's punishment, he would not insist or contact them again. At the end of the letter he named several of his agents in different towns whom he praised for their good service and reliability. As might be expected, some of these local agents later misappropriated funds, and others who had not received authorization from the Imam claimed to be his representatives and fraudulently collected money from the people. Numerous associates of the Imam were excommunicated in this period for such transgressions, including one of those named and praised in the letter just mentioned.

'Uthmān b. Sa'id al-'Amrī served as a financial agent first to Imám 'Alī al-Hādī (apparently from the time of the Imam's removal to Sāmarra') and then as the principal financial aide to Imam Hasan al-'Askari during whose time 'Uthmān was in full control of the office. 'Uthmān outlived both of his masters and remained head of the Imamite administration after the death of Hasan al-'Askari.

85. That was 'Urwā b. Yahiya al-Dihqān, the Imam's chief representative in Baghdad (Kashshi: 543, 579), who was later excommunicated by the Imam because he had embezzled the funds (ibid.: 536–7, 573–4). Another one of those named in the letter (Abū Tahir Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Bilāl, known as Bilāl) was excommunicated later by the second agent of the Twelfth Imām (Ghayba: 245).
86. 'Uthmān b. Sa'id started working in Imam 'Alī al-Hādī's house when he was 11 years old (Tūsī, Rijāl: 420); later he became one of the chief aides to the Imam (see, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:330; Kashshi: 526).
87. See Kulaynī, 1:330; Ghayba: 215. In a rescript that was sent from the Holy Threshold to the Imam's representative in Nishāpūr, who was at the time in Sāmarra', the representative was ordered not to leave the town until "you meet 'Amrī, God may be satisfied with him as a result of my satisfaction with him, and say hello to him and make yourself known to him, because he is the pure, the trustworthy, the chaste, and the [one] close to us and to our hearts. Whatever is brought to us from various regions eventually ends with him so that he passes it to us" (Kashshi: 580).
88. Mufid, al-Fiqh al-'ashara: 355. See also Kashshi: 544 where the phrase implies that it was not even quite clear if he always acted under the instruction of the Imam.
continuing to receive religious funds on behalf of his son who had passed into occultation beyond the reach of ordinary Shi‘ites. Upon 'Uthmān’s death, his position was assumed by his son, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, and then by two others. This period of the Minor Occultation ended with the death of the last deputy, who had not named a successor, and thus began the Major Occultation when the Shi‘ites lost all contact with the Imām.

II

Moderation or Shortcoming?

IT HAS BEEN insisted throughout the Qur‘ān that God is the only one who creates all beings and provides them with their living without anyone’s help or support,2 the only one who never dies whereas every other being dies,3 the only one who has knowledge of the unseen,4 and the only lawmaker in the universe.5 In numerous verses as well, the Qur‘ān insists that the prophets were ordinary people who lived and died like everyone else.6 It especially speaks of Muḥammad as an ordinary person whose only difference from other people was that he received revelation from God in order to deliver it to mankind.7 Muḥammad was asked by God especially to emphasize this point to those who asked him to perform miracles and to prove that he was someone special.8

In spite of these cautions, the idea that the Prophet was a supernatural being started immediately after his death. It is reported that as soon as the news of his death spread, a certain Companion asserted that he did not die but disappeared from his people and would return and “cut off the hands and feet of those who alleged that he was dead,”9 an assertion that other Muslims rejected on the basis of a Qur‘ānic verse that spoke of the Prophet’s death in the future.10 A similar claim was heard after the assassination of 'Ali when some people maintained that he was still alive and that he would not die until he conquered the whole world and drove the

1. Qur‘ān, e.g. 6:102, 27:64, 30:40, 35:3.
2. Ibid., e.g. 17:111, 34:22.
3. Ibid., 28:88.
4. Ibid., e.g. 27:65.
5. Ibid., e.g. 6:57, 12:40, 67, 39:3.
6. Ibid., e.g. 5:75, 14:38, 25:20.
7. Ibid., 18:110.
8. Ibid., 17:90–94.
Arabs with his stick. It was again heard after the death of his son, Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya in 81/700 when many of his followers claimed that he did not die but only concealed himself from the people and will reappear before the end of time "to fill the earth with justice as it was filled with injustice and despotism." This idea was labeled by the mainstream of the Muslim community as ghulat (13) (exaggerations, conventionally translated as "extremism") and the people who supported it as ghulat (exaggerators, conventionally "extremists").

From the beginnings of the second century of the Hijra, numerous heretic persons and groups emerged who proclaimed one or another prominent figure of the House of the Prophet as God. This idea reportedly was begun in the previous century by a group that, sometime after 'Ali's death, claimed that he was God and that he possessed limitless knowledge, including that of the unseen, and his people and will reappear before the end of time "to fill the earth as it was filled with injustice and despotism." This idea reportedly was begun in the previous century by a group that, sometime after 'Ali's death, claimed that he was God and that he was their God, and he subsequently ordered them to be burned.

The extremists did not proclaim the Prophet and the Imams as God but believed that God had empowered them to create and provide for all beings and had vested in them the authority to legislate and act, and, consequently, split from the Muslim community. The Imams and their followers, however, consistently condemned and publicly disassociated themselves from these groups. This might have been partly in order to protect the Shi'ite community from possible discredit by the blasphemies of those groups whose leaders started as Shi'ites and claimed association with the Imams, and the wild ideas of those groups could, therefore, be harmful to the image of Shi'ism.

Some time in the first decades of the second century of the Hijra during the time of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, another category of extremists emerged within the Imamiite community. This group inherited and adopted(24) many of the points of view of the extremists in the defunct school of Kaysaniite Shi'ism on the divine nature of the Imams, namely, that the Imams were supernatural beings who possessed limitless knowledge, including that of the unseen, and had power of disposal over the universe. This new group of Shi'ite extremists did not proclaim the Prophet and the Imams as God but believed that God had empowered them to create and provide for all beings and had vested in them the authority to legislate and abrogate the shari'a as they decided. The Prophet and the Imams were, thus, fulfilling nearly all the functions that God was supposed to do; the only difference was that His power was original and theirs subordinate. This idea soon came to be known in the Shi'ite tradition by the term ta'fuq (delegation), after which the group came to be more specifically known among the Shi'a as the Ma'atariyya, just the numerous groups that believed Ja'far al-Sadiq(19) and the Imams among his descendants(20) were God. All of these groups had their own special allegoristic and esoteric interpretations of the religious symbols; they subsequently abrogated the shari'a, legalized unlawful acts, and, consequently, split from the Muslim community. The Imams and their followers, however, consistently condemned and publicly disassociated themselves from these groups. This might have been partly in order to protect the Shi'ite community from possible discredit by the blasphemies of those groups whose leaders started as Shi'ites and claimed association with the Imams, and the wild ideas of those groups could, therefore, be harmful to the image of Shi'ism.

13. See, for instance, Kamal: 33 where the poet Al-Sayyid al-Himyar (d. ca. 173/789) is quoted as describing his own state of belief before his alleged conversion to Imamiite Shi'ism as the time when he "adhered to ghulat and believed in the occultation of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya." See also Nawbakhti: 52.
14. See Wadad al-Qadi, "The Development of the Term Ghulat in Muslim Literature": 293–300.
16. For sources and an evaluation of the authenticity of these reports see Wadad al-Qadi, "The Development ... ": 307.
18. Nawbakhti: 45; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allah: 32.
21. The extremists in question themselves regarded the Kaysanites as their predecessors as this statement that they ascribed to 'Ali al-Sadiq attests: "Our secret was undisclosed until it went into the hands of the descendants [sic] of Kaysan who disclosed it in the streets and amongst communities" (Kulayni, 1:223).
Arabs with his stick. It was again heard after the death of his son, Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya in 81/700 when many of his followers claimed that he did not die but only concealed himself from the people and will reappear before the end of time “to fill the earth with justice as it was filled with injustice and despotism.”

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the numerous groups that believed Ja’far al-Ṣādiq and the Imāms among his descendants were God. All of these groups had their own special allegoristic and esoteric interpretations of the religious symbols; they subsequently abrogated the sharī‘a, legalized unlawful acts, and, consequently, split from the Muslim community. The Imāms and their followers, however, consistently condemned and publicly disassociated themselves from these groups. This might have been partly in order to protect the Shi’ite community from possible discredit by the blasphemies of those groups whose leaders started as Shi‘ites and claimed association with the Imāms, and the wild ideas of those groups could, therefore, be harmful to the image of Shi‘ism.

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20. See Kashshi: 480, 518-21, 555.
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as the splinter heretic groups who deified the Imāms were sometimes more specifically called Ghulāt Ṭayyāra, or simply Ṭayyāra (over-flyers). In early Shi‘ite biographical dictionaries the latter, who split from the community and established their own heretical sects on the basis of their esoteric interpretations, are sometimes distinguished by the term fāsid al-madhhb or fāsid al-i‘tīfād (of corrupt doctrine) or by stating that the scholarship of the person concerned


25. See for this translation Kashshi: 507–8 (para. 978, 981) where Sa‘wān b. Yahyā al-Bajāli (d. 210/825–826), a prominent figure in the Shi‘ite community of his time, is quoted as having said that Muhammad b. Sinān, a well-known figure among the Mufawwīda, “was from the Ṭayyāra (or, according to another report, “repeatedly tried to fly”) but we clipped [his wings] until he settled with us.” The word was possibly related to the word ḥittāf, which was used for the Mufawwīda—the latter had gone up a distance away from the truth, the radical extremists had flown far beyond it (see also Nu‘mānī: 19). Cf. Maqdisi, 5:129 where it is said that the followers of ‘Abd Allāh b. Saba’ (see below, chapter 7) are called Ṭayyāra because they maintain that they do not die, rather their souls fly into the dark.

26. The list of the transmitters of hadīth who were described by those definitions includes the following:

—Abū al-‘Aqiqī is, for instance, called ṭakhlīṣ during his life, which is described by Ibn al-Ghādībīrī, 5:129; Ibn al-Ghādībīrī, 3:179; Tāhir b. Ḥārim b. Māhawayh al-Qazwīnī (Ibn al-Ghādībīrī, 3:228), whose beliefs and works suffered from ṭakhlīṣ (Najashī: 208).

27. See the article “Ṭuḥmiyya” in EF, 1:1098–1100 (by M. G. S. Hodgson).

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29. See Kashshi: 326 (describing three transmitters, one of whom, Ṭaḥṣīb b. Muhammad al-Baṣrī, had [according to ibid.: 531] a special interest in transmitting Mufaddal b. ‘Umar’s reports on the themes of tafwīd). See also Khusaybī: 431 where the word marafṣa is used in the same sense.

30. See Najashī: 24 (Ībrāhīm b. Yazīd al-Makṣūf, 155 (Khaybārī b. ‘Alī al-Taḥfūqī, 228 (‘Abd Allāh b. Khiyād al-Mahri, 384 (Muhadd b. Bahār al-Ruḥānī, who was accused, according to Ṭūsī, Rijāl: 510 of supporting the idea of tafwīd); Ibn al-Ghādībīrī, 1:37 (Ībrāhīm b. Ṭaḥṣīb b. Ahmad b. ‘Alī al-Rāzī, 237 (Umayyā b. ‘Alī al-Qaṣṣās, 2:42 (Ja‘far
all describing the doctrine of or the nature of the ḥadīth transmitted by the concerned person to be "elevated" and exaggerated as they elevated the Imams from human beings to supernatural beings ascribing miracles and superhuman characters to them. Nevertheless, in general usage, the term *ghulāt* was also liberally and systematically used for both categories in Shi'ite circles as well as in the traditions and sources.

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33. The expression was possibly taken from a then well-known statement attributed to the Prophet: "Do not exalt me above my actual rank [la fāqūhū fawqa haddī]; God picked me up as a slave of His before He picked me up as a prophet" (Ḥimyārī: 181; Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:201).

34. Ibn Dāwūd: 558–542 gives a list of 65 persons described in the Shi‘ite biographies of the transmitters of *ḥadīth* as *ghulāt*, and Wadād al-Qādirī, "Development . . .": 317–18, gives a list of 56 based on the information available in the biographical dictionaries of Kashshi, Najāshī, Tuṣī and Ibn Shahrāštīb. She, however, missed these names: Ḩamīl b. Mīhrān (Kashshi: 589), Mūsā b. al-Furāt (ibid.: 554), Mūsā b. Nūsair al-Nūmayrī (ibid.: 520–21), Mūsā b. Mūsā al-Shuraqī (ibid., 521: Tuṣī; Rijāl: 436); Munkhēkhāl b. Jamīl al-Kūfī (Kashshi: 368; also Ibn al-Ghāḏārī, 6:139); Muhammad b. Ṣa‘dāq b. al-Baṣrī (Tuṣī; Rijāl: 391); Mūsā b. ʿĪsā b. Umayyad al-Yaqūtīnī (ibid., *Fīrās*: 311; Ḩasan b. Khurūzadī (Najāshī: 44); and Ḥusayn b. Yazīd b. Abū al-Malik al-Nawfālī (ibid.: 38). Other names can be found in Ibn al-Ghāḏārī, 2:24 (Ja'far b. Ḩamīl b. al-Mīndārī); 272 (Ḫalāfī b. Muhammad al-Māwīdī); 275 (Ṭabāḥ b. Abī al-Ṭāḥhānī); 3:205 (Ṣā‘īd b. Sahl al-Hamadānī); 206 (Ṣā‘īd b. Uqba b. Qays b. Samān); 4:204 (Alī b. Abīd Allāh al-Ma‘mūnī); 5:45 (Qāsim b. al-Rabi‘ b. Ṣa‘īd); 6:112 (Mu‘allā b. Ṭūrānī al-Amīnī); 156 (Mūsā b. Sā‘īd al-Ḥanānī); 164 (Muḥammad al-Mādīrī); 290 (Yūsūf b. Bāhman).

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Many of these *ghulāt* belonged to sectarian extremist groups, whereas others were from the Mufawwīda. Tuṣī, for instance, describes Mūsā b. Bahr al-Ruḫnī as a *ghulāt* in his *Fīrās*: 132 but as a mufawwīd in his *Rijāl*: 510, and Ṣa‘īdī b. Abīnāfī al-‘Abdī as being attributed to *ghulāwaw* and *tawfīd* in his *Rijāl*: 99 (as quoted by Ibn Dāwūd: 492 who possessed the autograph of that work, although in the printed copy it appears as *ghulūwaw* and *tawfīd*; two concepts with opposite meanings). Sometimes, however, only the adherence to *tawfīd* is mentioned as in the case of Ādam b. Muhammad al-Qalānīsī al-Balkhī in Tuṣī, *Rijāl*: 438.

35. See, for instance, Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn*, 2:203 where a quotation from Imām ‘Alī al-Ridā states that the "Ghulāt are infidels and the Mufawwīda are polytheists" (naturally because the more radical extremists, referred to here as the Ghulāt, believed in a god other than Allāh, whereas the latter, the Mufawwīda, virtually added other acting gods to Him); ibid., 1:215 (and idem, *Khawāṣē*: 529; idem, *L’itiqād*: 100; *Ghayba*: 18) where it is said that the Ghulāt and Mufawwīda denied that the Imams were actually killed or actually had died (Tuṣī, in *Talkhīs al-shābī*: 4:198, says that the Mufawwīda doubted that Ḥusayn was actually killed, in the same way that the Ghulāt hesitated about ‘Alī’s death); idem, *Faqīh*: 1:359 where he says that "the Ghulāt and the Mufawwīda, may God curse them, deny the inadversity of the Prophet"); Mufīḍ, *Awaḍ*: 38 where he states that the idea that the Imams did not possess knowledge of the unseen is held by the entire Shi‘ite community "except those who split away from them of the Mufawwīda or those who allege to belong to them [the Shi‘ites] of the Ghulāt" (compare with other cases in that work, such as the beginning of the same page, where he speaks of "the Mufawwīda and others among the Ghulāt." See also Kashshi: 479).


Adam through a line of prophets. The second was an interpretation that seems to have been offered first by the Kaysînite Samʿîn al-Nahdi (d. 138/755-756), head of the Khaṭṭâbîte extremists, who maintained that the spirit of God descended to the earth, manifested in Jaʿfar b. Muslim, and that now he was the god on earth. The two ideas were combined in the fourth decade of the second/eighth century by Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb Muhammad b. Abī Zaynab al-Asadî (d. ca. 138/755-756), a former disciple of Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb, was clearly a further modification of that same idea.


39. Qurʿān, 43:84: “and it is He who is God in heaven and God on earth.”

40. Kashshi: 304 (see also Nawbakhti: 59).

41. On him see the article “Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb” in EP, 1:134 (by B. Lewis); Halm, Die Islamische Gnosis, 199–206.

42. On them see the article “Khaṭṭâbîyya” in EP, 4:1132–3 (by W. Madelung); Halm, Die Islamische Gnosis: 199–217.

43. Shahrastâni, 1:210–11.

44. Kashshi: 300. See also Nawbakhti: 59 and Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allāh: 53 where some followers of Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb are quoted as describing his successor as “the god on earth who was obedient to the god of heaven and acknowledged his superiority and rank.”


46. Kashshi: 321, 324.

47. See ibid., 324–5. Abu ʿl-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarî, 1:79, thus, classifies the Mufawwīda as a subsect of the Khaṭṭâbîyya whose only difference with the mainstream Khaṭṭâbîtes was that they disassociated themselves from Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb after Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq anathematized him, but they remained faithful to Abu ʿl-Khaṭṭâb’s teachings.

48. Saʿd: “Abd Allāh: 60–61; Muḥîd, Taḥḥîf: 112. To be more precise, the first and only direct creature was a single entity, a single perfect being. This perfect being was then manifested in the world in various shapes, first as the Prophet and then as ‘Alī, Fāṭima, and the Imāms from their descendants (Saʿd: “Abd Allāh: 60–61). Bursî: 258 names a certain Jālūt (? ) al-Qummi who held that the Imām was “the perfect man” and as such the manifestation of God. The idea was that the first creature had all qualities of God save His exclusive quality of being self-existing. The first creature was, thus, the manifestation of all names and attributes of God except for His name qayyūm (self-subsisting) because God is the only being whose existence does not depend on anyone or anything else. Thus, in the hierarchy of existence, the Prophets, his daughter Fāṭima and the Imāms (or, as the Mufawwīda called them, silsilat al-muhammadīyyin) occupy the highest rank save that of God. Some described their rank to be the rank of maṣḥīyya (God’s will), which is God’s first manifestation and action. They thus represent the will of God, that is, whatever they do is the manifestation of what God wants (see, inter alia, “Abd al-Jabbār, 20(1):13; Bursî, 32–8, 45–7).”


52. Šaffî: 378–87; Abu ʿl-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarî, 1:88; Kulaynî, 1:265–6, 441. See also Namazî, 8:319–26 for other references.


The Mufawwīda maintained that the Prophet and the Imāms were the first and only beings to be directly created by God from a substance different from that of the rest of humanity. God then gave them authority and responsibility for all affairs of the world, whatever movement and action takes place in the universe. They, as noted above, actually perform whatever functions are normally and conventionally ascribed to God, such as creation, providence, death, and so forth. They make the shariʿa and abrogate it, make things lawful or unlawful. They have knowledge of everything, seen or unseen. (At least some upheld that the Imāms received
direct revelation. They knew not only all the languages of mankind but also those of the birds and animals. They were omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and omni-efficient. The first spokesman for this tendency, in fact the first person who is known for supporting these views in the Imāmīte community, was, as noted above Mufaddal al-Ju'fī, who was then followed by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Sīnak al-Zāhīrī (d. 220/835) and found significant support in the Imāmīte Shi'ite community of that time. A few decades later in the middle of the third/ninth century, Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Numayrī, a prominent scholar from Basra and a follower of Mufaddal and Muḥammad b. Sīnak, developed their doctrine by adding much bāṭīnī material to their teachings. This brought the tendency back to the original fully extremist Khūṭābīte theories of metempsychosis and incarnation. He enjoyed the support of Muḥammad b. Mūṣā b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Furāt, a member of the influential Shi'ite family of high-ranking government officials of Banū 'l-Furāt, and managed to establish his own splinter group, the Nuṣayriyya. The movement was further consolidated by the works of one of its next heads, Ḥusayn b. Ḥamdān al-Khuṣaybī (d. 346/958 or 358/969) and lived henceforth within the Islamic community as a heretic sect that now has several million followers in Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey. The bulk of the Mufawwīdā, however, remained in the mainstream of the Imāmīte community until the end of the time of the Imāms.

From the time that extremist ideas started to gain some following in the Imāmīte community many Imāmītes opposed the idea of any supernaturality of the Imāms and insisted that they were simply virtuous learned men ('ulamā' abīrār). The followers of this tendency, however, firmly believed that absolute obedience to the Imāms was required, as the Prophet, according to the Shi'ite analysis and conclusion, instructed the people to follow them as the true interpreters of the Book of God and heirs to the Prophetic knowledge. This doctrine of the necessity of absolute obedience to the Imām distinguished the supporters of this Shi'ite trend from the many Sunnites of the time who also favored those Imāms whose authority was widely accepted, such as Muḥammad al-Būqīr and Ja'far al-Sādiq. Those Sunnites attended the circles of the Imāms, studied with them, cared about their opinions on various legal questions on the line of Nusayriyya).


66. On them see the article "Ibn al-Furāt" in ElI, 3:767-8 (by D. Sourdel). Muḥammad b. Mūṣā was father of Abū 'l-Ḥasan Abī b. al-Furāt (d. 312/924), the vizier of the Abbasid Muqtaḍīr (r. 925-320/908-932).

67. On him see especially Zirikli, 2:255; Sezgin, 1:584 and the sources mentioned in these two works.

68. On them see the article "Nuṣayriyya" in ElI, 3:963-7 (by L. Massignon).
and transmitted hadīth from them but only as some of the many religious authorities of the time, or even as some of the most, or the most, learned among them. Unlike the Shi'ites, those Sunnites, however, did not consider following the Imāms to be religiously binding by Prophetic designation. The followers of that Shi'ite trend denied and rejected any idea or report that would attribute any supernaturality to the Imāms, including claims about their knowledge of the unseen.

In the first decades of the second/eighth century, the most distinguished figure in this latter tendency was a profound Shi'ite scholar of the two7* disciples of his who were the most obedient to him and with whom he was totally satisfied. In numerous statements from the 'Abdi (d. 70). According to Kashshi: 246, he died in the year of the plague during the time of Imām Ja'far al-Sādiq. He maintained, however, that the Imāms were merely righteous and pious learned men ('ulamāʿ 'abrār atqiya'ī). He once had a debate with quotations from the Prophet are contradictory, and the opinion of Ja'far b. Muhammad [al-Sādiq] when quotations from 'Ali are contradictory.


71. Kashshi: 10. See also Kulyānī, 6:464.


74. Ibid.: 180.

75. Ibid.: 249.

76. Ibid.: 247. See also Abū b. Taqīrābīdī’s definition of the Shi’a (quoted in Najāshī: 12) as “those who follow the opinion of ‘Ali when quotations from the Prophet are contradictory, and the opinion of Ja’far b. Muhammad [al-Sādiq] when quotations from ‘Ali are contradictory.”

on this issue with Mu'allā b. Khunays,77 a servant of Imām Ja'far al-Sādiq, who ranked the Imāms as prophets. The Imām reportedly confirmed Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and strongly denounced Mu'allā’s idea.78 Ibn Abī Ya'fūr’s ideas clearly had wide support in that period. At the time of his death a huge crowd of those who supported his anti-extremist ideas attended his funeral.79 Some Muslim heresiographers, the first of them Ibn al-Muqaddas90 in the time of the Abbasid Mahdi (r. 158-169/775-785), mentioned a Shi'ite sect as Ya'fūryya, clearly denoting the followers of Ibn Abī Ya'fūr, who maintained moderate positions on various theological and sectarian questions. They, for instance, did not allow wrangling in religious matters and, unlike the extremists,81 did not consider the acknowledgment of the Imām to be an essential component of Islam.82 The extremists were working actively against Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and his supporters during his lifetime and after.83 In his lifetime, they tried to discredit him even in the presence of the Imām who always supported him and condemned his opponents.84 They labeled the big crowd that attended his funeral as the murji'at al-shi'īya,85 the Shi'ite Murji'ites, obviously trying to accuse his supporters of Sunnite inclinations in their doctrinal views as they considered the Imāms human beings, not acting gods. The situation created considerable tension and exchanges of verbal attacks between the two factions during the period of Ja'far al-Sādiq but reportedly became


78. Kashshi: 247 (para. 456); Manāgīb, 3:354.

79. Ibid.: 247 (para. 458).


81. See, for instance, Nawbakhtī: 65; Sa’d b. 'Abd al-Allāh: 69.

82. Abu l-Ḥasan al-Asḥarī, 1:122. The sect was, thus, obviously different from an extremist subsect with the same name that allegedly followed a certain Muhammad b. Ya’fūr (Khvārāznī: 50). On Ibn Abī Ya'fūr and his ideas, see further Kulyānī, 1:277, 3:133; Kashshi: 305, 307; Majlisī, 23:53.

83. In general, the extremists detested the prominent and learned disciples of the Imāms who were regarded by the community as most authentically representing the views of the Imāms. See Kashshi: 138, 148.

84. Kashshi: 246.

85. Ibid.: 247.

86. See Kulyānī, 8:78, 223, 285.
much worse and more bitter after him.87 Even the learned mainstream disciples of Imām Mūsā al-Kāzīm were divided on the issues concerning the position of the Imāmate, and the difference of opinion on those issues caused heated debates, and, in some cases, permanent breakdowns of friendship88 between them.

The turning point for the Mufawwida came with the death of Imām ‘Alī al-Riḍā, who left a seven-year-old son as his only descendant. This led, as noted above, to controversy in the Imāmite community as to whether a child of seven years was legally qualified or knowledgeable enough to become an Imām. The mainstream of the Imāmite community eventually accepted him as the Imām but disagreed in their interpretations and the solution offered. One group held that the meaning of his being an Imām was that he was the Imām to be, that is, that the Imāmate was his right. When he reached his age of maturity and obtained the knowledge necessary for the holder of the position, he would then be the Imām. This knowledge he would obtain not through revelation, as the Prophet was the last to receive it and there would be no revelation after him, nor through any supernatural means, but through reading the books of his forefathers and acquainting himself properly with the principles of religious law. This solution could not, of course, solve the problems entirely because the Imām later had inevitably to arrive at his legal conclusions about those cases through rational reasoning.89 This mode of reasoning was not recognized by most early authorities of the Imāmite doctrine to be valid in law because one could not guarantee the absence of errors in one’s argument that could eventually lead to wrong conclusions and to ascribing things to religion that were not parts of it. This rationale, however,

would not be true in the case of the Imām, who was protected by God against error in religion. Thus his rational argument would always lead him to truth.90 Others held that one could be given the perfect knowledge of the shari‘a and be appointed by God as the Imām even as a child in much the same way that Christ and John the Baptist were, according to the Qur‘ān,91 prophets from their childhood.92 This second interpretation and idea eventually received the most support in the community and contributed greatly to the popularization of extremist ideas about the cosmic position of the Imāms, the belief that they were superhuman beings possessed of a divine light, and that it was this divine light, not any mere knowledge or specific political right, that was the true essence of the Imāmate. The Imām became the Imām through divine grace; knowledge or political status were mere contingent effects of the Imāmate.

From this point on,93 the Mufawwida intensified their efforts to spread their literature, a vast body of material quoted by Mufaddal al-Ju‘fī and his colleagues on the authority of Imām Ja‘far al-Sādiq,

87. Manāqib, 4:250.
88. See Kulaynī, 1:410.
89. The word used here in the sources is qiyyās, which in the Shi‘ite terminology of the time implied any sort of rational argument, not only analogical reasoning which the word more specifically implied in the Sunnite tradition. See my An Introduction to Shi‘i Law: 29–30; also al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥilli, Ma‘ārij: 187.
90. Nawbakhtī: 98–99; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 96–98. See also Ṣaffār: 387–90. According to Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 96, this view was supported by the prominent Imāmī scholar and theologian of the time Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qummi (on him see below, chapter 4).
92. Ṣaffār: 238; Nawbakhtī: 99; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 95–96, 99; Kulaynī, 1:321, 322, 383–4; Abu ‘l-Ḥasan al-Asb‘arī, 1:105; Abu ‘l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181–2; Muḥfīd, Irshād: 317, 319; idem, Majālīs, 2:96; Majlisī, 50:20, 21, 24, 34, 35 (quoting other sources). Nashī’ī: 25 quotes a similar controversy among earlier Shi‘ites on the Imāmate of ‘Ali Zayn al-‘Abīdīn who, according to some reports, had not yet reached the age of puberty when his father was killed. According to Nashī’ī, a group of the Shi‘ites offered the same analysis cited above to support the truth of the Imāmate of ‘Ali Zayn al-‘Abīdīn, arguing that Christ and John the Baptist became prophets when they were still children. The group was headed by Abū Khālid al-Kābulī, an early Shi‘ite that the extremists greatly admired and considered as one of their pioneers (see Pseudo Mufaddal, Kitāb al-Haft: 20–21; also Ibn Abī ‘l-Thaljī: 148). For similar ideas among the Shi‘ites in the beginning of the second/eighth century, see Nawbakhtī: 68–9; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 72; Nashī’ī: 43.
93. On the split in the Imāmite community in the early third/ninth century on the nature of the Imāms, see Kulaynī, 1:441.
in addition to that already produced by radical extremists such as Abu 'l-Khaṭṭāb and others. The Mufawwīḍa also added extensively to that literature. In line with a statement attributed to the Imāms that permitted the attribution of whatever supernatural quality or miracle one wanted to the Imāms as long as one did not identify them with God, the Mufawwīḍa offered much material quoted on the authority of the Imāms on the divine aspect of their nature, as well as many stories of miracles performed by any one of the Imāms and narratives that traced their signs and effects to the antediluvian world. The whole of the third/ninth century was, thus, a period in which the extremists' literature in general and the Mufawwīḍa's in particular greatly flourished. Much of the material in those genres that is preserved in the later works was contributed by the Mufawwīḍa of this period. To further consolidate their own position, they also quoted many complimentary remarks and praises of Muḥaḍḍal and their other notables on the authority of the Imāms. By the middle of the third/ninth century they had properly established themselves as a group within the mainstream Imāmite community, and they were struggling to overwhelm the moderates.

The Imāmite scholars and transmitters of ḥadīth in Qum, which was now the main Imāmite center of learning, reacted very harshly to the Mufawwīḍa's expansionism. They tried to contain the flow of extremist literature that was spreading fast. The scholars of Qum began to declare anyone who attributed any sign of superhumanity to the Prophet or the Imāms an extremist and to expel such people from their town. Many of the transmitters of ḥadīth were banished from Qum for transmitting reports that contained that genre of material during the first half of the third/ninth century. This was, of course, the punishment for merely transmitting reports of that genre. The actual belief in the supernaturality of the Imāms was another matter; it was a grave heresy that could be punished by death. There is, in fact, a report that the people of Qum once tried to kill a scholar of their town who was accused of holding such opinions because they thought he was an unbeliever, but they stopped when they found him praying. This response indicates that the Imāmite community of Qum did not differentiate between the two concepts of ghnulwāw and tasfīrī and regarded extremism.

94. See Kashshi: 224–5.
95. See, for instance, Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, 6:131 where he commented about Muḥaḍḍal that “much additional material has been added to him and the extremists have loaded a big load in his reports.”
98. See Majlisī, 52:89.
99. Kashshi: 512 (see also Najāshī: 38, 77). They included famous Imāmite transmitters of ḥadīth such as Sahl b. Ziyād al-Ādāmī al-Rāzī (Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, 3:179; Najāshī: 185), Abū Sumayna Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Qurashi (Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, 5:264; Najāshī: 352), Ḥusayn b. ‘Ubayḍ Allāh al-Muḥarrīr (Kashshi: 512), as well as ‘Āmmād b. Muḥammad b. Ḥālid al-Barqī, author of Kitāb al-Mahāstīn, who was expelled from the town because he was not careful and quoted inauthentic material (Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, 2:138).
100. Najāshī: 329; Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, 5:160. The man was Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿUrayma al-Qummi, a ḥadīth transmitter of the mid-third/ninth century. Among his numerous works mentioned in Najāshī: 329–30 was a book against the Ghulāt. There was, however, some ḏātīnī material in a book attributed to him, which generated suspicions about him. He was, therefore, at most one of the Mufawwīḍa and not of the radical extremist splinter groups.
101. The sectarian Ghulātī, as said before, normally abrogated the ḥibīl and did not consider themselves bound by religious obligations, including prayer. They regarded such obligations as duties imposed on those like the Muṣṣaṣira (see below), whose minds, unlike those of the Ghulāt, were not developed enough and blessed enough to know the secrets of the Universe and the true rank of the Imāms (Saʿd b. ‘Abd Allāh: 61), and they maintained that the recognition of the true status of the Imām would make them unneedful of prayer and other religious obligations (ibid.: 39; Kashshi: 325). This is why in the early centuries people thought that they could ascertain whether someone was from the Ghulār by watching him in the time of prayer, because if he was an extremist he would not pray (Kashshi: 530). In a statement reported from Muḥaḍḍal he also downgraded the value of prayer in contrast to serving the Imām (ibid.: 327). Another report suggests that in a pilgrimage to Karbala’ he personally failed to say his prayers (ibid.: 325), a report that presumably attempts to prove that he was actually a full-force extremist. An opposite example is a statement quoted from a mid-third/ninth century transmitter of ḥadīth who denied...
anyone who attributed supernaturality to the Imāms to be a heretic, virtually a nonbeliever, whether he deified them or not. The Mufawwida counterattacked by calling the scholars of Qum and other moderates muqassira, the shortcomers, suggesting that the moderates fell short of recognizing the true nature of the Imam.102 At times they even accused them of having Sunnite inclinations.103 The term taqṣīr subsequently assumed a new sense in the post second/eighth century Imāmī usage104 as the opposite of taqwīd,105 that Muhammad b. Sinān was a ḡālī on the basis that he was the one who taught that transmitter how to perform ritual purity (Ibn Ṭawūs, Fālah al-sa‘īl: 11). This explains why the people of Qum who wanted to kill Muhammad b. ʿUruma stopped when they found him praying, because, in their minds, if he were a ḡālī, he would not pray and, therefore, in their judgment his praying proved that he was innocent of that accusation, not knowing that the Mufawwida branch of the Ghulāt did not differ from the mainstream of the Muslims in respect to the šari‘a and that they fulfilled the Islamic religious obligations.

102. In a statement attributed in an anonymous work of the Mufawwida to the Prophet, the Muṣṣira are defined as “those who fell short in the recognition of the Imāms . . . to know that God delegated His authority to those whom He blessed with His grace: to create by His permission and to know that God similar to man” (Muqaddama, 121). This is not, however, true with the editor’s footnote (anti-ʿAlid).

103. The contrast already existed between the two terms of taqṣīr and ḡulwūw in the Shi‘ite (see, for instance, Sa‘īf: 529; Kalaynī, 1:198, 8:128; Khuṣaybī: 419, 431, 432; Ibn Bābawayh, Khiṣā: 627; Majlisī, 26:1, 5, 6, 9, 14, 16) as well as in the general Islamic usage (see, for instance, Rāghib al-Īṣāfānī, Muṣṣara fi ‘l-taqṣīr: 120, where he quotes some earlier scholars as describing the opinions of those who restricted the right of the interpretation of the Qur‘ān to the Prophet and those who allowed it for anyone who had good command of Arabic as falling into the two extremes of ghulwūw and taqṣīr; Jishānī, Risālat iblīs: 96). A well-circulated anecdote suggested that both ghulwūw and taqṣīr in religion were disapproved (Majd al-Dīn b. al-ʿArīf, Niḥyā, 5:119; see also Nāṣir Khusrū: 410, 436). In the usage of the early pro-ʿAlid groups it referred to the disrespectful statements and accusations that the pro-ʿUmayyad and anti-ʿAlid elements used to make against ʿAlī (see, for instance, Ibn al-Īṣāfānī: 31 where it is said: “afrata fīhi [i.e. ʿAlī] qawmūn fa‘abadāhu wa qaṣārā fīhi qawmūn fa‘shābutūn fīhu wa qaṭdabāhu; see also 52, 53). In the more general Shi‘ite usage, however, it referred to the shortcoming of the non-Shi‘ites who did not acknowledge the right of the ʿAlī Imāms in the succession to the Prophet in the leadership of the Muslim community. A statement quoted on the authority of Imām ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbdīn, therefore, speaks of those who denied the right of the House of the Prophet as those “who came short in our matter” (Irbilī, 2:311 quoting Ibn al-ʿAkhḍar; also Sunnite sources mentioned in Ibn ʿAyyāsh, introduction to the edition: 17). Another statement attributed to Imām Jāfār al-Ṣādiq asserted that “the ḡālī comes back to us but we do not accept him, but the muqassira joins us and we accept him . . . [because] the ḡālī develops a habit [of neglecting his religious obligations], it would be impossible for him to give up the habit and obey God, whereas the muqassira will fulfill [his obligations] and obey [God] if he comes to know [the true path]” (Ṭaṣī, Amālī: 2:264; an abridged version of this statement is ascribed to Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqīr in ʿAyyāshī, 1:63). The reference is clearly to an outsider; a muqassira is someone who currently does not follow the Imām and is not a member of the Shi‘ite community. The term clearly retained this meaning until the time of Imām ʿAlī al-ʿRādī (see Ibn Bābawayh, ʿUyūn, 1:304), although the trend to label the non-extremist Imāmīs as the muqassira had already reportedly started in the second/eighth century when some early Ghulāt are quoted as calling the mainstream Imāmīs who opposed them muqassima (Sa‘d b. ʿAbd Allāh: 55).

104. Shahrastānī is obviously using the term in its general sense of shortcoming when he states that “the Shi‘a fell into ghulwūw in connection with the Imāms as they made them similar to God and into taqṣīr through making God similar to man” (Miḥāl, 1:105) and that some of the Ghulāt brought God down to the level of man and others elevated man to the status of God, so they are at the two ends of ghulwūw and taqṣīr (ibid., 1:203). Fakhr al-Dīn al-ʿRāzī clearly did the same when he interpreted a statement from an early ʿAlīd who said “the extravagant in love for us is like the extravagant in spite of us” as referring to the point that, in affection for the House of the Prophet, both ghulwūw and taqṣīr are disapproved (al-Sha-jara al-nubūraḥa: 121). This is not, however, true with the editor’s footnote
The rank and file Imámítes and many of their transmitters of hadíth, however, stood somewhere between the two extremes. They seem to have maintained that the Imámíes possessed a divine blessing not to the extent upheld by the Mufawwída. The Imámíes up to the middle of the third/ninth century are reported in the Imámíte hadíth as condemning the extremists and denouncing the attribution of supernaturality to themselves. “The Ghulát are infidels and the Mufawwída are polytheists”; whoever maintains any sort of contact or friendship with them is cutting his ties with God, the Prophet and his House, said Imám ‘Alí al-Ridá. A similar statement from Imám Ja’far al-Sádiq warned the Shi‘ítes to be extra careful and not to let their youth be misled by the extremists. The extremists, he said, are the most wicked among the creatures of God, worse than any other category of infidels, because they try to desecrate God. Many other similarly harsh statements are quoted from the Imámíes in condemnation of the extremists. Nevertheless, as noted above, the situation of the office of Imámite in the third/ninth century helped the extremist ideas to gain more ground within the Shi‘íte community, although not necessarily among the circle of the close associates of the Imámíes and certainly not in the principal Imámite center of learning at Qum.

By the time of Imám Hasan al-‘Askarí the heated debates on the nature of the Imámíes had already split the Imámíte community in some places into two hostile camps. In Nishápúr, for instance, the community was divided, and each group was excommunicating the other. One group supported the Mufawwída’s opinion on the supernatural knowledge of the Imámíes, and so they believed that the Imámíes knew the languages of all humans and birds and animals as well as whatever was happening in the world. They believed that the divine revelation did not stop with the death of the Prophet but continued, and the Imámíes still received it when they needed it. Another group headed by the prominent Shi‘íte scholar of that century, Faḍl b. Shádhán al-Náysábúrí (d. 260/873), denied all of these claims and maintained that the Imám was a man who had a thorough knowledge of the šaría’ and of the correct interpretation of the Qur’án. A few months before Faḍl b. Shádhán’s death, however, the emissary of the Imám’s office to Nishápúr for the collection of the community’s donations chose to stay with the first group. That caused great difficulty. The moderates discredited the emissary and abstained from paying their dues to him. The matter was reported to the Imám, who sent a letter to the community in which he condemned the beliefs of the Mufawwída but at the same time complained about Faḍl b. Shádhán, who had prevented the people from paying their religious dues to the Imám’s agent. Kashší, who has quoted this letter, suggests that the letter perhaps had been sent by ʿUthmán b. Sa‘íd al-‘Amrí, the Imám’s chief agent, who by that time controlled the financial affairs of the office. The whole episode, however, signifies a noticeable change in the practical position of the office to satisfy the entire community. (The change had obviously become necessary by the difficult political and social conditions of the Shi‘íte community in those years.) In another instance, two disputing groups, the Mufawwída and the Muqásíra, of an unspecified region (possibly of Sámmára’ itself) are said to have

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108. Tusi, Ḥamle, 2:264.
110. As Kashshi quoted, the Imám’s letter concerning the event in question was sent, or at least received, two months after Faḍl b. Shádhán’s death in the Hijrí year 260. Because the Imám himself died early in the third month of that year, the event should have happened mostly in the year before, and Ibn Shádhán’s death must have occurred quite early in 260. The fact that Ibn Shádhán died very early in the year is also verified by another quotation in Kashshi: 538 that reports that a Shi‘íte from Khurásan met the Imám on his way back from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca and later came to know that Ibn Shádhán had died around the same time that he met the Imám. If one considers the distance between Mecca and Sámmára’ and the time of annual pilgrimage, the meeting must have taken place sometime in Muḥarram, the first month of the Hijrí year, by any account.
111. Kashshi: 539–41. See also his own Kitab al-Idhā': 461; Ibn Bábawayh, ‘Uyún, 2:20; Najashi: 325, 328.
112. Ibid., 540.
113. Ibid., 542–3.
114. Ibid.: 544.
sent a representative to the Imām to ask for his instructions. According to the report, the Imām denounced the Mufawwida by name and called them liars.

The internal disputes and splits in the Imāmite community continued to the period of Minor Occultation. The case was referred several times to the agents of the vanished Imām to ask for the Imām’s judgment. In a rescript received from the Holy Threshold, the Imām complained about the “ignorants and idiots” among the Shi‘a who attributed the knowledge of the unseen or any supernatural power to them or exalted them above their actual rank. In another rescript sent by the second agent, Muhammad b. ‘Uthmān al-‘Amrī, the Mufawwida standpoints that attributed the creation of and providing for all beings to the Imāms were rejected, although the special grace that God had bestowed on the Imāms was confirmed. This seems to be an attempt to bring the official position closer to the prevailing view among the rank and file who, as noted above, stood somewhere between the two extremes. An old and well-circulated anecdote that condemned both ghulaww and taqṣīr (in their general Islamic senses) in religion would be now taken by many as confirming this middle position against those two concepts in their new and more specific Shi‘ite senses. Because the extremists had been condemned by the Imāms and the Shi‘ite community for a very long time, this and similar quotations would actually be used to discredit the moderates and to suggest that they, too, had gone too far in denying the divine qualifications of the Imāms. The position of scholars such as Muhammad b. Ibrahīm al-Nu‘māni of the first half of the fourth/tenth century, who complained that groups of the Shi‘ites went beyond the line of truth by either exaggeration or shortcoming, is in the same line of thought.

The moderate tendency, however, remained strong throughout these periods to the last decades of the fourth/tenth century. In a report, clearly authored by a pro-Mufawwida transmitter, he suggests that of thirty Shi‘ite pilgrims who were present at the grand mosque of Mecca on the sixth day of Dhu ‘l-Ḥijja, 293/23 September 906, only one was “purely faithful” (mukhlīs) and the rest were muqāṣīra. In another report from the post-Occultation period, an imaginary dialogue between Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju‘fī (d. 128/745-746) and Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir, it is said that the majority of the Shi‘ites are muqāṣīra who fell short of recognizing the true nature of the Imām: that he is the one who creates and provides with the authority given to him by God and that by this grace he is omniscient and omnipotent. The scholars of Qum, who were the highest authority of religious knowledge in this

116. Khuṣaynī: 359, who mentioned the Mufawwida as the mu‘minūn (the faithful); Ghyayba: 148–9.
117. See Ghyayba: 178, 238.
118. Abū Maṃṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:288–9 (quoted also in Majlīsī, 25: 266–8). The rescript was issued to Muhammad b. ‘Alī b. Ḥilāl al-Karkhi who was ordered at the end of rescript to show it to others until all the Shi‘ites come to know its content and learn about it.
120. Ghyayba: 178.
121. See above, n. 105. Clearly referring to the same general meanings of the two terms, a statement from Imām Ḥasan al-‘Askarkī also maintained that the right path is always the middle path, that stands between the two scales, lower than ghulaww but higher than taqṣīr (Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Astarābādī: 44; Ibn Bābawayh, Mu‘ānī al-akhbār: 33).
remained firmly anti-Mufawwida until the end of the fourth/tenth century, opposing and rejecting any idea that attributed any supernatural quality to the Prophet and the Imāms. They held that whoever believed that the Prophet or the Imāms were immune to inadvertence (sahw) was an extremist. They continued to discredit the transmitters who related reports that attributed any supernaturality to the Imāms and considered the transmission of that genre of material to be unlawful. A group of the scholars of Qum even held that the Imāms did not know many laws of the sharī'ah and had to rely on personal judgment and ijtiḥād to derive the appropriate laws. The Mufawwida consistently endeavored to discredit the scholars of Qum, derogatorily calling them muqassira. This denigration angered Ibn Bābawayh, the most prominent representative of the school of Qum in the middle and second half of the fourth/tenth century. In his work on the Shi‘ite creed, after reemphasizing that to the Shi‘ites the Ghulāt and Mufawwida are infidels, more wicked than all other infidels and wrong thinkers, he asserted that “the sign to know the Mufawwida and Ghulāt and their like is that they accuse the masters and scholars of Qum of shortcoming.”

The period of the Minor Occultation was especially marked by the tireless efforts of the Mufawwida to establish themselves as the true representatives of Shi‘ism and their doctrine as the middle path between extremism and shortcoming. To this end, they missed no opportunity and failed no chance. They continued assiduously to spread countless quotations on the authority of the Imāms, some of which, despite all efforts of the masters and scholars of Qum, penetrated the Shi‘ite hadith. Tampering with the material in books written by reliable authors and inserting new material into them had been done successfully by heretics in the periods of the two Imāms, Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, and the option was still available to all conflicting groups. The transmission system of hadith could not always prevent these forgeries. Like their predecessors in the time of Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, the Mufawwida continued their effort to discredit their opponents by accusing them of weak faith, of debasing the glorious position of the Imāmate, of opposing the authority of the Imāms and knowingly denying their qualifications, and of being influenced by the Sunnite doctrines.

To counter a widely reported statement from the Imāms that gave a much more favorable status to the Muqassira than to the extremists, the extremists came forward with their own interpretation of that statement by construing the term muqassira to refer to other groups of the Shi‘a and not the moderates. Then the extremists ascribed to the Imāms their own similarly phrased statements, which favored the extremists against the Muqassira. One of the Mufawwida’s contributions in this period which later became a popular Shi‘ite practice, in spite of the opposition of

128. This fact is well verified by the fact that Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī (d. 326/938), the third chief agent of the vanished Imām, sent a book of doubtful authority to the scholars of Qum and asked them to look at it and see if anything in it contradicted their views (Ghayba: 240).

129. Ibn Bābawayh, Faqih, 1:1359–60. See also my An Introduction to Shi‘i Law: 40.

130. See, for instance, Majlisī, 25:347.


134. See Kashshī: 224–5. These activities brought the condition of the Shi‘ite hadith to a situation that Zurār b. A‘yān, the most prominent Shi‘ite scholar of the first half of the second/eighth century, wished he could “make a fire and burn all of it” (Majlisī, 25:282).

135. See, for instance, Khusaybī: 385 where he accuses the “Muqassira and weak faithful among the Shi‘a” of growing doubt about Imām ‘Alī al-Hādi after his elder son Muḥammad, who was reportedly his successor designate, died during ‘Alī al-Hādi’s lifetime.


138. Ibid.: 432.

139. See Ibn Bābawayh, Faqih, 1:290–91, who after quoting the traditional formula of adhān said: “This is the correct adhān, nothing should be added to or omitted from it. The Mufawwida, may God curse them, have fabricated reports and added in adhān . . . I witness that ‘Alī is the friend of God’ . . . I mentioned this in order that those suspected of being among the Mufawwida but who have mixed themselves with us be distinguished [from us].”

140. This was not a common practice among the Shi‘a until 907/1501–1502 when the Safavid Ismā‘īl I (r. 906–930/1501–1524) issued a decree that
generations of Shi‘ite jurists who regarded it a legally unwarranted innovation,141 was the addition of testimony to the spiritual authority (wilāya) of ‘Alī in the call to prayer (adhdūn). Some of their ideas also gained the acceptance of Imāmī theologians of that and later periods. The Nawbakhtīs, for instance, adopted their theory of the Imām’s perfect knowledge of all languages and arts,142 as well as the theory that his Imāmate is a necessary conclusion of his inborn merits.143 However, they opposed the Mufawwīdīa on other questions such as the Imām’s power to perform miracles,144 his receiving of divine revelation,145 his ability to hear the voices of the angels,146

the formula asbabu anna ‘aliyyan waliyya ‘illaḥ be added to the adhdūn. At that time, it was suggested that it was a Shi‘ite practice that had been abandoned for more than five centuries (Rūmḥūlū, 12: 61). By early next century (eleventh/seventeenth) it had already become such a popular practice in most Shi‘ite towns that if someone did not say it in the adhdūn he was accused of having become a Sunnite. Therefore, although the jurists regarded it as an unauthorized addition, they could not publicly denounce it, so they considered it to be a case wherein they had to practice precautionary secrecy (Majlīsī I, Lawwāmi‘ī, 1: 82). However, in the middle of the following century (twelfth/eighteenth) many Shi‘ites still refrained from adding that formula to the adhdūn (Muḥammad Mu‘āmin al-Ḥusaynī: 43–4; Muḥammad Naṣīr b. Muḥammad Maṣūm: 2–3). The Prominent Imāmī jurist, Ja‘far b. Khīḍr al-Najafī, Kāshīf al-Ghiṭū (d. 1228/1813) sent a petition to the Qājār king of his time, Fath ‘Alī Shāh (r. 1212–1250/1797–1834) and asked him to ban this unwarranted innovation (Akhbārī, Risāla dar sbahādat bar wilāyat: 181–3). Later in that century the Shi‘ite ‘alāmī in India, too, tried to encourage the community to abandon the practice but failed (Muḥsin al-Amīn, 2:205; Muḥarrar Tābrizī, 4: 229). It is now an almost universal Imāmī practice (see, for instance, Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, 5: 545).


144. Ibid.: 40.


146. Ibid.: 41.

and, after his death, the voices of visitors to his shrine147 and to know their conditions, and his knowledge of the unseen.148 Other Imāmī theologians such as Muḥfīd disagreed with the Nawbakhtīs on their two pro-Mufawwīdīa ideas.149 Muḥfīd, however, agreed with the Mufawwīdīa on the basis of what he thought to be “sound reports”150 that the Imām could perform miracles and hear the voices of the angels and the pilgrims to his shrine. These are the reports that the transmitters of the Mufawwīdīa151 and many other early Imāmī authorities152 rejected as unauthentic and apocryphal accounts fabricated by the extremists, including the Mufawwīdīa. As will be seen below, Aḥū Ja‘far b. Qība also maintained the possibility that God “may manifest miracles by the hand of the Imām”153 although he,

147. Ibid.: 45.

148. Ibid.: 38.

149. Ibid.: 33, 35, 38.

150. Ibid.: 40, 41, 45. Aḥū ‘l-Ḥasan al-Asḥārī 2:125 noted the division in the Imāmī community of his time over the possibility of miracles from the Imām, where “groups” of the Rāfidītes (in his words) supported this possibility.

151. See, for instance, Najāshī: 329 (also Tūṣī, Fibrit: 143), also 348 where a long list is given of the transmitters whose reports were rejected by Aḥū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. al-Walīd (d. 343/954–955), head of the school of Qum in his time (ibid.: 383).

152. Fāḍl b. ʿAbdālān al-Nāṣirībūrī, for instance, considered it unlawful to quote the reports ascribed by Muḥammad b. Sīnān to the Imāms (Kashshī: 507). ‘Alī b. ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Fāḍlāl, a prominent Imāmī scholar of the early third/ninth century, had the same opinion about whatever was reported by Ḥasan b. ‘Ali b. ʿAbd Ḥamza al-Bāṭānī, who was an extremist and a liar (ibid.: 443), in spite of the fact that he had formed students with Bāṭānī and heard many hadīths from him and copied his entire commentary on the Qurʾān from beginning to end (ibid.: 404, 552). Ḥasan b. ‘Ali b. ʿAbū Ḥamzah al-Bāṭānī, another prominent Imāmī hadīth transmitter in the beginning of the third/ninth century, refused to transmit to his students a pro-Mufawwīdīa hadīth that was in a book that he was reading with his student (Ayyāshī, 1:374). The expression lā yaḥdūhu hadīthubu (or lā yaḥṣīna an yakāhu ḥadīthubu) repeatedly occurs in the early Imāmī biographical works in reference to the hadīth transmitters of the Mufawwīdīa (see, for instance, Ibn al-Ghāḍābīrī, 5:184 [on Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Jumāh al-Ammī]; 6:131 [on Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Ṭufī]; see further Najāshī: 122).

153. See his Mas‘ala fi l-imāma, paras. 5–7.
too, categorically rejected other ideas of the Mufawwida such as the Imām's knowledge of the unseen\textsuperscript{154} or the Imām as anything more than a pious scholar.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{154} See his \textit{Naqṣ kītab al-ishbād}, paras. 34, 55. The idea that the Imām had such knowledge was, as noted, originally put forward by the Kaysānite extremists and then followed by other heretic groups (see, for instance, Abu 'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari, 1:77; Kashshi: 291, 292, 298–9; Abu 'l-Faraj, \textit{Aghātā}, 23:243; Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd, 2:119) and the Mufawwida. The pro-Mufawwida elements among the Twelve Imāmites have since continued to support this idea, whereas the anti-Mufawwida have always strongly rejected it; in fact some (such as Ibn Qība in his \textit{Naqṣ kītab al-ishbād}, para. 55) considered the attribution of such knowledge to anybody other than God to be tantamount to infidelity (\textit{see inter alia} and apart from those mentioned above, Kashshi: 541 \textit{[see also 326, 443]; Ibn Bābawayh, \textit{Khiḍāl}: 428; idem, \textit{Ma'ānī}: 102; Mufid, \textit{Majālis}: 1:73; idem, \textit{Awā'il}: 38; idem, \textit{al-Maṭā'il al-ukhāriyya} \textit{[quoted in Majlīsī, 42:257–8]; Murtaḍā, \textit{Dhakhīrā}: 456; idem, \textit{Iṣḥāqī}: 243; Ṭūsī, \textit{Tibyān}, 4:152; idem, \textit{Takhlīs al-ṣafāt}, 1:252; 4:182–8; idem, \textit{Tambūd}: 365–6; Ṭabrisī, \textit{Majma'ā}, 6:230–31, 7:230–1; 12: 238–9; Abu 'l-Furtūh al-Rāzī, 5:347; Ibn Sharḥīn, \textit{Mutashābih al-qur'ān}, 1:111; 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī: 286; Ibn Maytham, 3:209; Fāṭḥ Allāh al-Kāshānī, 1:148; Nūr Allāh al-Tustari, \textit{al-As'īla al-yānṣūfya}: passim; Muhammad Ḥasan al-Najafī, 1:182 and many other sources mentioned in Najāfābādī: 464–5 and Qāḍīmārī: 166–185). Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-As'īrī, 1:117, noted the division between the Imāmite community of his time on this issue. Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 176 attributed to the Imāmites the opinion that the Imām knew everything related to the religious law. Other opponents of the Imāmites, however, accused all of them of believing in the Imām's knowledge of the unseen (Pseudo Qāsim b. 'Ibrāhīm: 104b; 'Abd al-Jabārī, \textit{Fawā'id al-qur'ān}, quoted in Ibn Tawūs, \textit{Sa'd al-su'ūd}: 184). Among the Imāmites themselves Mufid (\textit{Awā'il}: 38) and Ṭabrisī (\textit{Majma'ā}, 6:230–1, 7:230–1, 12: 238–9) categorically denied that any of the Imāmites in their time held such an opinion (the first asserted that only the Ghuṭūl and Mufawwīda held it), whereas 'Abd al-Jalīl al-Qazwīnī: 286 referred to a small group of the Imāmites \textit{ḥabībīyya} (traditionists) who still quietly existed within the Imāmite community of his time (\textit{see my An Introduction to Shi'i Law}: 34; also Muntajab al-Dīn: 161 where the title of a work written by the head of the Imāmite community of Qazwīn in the early or mid-sixth/seventh century, Muhammad b. Ḥamdān b. Muhammad al-Ḥamdānī, \textit{al-Fāsīl fi ḍhann ma'da' al-ṣalāl}, may be taken as further testimony to the existence of some of the Imām's \textit{ḥabībīyya in those days}) and who advocated the idea of the Imām's knowledge of the unseen. Ibn Tawūs, \textit{Sa'd al-su'ūd}: 185, also acknowledged the division among the Imāmites on the issue.

\textsuperscript{155} See his \textit{Naqṣ kītab al-ishbād}, para. 34. See also al-Shāhīd al-Thānī, \textit{Haqīqī}
collecting and preserving as many hadiths as possible was a feature of quality and pride for the collector, a mentality that prevailed in the entire community of Muslim traditionists from all schools during the early and middle Islamic ages. Much of the material contained in different versions of the earlier books as well as in works attributed to early authors (at times famous ones), even though there was no evidence to verify these attributions, was quoted in later works by non-Mufawwida authors who themselves did not believe in the content and could not guarantee the authenticity of their sources. In more recent centuries the preoccupation of some Shi'ite authors with preserving whatever early Shi'ite material has survived has spread the material from the works of heretic authors. Some authors even tried to rehabilitate those heretics and criticized the early Shi'ite authorities who “accused” them of heresy and corruption of faith. The result of this centuries-long process is manifest in the monumental collection of Biḥār al-anwār of Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi (d. 1110/1699), which includes most of the remains of the scholarship of the extremists of the early centuries that found their way into Imāmite works through the channels mentioned.

The history of these two trends of Imāmite thought, the conflict of which comprised a major chapter in the history of the Imāmite community in the periods following the period of Minor Occultation, is outside the topic of the present work. In brief, although the Mufawwida came to be regarded in theory as a heretical splinter community, many of their teachings (although not their fundamental ideas on cosmological matters) that were put in the form of hadith, especially on the scope of knowledge of the Imām, found supporters among later Imāmites. Heretical persons and sects appeared in the Imāmite community who even supported the cosmological theories of the Mufawwida, including authors such as Rajab al-Bursi (d. after 813/1410) and the splinter group of the Shaykhīyya (founded in the thirteenth/nineteenth century), all of whom were anathematized by the Imāmite mainstream as extremists. Many Shi'ite Sufis, too, supported those opinions, and, thus, the accession of the Sufi Safavids to power in Iran in the beginning of the tenth/sixteenth century contributed greatly to the spread and popularization of those ideas.

The introduction of Sufi ideas and interpretations into Islamic philosophy in the Safavid period brought about a new Shi'ite school of Islamic philosophy in the eleventh/seventeenth century and helped the Sufi cosmological theories of Ibn al-'Arabī to become established in Shi'ite philosophical thought. Some of the adherents of this philosophical school put forward a theory of the Imām’s “existential authority” (al-wilāya al-takwiniyya) that was virtually the same as the Mufawwida’s cosmological theory on the authority of the “first creature” or the “perfect man” in the creation and supervision of the world. Although many of the followers of that Sufi philosophical school have not supported that concept of the Imām’s existential authority to its full logical conclusion, others have done so. Those that have must be regarded as the true heirs to the Mufawwida (even though they strongly deny it, at least verbally) because their doctrines are identical. Although always a very small minority, some of their ideas, which were in line with the pro-Mufawwida reports in the collections of hadith, as well as their terminology, have gained some degree of support in the community.

159. These differences sometimes made two books of a single book as was the case with Saffār’s Baṣār’ al-darajāt (see its editor’s introduction: 4–5).

160. These include books such as the present version of Kitāb sulaḥ b. qays al-bišāri, Pseudo Mas‘ūdī’s Iḥbā’ al-waṣīyya, Pseudo Mufid’s al-Iḥṣāṣi and other similar works (see further Najāshī: 129, 258; Ibn al-Ghaḍāri, 5:160).

161. This work is available in two editions, the old lithograph in 25 large volumes and the new edition in 110 volumes.

162. See especially volumes 23–27 of its new edition and the section on the miracles under each Imām’s biography in volumes 35–53.

163. See, for instance, Gḥayba: 254 where a former Shi‘ite is said to have been converted to the doctrine of the Mufawwida and that “the Shi‘a did not know him except for a short time.”

164. Shubbar, Majābīth al-anwār, 1:369. See also Majlisi, 2:175, footnote.
For the past few centuries, therefore, the Shi‘ite scholastic community has been once again divided between supporters and rejectors of the supernaturality of the Imams. The absolute majority of the rank and file and many of the scholars stand somewhere between the two trends, as was the case during the time of the Imams. The relation between the two trends has remained as it was during the early centuries: calm and quiet at times, bitter and problematic at others, depending on whether something or someone provoked hostilities between them. The last outbreak of violent conflict between the two trends which started in Iran and soon spread to other Shi‘ite communities, followed the publication of a book late in 1970 by a member of the Shi‘ite seminary of Qum on one of the most popular Shi‘ite themes, the rise and fall of Husayn. The analysis offered in this book was very much in line with that of the early Shi‘ite scholars such as Mufid and the Sharīf al-Murtada, namely that the Imam did not know that his rising was not going to succeed and that he later tried all possible honorable ways to prevent bloodshed. The book received the written or verbal endorsement and support of other scholars of that seminary as well as of other members of the Shi‘ite religious establishment in different towns. The unmistakable implication that the whole episode was a failed personal initiative, however, provoked extremely hostile reactions from those who believed in the perfect knowledge of the Imam and in the authenticity of some related reports recorded in the collections of hadith that the author ignored. Some twenty books were published against that book. Using the same familiar and thirteen-century-old tactics, the supporters of the perfect knowledge and limitless power of the Imams, who now called themselves wilāyatī (the supporters of the absolute authority of the Imams) accused their opponents of lack of faith in the Shi‘ite doctrine and in the Imams and of having Sunnite inclinations, and labeled them wahhābī, or nāsībī (anti-‘Alid). The popular preachers, most of whom were in the wilāyatī camp, managed to provoke many of the common people against the so-called wahhābī and to prevail against them. The so-called wahhābī group included almost all of those who later led the Islamic Revolution, save the leader, and came to power in Iran. The wilāyatīs continued their thoroughgoing and harsh attacks on their opponents for several years and did not let the case rest. The situation got out of hand, very ugly and violent in some towns in Iran. In Isfahān in central Iran, it led to unfortunate bloodshed; an old religious scholar, who was among the opponents of the book, was murdered. Actually, if it had not been for the Revolution, which brought the suppressed group to power and prevailed over all other social questions, many more lives would have been lost.

Many works have been exchanged between the two lines of thought during almost thirteen centuries. Many more are written by the supporters of each trend to elaborate their own lines of thought. The standpoints of each group on the nature of the Imamate inevitably affected their views on every other subject, particularly toward the rest of the Muslim community and on sectarian topics. Outsiders who face different interpretations and opposite views on those sorts of questions from Shi‘ite authors become puzzled and have some difficulty deciding which one represents the true Shi‘ite position. At times the moderate views of some Shi‘ite writers on sectarian issues have led outsiders to suspect or presume that they are insincere, that they have exercised precautionary secrecy, or that they have attempted to offer a more moderate and presentable (or else reconciliatory) version of the Shi‘ite doctrine because completely different judgments on the same subjects are given by otherwise similarly authoritative Shi‘ite writers. What these outsiders fail to note is that each of the two groups is sincere in expressing its own mind but that each represents a totally different trend with different visions of some important dogmatic questions, although all agree on the basic and fundamental question on which the whole Shi‘ite doctrine is built—that the Imams of the House of the Prophet are the ultimate source and authority of religious knowledge, of the true interpretation of the Qur‘ān, and of the sound tradition of the Prophet.

167. One of the most recent examples is a book called Umarā‘-i bastī (in Persian), on the comprehensive authority of the Prophet and Imams over the universe, written by a certain Abu ’l-Fadl Nabawi (Tehran, 1345 sh/1966–1967). It was refuted by a book entitled Rāh-i nījāt az sharr-i ghulāt by Ḥaydar ‘Alī Qulamdarān (Qum, 1974).
III

The Crisis of Succession

In the first half of the second/eighth century, the overwhelming majority of the Shi‘ites, as noted, followed Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, who was widely recognized as the head of the House of the Prophet in his time. During his time, however, the radical wing of the Shi‘ite community first joined the revolt of Zayd b. ‘Alī in 122/740 and then turned to the Ḥasanid branch of the ‘Alīids. At this time the Ḥasanids were represented by ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan, known as ‘Abd Allāh al-Mahd (d. 145/762), who was the most senior in age among the living members of the House of the Prophet and considered himself to be the head of the House. The radical elements eventually followed ‘Abd Allāh’s son, Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, in his open revolt in 145/762. They controlled Medina for a short time before their defeat, and during this period gave Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq a difficult time for failing to support their insurrection. The disputes between the Ḥasanid and Ḥusaynid branches of the ‘Alīids incited some members of the Shi‘ite community to say that although the right to leadership of the Muslim community lay with the House of the Prophet, it was not known who the actual Imām was because there was disagreement on this issue within the House itself. The Imām, they maintained, would be the individual

1. See Ṣaffār: 66; Kulaynī, 1:349, 7:376; Kashshī: 427; Manāqib, 3:349. See also Nawbakhti: 68; Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 73.
who was accepted by the consensus of all members of the House of the Prophet. Nonetheless, all Imāmites accepted the authority of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and from that time on came to be known as Ja'fariyya.

The first major crisis of leadership in the Imāmite community occurred after the death of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq when his followers divided on the question of succession. One group, which included some of his distinguished disciples, did not recognize anyone after him as Imām. This group apparently consisted of those who followed Ja'far al-Ṣādiq as primus inter pares, the most distinguished scholar of the


6. They were those Shi'ites who maintained the father-to-son succession of the Imāmate, the believers in the nizām al-imāmah as termed by Mufid, Majdālī, 2:88, 93, or al-nāṣab al-nasāq as called by Niṣābī: 23, 26 (or al-qā'ilān bi-nasāq al-imāma, ibid.: 24, 25, 46, 48) and Mas'ūdī, Taṣbib: 232. The derogatory term of rāfida or rawāfid (sing. rāfīdī = rejector) in Sunnite usage refers to the same group. According to the Sunnite authors, this term was first used by Zayd b. 'Ali for those of his followers who deserted him after he allegedly refused to condemn Abī Bakr and 'Umar as illegitimate rulers (see Friedlaender, "The Heterodoxies of the Shi'ites in the Presentation of Ibn Hazm": 137-59; Kohlberg, "The Term Rāfida in Imāmī Shi'i Usage": 677-9). The Shi'ites themselves in the third/ninth century thought that the heresiarch Mughirā b. Sa'd b. al-Balajī (d. ca. 119/737) who started as a Shi'ite and then separated and established his own special group (see article al-Maṣūbiyya in EP, 7:347-8 [by W. Madelung]) invented this phrase kān min al-nāṣabīyya in Kashshi: 352 is said to appear in some manuscripts of that work as kān min al-qā'idīyya, and it is argued that this may be the right version because the man is said by Najāshī: 13 and Tūsī, Fihrist: 18 to be from Kūfa to which Qādisiyya belonged (Muhammad Taqī al-Tustari, Qāmūs al-rijāl, 1:114, 116). Kashshi, however, asserts that Abān was from Baṣra although he was living in Kūfa, so the expression wa kān min al-qā'idīyya would not fit in his sentence because it is against what the author has said previously in the same line. There is no other evidence to suggest that the man was from Qādisiyya, whereas there is a point to support that he actually "stopped" with Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. Contrary to what Najāshī: 13 and Tūsī, Fihrist: 7 asserted, he seems to have never quoted from Ja'far's successor, Mūsā (Muhammad Taqī al-Tustari, 1:115), in spite of the fact that he lived during the latter's period of Imāmate. (The date of Abān's death is not known. However, that he lived until well into the second half of the second/eighth century is well verified by the fact that many of the transmitters of hadith who started their careers in the last decades of that century studied with him. See a list of them in Khu'ī, 1:164. See also Ibn Hajar, Lisān, 1:24.)

10. A prolific Imāmite scholar of the fourth/tenth century, Abū Tālib 'Ubayd Allāh b. Ahmad al-Anbārī (d. 356/966-967), is also reported to have been among the Nāwūsiyya (Tūsī, Fihrist: 103; compare with Ibn al-Nadīm: 247 where he is said to have been from the "Bābūshīyya." However, the point that this scholar had Wāqidī tendencies in "stopping" with a certain Imām is also attested to by Najāshī: 232).

11. See, for instance, 'Ali b. Bābawayh: 198 where the Prophet is quoted as predicting that upon the passing away of his two grandsons, Muhammad al-Baqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, the chapter of knowledge will categorically close.
raphers," however, made a special sect out of this group, saying that its members held that Ja’far al-Ṣādiq had not actually died but was alive and would come back someday to the world as the qāʾim. The heresiographers named the group the Nāwūsīyya, allegedly because the head of the group was a man of Baṣra called Nāwūs. Two completely different accounts are given of the reason why these people “stopped” with Ja’far and thought that he must be alive.  

12. Nawbakhti: 78; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 79; Nashī: 46; Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 286; Abu ’l-Ḥasan al-Ash’arī, 1:100; Abu ’l-Qāsim al-Balḥūkī: 179 (misspelled as bārīsīyya in this edition); Mufid, Majālis, 2:88; ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, Ḫulūl al-dīn: 273 (misspelled as yāhūsīyya in this edition); idem, Farq: 61; Isfārā’īnī: 37; Ibn Ḥāzm, 5:36; Shahristānī, 1:195; Nashwān: 162; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Muḥāṣṣal: 354; idem, Fīiqādat: 64 (appears in the edition as nāmāsīyya); Maqrīzī, 2:351; Samānī, 13:19 (who erroneously ascribed to them that they doubted that Muḥammad al-Bāqir had actually died and awaited the return of Ja’far al-Ṣādiq, too). See also Ibn Qība, Naqqī kitāb al-īshbād: paras. 14, 23; Kamāl: 37; Mufid, al-Fuṣūl al-‘ashara: 373; Ghayba: 18, 119.

13. A variant version of this account quotes them as saying that Ja’far did die, but there would be no Imām after him and he would return to the world in a future time. See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Muḥāṣṣal: 354.


15. Compare Nawbakhti: 78; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 79–80; Mufid, Majālis, 2:88; Shahristānī, 1:195 with Kashshī: 414. One of the two quotations given as the basis for this opinion in the first account is also mentioned as one of the main arguments of those who later denied that Muṣā al-Kāzīm died. Compare Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 286; Shahristānī, 1:195; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Muḥāṣṣal: 354 with Abū Ḥātim: 290; Nawbakhti: 90; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 89–90.

16. See above, chapter 1. According to a report recorded by Kulaynī, 1:307 and Khuṣaybī: 243, even ‘Anbasa b. Muṣ‘ab, one of the future so-called Nāwūsūs, himself quoted that he once asked Ja’far al-Ṣādiq whether he was the qāʾim, to which question the Imām replied that he was qāʾīm in the sense that he was the one to rise to the position of Imām after his father.

17. Especially Kashshī: 426, 450, 458, 463, 473–4, 475 (dated 193/905, which was ten years after Muṣā’s death), 477, 614.

18. Among the Muslim authors Mufid was the only one who doubted if any group ever existed that denied the return of Ja’far al-Ṣādiq and maintained that he was the qāʾīm (Majālis, 2:90). Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 285 also emphasized that there was no one in his time who held such an opinion. It should also be noted that some Sunnite sources describe the Nāwūsīyya as a sect of the Ghulāt who, according to different accounts, either awaited the return of ‘Ali with no reference at all to Ja’far (Shahristānī, 1:195 [quoting Abū Ḥāmid al-Azwarān]; Ibn al-Jawāzī, Talbis ʾibti: 22) or were later joined and influenced by a group of Sabaʾīyya and held exaggerated opinions about Ja’far (Farq: 61; Isfārā’īnī: 37. See also Samānī, 13:19), whereas the Shiʾite sources only attribute to them the opinion that Ja’far al-Ṣādiq did not die and that he would return to the world as the qāʾīm. It can be suggested with some confidence that the Sunnite sources mixed the Shiʾite material on the Nāwūsīyya with material about another sect whose name was spelled somehow similarly in Arabic script and ascribed
A second group comprised the disciples of Ismā'il, a son of Ja'far al-Sādiq who had predeceased his father by one or two years. Ismā'il had been the eldest son and his father's favorite, and it had been widely believed that he would be the next Imām. There were even rumors within the Shi‘ite community that Ismā’il’s father had explicitly designated him as his successor. Ismā’il’s unexpected death thus created a doctrinal problem for those among the Imāmites who believed that the order of the Imāms was prefixed and that each Imām appointed his successor according to that order as revealed to him by God or delegated by the Prophet or the previous Imāms. It also created a problem for those who thought that the Imāms possessed knowledge of the future. This quandary led to the introduction of the early Kaysānite concept of bāda‘ into Imāmite thought, a concept originally understood as a change in the divine decision but later reinterpreted by Imāmite theologians as referring to an unexpected divine decision, that is, that people came to realize that the divine decision had been different from what they had thought it was. Others among the disciples of Ismā’il maintained either that Ismā’il had not really died and had succeeded his father as a living but vanished Imām or that his right to the succession had been transferred to his son, Muḥammad, who was to be followed as the Imām after the death of his grandfather, Ja’far al-Sādiq. The latter was the position of the followers of Abu ‘l-Khaṭṭāb who accepted Muḥammad b. Ismā’il as the true Imām after the execution of Abu ‘l-Khaṭṭāb left them without a leader. The Ismā’iliyya branch of Shi‘ism thus came into existence; it has survived into the present.

The overwhelming majority of the Imāmites, however, accepted ‘Abd Allāh, the eldest of the remaining sons of Ja’far al-Sādiq, as the true successor to his father. He lived only seventy days after his father and died without a son. Most of his followers then transferred their allegiance to Mūsā, the next eldest son of Ja’far, who had already built his own circle of followers among close associates of his father but had not openly challenged his brother while ‘Abd Allāh still lived. ‘Abd Allāh’s followers divided after his death with some deciding that they had been wrong to believe he was the true Imām. The main arguments against his truth were his inadequate knowledge of the shari‘a and his reported earlier Sunnite inclinations although many also argued that if he had been the true

24. As cited by most sources. ‘Alī b. Bābawayh: 179, however, states that ‘Abd Allāh outlived his father by one month only.
25. According to Saḥfī: 250–51 and Kashshi: 282–4, this group was headed by two well-known Imāmites mutakallimīn, Hishām b. Sālim al-Ja‘farī and Abū Ja‘far al-Ahwāl Shāhī al-Tāqī, who reportedly tested ‘Abd Allāh by putting some legal questions to him and concluded that he was not knowledgeable in the matters of shari‘a and so was unqualified for the Imāmate (see also Nawbakht: 89; Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 88; ‘Alī b. Bābawayh: 209–10; Kulaynī, 1:351). Others such as Abu ‘l-Ḥasan al-‘Ash’arī, 1:103; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamāra, 53; Shahrastānī, 1:218 attributed this testing to Zurār b. A‘yan, which is incorrect (see Kashshi: 154–6). Ibn Ḥazm’s account here is particularly confused as he first identifies ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Abta‘ī (sic), head of the Abja‘iyya (sic, possibly a later misspelling in both cases), as son of Muḥammad al-Baqīr and then as son of Ja‘far al-Sādiq.
Imām he would not have died without issue. Mūsā was, thus, the true successor to Ja'far al-Sādiq. This group later formed the mainstream of the Imāmite community. Another group was of the opinion that ‘Abd Allāh had been a true Imām and was the legitimate successor to Ja'far al-Sādiq, and Mūsā was the successor to ‘Abd Allāh. This group remained within Imāmite Shi‘ism until the late third/ninth century and produced some of the most distinguished Imāmite scholars. Agreeing with the mainstream Imāmites on the chain of succession from Mūsā al-Kāzīm on, they differed only on the addition of the name of ‘Abd Allāh. This group was known as the Faṭhites after ‘Abd Allāh, who bore the epithet aftab (the flatfooted). Their belief that succession to the Imāmate need not necessarily be from father to son later contributed, as will be seen below, to another split in the Imāmite community after the death of the eleventh Imām.

The death of Mūsā al-Kāzīm in 183/799 led to another major succession crisis. A number of the most distinguished among his close associates and regional representatives maintained that Mūsā had actually not died but had gone into hiding until he would return to the world as the gā‘im. Many of the Imāmites, probably the majority of them in the beginning when there was a rumor that the Imām would reappear in eight months, supported this claim. This group came to be known as the Wāqi‘ites, later called the Maṃtūra by their opponents, and, like the Faṭhites, included and

produced many distinguished scholars. Unlike what some Shi‘ite scholars of the fifth/eleventh century thought that the supporters of this sect had disappeared, the sect seems to have survived for quite a long time, at least until the mid-sixth/twelfth century.

27. See Kashshi: 345, 385, 530, 562, 563, 565, 570, 612. For a list of the Faṭhite scholars mentioned in the early Imāmite sources see Ibn Dāwūd: 532–33.
28. See Kashshi: 530, 565.
29. Ibid.: 406.
30. The word can mean either "wet by rain" or "the recipients of rain." There are two completely different accounts about why these Shi‘ites were called the Maṃtūra. According to one account, they once in a year of drought went out of the town and prayed for rain. That was after everybody else had gone and prayed with no result. It rained when they prayed and so they became known as the Maṃtūra, those for whom the rain came ('Abd al-Jabīr, Maghiri, 20 [2]:182. See also Pseudo Mas‘ūdi, Ishbāt al-waṣīyya: 187). According to the other, the reason they were called Maṃtūra was that once one of their opponents argued with them and said to them: "you are wet dogs" or "In my eyes you are inferior to wet dogs." (The dog is considered unclean in Islamic law. It is worse when it is wet because it contaminates other things it contacts.) The opponent who made this statement is variously identified as ‘Ali b. Ima‘rī al-Maythamī (Nawbakhti: 92; Abū Hātim al-Rāzī: 290, Shahristānī, 1:198), Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Rahmān (Sa`d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 92; Abu ‘l-Hasan al-Ash‘ari, 1:103; Farg: 64) or Zurārah b. A‘yan (Isfara‘īnī: 39; in actual terms, Zurārah had already died more than thirty years before Mūsā al-Kāzīm died and this sect came into existence) or an unidentified "group" (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Tīqāqāt: 66). The first account, however, does not seem accurate because the name Maṃtūra was considered a derogatory title that their opponents used to call them (see Abu ‘l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181. See also Kashshi: 460–61; Najāshī: 393 for examples of the derogatory use of that title), whereas it had to be a compliment if the basis for this naming was that story.
31. See a list of them in Ibn Dāwūd: 528–32 and Riyād Muhammad Ḥabīb al-Naṣīri’s monograph on this sect, 1:211–19, 261 ff.
32. See, for instance, Murtadā, Dākhira: 503; idem, Risāla fi ḡbaybat al-huwayja: 295 (in his Shāfi‘ī: 3:148, however, he was more accurate as he confirmed that a few of the supporters of this opinion still existed); Tūsī, Ghayba: 42.
33. See Madelung, “Some Notes on Non-Iṣmā‘īlī Shi‘ism in the Maghrib”: 87–97. According to Madelung, “Ibn Ḥawqal, writing ca. 378/988, mentions that the people of the extreme Sūs in the western Maghrib were partly Mālikī Sunnīs and partly Mūsawi Shi‘īs who cut the line of Imāms after Mūsā (al-Kāzīm) b. Ja‘far and belonged to the followers of ‘Ali b. Warsand (Ibn Ḥawqal, K. Šūrat al-ard, ed. K. H. Kramers, pp. 91f.)... al-Idrīsī, writing ca. 548/1154, mentions that the people of the caliphate of Sūs, Tārūdān, were Mālikīs while the people of the second major town, Tiyūwīn, located a day’s trip from Tārūdān, adhered to the madhhab of Mūsā b. Ja‘far (al-Idrīsī, Description de l’Afrique septentrionale et saharienne, ed. H. Pérès, Algiers, 1957, p. 39).” The sect was known in Maghrib as Bajalīyya after its head, ‘Ali b. al-Ḥusayn b. Warsand b. Bajalī, the Shi‘īte author of the early third/ninth century. For this scholar and the sect of Bajalīyya see the same article of Madelung and his article on Ibn Warsand in EF, supplement: 402. See also al-Sharif al-Ruḍī, Ḥaṣā‘īs al-A‘īmna, p. 37.
that they did not want to surrender to a new concern. The large sums of money had accumulated with his representatives in different towns, which they had not forwarded to the Imám because he was in prison for several years. To keep the funds for themselves and not send them to his successor, they denied Músâ’s death and claimed that he would return to the scene. This actually may have been one of the factors that contributed to the emergence of that doctrine; in fact there are numerous reports concerning distinguished members of the group who held assets. Al-Ridâ, rumors circulated to the effect that Muḥammad was his adopted, not his natural, son. That uncertainty was compounded by questions about his youth and the state of his knowledge when he succeeded his father as Imám. Despite this, the fact that no other clear alternative existed made the transition relatively painless. Hardly anybody could challenge the succession of the only son of a venerated head of the House of the Prophet who had died at the peak of his popularity. Adequate solutions were also found to the questions about the qualifications of a child Imám. Therefore, after 36. See ‘Abî b. Bâbawayh: 213–14; Kashshi: 405, 459–60, 467; Ibn Bâbawayh, ‘Ilal, 1: 225; idem, ‘Uyun, 1:22, 113–14; Ghayba: 42–4; Tabrisî, I’lam: 314. 35. Kashshi: 405, 459, 467, 468, 598, 599; Najâshî: 300. 34. See ‘Abî b. Bâbawayh: 213–14; Kashshi: 405, 459–60, 467; Ibn Bâbawayh, ‘Ilal, 1: 225; idem, ‘Uyun, 1:22, 113–14; Ghayba: 42–4; Tabrisî, I’lam: 314. 33. See, for instance, Pseudo Qâsim b. Ibrâhîm: 104a; Abû Zayd al-‘Alawî, para. 24; Nâshî: 47; Nawbakhhtî: 90; Sa’d b. ‘Abî Allâh: 89; Abû Hâtim al-Râzî: 287, 291, 293; Abu l-Hasan al-Ashtârî, 1:90, 103, 104; Abu l-Qâsim al-Balkhî: 176, 180, 182; Mas‘ûdî, Marjî’î, 4:28; idem, Tanbîh: 231, 232; Kamâl: 84; Khwârîzmî: 50, 51; Mufiid, Majâtîs, 2:98; Ibn Hazm, 5:38; Farq: 64, 70, 71; Shahristânî, 1:198–9; Nashwân: 166; Isfârâ’înî: 39; Fakhhr al-Dîn al-Râzî, Muḥayyal: 355. See also ‘Utsî, Tanbîhî, 4:150. 32. There are statements which confirm that an allegation. See, for instance, Sa’d b. ‘Abî Allâh: 101; Kashshi: 612; Ghayba: 41; Tabrisî, I’lam: 364. Mâlari: 38 (hence Maqrîzî, 2:351) erroneously identified the Qaṭ‘iyya as those who “stopped” with ‘Abî al-Râdî and did not believe in the Imámâte of his descendants, so they were called Qaṭ‘iyya because they cut the order of Imâmâte after him (see also ‘Utsîr: 157). Fakhhr al-Dîn al-Râzî, Itiqâdât: 66 identified them as those who believed wholeheartedly and most faithfully (from qaṭ‘a‘a, believed with certainty) in the Imâmâte of Músâ al-Kâzîm. Both of these latter assertions are obviously wrong. There is, however, a passage in Kulaynî, 1:322–3; al-Tabari, al-Shî’î: 201; Khûshaybî: 295–6; Manâqib, 4:387. The reason for the doubt is said to be the fact that Muhammad al-Jawâd was extremely dark skinned (Kulaynî, 1:322; Khûshaybî: 290; Manâqib, 4:387), which encouraged many people, including the close relatives of the Imâm, to suspect that Muhammad might have been a son of Sayf or Lu’u’, the two black slaves of ‘Alî al-Ridâ (Khusaybî: 295) and that the Imâm might have adopted him. The assertion of ‘Utsîr: 128 that ‘Alî al-Ridâ himself was aswad al-lawn (very dark skinned) seems thus to be unfounded. Both ‘Alî al-Ridâ and Muhammad al-Jawâd were reportedly born of Nubian mothers. The tenth (Kulaynî, 7:465–4) and the eleventh (Kashshi: 574) Imâmâs were also very dark skinned. 38. Kulaynî, 1:322–3; al-Tabari, al-Shî’î: 201; Khûshaybî: 295–6; Manâqib, 4:387. The reason for the doubt is said to be the fact that Muhammad al-Jawâd was extremely dark skinned (Kulaynî, 1:322; Khûshaybî: 290; Manâqib, 4:387), which encouraged many people, including the close relatives of the Imâm, to suspect that Muhammad might have been a son of Sayf or Lu’u’, the two black slaves of ‘Alî al-Ridâ (Khusaybî: 295) and that the Imâm might have adopted him. The assertion of ‘Utsîr: 128 that ‘Alî al-Ridâ himself was aswad al-lawn (very dark skinned) seems thus to be unfounded. Both ‘Alî al-Ridâ and Muhammad al-Jawâd were reportedly born of Nubian mothers. The tenth (Kulaynî, 7:465–4) and the eleventh (Kashshi: 574) Imâmâs were also very dark skinned. 39. Ḥîmyarî, Dalâ‘îl (quoted in Irbîlî, 3:92); Kashshi: 596; al-Tabari, al-Shî’î: 184; Ibn Bâbawayh, ‘Uyun, 2:250; Mufiid, Irshad: 316; Hasûnî b. ‘Abî al-Wahlâb: 118; Tabrisî, I’lam: 344; idem, Tâf: 51; Manâqib, 4:367; ‘Alî b. Yusuf b. al-Muṭahhâr: 294 (quoting Kitâb al-Durr). Others name a second son for ‘Alî al-Ridâ as ‘Alî (Ibn Hazm, Jamhûra: 55) or Músâ (Ibn Abi l-Thalj: 109; Ḥasan al-Qummi: 200; ‘Utsîr: 128 [quoting Naṣr b. ‘Alî al-Jahâmî in his Mawâlid al-‘a’îma]; Ibn Tâwîs, Mubâj al-Da’awwâ: 378; ‘Alî b. Yusuf b. al-Muṭahhâr: 294). Others added yet three more sons (Ibn al-Khashshâb: 193–4; Ibn Talha: 87; Irbîlî, 3:57 [quoting ‘Abî al-Azîz b. al-Akhdar], 74; Sîlîbî Ibn al-Jawzî: 202). Both of these latter assertions are clearly wrong.
a short period of uncertainty that the community experienced, the Imām of Muḥammad al-Jawād was accepted by almost the entire mainstream of the Imāmite community.

With this precedent, the transfer of authority went even more smoothly when it passed in turn from Muḥammad al-Jawād to his son, ‘Alī al-Hādī (who, like Muḥammad, was a child of only seven years when he succeeded to the Imāmate). According to a report, a servant of Muḥammad al-Jawād, Khayrān al-Khādīm, testified that Muḥammad had named ‘Alī al-Hādī as his successor, and the leaders of the Shi’ite community, who gathered on the day of Muḥammad al-Jawād’s death to decide the issue of the succession, eventually accepted his word. One notable who had been present at the Imām’s deathbed, the influential chief of the Shi’ite town of Qum, Abū Ja’far Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā al-Ash’arī, did contest Khayrān al-Khādīm’s story, but the situation was quickly brought under control by other close associates of the late Imām. This episode, if it can be substantiated, however, clearly indicates that even in this late phase of the history of the Imāmate, mere descent or seniority among the descendants of the deceased Imām was not considered sufficient for succession. The Shi’ite community had to be convinced that the new Imām had actually been appointed by his predecessor.40

41. According to Nawbakhti: 95, 97; Sa’d b. ’Abd Allāh: 93, 95; Abu ’l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181; and Mufīd, Majālis, 2:95, a group of the followers of ‘Alī al- Riḍā followed, after his death, his brother Ahmad, who had earlier, too, been followed by some Imāmites as the legitimate successor to his father Mūsā al-Kāzim (Kashshi: 472; Abu ’l-Qāsim al-Balkhī: 181), and another group held that ‘Alī al-Riḍā’s death without leaving a qualified successor indicated that he was not a true Imām; they thus joined the Wāqifīs and held that the Imām was Mūsā al-Kāzim who was still alive in occultation and was to reappear in the future as the gā’in. According to another report (Ṭust, Tābdīb, 3:28) a third group “stopped” with ‘Alī al- Riḍā and did not believe in any Imām after him. These groups must have been very small. None of the Imāmite notables or transmitters of ḥadīth are reported to have been among these groups.42

42. Kulaynī, 1:324.
43. See also Sa’d b. ’Abd Allāh: 106.

Special problems appeared again toward the end of the incumbency of ‘Alī al-Hādī with the death of his eldest son, Abū Ja’far Muḥammad. A well-mannered young man, Muḥammad had been adored by his father and by the Shi’ite community as a whole. He was the obvious choice to succeed his father, and this was the widespread expectation. Some reports even suggest that his father had explicitly singled out Muḥammad from among his sons to succeed to the Imāmate.43 Nevertheless, Muḥammad died three years before his father,44 and ‘Alī al-Hādī named as his successor his next son, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan, later known as Ḥasan al-’Askarī. The Imāmite community thus experienced once more the “unexpected divine decision” encountered first at the death of Iṣmā’īl, the eldest son of Imām Ja’far al-Sādiq. The overwhelming majority of the Imāmites accepted Ḥasan al-’Askarī as the Imām after the death of ‘Alī al-Hādī in 255/869 although the circumstances seem to have led many to question his authority, which led in turn to an unprecedented lack of faith in and lack of deference toward the new Imām. In one report, Ḥasan al-’Askarī is quoted as complaining that none of his forefathers had been as much doubted by the Imāmites as he was. On another occasion he asked a visitor from the town of Qum about the state of the Imāmite community there “when the people [presumably referring to the Imāmites of Iraq] were in doubt and suspicion.”45 Numerous references in the early sources cite the widespread disagreement among the Imāmite community of the time about his Imāmate.46 The lack of faith among the community was so great that for the first time ever in the history of the Imāmate one hears that some Shi’ites doubted

44. See Nawbakhti: 111; Sa’d b. ’Abd Allāh: 109; Ṭumāri: 131.
45. Ḥuṣayni: 385; Ghayba: 55–6, 120–21.
46. Mufīd, Irshād: 337.
47. Ibid.: 336–7; Ghayba: 55, 120–21, 122.
49. Ibid.: 385.
50. Kamāl: 222.
51. Ibid.
52. See, for instance, Ḥimyārī, Dalā‘il (quoted in Irshād, 3:206–7); Ibn Shu’ba: 361; Rāwandī, 1: 440, 448–50; Pseudo Māṣūdi: 239, 243.
the chastity of the Imam and accused him of wrongdoing in secret. Some of the Imamites of the time claimed that they had rested the Imam and concluded that his knowledge of the shari'a was not up to the perfect standard required for an Imam. Throughout the period of his Imamate, in fact from the very first day of his tenure, Hasan al-'Askari faced the criticism of his followers, who complained occasionally about what they called his untraditional and unprecedented actions. In the funeral procession for his father, for example, he rent his collar. This was a well-known and familiar expression of grief in the Arab tradition, but no previous Imam had ever done it, and so he was criticized for the action. He responded to his detractors by reminding them of how "Moses rent his collar in grief for the death of his brother, Aaron." Later, he was criticized for dressing in what some considered to be a sumptuous fashion. In a letter sent to the people of Nishapur, he complained that the prominent Imamite scholar of that town, Faḍl b. Shādhān, "draws away our followers from us . . . and whenever we write a letter to them he criticizes us for that." Some Shi'ites even argued that the Imam was making grammatical mistakes in his letters.

There were also complaints about the excessive spending of one of the Imam's financial agents, 'Alī b. Ja'far al-Humānī, on a pilgrimage to Mecca; complaints that the Imam rejected as infringements on his authority. It had been his own decision, the Imam stated, to grant his financial aide 100,000 dinārs and then to double that for him later. Naturally, the common people could not understand the divine interest behind the Imam's decisions. There were also doubts about how much he was in actual control of the office of Imamate. The financial affairs of the office, as noted above, were entirely administered by his close associate, 'Uthmān b. Sa'id al-‘Amrī, who was reportedly also writing and sending rescripts out in the name of the Imam. The community was not, therefore, sure about the authority of the orders and statements they received in the name of the Imam. This was apparently the reason that the

55. Kashshi: 572 (see also 574); Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 234. Cf. Khusaybī, 249–50 where Jacob and Joseph are mentioned instead (note that Ḥasan is quoted as having rent his collar on the death of his brother Muḥammad, too. See Kulaynī, 1:327).
57. Kashshi: 541. Ibn Shādhān's criticisms of the Imam and the Imam's unhappiness with him seem to have been well known in the Shi'ite community of Khurāsān at that time. See Kashshi: 538.
58. Pseudo Mas'ūdī: 244.
59. On him, see Kashshi: 606–8 (also 523, 527, 557); Najāshī: 280; Ghayba: 212.
60. Ghayba: 130, 212; Manāqib, 4:424–5.
61. See Sa'fār: 386 where a report ascribed to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq says: if you see the qa'im gives one hundred thousand to a man but only one dirham to another do not feel uncomfortable because he is given the full authority to do what he decides (fa-inna 'l-amra munafuwadun ilayh).
63. The Imamite community of Baghdad, therefore, doubted the authenticity of a rescript they received in his name about a well-known and prominent Imamite scholar of that town, Ahmad b. Hilāl al-'Abartā'i (on him see Kashshi: 535; Kamāl: 76; Najāshī: 83; Tusī, Fihrist: 36) whom the rescript anathematized on the basis that he embezzled the Imam's property without his permission. The community asked the Imam again, and a new rescript was issued confirming the former one (Kashshi: 535–7). According to both Kashshi and Najāshī: 83, his anathematization was in the period of Ḥasan al-'Askari (although this does not seem to be the case with Kamāl: 489; Ghayba: 214). A contemporary Shi'ite author (Muḥammad Taqi al-Tustari, 1:675) has cast doubt on this on the basis of a reference in the first rescript to Ibn Hilāl's death, while his date of death is given by Najāshī: 83 and Tusī, Fihrist: 36 as 267/880–881. He also argues that Tusī (in his Ghayba: 245) mentioned that the man contested the authority of the second agent of the vanished Imam, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, and that consequently (according to Ghayba: 245, 254) he was anathematized by a rescript of the Imam by the hand of his third agent, Husayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī. The second argument is certainly wrong. The one who contested the authority of the second agent was another disciple of Ḥasan al-'Askari, Ahmad b. Hilāl al-Karkhī, whose anathematization was because of this challenge, not the embezzlement of the Imam's property, which was the case with 'Abartā'i. This is explicitly mentioned in the rescript (Kashshi: 536). This author, like many others (such as Māmaqānī, 1:100; Khu'ī, 2:357), has failed to notice that Tusī mentioned the two Ibn Hilāls in two different parts of his work, the 'Abartā'i in the section on the "rebuked agents" of
Imām’s representative in Qum, Ahmad b. Ishāq al-Ash’arī, asked the Imām to write a line for him so that he could always recognize his handwriting whenever he received a rescript in his name.64

There were, indeed, some new practices that set Ḥasan al-‘Askārī’s period of Imāmāte apart from former periods. For obvious political reasons, he, unlike his forefathers, regularly attended the court, usually every Monday and Thursday during the caliph’s public audience,65 as one of the dignitaries of rank.66 He also occasionally visited other court dignitaries during their public audiences.67 He had vicious and rude enemies among the common people who shouted disrespectful words at him whenever he came out to go to the court68 despite the great respect and reverence that the community and the government held for him.69 Owing to the ever-increasing financial needs of the members of the House of the Prophet, the former Imāms until the time of Ḥasan al-‘Askārī, and the Karkhī in the section on the rebuked agents of the Twelfth Imām. These authors also failed to note that Ṭūsī said that the Karkhī was anathematized in a rescript to Husayn b. Riih “together with others,” a point which is true in his case (see the rescript in Ghayba: 254; see also 228), not the ‘Abartā’ī who was anathematized with two ad hoc rescripts (Kashshi: 535–7) addressed to ‘Uthmān b. Sa’īd al-Amrī (Ghayba: 214). The first argument of that contemporary author, however, has some truth in it. If one assumes that the date given for the ‘Abartā’ī’s death is authentic, there will actually be a conflict between Kashshī and Najashi’s accounts on the one hand and the related rescript on the other. The document, however, seems to be much more authoritative than the date, which may well be inaccurate, possibly by ten years. The man, thus, must have actually died before the death of Ḥasan al-‘Askārī in 260/874.

64. Kulaynī, 1:513; Manāqib, 4:434.
65. Kulaynī, 1:511; Ghayba: 123, 129. See also Khusaybī: 337; Rāwandi, 1:426, 439, 445, 446, 447; Manāqib, 4:431; Irbīlī, 3:302, 305; Pseudo Mas‘ūdī: 243. For the days of the caliphs’ public audiences see, inter alia, Manāqib, 4:368.
66. See Ghayba: 129.
68. Ghayba: 123; Manāqib, 4:430.
69. See Kulaynī, 1:503–5; Kamāl: 40–43.

for whom the generosity of the Imām was always available,70 he reportedly had to use his discretionary authority at times and deviate from the practices of his forefathers. It was a common phenomenon in the Shi‘ite community of the third/ninth century that many of its members willed all their belongings to the Imām. According to Shi‘ite law, however, a man could will only one-third of his belongings, and the remainder would go as inheritance to his heirs. The previous Imāms used to return to the heirs two thirds of any inheritance that was willed completely to them.71 There is, however, a report that Ḥasan al-‘Askārī ordered the executor of the will of a deceased Shi‘ite who had willed his entire property for the Imām, to sell it and send the entire value to him in spite of the fact that the executor explained in his letter to the Imām that the deceased man had left two nieces.72 The language that the Imām used against his criticizers was unusually tough. In response to a Shi‘ite who criticized the Imām’s rending of his collar in his father’s funeral procession, the Imām called him an idiot and predicted that he would die both an infidel and mad.73 Clearly for the purpose of preparing the community for the situation it was going to experience in the imminent future, his style in answering legal questions was also significantly different from that of previous Imāms and much

70. See, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:506–10; Mufīd, Irshād, 1:341–4; Rāwandi: 426–7, 434–6; Manāqib, 4:431–2; Irbīlī, 3:202–4. For the Imām’s extraordinary moral support of the descendants of the Prophet see Ḥasan al-Qumī: 211–12.
72. Ṭūṣī, Tabādhīb, 9:195; idem, Istihās, 4:123. This author thought that there were similar cases during the time of the two previous Imāms, but in the cases that he cited the legator or the executor had satisfied and obtained the consent of the heirs to the will. One of the author’s own interpretations is that the will to the Imām is an exception to the general rule and that the limitation of one-third is for wills made for other charitable purposes, not for donations to the Imāms. The Imāms have the right to take the entire property willed into their possession; if they return any part of it to the heirs, it is their special favor and generosity, not a legal obligation. After all, the law is what they do; we have to obey and submit without asking about its legal basis (Tabādhīb, 9:196).
73. Kashshi: 573–4. (See also 541 for another example.)
to become known among the Shi'ites as Ja'far the Liar—to the position of Imám. The problem stemmed ultimately from the introduction of the Imám's financial representation system; its proximate origin lay in the time of Imám 'Alí al-Hāḍī in, or shortly before, 248/862 when one of the Imám's chief agents in Sāmarrā', Fāris b. Hā̀tim b. Māhwawī al-Qazwīnī, became embroiled in a dispute with another aide, the aforementioned 'Alī b. Ja'far al-Humānī. This dispute led eventually to bitter quarrels and mutual vituperation, which led in turn to uneasiness within the Shi'ite community and the unwillingness of some to pay their financial obligations to the Imám. Furthermore, local representatives of the Imám who had previously forwarded their collections to the Imám through these two aides no longer knew which one they could trust. The Imám sided with 'Alī b. Ja'far against Fāris and ordered his representatives to stop using the latter for their business with the Imám; at the same time, however, he asked his representatives to keep silent about his decision and to avoid provoking Fāris. The Imám did this because Fāris was an influential man. He was the main intermediary between the Imám and the Shi'ites of Jibal, the central and western parts of Iran, who normally sent their religious obligations to the Imám through him. Fāris continued to receive funds from that region despite the Imám's instructions to the contrary

80. The man is said to have held some exaggerated and heretical views (Kashshi: 522), a fact attested by the title of one of his works, Kitāb 'Adad al-a'imma min hii sab' al-jumal (Najashi: 310). Two of his brothers also were among the disciples of 'Alí al-Hāḍī, Tāhir, who, too, later deviated from the mainstream Imāmism (Najashi: 208; Ibn al-Ghālābīrī, 3:228; Tūsī, Fibrīs: 86; idem, Rijāl: 379, 477; see also Kulaynī: 1186 and Ahmad (Kashshi: 4–5). On Fāris's close association with 'Alí al-Hāḍī see also Khusaybī: 317, 318.
82. Ibid.: 527, 528.
83. Ibid.: 527.
84. See the letter of the representative in Hamadān to the Imám in 248/862–863 in Kashshi: 525, 527, and that of the representative in Baghdad (ibid.: 543, 579) in the same source: 528.
86. Ibid.: 526.
and no longer forwarded them to his putative master. At this juncture the Imam decided to make the matter public and asked his representatives to announce to the Shi'ite community that Fāris was no longer associated with him and should not be given funds meant for the Imam. He then formally anathematized Fāris in two letters, one dated Tuesday, 9 of Rabi' I, 250/April 20, 864. Fāris thereupon began an open campaign against the Imam. The sources provide no details about his activities other than to say that he became a major troublemaker, calling people to turn against the Imam and to win them over to his own faction. In a message sent to some of his followers who had come to Sāmarrā' from central Iran, the Imam charged Fāris with having made “a wicked utterance.” The gravity of the situation is seen in the Imam’s next move, an extraordinary, although not totally unprecedented, call by the Imam for the assassination of his rogue agent. The order was carried out by one of the Imam’s followers.

90. This letter was addressed to ‘Alī b. ʿUmar al-Qazwīnī (Ghayba: 213), who seems to be the same as ‘Alī b. ‘Amr (ṣīr) al-Qazwīnī al-ʿAṣṭār mentioned by Kashshi: 526, who came to Sāmarrā’ from Qazwīn carrying religious funds for the Imam and stayed with Fāris. A messenger was immediately sent by ‘Uthmān b. Sa‘d al-ʿAmrī to inform the man that the Imam had disavowed Fāris and that the funds should be forwarded to ‘Amrī. The Qazwīnī followed the instruction, and, then, the Imam pronounced a formal curse on Fāris (Kashshi: 526). This is apparently a reference to the same letter recorded in Ghayba: 213.

91. Kashshi: 524.

92. Ibid.: 557.

93. Ibid.: 527.

94. See Kashshi: 529 where Imam Muhammad al-Jawād is quoted as instructing one of his followers to assassinate two deceitful fellows who pretended to be followers and propagandists of the Imam and managed to attract people to themselves and presumably made money by collecting funds that were to be paid to the Imam.

95. Ibid.: 524. The assassin continued to receive a payment from Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī until his death in 260/874 shortly after the death of Ḥasan (Kulaynī, 1:524).


97. According to Khusayyī: 385, he died four years and ten months before his father’s death, which occurred on 25 Jumādā 1/11 June (Khusayyī: 313; Ibn Abī l-Thaljī: 86; Ibn al-Khashshābī: 197; Khāṭībī, 12:57), or 26 Jumādā 1/12 June (Ṭabarī, 9:381; Kulaynī, 1:497; Maʿṣūdī, Manāṣib, 5: 81–2) or 3 Rajab/28 June (Nawbakhti: 101; Saʿd b. ‘Abd Allāh: 99–100; Tābrīsī, Tāj al-mawāliʿ: 132; Manāṣib, 4:401 (quoting Ibn ʿAyyāsh)—Everyone, however, seems to agree that it was on a Monday) of the year 254/868. This will set Muhammad’s death at around the beginning of Ramaḍān 249/mid-September 863, which cannot be correct as it is before even the public anathematization of Fāris by ‘Alī al-Hādī and naturally is before Fāris’s assassination, whereas Muhammad’s death, as noted above, occurred after Fāris’s assassination (see also ‘Abd al-Jabbār, 20 [2]:182 quoting from Nawbakhti). Another report in Kulaynī, 1:327 sets Ḥasan’s age at the time of Muhammad’s death at around twenty or a little more. This sets the date of the latter’s death at around 252/866, which agrees with the above reference.

98. Ibn Qība, Naqd kitāb al-ichhād: para. 27.


al-Hādī himself had appointed Ja’far, rather than Hasan, as his successor.  

Ja’far had thus assembled a small following, mainly from among the followers of Fāris, during the incumbency of his brother Hasan al-‘Askari.  

Some of Ja’far’s followers were quite outspoken in their opposition to Hasan and his followers, denying that he possessed the level of learning required of an Imām and even calling his followers the “Party of the Jackass” (Himāriyya).  

Some went so far as to call Hasan and his followers infidels. The leader of these schismatics was a sister of Fāris who never accepted Hasan as a legitimate Imām and was a major and influential supporter of Ja’far in his campaign for the Imamate after the death of Hasan. In return, Ja’far praised Fāris as a pious and virtuous man, openly rejecting his father’s and brother’s pronouncements on the case. The whole episode led to bitter animosity between Ja’far and his brother, whose associates accused Ja’far of being morally corrupt and openly committing such sins as drinking wine.  

Later, they also accused him of having skipped his daily prayers for forty days in a row, during which time he was occupied learning the art of juggling. Although it is difficult to believe that people could accept as their Imām a man so notoriously irreligious, it seems that there is some truth in these reports, especially those concerning the time when Ja’far was young. In their refutation of the charges against Ja’far, some of his supporters made a point of saying that he had “distanced himself from the characteristics of his youth, and given up improper deeds.”  

Ja’far and Hasan remained at odds with each other until Hasan’s death, and never spoke to each other again. As long as Hasan was alive, Ja’far was a continual source of trouble for him. The counteraccusations, hatred, and animosity between Ja’far and the associates of Hasan reached their peak, and the matter became very violent. The unfortunate Nafis, who was claimed to have passed the sacred paraphernalia from Muḥammad to Ja’far, was found drowned in a pool. Two members of the Imāmīte community of Sāmarrā’ who had openly supported the claim of Ja’far were chased, according to a report by the order of Hasan. They had to escape for their lives to Kūfā and stay there until he died. Taking all these and similar facts into account, the death of Hasan without a son and with no brother besides Ja’far would pose a terrible problem

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1. Nawbakhti: 104–5, 108–9 (with several errors in the latter case); Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 101, 110–11. See also Khusaybi: 320, which claims that disagreement on whether the successor to the Imamate will be Hasan or Ja’far had already started during the lifetime of Alī al-Hādī.  


4. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291, 292; Shahrastānī, 1:200. The account of Dustūr al-muṣāfiṣīn: 345b that assigns this name to those Imāmites who recognized Ja’far as Hasan’s successor seems, thus, to be inaccurate.  


8. Nawbakhti: 110–11; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 109; Abu ‘l-Ḥasan al-As’ārī, 2:114; Kulaynī, 1:548, 509; Khusaybi: 249, 382; Kamāl: 42, 475, 477; Mufīd, Majālis, 2:103; Gḥayba: 7, 133, 137, 175; ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Ṭāṣī: 609. Some sources even mention that Ja’far was popularly nicknamed zayg al-khamr (wineskin) because of his well-known love for wine (see Khusaybi: 248; ‘Umārī: 131; Tābārisī, Tāj al-mawālīd: 56; Ibn Shāqiq: 61, 65). These sources also scorn him for having ordered his servants to carry candles in front of him wherever he went in town, even during daylight (‘Umārī: 131; Ibn Shāqiq: 61, 65). It was noted above that the Shi‘a commonly

9. Ya’qūbī: 2:503; Ibn Abī ‘l-Thalājī: 111; ‘Umārī: 130. See also Ibn Qiba, Naqīd ibn bashbār, paras. 4–5. It should be noted that some sources (al-Ṭabarī al-Shi‘ī: 217; Khusaybi: 313; Ḥasan al-Qumrī: 203; Mufīd, Irshād: 334; Tābārisī, Lām: 366; idem, Tāj al-mawālīd: 56; Manāqib, 4:402)
for the Imám's close associates, who were now in control of the Imámite administration, for they were absolutely unwilling to turn it over to Ja'far. It would also plunge the entire Imámite community into the most difficult doctrinal turmoil it had ever experienced. Fortunately, that situation did not come up and the

name a fourth son for 'Alí al-Hādi (besides Hasan, Ja'far and Muhammad) as Hasūn. Some mentioned that this son also died in his father's lifetime in Sāmarra'. (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Shayrā. 78). Others mentioned that the voice of the Twelfth Imám was very much like this uncle of his. They argued with a report in Tūsī, Amālī, 1:294, in which, according to them, an Imámite is said to have heard the Twelfth Imám, whose voice he described as resembling the voice of Hasūn, son of Imám 'Ali al-Hādi (see, for instance, Muḥammad Taqī al-Tustari, Tawārīkh al-nabī wa l-āl: 66). However, the one named in that report is Hasūn b. 'Ali b. Ja'far, Ima b. Riḍā, clearly a great-grandson of 'Ali al-Hādi via his son Ja'far. The Imámite who claimed he had seen the Twelfth Imám and described his voice, Abu ʿI-Taṣyib Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Bū Taṣyay, was a servant of 'Ali al-Hādi (Tūsī, Amālī, 1:305–6), clearly a contemporary of 'Ali al-Hādi's above-mentioned great-grandson and not a son of his. The actual existence of such a son is, therefore, extremely doubtful. At any rate, at the moment of 'Ali al-Hādi's death, Hasan and Ja'far were his only surviving male descendants (Ibn Qība, Naqq ibn bashshār, paras. 4–5. See also Muḥfid, Irbād: 35)).

116. See Gheyba: 76. They included 'Uthmān b. Sa'd al-ʿAmrī, his son Muḥammad, Abū Hāshim Dāwūd b. al-Qāsim al-Ja'fārī, the most senior in his time among the Tālibīs (Masʿūdī, Marāj, 5:62), and a few others. See Abu ʿI-Salāḥ al-Ḥalābī: 185–6.

117. That would be especially unfavorable to 'Uthmān b. Sa'd al-ʿAmrī, who was instrumental in the anathematization of Fārsī. See Kashshi: 526.

118. Furthermore, there was a technical problem too because lateral succession to Imámate was disallowed (except for the second and third Imámā) according to a well-known report originating from the sectarian debates between the Fāṣḥīṭes and mainstream Imámītes in the middle of the second/eighth century (see Nawbakhṭī: 80; Sa'd b. ʿAbd Allāh: 102, 103, Abū Sāhī al-Nawbakhṭī: 92; ʿAlī b. Bābawayh: 179, 188–9, 191; Kulaynī, 1:285–6; Kamāl: 414–17, 426; Gheyba: 136, 176). Nevertheless, had the situation been different and Ja'far been qualified to be the next Imám, his could have been another case of the bāda'. Indeed, some of his followers used that concept for this purpose (see Sa'd b. ʿAbd Allāh: 110 as did Ja'far himself (Kulaynī, 1:391; see also Kamāl: 488) and some other Shi'ite groups of the time (Sa'd b. ʿAbd Allāh: 108) for similar purposes.

Twelfth Imám was born, although until his father's death, the news about his birth and existence was not publicized.119

Immediately after the abrupt death of Imám Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī in 260/874, his close associates,120 headed by 'Uṭmān b. Sa'd al-ʿAmrī, made it public that the Imám had a son who was the legitimate successor to the Imámite. The son, according to ʿAmrī, was in hiding because he feared he would be captured and killed by the government.121 The mere fact that this possibility was suggested and accepted by many indicates that many feared the government had run out of patience with the Shi'ites in general and their leaders in particular.122 There were, however, disagreements about the age of the son, for his birthdate is given differently in different sources.123 Some Shi'ites even held that he was still in utero when his father died.124
This latter assertion was, however, put forward by Hasan’s mother.125 Hudayth, for a different purpose. She was the one named in Hasan’s will, with no mention of a son or anyone else.126 She was in Medina when Hasan died, but she came to Sāmarrā’ immediately when she heard the news127 to try to stop Ja’far from seizing her son’s inheritance. According to the Sunnite law of inheritance followed by the caliphate, if Hasan had died without a son, his inheritance would be divided between his mother and Ja’far. Shi’ite law, however, would give it all to her, because it did not consider that she was pregnant. Consider this to be a total fabrication designed with no other aim in mind than to exclude him from his brother’s inheritance, Ja’far denounced Hudayth to the government.128 This was another example of Ja’far’s departures from Shi’ite tradition, which prohibited recourse to an “unjust” judicial system, whether one’s claim was true or false.130 The slave girl was put in the house of Muḥammad b. ‘Ali b. Hamza al-‘Alawi, a respected scholar from the ‘Alid family,131 under government surveillance until it became clear that she was not pregnant. She was then released and lived for many years in Baghdad, at least for a while in the house of a member of the influential Shi’ite family of Banū Nawbakht, Hasan b. Ja’far al-Kātib. Later, she was seized once again by the government and put under surveillance until she died around the turn of the century.132 Meanwhile, after seven years of struggle, the inheritance of Hasan had been divided between Hudayth and Ja’far.133

‘Uthmān b. Sa’īd al-‘Amrī continued as caretaker of the office of Imāmate in the absence of Hasan’s son.134 Although some harbored doubts about the actual existence of such a son,135 most of the

125. Dustūr al-munajjimin: 345b. Other sources attribute this to one of Hasan’s slave girls who claimed that she herself (Kamāl: 474, 476) or another slave girl (Kula yı, 1:505; Kamāl: 43) was pregnant.

126. Mufīd, al-Fuṣūl al-‘ashara: 348, 357; Ghayba: 75, 138. See also Kula yı, 1:505; Kamāl: 43. She was also the one considered by many Imāmīs as the caretaker of the office in the absence of her vanished grandson. See Kamāl: 507; Khuṣaybi: 366 where Ḥakīma (or Khadija), the aunt of Ḥasan’s ‘Askari, refers a wandering follower of his in the year 262/875–876 to the “Jaddah (grandmother), mother of Abū Muḥammad al-Hasan.” The same report appears with the date 282/895–896 in Kamāl: 501, which is an obvious error.


128. According to Khuṣaybi: 248, he had two slave girls, Narjis (same as Saqīl [Ghayba: 241; ‘Umarī: 132] mentioned in other sources as the mother of the Twelveth Imām; see, for instance, Kamāl: 475), and Wardās, who is described as kitābiyya, a non-Muslim from the People of the Scripture, undoubtedly a Christian. They are apparently the same as Nasīm and Māriya mentioned in Khuṣaybi: 357 (Nasīm is also mentioned in Kamāl: 441). According to a report in Kamāl: 419–423 Narjis was also originally a Christian-Roman slave girl, in fact a member of the Byzantine royal family who was captured by the Muslims in a war and brought to Dār al-islām. Having Roman slave girls was a common phenomenon in the Islamic community of those ages. Imām ‘Alī al-Riḍā also reportedly had a Christian slave girl (see Tūsī, Tabdhib, 1:399).

local representatives publicly acknowledged his existence. Those who did so were confirmed in their posts and were authorized to collect funds from the Imāmīte community on behalf of the hidden Imām. Most Shi‘ites in various towns of Iran and especially Qum, which was the main center of Shi‘ite scholarship in this age, accepted the new situation and continued to pay their taxes to the local representatives, who were now the agents of ‘Amrī. In Iraq, however, the situation was different. Kūfah had been a Shi‘ite town for two centuries and was, by reason of its proximity to Sāmarrā‘, closely attuned to movements and disputes within the inner core of the Imāmīte and always rife with unorthodox tendencies. The sources name many different sects that emerged after the death of Ḥasan al-‘Askārī within the Imāmīte community, presumably basically referring to the community in Kūfah and other towns of Iraq. Many members of that community were puzzled by the situation and did not know how to react. Many left the community the son (Kamāl: 442; see also Tūsī, Fihrist: 26), apparently on the basis of a story that is included in Kamāl: 454–65. He had also reportedly received a letter from Ḥasan al-‘Askārī when the son was born, in which the Imām gave him the news of the birth of his son (ibid.: 433–4).

136. Kulaynī, 1:518. In a somewhat similar case those Talibids of Medina who maintained good relations with the Imāms and acknowledged them used to receive an allowance from the house of the Imām in Sāmarrā‘. After the death of Ḥasan those who acknowledged the existence and Imāmate of the son continued to receive their payment but for those who did not the payment was discontinued (Kulaynī, 1:518–19; Ḥuṣaybī: 370).


139. Kamāl: 408; Khazzāz: 290. For examples of the uncertainties and doubts among the Shi‘ites immediately after the death of Ḥasan, see Kamāl: 426, 429, 487; Ghayba: 138, 172; also Abū Ghālib al-Zurārī: 141 who reports that in 260/874 the Shi‘ite community sent an emissary to Medina to investigate the existence of the son, clearly because it was claimed that the son had been sent by his father to that town (Kulaynī, 1:328; see also 340).

140. A large number, possibly even the majority, recognized Ja‘far as the Imām. The Fāṭhītes, who maintained that the succession need not necessarily pass from father to son and that two brothers could both become Imāms, did not face a doctrinal problem and followed Ja‘far as Imām after Ḥasan. Hasan b. ‘Alī b. Fadlāl, the most prominent jurisconsult in the Imāmīte community of Kūfah, and ‘Alī al-Tāhīn, a Kufan mutakallim and prominent member of the Fāṭhīte community, were among the Fāṭhītes who followed Ja‘far. It is obviously for this reason that Ja‘far was described by some as the Imām of the second [generation of the] Fāṭhītes (‘imām al-fāṭhiyya al-thānīyya). Ja‘far’s following was more diverse than this, however. In addition to the Fāṭhītes, it included those who countet him as successor to ‘Alī al-Ḥāḍrī or to his other brother, Muḥammad. Some of these were originally followers of Ḥasan who had lost faith in him when he died with no apparent

for other Islamic sects. A large number, possibly even the majority, recognized Ja‘far as the Imām. The Fāṭhītes, who maintained that the succession need not necessarily pass from father to son and that two brothers could both become Imāms, did not face a doctrinal problem and followed Ja‘far as Imām after Ḥasan. Hasan b. ‘Alī b. Fadlāl, the most prominent jurist in the Imāmīte community of Kūfah, and ‘Alī al-Tāhīn, a Kufan mutakallim and prominent member of the Fāṭhīte community, were among the Fāṭhītes who followed Ja‘far. It is obviously for this reason that Ja‘far was described by some as the Imām of the second [generation of the] Fāṭhītes (‘imām al-fāṭhiyya al-thānīyya). Ja‘far’s following was more diverse than this, however. In addition to the Fāṭhītes, it included those who countet him as successor to ‘Alī al-Ḥāḍrī or to his other brother, Muḥammad. Some of these were originally followers of Ḥasan who had lost faith in him when he died with no apparent
son. The majority, however, simply considered Ja'far to be another name on the list of Imāms after Hasan. For some he was the twelfth Imām, whereas for the Faṭhites, who had already added to their list the name of 'Abd Allāh, son of Ja'far al-Sādiq, he was the thirteenth. The followers of Ja'far became known in this period as the Ja'fariyya, a title coined in the previous century for the followers of Imām Ja'far al-Sādiq. Their opponents, who believed in the Imāmate of the vanished son of Hasan, used to call them Tāhîniyya after the head of the movement and its main apologist in Kūfa, 'Ali al-Tāhîn. Heated sectarian debates flared between the two groups, and tracts and treatises were exchanged.

These disputes raged for quite some time. The house of the Imāmate was divided. The mother of Imam al-Mahāmad al-Jawād, supported the existence and Imāmate of the son, whereas Hasan's only sister, the only other surviving descendant of 'Ali al-Hādi besides Ja'far, supported the claim of Ja'far. High-ranking Shi'ite officials were also divided; some supported Ja'far and others Hasan's mother. Ja'far did not live long. His followers then turned to his son, Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali, although some held that he shared the name of this sister is variously given as Fātimah (Abū Ḥātim al-Razi: 292; Shahrastānī: 1:200), and the majority take this form as the misspelled form of Fatimah. The reference does not however, appear in the edited copy of Ibn Ḥazm's Fiṣal, 4:158.

This fact is attested to by the point maintained by many followers of Ja'far that she was one of his two successors after his death (see below, n. 163).

Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 291.

For examples of that see Kamāl: 511. See also Ghayba: 175.

These include the tract in support of Ja'far written by Abū l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ahmad b. Bashshār and the refutation of it by Ibn Qība (both texts follow in the second part of the present work); also the treatise by Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Khalaf al-Ash'arī al-Qummi (d. 299/301/912–914) against the followers of Ja'far entitled Kitāb al-Dīyafā'ī l-radd 'ala l-nuṣḥ madīyya wa l-ja'fariyya (Najāshī: 177). This latter treatise was extant at least until the late fifth/eleventh century as evidenced by a quotation from it in a work of that period, Dūstūr al-nunāṣīmīn: 344b.


A different report, however, is quoted as telling that she had not herself seen the son; she rather came to know it through a note that Ḥasan had sent his mother when the son was born, giving her the news of the birth (ibid.: 501, 507).
the Imāmate with Fātimah, the sister of Ja’far. After ‘Alī and Fātimah, they carried the same claim to other descendants of Ja’far. At the turn of the century, the Iraqi Imāmites were divided into two opposing camps; those who adhered to the son of Hasan and those who championed Ja’far’s descendants. It is not quite clear how much longer the supporters of Ja’far and his descendants existed as a separate sect in the Shi‘ite community. By 373/983-984 when Mufid was writing the chapter on various Imāmite sects in his Kitāb al-Majālis, he did not know anyone who believed in Ja’far as the Imām. By 410/1019-1020 when he was writing his main book on the Occultation, many of the descendants of Ja’far had already converted to mainstream Twelver Shi‘ism; in fact, Mufid did not know any descendant of Ja’far who disagreed with the Twelvers on the question of the Imāmate of Hasan al-‘Askari’s son. Tusi emphasized the same point in his book on the Occultation written in 447/1055-1056 by then this sect had completely disappeared and none of its followers remained.

A descendant of his, Yahyā b. Ḥamza b. ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Muhammad b. Idrīs b. ‘Alī b. Ja’far (‘Arashi: 51, presumably with missing names of additional intermediate persons in this genealogical table), a prolific Zaydite scholar (on him see Ḥibshi: 67-78; Zirikli, 9: 173 and the sources mentioned in these two works), emerged in 729/1328-1329 in Yemen and called people to himself as the imām al-Mu‘ayyad bi ‘l-lāh. He was recognized and accepted as imām by many people until his death in 749/1344-1349. A descendant of this scholar, Shara‘ al-Dīn b. Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allāh (d. 1307/1894), assumed the imāmate of a part of Yemen as the imām al-Hādi li-Dīn Allāh from 1295/1878 until his death (‘Arashi: 79). The family has produced other notables and scholars up to the present (see the editor’s introduction to Yahyā b. Ḥamza’s Taṣfiyat al-qulūb: 5).

167. ‘Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī: 293.
169. This is his al-Fuṣūl al-‘ashara fi ‘l-ghayba. See its date of compilation in pp. 349 and 366 of the book.
170. Mufid, al-Fuṣūl al-‘ashara: 356.
172. The large clan of Naqavi sayyids in the Indian subcontinent traces its genealogical ancestry back to Ja‘far. See also Marwazi: 8, 219 (read naqawi for naqavi in both cases as also suggested in the footnote in the second case).
173. Among his many sons apart from ‘Ali, his eldest son and successor, some were respected notables. One of them, ‘Īsā (d. 334/945) was a respected public figure in Baghdad and a transmitter of ḥadīth (Tusi, Rijal: 480; Ibn Hazm Jambara: 55). Another, Muḥsin (or Muhassan) was killed during the time of the Abbāsid Muqtadir (r. 295-320/908-932) on the accusation that he called a rebellion against the government (Abu ’l-Faraj, Maqta’il: 703; Jambara: 55). Another, Yahyā al-Sufī (d. 354/965), was syndic of the Ṭalibids in Baghdad (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Shajara: 79) and moved to Qum later in his life (Ḥasan al-Qummi: 216-17; on him see also Jambara: 53). Another, Mūsī, is said to have become a Sunnite, frequenting regularly the circles of the Sunnite traditionalists (Jambara: 55-56; possibly the same one mentioned in Śuli: 98 as having died in 326/937). Among his descendants, who formed a very large clan, were many holders of official positions, such as syndics of the Ṭalibids in different towns (in addition to those mentioned above among the descendants of his son, ‘Ali, see ‘Umarī: 135; Marwazi: 9, 219, 39; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Shajara: 79-80; Ibn ‘Inaba: 200-201; Kamāna, 1:116, 2:156-7), emissaries from the caliphs (Ṣarīfīnī: 256) and the like, scholars and transmitters of ḥadīth (see, for instance, ‘Umarī: 135; Jambara, 56 [which mentions as a great-grandson of Ja‘far, a Ja‘far b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. Ja‘far, a learned muḥaddith who died in Mecca in 341/951-2 at the age of 100. Unless the correct date is 441/1049-50, this man, obviously, cannot be a great-grandson of Ja‘far b. ‘Ali]; Ibn ‘Asikīr, Ta’rīkh, the biography of ‘Alī, 2:253; Ibn ‘Inaba: 200; Ibn Shaddāq: 61-2).
174. See, for instance, Sha’rānī, 1:181 (the biography of the Sufi saysībāb, Ibrāhīm b. Abī ’l-Majd al-Dusūqī [d. 676/1277-8], who descends from Ja‘far as a twelfth-generation descendant of his).
their spiritual leaders back to Ja'far, whom they call Ja'far al-Mahdi. One of their most recent heads, Seyyid Ahmed Husameddin (d. 1343/1925), author of a partly published commentary on the Qur'an, was in the twenty-ninth generation from Ja'far. In an indirect reference in the introduction to his Qur'anic commentary, he unmistakably refers to himself as the "heir to the Prophet and the Imam of the age."  

For the mainstream of the Imâmîtes who maintained the Imamate of the vanished son of Hasan al-'Askari the puzzlement and uncertainties continued and increased in the course of time. In the first days when that idea was put forward and accepted by the community, nobody, obviously except for 'Uthmân b. Sa'id al-'Ammî and his close associates, had ever imagined that it was going to be such an unusually long occultation. The Shi'ites clearly expected the son to become manifest in a short time and the office of the community, nobody, obviously except for uncertainties continued and increased in the course of time. In the natural course. The Waqifites used to quote these reports in support of their idea that Mūsā al-Kazim was the qā'im, identifying the two Occultations with his two periods of imprisonment.

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175. A group of supporters of Ja'far in the late third/ninth century maintained that he was the qā'im, a concept which by then had become equivalent to the concept of mahdî. See Nawbakhti: 115; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allâh: 113.

176. Kur'an'in 20. asra gore aulami, ed. M. Kâzım Öztürk, vol. 1: Fatihâ ve Amme cuzu okunuşu tercume-i ve acıklamâsi (İzmir, 1974), vol. 2: Têhârebê cuzu. Okunuşu tercume ve acıklamâsi (İzmir, 1976). They are numbers 4 and 5 from a series of his works published by the same editor, who is the son of the author, under the general title of Seyyid Ahmed Husameddin Kütüphâniyâtüddûn. According to the editor's introduction to the mentioned Qur'anic commentary, 1:25; other works by Husameddin edited in that series include Thematât al-tûbâ min âğhânî al-arâb, Mawâli'd abî al-bayt, Maqâsid al-sâli-kân ve Zuhdat al-maraštîn, which are published in a single volume, and Wâjizat al-şu'ûrî 'alâ manâtiq al-senâr, which is published together with its Turkish translation as Esrar-i Cebaret-ül A'la. The editor has also translated the Mawâli'd abî al-bayt into Turkish, which was published in Ankara in 1969 as İslam Felsefesi İlah veen Seyyider.

177. See his Qur'anic commentary, 1:20–21. According to the genealogical table that appears there, he was the nineteenth-generation from the above-mentioned Sufi shaykh, İbrahimî b. Abî 'l-Majd al-Dusûqî. However, the names in the genealogical table here vary from those in Sha'rînî, 1:181, in minor ways.


179. See Nawbakhti: 116, 118; Sa'd b. 'Abd Allâh: 102, 106. See also Ibn Qîba, Mas'ula fi 'l-imama, para. 5 where it is said that when the vanished son of Hasan al-'Askarî reappears, the truth of his claim to be the vanished son will have to be confirmed by his associates, that is, those who had previously seen him and can identify him. Clearly, the author expected the son to reappear while those witnesses were still alive.

180. 'Ali b. Bâbawayh: 146; Kula'înî, 1:338; Kanâl: 323 (In Nu'mânî: 61, who quoted the report from Kula'înî, the phrase "six days, six months or six years" is changed to "a period of time." Ghayba: 204 omitted the part of the report that mentioned the duration of the Occultation altogether.)


184. Numerous works were compiled during the late second/eighth and early third/ninth centuries by the Waqifite scholars and their opponents as Kitâb al-Ghayba, obviously all discussing the concept of the alleged occultation of Mūsā al-Kazîm as suggested by the Waqifites (see the article al-Mahdi in EI, 5:1230–38 [by W. Melelungen]: 1236). These include works by the Waqifites İbrahimî b. Sâlih al-Anmârî (Nâjîshî: 15, 24); Hasan b. 'Ali b. Abî Hamza al-Bârînî (ibid.: 37); Hasan b. Muhammad b. Sânîa (Tûsî, Fûlûz: 52); 'Abd Allâh b. Jabala (Nâjîshî: 216); 'Ali b. al-Hasan al-Taṣârî (ibid.: 255); 'Ali b. 'Umar al-Araj (ibid.: 256), and 'Ali b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. 'Umar b. Râbî'ah al-Qallâ (ibid.: 260) and non-
It was also true that most of those who supported the Wāqiṭī idea about Mūsā al-Kāzīm later rejected it as “predicted” in those reports and recognized ‘Alī al-Riḍā as the next Imām.185

The general idea of the occultation of a future Imām who would be the qā‘īm was, thus, a well-established concept in the Shi‘ite mentality.186 This fact is well evidenced by the views of those who denied the death of ‘Alī and awaited his return and those of the Kaysānītes and other early heretic movements on the living and future return of their respected leaders. After the death of Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, too, some of his followers are quoted as suggesting that he actually went into his first concealment from which he would emerge in a short time as the qā‘īm.187 By around 290/903 when the prominent Imāmite theologian Abū Sahl al-Nawbakhtī finished his Kitāb al-Tanbih,188 it was already known, apparently for many years, that the vanished son of Ḥasan was the one to emerge as the qā‘īm to establish the rule of truth.189 Otherwise, one could hardly imagine any reason why he was so afraid for his life if he were to live calm and quiet as his forefathers had done.190 The time period of the Occultation was not yet long enough for one to assert that it was impossible for someone to still be in hiding.191 It was not like the alleged occultation of Mūsā al-Kāzīm which, as Abū Sahl stated, more than one hundred and five192 years had passed since his death (or concealment as the Wāqiṭīes claimed) and the duration of his alleged occultation had already exceeded the maximum normal duration.193

A short time later, the concept of mahdi, “the rightly guided one,” thus far essentially a non-Imāmite concept,194 was also introduced into the case.195 This concept was based on a statement reported from the Prophet that predicted that before the end of time a descendant of his would emerge who would restore the religion

\[ 'Alī al-Riḍā is quoted as saying that if God were to prolong someone’s life because society needed him, He would have prolonged the life of the Prophet. \]

192. Read mi’ā wa khams for mi’ā wa khamsīn, as noted.


194. See the article “al-Mahdi” in EP, 5:1230–38 [by W. Madelung]. The Prophetic statement about the mahdi does not seem to have been recorded by the Imāmite authors until the post-Occultation period. The assertion of some Sunnite authors of the past and present who accused the Imāmites of fabricating the reports about the mahdi is, thus, totally misplaced. The statement, however, is widely quoted in the post-Occultation Imāmite literature, especially in the reports where the Prophet and previous Imāms are quoted as miraculously predicting the exact number and names of the twelve Imāms where the vanished son of Ḥasan al-‘Askari is said to be the mahdi who is to “fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice” (see Kulaynī, 1:338, 525, 534; Nu’mānī: 58–60, 86, 93). There are a few cases in the supposedly pre-Occultation Imāmite literature where the concept of mahdi is mentioned (see, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:281, 372; Nu’mānī: 60, 189, 212–15, 231, 247, 264). Most of these, however, seem to have been subject to later rewordings. Compare, for instance, Kulaynī, 1:372, report no. 6 in which the word mahdi is used with 1:372–3, reports nos. 2, 4, 5, and 7 (also Nu’mānī: 200, 329, 330, 331) where the words qā‘īm, muntasār and jāhiba bādha l-‘amr are used in other versions of the same statement; also Nu’mānī: 283–4 where a statement is quoted with the word qā‘īm in one version and with mahdi in the other.

195. This is, of course, the chronological order of how the community came to know the fact. This certainly does not exclude that the fact was already revealed by God to the Prophet and via him to the Imāms and that they had already informed their reliable associates, as verified by many Imāmite and even non-Imāmite reports.
and “fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice.” The rank and file of the Imāmītes tended to identify this savior of the earth with the qā‘im who would establish the rule of truth.\textsuperscript{196} The link between the two concepts had already been reportedly advocated by some splinter groups who “stopped” with certain Imāms on the assumption that they were the qā‘im and the mahdi.\textsuperscript{197} This identification presented some technical problems because, according to widespread reports, the mahdi was to be a namesake of the Prophet.\textsuperscript{198} Many Imāmītes, however, expected any of the Imāms to be the qā‘im, whereas the names of most of the Imāms did not satisfy that condition.\textsuperscript{199} This problem did not exist in the case of the Twelfth Imām, whose name was first unknown even to the most prominent Imāmīte persona of the time who asked his first deputy about it.\textsuperscript{200} Furthermore, a report circulating in this period among the Shi‘ite community quoted Imām Muhammad al-Jawād telling a disciple, who was wondering whether the mahdi was the same as the qā‘im or different, that both concepts referred to the same person.\textsuperscript{201} Thus while the reference to the concept of mahdi in connection to the vanished son of Ḥasan al-‘Askari is absent in the Imāmīte works written in the last decades of the third/ninth century, even in those that describe him as the qā‘im, by the first decades of the following century when Kulaynī finished his Kitāb al-Kaff\textsuperscript{202} and ‘Alī b. Bābawayh al-Qummī wrote his Kitāb al-Imāma wa ‘l-tābi‘īna min al-bayra\textsuperscript{203} the vanished Imām was already the one who was to reappear to “fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice.”\textsuperscript{204}

\textsuperscript{196} See, for instance, the reports that suggest that the qā‘im must be a namesake of the Prophet (Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 43; Nu‘mān: 230) or that the qā‘im or ṣāhib ḥadda ‘l-amr will fill the earth with justice (Kulaynī, 1:341).

\textsuperscript{197} This assertion is quoted from those who allegedly “stopped” with Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (Nāshī’i: 46; Nawbakhtī: 78; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 79; Farq: 61; Isfārā’īnī: 79; Shahrastānī, 1:195), Mūsā al-Kāzīm (Nāshī’i: 48; Nawbakhtī: 90, 92; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 89, 91), and Ḥasan al-‘Askarī (Nawbakhtī: 106, 108; Kamāl: 40). Some non-Imāmīte Shi‘ite groups are also quoted as having considered their leaders to be al-qā‘im al-mahdi (Nawbakhtī: 52, 74; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 43, 76). Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq was asked by one of his disciples whether he was the qā‘im and the mahdi or not (Kulaynī, 1:536). The combination of al-qā‘im al-mahdi or the connection between the two appears in some other reports, too (see, for instance, Nu‘mān: 235, 237-8).

\textsuperscript{198} See, for instance, Ahmad, 3:376, 377, 448; Tirmidhī, 9:74-75; Ṭabarānī, 2:148. See also Sulamī: 27–32; Ṣāḥī: 182–4 who refers to forty-eight hadīths to that effect, some quoted in several sources. See also al-Sayyid al-Hīmyārī: 49, 183 for the common belief about that. According to another report, the father of the mahdi was also to be a namesake of the Prophet’s father (see Ibn Abī Shayba, 6: 678; Abū Dāwūd, 4: 105–7; Hākim, 4: 442; Khaṭṭāb, 1: 370; Baghawī, 3: 492; Sulamī: 27, 29, 30). This report, which was in wide circulation in the middle of the second/eighth century, encouraged many people to consider Muhammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Nāfī al-Zakīyya as the long awaited mahdi see, for instance, Nawbakhtī: 74; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 43; Nu‘mān: 230; Abu 1-Faraj, Maqātil: 244; Ibn Zuhara: 20. See also Qāḍī, Kaysānīyya: 227).

\textsuperscript{199} There were other technical problems too. The mahdi was to emerge close to the end of the time, according to some reports right before the day of judgment. According to a report, he was to come after an interval during which there would be no Imām at all, just as the Prophet came in a time when the sequence of the prophets had been cut for a long period of time (Kulaynī, 1:341). This was against the Imāmīte’s main principle that the earth would never remain without an Imām (Safīr: 484–9; ‘Alī b. Bābawayh: 157–62; Kulaynī, 1:168, 177–80). It, however, contributed to the emergence of one of the several groups that rose after the death of Ḥasan al-‘Askarī as some of his followers held that there was no Imām after him, and the sequence of the Imāms was cut until God appoints the next Imām. During this period of vacuum the Shi‘ites were to follow the already well-established teachings and principles of their own school (see Nawbakhtī: 113–14; Sa’d b. ‘Abd Allāh: 107–8; Mufīd, Maqātil, 2:99).


\textsuperscript{201} See Kamāl: 377.

\textsuperscript{202} The compilation of this book took twenty years (Najashi: 377). The author died in 329/940–41.

\textsuperscript{203} According to the author, the age of the vanished Imām at the time the book was compiled had already reached the maximum of the normal life of people of that time (ibid.: 149), presumably referring to age seventy. The book must, therefore, have been written in or shortly after 325/937 when, according to the most supported view on his birth date (the year 255/869) the Imām had passed his seventieth birthday. The author died in 329/940–41.

\textsuperscript{204} See Kulaynī, 1:338 (where the vanished Imām is explicitly called the mahdi), 341, 525, 534; ‘Alī b. Bābawayh: 147. However, the vanished Imām is already Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan in Ibn Qība, Ma‘ala fi ‘l-imāma, para. 5, a name that was apparently determined by the introduction of the concept of mahdi into this case.
'Uthmân b. Sa'id al-'Amrī moved to Baghdad and continued as the caretaker of the office of Imāmīte until the end of his life. He insisted that he had direct contact with the son of Ḥasan and received the correspondence sent to the son by the community as well as the religious funds in the same way that he had during the time of Ḥasan. It is said that the entire community agreed to recognize his claim to be the deputy of the Imām.²⁰⁵ Some reports, however, suggest that rather serious doubts existed about his authority to receive the religious funds.²⁰⁶ As noted above, some doubted the scope of his credibility even during the time of Ḥasan and whether he was always acting at the Imām's instruction and wish.²⁰⁷ Nevertheless, there was no doubt that he was the closest associate of the Imām. His position was further strengthened at the Imām's death when he was the one who performed the funeral and burial ceremonies,²⁰⁸ an extremely important privilege in the Imāmīte tradition, reserved, according to popular opinion, for the successor to the deceased Imām.²⁰⁹

'Amrī was succeeded by his son, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, also a well-known agent who had previously served in the office of Ḥasan al-'Askārī in the company of his own father and later as the chief aide to his father when he was the caretaker for the vanished Imām. Muḥammad carried on in this job for a long time despite more open challenges to his authority as the caretaker of the office raised by some prominent members of the community who had not contested his father's claim.²¹⁰ Before his death in 305/917, he appointed one of his junior aides,²¹¹ Husayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhtī, as his successor. The latter continued in that office, meeting the same sort of challenge and doubt from some members of the community,²¹² until 326/937 when he died, leaving 'Ali b. Muḥammad al-Samarri, presumably an aide of his, as his successor. The latter held that position for only three years and died in 329/941 without naming anyone as his successor. The office was, thus, formally closed.

During the period between the deaths of Ḥasan al-'Askārī and the fourth agent, later termed the Minor Occultation, the chief agent used to receive the correspondence to the vanished Imām from the community and the religious funds and donations for the Imām. The agents occasionally issued written statements to the community and instructions to the local agents as rescripts of the vanished Imām.²¹³ Until the time of the second agent, Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, they were all written in the same handwriting that the community received from the office of Imāmīte during the time of Ḥasan and later during the incumbency of Muḥammad's father,²¹⁴ which suggests that all were copied by Muḥammad himself at the instruction of the Imām. The rescripts were mostly instructions to a respected scholar and hadīth transmitter (Kashshi: 564, 566; Kamāl: 499; Ṭūsī, Rijāl: 451; Ghayba: 238), and formerly an agent of Ḥasan al-'Askārī who praised him in a letter as a "reliable and trustworthy man who knows his duties very well" (Kashshi: 579; see also Kamāl: 442; incidentally he was the one who complained to Ḥasan about the excessive spending of his agent 'Ali b. Ja'far al-Humānī, quoted above); Ahmād b. Hilāl al-Karkhī (Ghayba: 245), also a companion of Ḥasan al-'Askārī (and possibly the uncle of Muḥammad b. 'Ali b. Hilāl al-Karkhī, a later recipient of a rescript from the vanished Imām [Abū Manṣūr al-Tabrīzī, 2:288–9]), who had accepted 'Uthmān b. Sa'id as the agent of the vanished Imām but disputed the authority of Muḥammad; and Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Nusayrites (Ghayba: 244).²¹¹

²⁰⁵ Ghayba: 216, 221.
²⁰⁶ See Kulaynī, 1:517.
²⁰⁷ See Kashshi: 544 where, after quoting the text of a letter that Ḥasan al-'Askārī's representative in Nishāpur received from the Imām that included harsh words against the prominent Imāmīte scholar of the time, Faḍl b. Shāhdān, the author expressed doubt on the credibility of the latter on the basis that "it has been mentioned that that letter as well as all other instructions that [the representative in Nishāpur] received were sent by 'Amrī." The hesitation in this statement about 'Amrī's credibility and authority is unmistakable.
²⁰⁸ Ghayba: 216.
²¹⁰ They included Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. 'Ali b. Bilāl (Ghayba: 245–6),...
the local agents or receipts for the donation made to the Imām and, occasionally, answers to legal questions asked by the community. For this last point, however, the community was ordered in a rescript to refer to the Imāmī jurists.215 Sometime around 280-285/893-898 the correspondence from the Holy Threshold stopped, and no more rescripts were issued. The situation continued at least until around 290/903. This was taken by the community to mean the beginning of the second and greater occultation during which the Shi‘ites were supposed to lose their contact with the Imām.216 The correspondence seems to have resumed during the term of office of the third agent when some rescripts were issued to anathematize those who challenged the authority of the agent.217 The legal questions were now forwarded by the agent to some Imāmī jurists to answer,218 jurists to whom the agent also turned with his own questions.219 The rescripts were now in the handwriting of an agent’s secretary and dictated by the agent himself.220

216. See Ābī Sahl al-Nawbakhti: 93.
217. Ghayba: 228, 252–4. There were also quasi rescripts in the form of answers given to legal questions. Some Shi‘ites used to put their questions in scrolls to the agent, which he would return with short answers on the back of the paper (Ghayba: 228, 229) or in the space between the questions (Najāshī: 355). See, for instance, the four examples of this kind of rescript sent by the Imāmī scholar of Qum, Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Jaʿfar al-Ḥimyārī (on him see Najāshī: 354–5; Ṭūsī, Fībīṣṭ: 156; Ibn Shahrāshub, Maʿālīm: 111; Āghā Buzurg, 1:241) in Ābū Ḍuṣṭūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:301–318 (the first two also in Ghayba: 229–236) including one dated 307/919–920 (ibid., 2:306–9) and another dated 308/920–921 (ibid., 2:309–15).
218. See, for instance, Ghayba: 181, 228. Some people apparently knew this fact as may be verified by their asking the agent to “ask the jurists that he trusts” and return an answer (Ghayba: 230, 231, 232). It is, however, probable that the Imām himself was meant by that expression. Others were in doubt (ibid.: 228). The answers sometimes clearly demonstrated that they were given by an Imāmī jurist and not by the Imām, as they referred to the conflict of the reports and that one could choose whichever he wanted (ibid.: 232) or, alternatively, argued with consensus (Abū Ḍuṣṭūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:307) or the reports from the former Imāns (ibid.: 308, 311, 314).

220. Ibid.: 228, 229.

There seems to have been a widespread expectation in the Imāmī community that the vanished Imām would reappear before his fortieth birthday, which was to occur before the turn of the century. This idea originated from suggestions in a number of reports that the qa‘īm had to be an energetic young man221 of either thirty or thirty-one years, with a maximum age of forty,222 and that anyone who exceeded the age of forty would not be the qa‘īm.223 When the expectation did not come true, it was first suggested that the limit mentioned was to mislead the unjust rulers who were gathering their whole power to crush such a rise of the qa‘īm.224 Later, it was decided that the reports meant that whenever the qa‘īm appears, regardless of whatever number of years that he lives and even if he lives for thousands of years, he will look like a young

221. Kullānī, 1:536.
222. See also Sulāmī: 35–6, 38; Ḥaytāmī: 43.
223. ʿĀli b. Bābawayh: 146; Ghayba: 258; Dūstūr al-munajjamīn: 345b; Shahrastānī, 1:202. See also Khusaybī: 242–3. It may have been because of these reports that some of the Imāmīs in this period thought that the son of Ḥasan al-ʿAskārī might have died in hiding and been succeeded by his own son. They seem to have come to this conclusion by a juxtaposition of several facts, that (1) the existence of the son of Ḥasan was proved by reports, that (2) he was in occultation because he was to be the qa‘īm, otherwise there would be no reason for him to hide because the time was not more difficult than that of his forefathers, and that (3) the qa‘īm was not to have passed his fortieth birthday. Because the son of Ḥasan had not reappeared although he was no more to be the qa‘īm as he had already passed his fortieth birthday, this had to be a sign that he had passed away while in hiding. Because the next Imām had to be his descendant he must, thus, have left a son who was the current Imām. Because this one was also unseen, one had to determine that he was now the one who would rise to establish the just rule. The application of the principle of bāda‘ could facilitate this transition of the task. The opinion is attributed by Ibn al-Nāḍīm: 225 (also quoted by Dhahābī, Siyār, 15:528) to Ābū Sahl al-Nawbakhti. His own statements in his Kitāb al-Ṭambīh (quoted above), however, do not support this view though the book was written before the fortieth birthday of the vanished Imām when the above theoretical problems arose. Should he have held such an opinion, he should have started it some years after the completion of that work. The attribution is not, however, supported by any other source and seems to be unfounded (see also Ghayba: 240).
man of thirty odd years. There was some background for this mode of interpretation. A clearly Wāqifite report on the authority of Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq had suggested that the qā‘im would live for 120 years but emerge as a thirty-two-year-old man. Before this stage, however, in the first days of the Occultation the Zaydites used to criticize the Imāmites for the belief in the Imāmate of a child. They argued that the Imām was needed for the administration of the Islamic state and the protection of the Muslim homeland from enemies, which required the ability to fight and to lead the Muslim army, functions that could not normally be performed by a young child. The Imāmites used to answer these criticisms by saying that if such a situation arose, God would immediately turn the child Imām into a well-grown man, powerful and strong enough to lead such a fight. Some quoted a report that suggested that the son of Hasan al-‘Askarī was growing as much in one month as normal babies grew during one year.

Nevertheless, the failure of the old expectations and justifications created an atmosphere of severe doubt and uncertainty. At the turn of the century, the Zaydite Imāms had already established their independent rules in Yemen and the northern part of Iran. The political situation started to change dramatically in the first decades of the fourth/tenth century; the pro-Shi‘ite Būyid dynasty came to power and extended their power over the caliphate of Baghdad for quite a long time. During the Būyid time, the better part of the fourth/tenth century, the situation changed everywhere to the benefit of the Shi‘ite community. It was now believed that the Imām could safely become manifest should he, as was upheld by his chief agent in the first days of his occultation, have vanished. The situation was not much better in the eastern parts of the Shi‘ite homeland (in fact, the whole community with very few exceptions) were in a similar state of fierce doubt and one way or another rejected the existence of a vanished Imām. The situation was not much better in the eastern

225. Mufid, Majālis, 2:98; Ghayba: 259.
228. Ibid.: 79 describing it as the answer given by an Imāmite scholar to Abu ‘l-Qāsim al-Balkhī.
229. Ibid.: 429.
231. Kamāl: 485. Some reports attributed to the earlier Imāms also mention the same reason for the hiding of the qā‘im in the future (Nu‘mānī: 171, 191; Ibn Bābawīyah, ‘Uyun, 1:273; Kamāl: 479–80), including one with a small chronological problem in the chain of transmission because a transmitter from an earlier generation appears in it quoting from one of the later generation (see Nu‘mānī: 171, n. 1). The idea is, however, based on an ultraorthodox, pro-Umayyad and anti-Shi‘ite view that regarded the unjust rulers who forcefully seized political power as legitimate and allegiance to them as binding, even if paid under duress and in fear. It is apparently for this reason that neither Mufid in his treatise on the reason for the Occultation (published as al-Risāla al-rabī‘a fi ‘l-ghayba) nor Ṭūsī in his Kitāb al-Ghayba mentioned any of these reports but insisted that the reason for the Imām’s occultation was only his fear for his life (see Mufid, al-Risāla al-rabī‘a: 395–8; Ghayba: 199–201).
234. The book was written when some eighty-odd years had already passed since the birthdate of the Twelfth Imām (p. 157) and before Dhu ‘l-Hijja, 342/April 954 when the book was read with the author by his student (p. 18, n. 2). These references put the date of compilation at around 340/951–952 (see also pp. 161, 173–4).
region either; a decade or two later Ibn Būbawayh found most of the Shi‘ites he met in Kūhāsān, even respected scholars of the Imāmīte community, extremely doubtful about the vanished Imām.236 Numerous references in the reports that circulated in the Shi‘ite community during these periods attest to a universal uncertainty about this question237 and to widespread conversions from (according to some, up to two-thirds)240 of those who followed the truth would turn to other doctrines.241 The reports also speak of severe hostility and mistrust among the Shi‘ites, some of whom called others liars, cursed each other, and spat into each other’s faces,242 as well as similar sorts of violent behavior.243

236. Kamāl: 2–3 (see also 16).
237. See, for instance, Nu‘mānī: 185, 186, 190; Kamāl: 258, 286, 287, 302, 304, 330; Majlīsī, 51:109, 118, 142, 158 where these reports are quoted from other early sources (see also Kūshāyī: 357–8; Ibn Abī ‘l-Thalāl: 116; Alqāb al-rasālīl: 287). Reference to this state of doubt, traditionally referred to as ḥayra (uncertainty), can also be found in the names of several books that were written on the question of Occultation in this period, including the above-mentioned work by ‘Alī b. Būbawayh (Kitāb al-Imāma wa ‘l-taḥỳra min al-ḥayra), another one by Muḥammad b. Ṣaḥm al-Safwānī (Najāshī: 393), another by Salām b. Muḥammad al-‘Arzānī (ibid.: 192), and a fourth by ‘Abd Allāh b. Ja‘far al-Ḥimārī (ibid.: 219). The full title of Ibn Būbawayh’s Kamāl (which appears at the end of its first volume) 352 as well as in his Kbišāl: 187 and ‘Uyūn, 1:54, 69) also refers to it: Kamāl al-din wa tāmām al-ni‘ma fi ṣibābāt al-ghbāra wa kāṣf al-ḥayra.


240. Kamāl, 656 (read thulūthθay for thuluth); Ghayba: 206.

241. Many of these Imāmīte transmitters of hadīth to other branches of Shi‘ism, including Ismā‘īlim (see, for instance, ‘Abd al-Jabhār, Taḥbīḥ bahr al-nuha‘waw, 2:390). They included even some Imāmīe jurists and notables (see, for instance, Kulaŋyī, 1:520). Others turned to other non-Shi‘ite heretical sects (see, for instance, Ta‘īkhī, 8:70).


244. This dating is based on the fact that the argument with the Prophet’s prediction of the exact number of the Imāms is absent from the works of Nawbahkāhī, Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh, Ibn Qibta, and Abū Sahāl al-Nawbahkāhī, the last of which was compiled around the year 290/903, but is already used by ‘Alī b. Būbawayh, writing shortly after 325/937.

245. Variations of the report mention twelve amīrs or quayims, (guardians).


247. Abū Dāwūd, 4:106.
ment had thus been in circulation long before the beginning of the occultation of the Twelfth Imām in 260/874. It was already on record as early as the middle of the second/eighth century in, for instance, the Amāli of the Egyptian scholar Layth b. Sa‘d (d. 175/792),[248] later in the Musnad of Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālisi (d. 204/819-820) and in others. No one can, therefore, claim that the statement was in any way authored by the Imāmites in the post-Occultation period. In fact, there is no evidence in any work written before the last decades of the third/ninth century that suggests that this statement had ever attracted the attention of the Shi‘ite traditionists or that anyone in the Shi‘ite community had ever thought that it might concern them. The Imāmite scholar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār (d. 290/903), for instance, does not refer to that statement in his book, Baṣa‘ir al-darajāt, which is a collection of ḥadīths on the virtues of the Imāms.[249] Other scholars, such as the two Nawbakhris, Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ash‘ārī and Ibn Qiba, all from the latter part of the third/ninth century, also failed to refer to that statement in any of their surviving works.[250] The only exception[251]

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250. That includes the surviving section of Abū Sahḥ al-Nawbakhri’s al-Tanbih fi ‘l-imāmā, the related part of Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhri’s Fīraq al-shī‘a, the corresponding part of Sa‘d b. ‘Abd Allāh’s al-Maṣādil wa ‘l-firaq as well as the abridged version of his Baṣa‘ir al-darajāt, and all three works of Ibn Qiba which are reproduced in the second part of the present work.
251. Another exception is suggested by Etan Kohlberg: “Al-Barqi [d. 274/887 or 280/893] quotes a well-known Imāmī tradition, in which al-Khīdhr meets ‘Allī and his son al-Ḥasan and reveals to them the names of the Imāms [Barqi: 332f]; but in the version cited by al-Barqi, unlike other ... versions of this tradition, al-Khīdhr mentions by name only ‘Allī, al-Ḥasan and al-Husayn; the tradition adds: and he counted each last one of them, ... but the names or the number of Imāms who are to follow al-Husayn are not specified. In the Taṣfīr by ‘Allī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummi (d. 307/919), the Khīdhr tradition appears already with the names of the twelve Imāms [‘Allī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummi, Taṣfīr, 2:45]” (“From Imāmiyya to Ithnā‘ashariyya”: 523). It should, however, be noted that the version of this Taṣfīr now available was compiled by ‘Allī b. Ibrāhīm’s pupil, Abu ‘l-Fadl ‘Abbās b. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim b. Ḥamza (Ḡūsūr, 4:303–8), presumably sometime during the first decades of the fourth/tenth century, by which time the complete version of the Khīdhr tradition was already in full circulation (see Kulaynī, 1:525; Nu‘mānī: 58–60; Ibn Bābawayh, ‘Uṣūn, 1:67; Kamāl: 213–15).
253. Abū Naṣr Ḥibat Allāh b. Ahmad al-Ḳāṭib, a late fourth/tenth-century Imāmī scholar who was also a maternal grandson of the second agent of the Twelfth Imām (Najāshī: 440; Ghayba: 216, 220, 221, 227, 238, 246, 248), wrote a book on the Imāmēte for a Zaydite patron of his. Arguing with this report in Kitāb sulaymān b. qayī, he suggested that the Imāms were thirteen: the twelve plus Zayd b. ‘Ali (Najāshī: 440).
254. In the printed copy of the book, which is apparently an early fourth/tenth-century contribution, the number appears as eleven (see pp. 62, 201 [also 94, 109, 125, 131, 167, 168]; see also Muḥammad Taqi al-Tustarī, al-‘Ākhbār al-dakhīla: 1–10).
255. Two similar reports that quoted the Prophet as predicting twelve noble chiefs “from among his descendants,” the last of them being the qā‘im who would fill the earth with equity and justice, appeared in a collection of hadīths ascribed to the Kūfīan Zaydite transmitter of hadīth, ‘Abbād b. Ya‘qūb al-Rawāji‘nī (d. ca. 250/864) (Kulaynī, 1:534). However, in the edited version of Rawāji‘nī’s work (entitled ‘Aṣr abī ‘aṣīr ‘abbād al-nuṣafī: 15, the number appears as eleven. Both reports were quoted from ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bāqīr.
the community started to realize that the situation was more unusual than they had originally thought and that possibly there would not be a manifest Imām for the foreseeable future, that the question of the number of the Imāms came under serious consideration, although many may have guessed and some reports may have started to circulate before that date.

The two prominent Shi‘ite traditionists of the early fourth/tenth century, Muhammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Kulaynī and ‘Ali b. Babawayh al-Qummi, both of whom died in the late third decade of that century, are the first among those Imāmite authors whose works have survived to put forward the idea. In the introduction to his al-Imāma wa ‘l-tabī‘ira, ‘Ali b. Babawayh mentions that because he found many Imāmites of his time in doubt about the truth of the doctrine because the Occultation had continued for such a long period, he wrote that book and collected some hadiths that specified the exact number of the Imāms so that the community would know that it was following the right doctrine. There is a chapter in Kulaynī’s Kitāb al-Kāfi on the hadiths which set the number of the Imāms at twelve although the chapter is not in its most proper place and very much looks like a later supplement, possibly added by the author later in his life. Later scholars managed to find many more hadiths of this genre, so numerous that they formed the basis for later sizable monographs on the subject. According to these hadiths the Prophet and the earlier Imāms had not only predicted the exact number of the Imāms but had even disclosed the full list of their names, including the vanished one that was the last on the list.

256. According to Najāshī: 310, Fāris b. Ḥātim wrote a book on the number of the Imāms on the basis of chronogrammatic calculation (Kitāb ‘Aḍād al-a‘īmma min ḥiṣāb al-jumal). This work, however, clearly was not related to our discussion and most likely did not come to the same conclusion that the Imāmite community later reached on the exact number of the Imāms either.


259. Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nu‘mānī was a pupil and close associate of Kulaynī and personally copied his above-mentioned work (see Maḥfūz: 19). In the chapter of his Kitāb al-Ghayba that deals with the question of the exact number of the Imāms (pp. 57–111), Nu‘mānī tried his best to collect all reports he could find on that matter. After the completion of the book he found yet two more reports and he added them to the chapter (pp. 97–101) as attested by a note that the principal transmitter of the book, Abu ‘l-Husayn Muhammad b. ‘Alī al-Shujā‘ī (Najāshī: 383), added before those two reports (p. 97). The work, as noted, was compiled some ten years after the death of Kulaynī. Nu‘mānī, however, failed to quote sixteen of the total of twenty reports included in that chapter of the Kāfi, though he quoted some of those reports from other Shi‘ite authorities of hadith. This clearly indicates that in his copy of the Kāfi those sixteen reports, especially those that he quoted on other authorities, did not exist, particularly if one notes Nu‘mānī’s special preference for what is reported by Kulaynī. This is well attested by the fact that in one case in which he received one of those reports recorded in the Kāfi through a different source too, he quoted that on the authority of Kulaynī and merely referred to some additional words in a different transmission of it that was narrated by “some others” (pp. 94–95). Apart from four reports that Nu‘mānī quoted from the above-mentioned chapter of the Kāfi, he quoted also a fifth report on the authority of Kulaynī that he quoted from ‘Ali in the chapter of the Occultation of the Kāfi, but major differences exist between Nu‘mānī’s quotation from Kulaynī and what is in the present version of the Kāfi. In the Kāfi, 1:338, the duration of the Occultation is, as noted before, given as “six days, six months or six years.” In Nu‘mānī: 61 this phrase is recorded as “a period of time.” In the Kāfi the madābi is said to be the eleventh (or the twelfth according to another variation of the hadith); see Nu‘mānī, 61, n. 3; also Khusaybī: 262; Khazzāz: 316; and Ghyaya: 204, depending on whether the phrase is min za‘ūr, al-ḥāḍa‘iṣal min wulūd or min za‘ūr al-ḥāḍa‘iṣal min wulūd; in ‘Umārī: 134 it is, however, al-‘aṣīb min wulūd al-thānī) generation from the descendants of ‘Ali; the reference is missing in Nu‘mānī (the Twelvers’ madābi is, in fact, the tenth generation from ‘Ali).

260. See Khazzāz: 289.

whose authority those hadiths are quoted belonged to other groups. Why should one follow a false doctrine when he himself had heard and, more importantly, had quoted the true doctrine from the Prophet or the Imam? The most prominent Imāmīte scholar of the second/eighth century, Zurāra b. A'yan, reportedly did not know who the successor to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was. According to numerous reports, when the news of the Imam’s death reached Kūfa, Zurāra immediately sent his son to Medina to find out who the new Imam was. However, before the son returned, Zurara became ill to the point of death. To fulfill the obligation that requires any Shi'ite to know his Imam at any given time he reportedly took a copy of the Qur’ān and said, “my Imam is the one whose Imamate is determined in [or, variantly, ‘established by’) this Book.” Clearly, if Zurara had heard the name of Ja’far al-Ṣādiq’s successor from him, as suggested by a report, he would hardly have needed to resort to that option. Similarly, if the most learned of the disciples of Ja’far al-Ṣādiq did not know the Imam’s successor, how then can one imagine that a new convert such as the poet al-Sayyid al-Himyari knew the full list of the Imāms so as to be able to include it in a poem ascribed to him?

The Imāmīte scholars rejected these criticisms. The fact that many of those on whose authority those reports were quoted did not admit the truth of their own words did not prove that the reports were not authentic. Those authorities may well have been driven by their worldly desires away from truth, while they actually knew what the truth was. The point made that such a prominent scholar as Zurara did not know the new Imam was not true. He knew who the successor to Ja’far al-Ṣādiq was; he did not disclose it because he was not sure whether it was permissible for him to publicize it. It was then a matter of precautionary secrecy that he did not make it public. After all, in some of these hadiths, the Imam or the first transmitter of the hadith is quoted as advising the one who heard it from him to keep it a secret and not to disclose it to the wrong people.

These hadiths henceforth became the central point in the Imāmītes’ argument on the Occultation and in support of the truth of the Twelver Shi‘ism doctrine. They were extremely instrumental in gradually removing the doubts and uncertainties of the Imāmīte community and persuading the Imāmītes of the truth of their doctrine. This entire success was made possible by the hard work and tireless efforts of the Imāmīte transmitters of hadith during the last decades of the Minor Occultation up to the middle of the fourth/tenth century. The Twelver Shi‘ism doctrine and the Imāmīte community owe a great deal to those faithful and courageous men.

262. That included persons such as the Companion Abū Hurayra (Ibn Bābawayh, Nisāfī [quoted by Ḥāshim al-Bahrānī: 210–12]) and ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan (Ḥāshim al-Bahrānī: 125–6), none known to have had any pro-Imāmīte tendency.
265. See his Diwān: 357–69. According to a report quoted in Kamāl: 33, he had also told a friend that the qa‘im would be the sixth generation from Ja’far al-Ṣādiq. See also Mufid, al-Risāla al-khāmisa fi ‘l-ghayba: 400–401; Ḥāshim al-Bahrānī: 193.
268. A statement quoted from Imām ‘Alī al-Ḥādī reportedly predicted this situation. It asserted that “if it were not for the learned men who exist in the community after the occultation of the qa‘im, which learned men call [others] to him and instruct people about him, protect the doctrine with the divine proofs, and save the weak among the servants of God [the Shi‘ites] from the nets of Satan and his followers and from the traps of the anti-Shi‘ites, nobody would remain who had not converted from the religion of God. But they, the learned men, will take the reins of the hearts of the weak among the Shi‘a in the same way that the pilot controls the rudder of the ship. Those [learned men] are the best people before God, the mighty, the exalted” (Abū Muṣūr al-Ṭabrisī, 2:260).