MAHDISM IN ISLAM UP TO 260 A.H./874 A.D.
AND ITS RELATION TO
ZOROASTRIAN, JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN MESSIANISM

BY

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THESIS PRESENTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
APRIL 1976
Best Copy Available

Variable Print Quality
Acknowledgements

Having completed this work, I should like to express my gratitude and deep thanks to Professor W. Montgomery Watt, head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Edinburgh, who has supervised this thesis. He has offered me every possible help, encouragement and kindness. He has kindly read the draft of the first six chapters, making valuable remarks and giving helpful advice concerning terminology and other technical points.

My thanks are also due to Rev. Dr. Frank Whaling of the Divinity Faculty, University of Edinburgh, who has read the draft of the last chapter making very useful suggestions on different points. Also I should like to acknowledge the efforts of the various scholars whose works have been quoted or been consulted throughout the thesis. I am deeply grateful to my friends and colleagues, Muhammad Shukri, Brendon Turville-Petre and Amanda Britain for their kind help in checking the draft and offering various grammatical corrections. Despite the kind help of those scholars, I must confess that the final choice is always mine and, therefore, any responsibility rests upon my shoulders.

I am deeply grateful to the Islamic University of Omdurman for offering me this study leave and subsidising the whole course. I am also greatly indebted to Mrs. Mona Bennett for typing carefully and neatly both the draft and the final script of this thesis, to Miss Irene Crawford, secretary to the Department of Arabic for offering every possible help, to the staff of the...
main library of the University of Edinburgh for making many books available to me.

Last, but not least, my special thanks go to my wife for her understanding and unlimited help which have made life easier for me and for our small children during the four years of study.

M.O. Salih
Edinburgh
April 1976.
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Bibliography
Abstract

The aim of this thesis, as its title indicates, is to investigate the origin of the idea of the Mahdi in Islam and try to find out its relation to the similar ideas of the expected Saviour (Messiah) of the Zoroastrian, Jewish and Christian traditions. In the first six chapters the study is based on the primary sources dealing with the hadīths (sayings) attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur'ānic commentaries, the early historical material and heresiographical works. Massive secondary sources have also been consulted.

In the last chapter, which deals with Jewish and Christian Messianism, the primary sources are the Old and New Testaments and the Apocalyptic literature. In dealing with the relation between Zoroastrian, Jewish and Christian Messianism I rely upon the scholarly works of various authors in the field of comparative study of religions. Reference is made to all these sources in the footnotes or in the text if it is necessary.

Thus, chapter one deals with the primary and technical usage of the term Mahdi, the origin of this usage, its relation to the term Messiah and how the doctrine of wasiyya led to the belief in the Mahdism of 'Alī b. Abī-Tālib, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. Chapter two explains views of the Muslim historians concerning the phenomenon of the Saba'iyya and the theories of the modern Western scholars concerning the origin of Mahdism and Saba'iyya. In the light of the information which I obtain from numerous sources, the whole question of Saba'iyya has been reviewed.
In chapter three the early development of Mahdism is studied; and chapter four discusses the Kaysānites who believed in the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and were the connection between the earlier and later developments of Mahdism. Chapter five concentrates on the study of the hadīths in which the Prophet Muhammad was reported to have preached the good tidings of the expected Mahdi. The analytical study shows that the growth of these hadīths has something to do with the inter-tribal and sect conflicts. The rest of chapter five deals with the identification of these hadīths with certain historical persons or groups.

The seventh and last chapter deals with the Jewish and Christian Messianism and its relation to Zoroastrian Messianic ideas. It also demonstrates the impact of late Jewish pseudo-Messiahs upon the Muslim concept of Mahdi, Christ and Antichrist. The influence of early Christian beliefs in the second coming of Jesus upon the Muslim eschatology is also explained.

It is concluded that there is not a clear reference to a Mahdi or awaited Saviour in the Qur'ān, because the concept of salvation in the Qur'ān is based upon individual responsibility and then that of nation as a whole. It is also concluded that the authenticity of the hadīths of the Mahdi, attributed to the Prophet is doubtful, and that the development of the idea in Islamic society was the outcome of socio-political upheaval caused by civil wars and the seizure of power by semi-secular administrations. The development of the idea has flourished in Kūfa (Iraq) where the Jewish, Christian and Zoroastrian elements were at work.
### Abbreviations

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E.R.E. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics
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ODOCC Oxford Dictionary of Christian Church.
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Z.A.  Zeitschrift für Assyriologie.

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Note: The abbreviations of Biblical references are those of Jerusalem Bible; but in cases of ambiguity, like Is. for Isaiah, I have altered it to Isai.
Introduction

The idea of the expected saviour is almost universal in all religions. It is deeply-rooted in the ancient Indo-Iranian beliefs, in the Babylonian and Assyrian myths and has a significant impact upon the revealed religions, i.e., Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The Jewish and Christian ideas of the expected saviour are believed to have sprung from the Old Testament promises and prophecies, as found in Deut. 18:15-18, which indicate that God will raise, after Moses, a prophet who will be, like him, a divinely guided leader. (1)

It is argued, however, that the identification of these prophecies with the expected saviour or Messiah is of later date and known only to the post-exilic Judaism, and more particularly to the contemporaries of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. (2)

The assumption is, that the early Israelites who understood from these prophecies an immediate successor to Moses, were not familiar with the Messianic ideas of the neighbouring nations. But later, when they came into contact with these nations the Messianic ideas flourished especially under the circumstances of socio-religious decay and uncertainty.

Thus, the Jews expected a Prophet-Messiah, a second Moses to deliver them, mainly from political oppression. It is assumed


(2) Nowhere in the O.T. "the prophet like Moses" is identified with the Messiah. This identification appears only in the N.T. Cf. the Gospel of John, 1:19; 6:14.
that the idea of a prophet-Messiah has a close relation with the ancient belief in an adored charismatic king or leader who, through his personal abilities, charm and divine power, would bring salvation and happiness to his people, setting everything right. After centuries of development the idea of the expected saviour came to help the quiescent attitude of the masses towards social and political oppression. This is because believers in an expected saviour are not obliged to do anything in the present, "not even to work for the reform of any particular abuse". At the same time the idea helped to keep morale higher and hope renewed in a future deliverance. But on the other hand, the idea inspired many individuals of different background, and in various times and places, to claim that they were the expected One, whenever the time was ripe for action.

Thus, the idea of the expected saviour played an important role throughout the history of many Eastern nations; because it dominated, until recently, the thinking of many political revivalists and religious reformers, especially Jewish and Muslim. Some claimants succeeded in attracting a large number of followers, creating political and religious dissension or leading bloody revolutions, with little success in most cases.

This historical importance of the idea drew my attention to study in detail its emergence and development in Islamic history. My main thesis is to find out whether this idea was an original part of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings (hadīths) or

(1) Prof. Watt applied this expression to the believers in a "hidden Imam", cf. Formative Period, 48.
was it a mere later edition by some men\(^1\) who were, for some reason, interested in proclaiming it as part of his teaching.

Due to striking similarities between the idea of the expected Mahdi in Islamic Tradition and the idea of the expected saviour in Zoroastrian, Jewish and Christian faiths, I aim to investigate how close these ideas are to each other and on what ground they differ.\(^2\)

To the best of my knowledge, there has not been enough work in English or Arabic dealing with such a problem. But material dealing with the different aspect of Mahdism in Islam is enormous, not to mention the massive sources covering the field of Jewish and Christian Messianism. For instance, we have in English the article of Professor D.S. Margoliouth 'Mahdi' in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics;\(^3\) and that of D.B. Macdonald 'al-Mahdi' in the Encyclopaedia of Islam.\(^4\) Beside this there are some books by Professor P.M. Holt and other scholars dealing mainly with the Sudanese Mahdi and his movement, but also discussing the origin of Mahdism.\(^5\) Unfortunately, most of

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\(^1\) Cf. Chapters V, 194ff and VI.

\(^2\) See the comparison throughout this thesis, especially Chapter VII.

\(^3\) Vol. viii, 570-581.


\(^5\) Holt, P.M., The Mahdist State in the Sudan and his sources.
these works are repeating the ideas of Shouck-Hurgronje, (1)
Van Vloten (2) and Ignaz Goldziher. (3)

Among the modern Arab scholars who treated the subject we
find Ahmad Amin, who similarly depended on the above-mentioned
scholars in his book al-Mahdi wa-al-Mahdawiyya. (4) Next to
Ahmad Amîn comes Sa‘ad Muhammad Hasan who wrote al-Mahdiyya fi-
likewise depended on preceding scholars, has succeeded in
collecting the poetry and historical information dealing with
those who claimed Mahdisrn from the first century of Hijra onwards.

Dr. Kamil MustafÄ al-Shaybi also dealt with some aspects of the
subject but did not touch the heart of the problem. His thesis,
of course, was the link between Shi‘ism and Sufism. (6)

(2) Recherches sur la domination arabe, le chi‘itisme les croyances
Messianiques sous le Khalifat des Omayades, Arab. Trans. as-
Sivada al‘Arabiyya wa-sh-Shi‘a wa-1-Irâ‘i-liyyat fi ‘Ahd
Banî-Umayya by Hasan, Ibrâhim Hasan and Ibrâhim, Muhammad
(3) Vorlesungen Uber den Islam, Arab. Trans. al-‘Agīda wa-sh-
Sharî‘a fi al-Islam by Mūsâ, Muhammad Yusuf and others,
2nd ed. Cairo, 1959.
(4) Där al-Ma‘ārif, Cairo, ‘Iqra’ Series.
(6) (a) The Shi‘ite thought and the Sufi trends to early
(b) Al-Sila bayn at-Tasawwuf wa-at-Tashayyu‘, Där-al-
Ma‘ārif, Cairo.
As regards Jewish treatment of some aspects of the subject there is, as has already been mentioned, much study dealing with Messianism only. The most useful work, from the Jewish point of view, is that of Joseph Klausner, the Messianic ideas in Israel from its beginning to the completion of Mishnah.\(^{(1)}\) Added to this are the various articles by various scholars in the Jewish Encyclopaedia\(^{(2)}\) dealing with the different aspects of Messianism.

The Christian viewpoint is to be found in an article 'Jesus Christ' by W. Douglas MacKenzie in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics\(^{(3)}\). Other related articles are also to be found in the same Encyclopaedia and in other similar sources. The works of Professor William Manson\(^{(4)}\) and Rudolf Otto\(^{(5)}\) are still of significance although later works have since been published\(^{(6)}\).

The original plan of my thesis was to study Mahdism from a theological and historical point of view, from the first century of Islam to the present day; and then to compare these developments

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\(^{(2)}\) Edited by Singer, Isidore and others, in 12 vols., New York, 1901-1905.

\(^{(3)}\) Ed. by James Hastings and others, vol. vii, 505-551.

\(^{(4)}\) Jesus the Messiah, 1st ed. London, 1943; Christ’s view of the Kingdom of God, London, 1918.

\(^{(5)}\) The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, trans. from German by Floyd V. Filson and B. Lee-Woolf, London, 1943.

with those of the Messianic ideas in Judaism and Christianity from their earliest times to the present day. But it seems that this is too ambitious a plan because it is almost impossible to cover all these eras in a one-volume thesis and in such a limited time. Thus, it was necessary to confine the study to a limited historical period; and undoubtedly the most important period in Islamic history is the first two and a half centuries of Hijra, precisely up to 260 A.H./874 A.D. This date was the time in which the foundation was laid for later developments.

A quick survey of the problems discussed in this thesis is to be found in the abstract and table of contents, therefore there is no need to repeat what has been stated before.
CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORICAL REFERENCES TO MAHDI

1. **The Primary Usage of the word Mahdi**

   In order to understand the word mahdi technically, it is useful to begin with the Arabic lexicons\(^1\) to see what is the primary meaning of these terms in the pre-Islamic usages and what is the new meaning which Islam gave them before they took their technical one. Originally, the word mahdi came from the Arabic verb *hada* which literally means 'to guide someone to the right path', or in the right way. The opposite meaning is to mislead (*adallâ*). The verb *hada* and its corresponding verbs *ihada*, *shada* and *tahadda* have also other meanings, e.g., to send the bride to her groom or to give a present to someone; also they can mean 'to explain (*bayyana*) something to others'. The mahdi (passive participle) means the guided one, or the given one, while the word *muhdi* (present participle) means the giver undoubtedly. If we want to use the passive participle for a feminine, we will say *mahdiyyâ*\(^2\) instead of 'mahdi'; and the same word *mahdiyyâ* is used for the relative adjective. The

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\(^2\) A pre-Islamic poet was called Abû-Mahdiyya, see *al-Asma‘iyvât*, ed. A.M. Shâkir and A.M. Harûn, 131. For the expression "God has created you mahdiyya and not perplexed", see *al-Ma‘arri*, *Risâlat al-Shufrân*, 214.
anglicised form for mahdivva, in the latter sense, is mahdism.
and, as it will be seen, Mahdism has special connotation, i.e.,
the office whose claimant called the Mahdi. (1)

In the Qur'anic usages huda (infinitive mood) has a special
meaning, i.e., 'to guide someone by divine will or kindness
(lutf)'. The new meaning which Islam brought is that huda by
whatever means is from God alone; 'for Allah in the intense and
immediate theism of Islam, is guiding everyone and everything in
the world whether by the human reason or by the instincts of the
lower animals to a knowledge of himself and to what is needed for
their existence and continuance'. (2) In the Qur'an the verb hada
and its derivatives occur frequently; but it is interesting that
the word Mahdi, which is our concern in this study, has never
occurred in it, although its correspondent (reflexive passive) is
found there as singular (muhtadi) or plural (muhtadun). The
precise meaning of mahdi and muhtadi is "the man whom Allah
guided (thus, he is) not simply guided but reacted himself to the
divine guidance ..." (3)

According to al-Baydawi's commentary on the Qur'an, (4) huda
has several aspects which can be summarised in four points:
(a) The gift of the power of intelligence and the five senses
and the other inner senses (Qur'an 2:170; 5:104; 27:41).

(2) E.I.(S), 310.
(3) E.I.(S), 310. Cf. 'Abd-al-Baqi, M.F., Concordance to the
Qur'an, 731f.
(4) 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar b. Muhammad, Anwar at-Tanzil, i, 34.
(b) To show the signs which distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and bad, (Qur'an 90:10; 41:17).

(c) Salvation by sending prophets and Messengers with Books (Qur'an 17:9; 21:73; 32:24; 46:30).

(d) Revealing the truth to some people by inspiration (ilhām) and to others by revelation (wahy), (Qur'an 5:90; 29:69).

Beside these Qur'ānic usages, there are many examples to show that the word mahdi was very simple and commonly used as an honorific adjective for those who have been led by "divine guidance" in its general sense. One of these examples is that the Prophet Muhammad himself (may peace be upon him!) was called al-Mahdi and al-Muhtadī by his poet Hassān b. Thābit (d. 54 A.H.). Hassān expressed his outburst of impatience and grief over the death of the Prophet whom he loved and described as Mahdi and Muhtadī.

The poet said:

"Jaza' an 'alā al-Mahdiyyi asbaha thāwivan ...
fi yawmi al-ithnayni an-Nabīyyi al-Muhtadī."

Similarly, the Prophet himself was reported, by Ahmad b. Hanbal, Abū-Dā'ūd, Tirmidhi and Ibn Maja, to have used the word Mahdi for the Caliphs who would follow the right path and who would be guided to it. He said, "follow after my death the way of 'the divinely guided Caliphs' (summat al-Khulafā' al-Rashidīn

(1) Diwan (H. Hart), 58; cf. Goldziher, Vorlesungen (Arab. Tr.) 'Aqīda, 374.
al-Mahdiyyin). It should be mentioned that sometimes the words rashâd and sadâd were used instead of huda, because huda and the other two are almost synonymous. (2)

It has been found that Abû-Bakr, the first Caliph, used these words thus. He addressed his brethren once praising the Prophet and describing his mode of life (sîra) as "al-râshida al-Mahdiyya". (3) Also in this respect Hassân b. Thâbit described the Prophet as dha-r-rashâd al-murshid; (4) this phrase is equal to hâdiyan mahdiyyan. Likewise, al-A'ashâ, the poet, used the word musaddada in the sense of mahdi. He said:

"Amir al-Mu'minîna musaddada" (5)

Thus, the word Mahdi has been used in a purely honorific sense for all Caliphs who were thought to be following the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunna. Of course, the foundation of this usage is in the above mentioned Tradition attributed to the

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(1) Sunan (D), iv, 201; Musnad, (Ah.Sh.), ii, 159; Sunan (T), x, 143; Sunan (BM) i, 15; cf. Nawawi, Arba'in, Trad. 28; Ibn-al-Qayyim, Manâr, 150; the isnâd of this hadîth according to Ibn-Hanbal and Ibn-Mâja is: 'Abd-ar-Râhman b. Mahdi, Mu'awiya b. Salih, Damra b. Habîb, 'Abd-ar-Râhman b. 'Amr as-Sulami and the Companion 'Irbd b. Sâriya. Three other isnâds are found in Musnad (Ah.) and Sunan (BM).

(2) Goldziher, 'Agîda, 376f.

(3) Al-Imama wa-s-Siyasa, attributed to Ibn-Qutayba, 22.

(4) Diwan (H. Hart) 58; Tabaqât (B.S.), ii, 2,94; Goldziher, 'Agîda, 377.

Prophet Muhammad. (1) It is noteworthy that ḥudā (guidance) goes always with the observation of the Sunna, while ḍalāl (misguidance) is the result of innovation (bidʿa). (2)

Therefore, it was suspected that ʿAbd-Allah b. Masʿūd, (3) the Prophet Companion, was referring to the political 'misguidance' of Uthmān's government when he used to repeat his famous opening phrase for his lessons in Kūfa, in which he condemned innovations this way:

"The best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad; the worst of all things are innovations; and every innovation is sin (dalāla) and every sin is in Hell". (4)

However, the term al-Khulāfāʾ ar-Rāshidūn al-Mahdiyyūn or "the divinely guided Caliphs" was attached to the first four Caliphs, i.e., Abū-Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī. (5) ʿAlī himself

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(1) See above, 3, cf. below, chapter VII where the term Messiah was used as honorific title for the Israeli kings.

(2) Bidʿa means innovation; but the one which is condemned is the one which contradicts or offends the rule of Shariʿa (Islamic law).

(3) Ibn-Masʿūd was discontent with ʿUthmān's policy; cf. Husayn, Tāhā, al-Fītnā, i,160, Cairo, 1959.


(5) This is the chronological order which is the order of merits according to the Sunnites, cf. Watt, The Formative Period, 120, 126, 159, 132, 133.
was reported by Dar-Qutni to have said in his prayers, "O God make us good by the means with which you made good al-Khulafa' ar-Rashidin". *(1) He also was asked about Abū-Bakr and 'Umar; in reply he said: "they were Imāms of huda-rashidavn murshidavn".* *(2) The confinement of the term, in its general sense, for the four Caliphs must have occurred sometime between 'Alī's death and the coming of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz *(110).* *(3) For by this time the pious Muslims were able to compare between the "divinely guided Caliphs" and the 'Umayyad rulers who transformed the Khilāfā to a tyrant kingdom or (mulk 'aḍūd).* *(4) Though 'Umar II was an Umayyad yet he was regarded even by the enemies of his dynasty as the fifth divinely guided Caliph because of his justice and devoutness. This, however, indicates the acceptance of more than four divinely guided Caliphs; and this was further supported by an-Nawawī who said that Abū-Dā'i'd related on the authority of Sufyān ath-Thawrī: "the Caliphs are five", *(5) also this indicates that the predecessors of 'Umar from

*(1) In the isnād of this hadīth there are Ja'far as-Sādiq, his father and grandfather. Ibn-Hajar al-Haytamī, Sawā'iq, 32, quoting Dar-Qutni.

*(2) Tabaqāt *(BS)*, 111, 149.

*(3) Tabaqāt *(BS)*, v, 245. It is mentioned that 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz was said to be the Mahdi. cf. below, 247.

*(4) This refers to the Tradition which says 'the Caliphate would be forty years (up to the time of 'Alī) and then it would be mulk 'aḍūd.'

*(5) An-Nawawī, Asma', ii, 17-24.*
the Umayyad dynasty were regarded as Imāms of ḍaʿāl (misguidance).

This thought was expressed clearly by an anti-Umayyads poet who was encouraging his clan to fight the battle of Siffin against the Umayyads' party. (1)

On the other hand, one of the Umayyads' supporters, a certain Habīb b. Maslama al-Fihrī, (2) wanted to rule out any suggestion that 'Uthmān was not a divinely guided Caliph. He said, "'Uthmān was Khalīfahān Mahdiyyah and was working according to the Qur'ān." Indeed, the main body of the Muslims accepted 'Uthmān as divinely guided Caliph and disconnected him from their criticism of the Umayyads who claimed to be his heirs.

The Sunnite sources related that the Messenger of God prophesied a Fitna (affliction) in which 'Uthmān would be on the right path ('alā al-hudā). (3)

As for the Umayyads who were accused of being "the Imāms of ḍaʿāl", they countered this accusation by their claim that they had inherited the divinely guided Caliphate from their kinsman 'Uthmān. In this respect the poet al-Farazdaq (4) praised the Umayyads as the heirs of the Prophet whom he called al-Mahdi.

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(1) The poet is Bishr b. al-ʿAsūs; see Tab. Tārīkh, i, 3309.
(2) Habīb is one of those who witnessed the Prophet (d. 42)
Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 3377.
(3) Tirmidhī; al-Ḥākim; Ibn-Majah all quoted by Ibn-Hajar, Sawāʾiq, 66.
(4) Al-Farazdaq called Hammām b. Ghulib b. Saʿsaʿa (d. 110-14)
See his Diwan, Aghānī, xix, 1ff, also see Naqāʾid, i, 349.
He said:

"... Their father is Abū-al-‘Ās. (1)
They inherited a caliphate of a mahdi
who is the best of the seals (al-khawātim)."

There was a belief that they even came by God's decree. The poet said:

"God has garlanded you with the Khilāfa and 'guidance'; for what God decrees (qada) there is no change."(2)

Ignaz Goldziher referred to material found in the first and second century poetry concerning the application of the term 'Imams of Hudā' for the Umayyad Caliphs. (3) He also quoted several lines in which the word Mahdi had been used for several people as an honorific adjective. The given examples were mainly from al-Parazdaq and Jarīr. He quoted al-Parazdaq using it for the Prophet Muhammad in the line before the above mentioned one. The poet also used the word Mahdi for Sulaymān b. Ḥabd-al-Malik thus:

"You disconnected yourself from the cord of society; from the obedience of a mahdi whose punishment is fierce"(5)

(1) Abū-1-‘Ās is the grandfather of Marwān the founder of the Marwānīte branch of the Umayyads which ruled from 65/684.

(2) The translation of this line from Watt, W. Montgomery, Formative Period, 83; cf. al-Farazdaq, ii, 309.

(3) Goldziher, 'Aqidā, 327-8, 376-8.


(5) Nagā’il, i, 374.
Goldziher also quoted Jarîr (1) using the term mahdi for the prophet Abraham; he said:

"our father is the father of Isaac who joined between us; he was a mahdi a purified prophet . . . "(2)

He used it for Sulaymân b. 'Abd-al-Malik this way:

"Sulaymân is the blessed one, you know already that he is the Mahdi."(3)

And for Hishâm b. 'Abd-al-Malik he said:

"... I told her, I am going to the Caliph, without doubt he is the Mahdi and the wise ruler". (4)

It is noteworthy that the title Mahdi was not spared for the Caliphs but Jarîr used it for men of lesser position like Khâlid b. 'Abd-Allah al-Qasri (governor of Iraq 724/105-738/120). He said:

"He cureth them (the Iraqi rebels) with forbearance, religious sense, godliness and a mercy of a Mahdi who was guided to the truth and to it he was intending."(5)

In conclusion, of these different usages of the word Mahdi in its general meaning, it should be said that the valuable

(1) Jarîr b. 'Atiyya (d. 110 A.H.) see his Diwan (J.S.) i, 243 and Nagâ'îd, ii, 994.
(2) Nagâ'îd, ii, 994.
(3) Diwan (J.S.), i, 432.
(4) Diwan (J.S.), 1, 147.
(5) Nagâ'îd, ii, 987.
study of Goldziher to the subject was quoted by many writers, (1) who agree with him that the term was used in these examples in its general meaning. But after the examination of the texts of the poetry of Jarîr and al-Parazdaq and some others, I had found that these poets had had in mind the technical usage of the term Mahdi, at least in some cases, as will become clear later. (2)

2. The Technical Usage of the Term

The term Mahdi in its technical sense was not initially defined or limited to denote certain qualifying peculiarities or to ordain the manner of the rule of the Mahdi. Its meaning continued to develop until the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century of the Islamic era, (3) by which time the most important features of the doctrine of the Mahdi and of Mahdism had become established. This section aims to show that already in this early period the term Mahdi had become linked


(2) Cf. below, 241 ff.

(3) This is not a final date for the development of the idea of Mahdi but it is the date in which the canonical collection of hadîth both Sunnites and Shi'ites appeared. See below, chapter V, 194.
with the concept of "the charismatic leader" which had developed from pre-existing messianic ideas. It also aims to show that the term Mahdi was first applied to 'Ali b. Abī-Tālib at the time of the early development of the doctrine of wasiyya after the death of the Prophet.

Later, in the period from the second half of the first century A.H., until the end of the Umayyad period, the claim to be the Mahdi or his agent as a means to power, supplanted the earlier tendency to claim prophethood during the life of the Prophet and shortly after his death. Claimants to prophethood ceased to appear after Abū-Bakr spared no effort to deal with several such claimants, in order to establish the finality of Muhammad prophethood. The success of the first two Caliphs, Abū-Bakr and 'Umar, in representing themselves as merely the political successor of the Prophet, established this doctrine firmly in Muslim beliefs, such that since then those who have rejected this doctrine have not been considered members.

(1) For the application of this expression and the difference between the idea of "charismatic leader" which was held by different sects of Shi'ā and that of "the charismatic community", which was held by the Khārijites and probably the Sunnites, see Watt, W. Montgomery, "The Conception of the Charismatic Community in Islam", Numen, vii-viii, (1960-1), 77-90.

(2) See below, 13ff.

(3) Ibn-Hishām, Sīra.

(4) This idea based upon the Qur'ānic verse 33:40.
of the Muslim community. (1)

The first six years of `Uthmān's caliphate were similarly successful; but during the last six years of his rule he was increasingly, and perhaps unjustly, criticised for practising favouritism and old antipathies between the tribes, (2) which the Prophet and his first two successors had barely succeeded in uniting, re-appeared. Abū-Bakr and 'Umar had succeeded in dealing with the social problems caused by the change in emphasis from nomadic to urban life. By the time `Uthmān took over the leadership of the community, it had become an empire, and the socio-political problems which were becoming more and more acute were not at all helped by the lenient policy which `Uthmān adopted for himself, nor by his ill-chosen provincial governor. (3)

A number of nomadic groups objected to the new governmental organisation and its powerful urban bureaucracy, and they looked for the establishment of a "charismatic community". Another large group was disappointed at the style of leadership of `Uthmān whom they came to regard as the wrong man to lead the community. This group tended to look for a possessor of "a messianic charisma" to bring salvation to them and to the community. Since it had now become universally accepted that no more prophets would succeed Muhammad,

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(1) The Ahmadiyya sect which was found by Ghulām Ahmad of "Qādyān" (1908 D.A.) was declared non-Muslim sect in Pakistan, see Impact, iv: (18 & 19, 27th Sept.1974), 5.

(2) Tāḥā Husayn, Ṣaḥīh, 130-137, 205ff.

(3) cf. Tab. Tārīkh (Q), iv, 271ff., 322ff.
"these people persuaded themselves and others that charismatic qualities were inherited within the family and clan of Muhammad. Most of them regarded Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Ali as his charismatic successor, from whom the charismata were transmitted to certain of his descendants (who were also Muhammad's descendants)"\(^{(1)}\).

This last group and its ambitions will be discussed presently.

(a) **The doctrine of wasiyya**

Certain groups of people, mainly of Yemenite origin, developed and propagated the idea that the Prophet had designated 'Ali as his successor and that he, therefore, was his legatee (wasi). The word wasi came from the Arabic root wasiyya, which literally means testament, commission, mandate, and legacy. In Islamic law wasiyya means the last will endued by a dying person concerning the distribution of his money and property.\(^{(2)}\)

However, in the pre-Islamic period, the term wasiyya, "was less concerned with distribution of estate than with order and instruction to the survivors. It is spiritual testament of the dying man which is to hand on obligations and secure the continuity of tradition."\(^{(3)}\)


\(^{(2)}\) cf. the Qur'ān, 2:180; 4:11-12; 5:106.

\(^{(3)}\) E.I.\(^{(8)}\), 632.
This pre-Islamic sense of wasiyya was the basis for the claims (which were surprisingly not put forward immediately after the Prophet's death)\(^{(1)}\) that he should have passed his heritage to 'Ali, his cousin and son-in-law. 'Ali himself had nothing to do with this claim of wasiyya because if he believed that he was the designated wasi to succeed, he would not have given up what he would have thought was his right to the Caliphate to Abu-Bakr and his successors; or at least he would have mentioned to those who chose Abu-Bakr that he had been designated by the Prophet.

Ibn-Abi-al-Hadid (d. 655 A.H.)(2), a late pro-Shi'ite author, accepted this argument, saying that there was no designation (or nass)(3), but he held the view that there were other matters more important than nass which showed that 'Ali was wasi.\(^{(4)}\) It is not clear what he meant by these "other matters", but it was

\(^{(1)}\) The earliest reference in which we find the claims of 'Ali's wasiyya is Tabari, the isnad is as-Sirrî, Shu'ayb, Sayf b. 'Umar, 'Atiyya and Yazid al-Faq'asî; Tarikh, i, 2922, 2942. These claims can be dated to the last six years of 'Uthmân's caliphate (approximately 32-36 A.H.) Some information even suggests that there was probable earlier date of 'Ali's designation allegation, see below, 16.

\(^{(2)}\) He is the author of Sharh-Nahi-al-Balâahâ, Cairo, Maymaniyya Press, 1329 A.H.

\(^{(3)}\) Ibn-Abi-al-Hadid emphasised his argument by the Arabic proverb "the perfume is useless after the honeymoon", Nabi, ii, 5. Quoted from Hassan, Sa'ad Mohammad, Mahdiyya, 22.

\(^{(4)}\) Mahdiyya, 29.
suggested that he probably meant the alleged "secret knowledge" which was given to 'Ali alone and to his descendants after him in succession. (1)

The alleged foundations for 'Ali's designation as wasi are:

(i) the hadith of "Ghadir Khumm", (2)

(ii) another hadith in which the Prophet compared his relation to 'Ali with that of Aaron to Moses, (3) and

(iii) various overstated Shi'ite interpretations of the Qur'anic verses which mention "ahl-al-bayt (the people of the house) or Dhawī-al-Qurbā (the kinsfolk) as referring to the family of 'Ali." (4)

Dwight M. Donaldson (5) was aware of the above-mentioned material but it seems as if he regarded its Shi'ite interpretation as authentic; he therefore derived unsound conclusions about the Prophet's desire for a successor.

Ibn-Hajar considered "Ghadir Khumm's Tradition to be strong evidence for the Shi'ite claim because as he reported he found

(1) Cf. below, 78-88.
(2) See below, 16.
(3) See below, 18f.
(4) Qur'ān 5:71; 43:23; also see Tafsīr (Tab.), Kulīnī, Kāfī (Us.) 162-166.
it in the Sunnite sources.\footnote{1} The earlier Shi‘ite reference to 
this hadīth is found in Ibn-Wādih al-Ya‘qūbī, (d.284/897) who 
wrote that after the farewell pilgrimage,

"Muḥammad set out at night straight for Medina. 
When he came to a place in the vicinity of al-
Juhfā which was called "Ghadīr Khumm", on the 
eighteenth of the month Dhū-al-Hijja (10 A.H.), 
he stood up to deliver an inspired utterance. 
Taking the hand of ‘Alī Ibn-Abī-Tālib, he said, 
'Am I not dearer to the believers than their 
own lives?' They replied, 'Yes, O Apostle of 
God'. He then declared whoever recognises me as 
his master (mawla) will know ‘Alī as his master.’\footnote{2}

"He went on to say, 'O ye people, I will now 
go ahead of you, and you will meet me at the 
drinking fountain in Paradise. And I will ask 
you when you arrive concerning two treasures, 
so be careful how you look after them.' They 
inquired, 'What treasures, O Apostle of God?' 
He answered, 'the greatest treasure is the Book 
of God ... Hold fast to it and do not lose it 
and do not change it. The other treasure is

\footnote{1} He referred to Sunan (T); Sunan (N) and Musnad (Ah.) 

\footnote{2} Sawā‘iq, 25. Ibn-Hajar said, "this is a sound Tradition 
without doubt." He added it was related by Tirmidhī, 
Nisā‘ī and Ahmad.
the line of my descendants, the People of the Household." (1)

There is a later different version of this Tradition according to Muhammad Baqīr al-Majlisī, another highly esteemed Shi‘ite (d. 1110 A.H.), but his account represents the official Imāmīte viewpoint. (2)

The Sunnite sources which record the hadīth of Ghadir Khumm also have different versions (3) most of which are in agreement with those of Shi‘ite sources. But they were differently interpreted. These interpretations stated that the hadīth did not indicate that the Prophet had designated ‘Alī as his successor but refer rather to the Prophet’s advice for his followers to take ‘Alī as their mawla, which does not mean ‘successor’ or ‘master’ but supporter and beloved one. (4) Other Sunnite sources even denied that the event took place, and claimed that ‘Alī was in Yemen at the time of the farewell pilgrimage. (5)

Concerning the hadīth in which the Prophet said to ‘Alī

(1) Shi‘ite Religion, 1; quoting al-Ya‘qūbi History, ed. in two vols. by Professor Houtsma (Leyden, 1883) ii, 125.
(4) Sawā‘iq, 25; Mahdiyya, 23ff.
(5) Ibn-Hazm, Fisal, iv, 96f; cf. Ibn-Khaldūn, Mugaddima (B) 96; quoted from Mahdiyya, 23.
that you are to me like Aaron to Moses, the Shi'ites said that this indicates that as Aaron became the deputy of Moses, 'Ali was made the deputy of the Prophet Muhammad in all his functions as leader of the people except in his Prophethood. The Sunnites rejected this conclusion although they did accept the hadith as sound. They said that the Prophet made this comparison as a special occasion, that is, when he intended to set out on the expedition of Tabuk (9/630) and he asked 'Ali to be his deputy in Medina. 'Ali, valiant warrior that he was, complained to the Prophet that he did not want to be left with the women and children. Then the Prophet said to him, "are you not satisfied that you should be in the same relation to me that Aaron was to Moses; but there is no Prophet after me."

There was similar argument between the supporters of 'Ali and their rivals concerning the verses of the Qur'an where the ahl-al-bayt are mentioned as we have already noted. These Shi'ite re-interpretations were put forward even during the lifetime of 'Ali, as will be seen. An early incident shows

(1) Kulini, Kafi (Us.), 166; As-Saduq, Kamal, ii, 100-15. This is also in Bukhari and Muslim according to Ibn-Hajar, Sawaiq, 29; cf. Mas'udi, Muruj, ii, 49.
(2) See above, 14.
(3) Sawaiq, 29.
(4) Sawaiq, 29.
(5) Cf. Shi'ite Religion, 45.
(6) See below, 109.
the interest of some people in interpreting the Qur'ânic verses where the ahl-al-bayt are mentioned. Tabârî related that a man came to Ibn-'Abbâs, a cousin of 'Alî who died in 63-9 A.H., and asked him the meaning of sûra 42, verse 23, (1) which reads, "I ask you no fee therefore, save loving kindness among kinsfolk." (2) Sa'îd b. Jūbayr (executed by Ḥajjâj in 95 A.H.) who was sitting in the circle of Ibn-'Abbâs's students at the time, forestalled his teacher in his reply: "This means the kinsfolk of Muhammad (ahl-bayt Muhammad)." Ibn-'Abbâs replied angrily, "You have been over-hasty (in your reply). The truth is that God ordered Quraysh to observe their kinship with Muhammad." (3)

The echoes of early Shi'ite interpretations of the Qur'ân and hadîth had appeared in early poetry of a number of 1st and 2nd century poets like al-Kumayt al-Asâdi (60-126 A.H.) and al-Sayyîd al-Himyârî (d. 179 A.H.) who frequently referred to Ghâdir Khumm and to the verses of the Qur'ân which speak about the "kinsfolk" (dhawî al-Qurbâ) or the "household" (ahl-al-bayt). (4)

As we have already seen, 'Alî did not approve of these claims for his wasîyya because he repeatedly denied that he had any special qualities giving him "the secret knowledge of prophecy" as his followers believed. There are satisfactory proofs that such beliefs in 'Alî's special qualities existed

(1) Tafsîr (Tab.B.), xxiv, 17.
(2) Pickthall, Marmaduke, The Glorious Qur'ân.
(3) Tafsîr (Tab.B.), xxiv, 17; Sahîh (M); Sahîh (Bukh.);
Musnad (Ah.Sh.) iii, 320; iv, 205. Quoted from Mahdiyya, 6.
(4) Qur'ân, 8:41; 33:33; 42:23.
during his lifetime and that he denied that he had these qualities. Consequently, when 'Ali died, these beliefs spread and were embellished all the more, as we shall see. (1) An incident witnessed by Tariq b. Shihab (d. 82 A.H.) demonstrates how careful 'Ali was to deny these claims. He said: "I heard 'Ali denying that he had any special or secret knowledge." (2) Similar to this is the version of Muslim b. al-Hajjaq (3) in which he reported 'Ali as saying, "whoever claims that we have something which we should recite in addition to the Qur'an and this paper (sahifa) in which there is (a statement concerning) the ages of the camels for Sadaqa (poor-tax) and in which the requital of the injuries inflicted is explained, verily he lies." (4) It is clear from the following story that "secret knowledge" was a term referred to the claimed wasiyya. Also it shows that 'Ali was annoyed at the allegation of his designation.

It was said that when 'Ali arrived in Basra (probably immediately before the battle of the Camel, 36 A.H.) two men asked him whether he was acting in his struggle for power according to 'Ahd (testament) from the Prophet. He answered that there was no such testament because "if there was a testament I would never have allowed Abu-Bakr of 'Adiyy) to jump upon the pulpit (Minbar) of the

(1) See below, 36ff., 78ff.
(3) Sahih (M).
(4) Sahih (M); Sawaiq, 27.
Moreover, we find echoes of the belief in 'Allī's special qualities in the hadīth reported by al-Bukhārī on the authority of 'Abd-al-'Azīz b. Rufayṣ al-Asadī al-Kūfī(2) who said, "I and Shaddād b. Mi'qal(3) went to see Ibn-'Abbās (perhaps after 'Allī's death);" Shaddād said to him, "did the Prophet leave anything (i.e. wasiyya or knowledge)?" He replied, "he did not leave anything except what is between the two covers of the Qur'ān." 'Abd-al-'Azīz added, "and then we went to Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and asked the same question, but his reply was the same."(4)

(b) 'Allī, the first Mahdi

On careful examination of the early sources which tend to be somewhat ambiguous, together with a consideration of the later conceptions of 'Allī's supernatural personality, I have come to the conclusion that there are good grounds for believing that 'Allī b. Abī-Tālib was the first to be called the Mahdi in Islamic history, rather than his son Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya as had commonly been supposed. (5) The concept of 'Allī's Mahdism

(1) Ibn-Hajar quoting Dāraquṭnī, Ibn-'Asākir and Dhahābī, Sawā'iq, 27.
(2) For his biography see Tahdhīb, vi, 337.
(3) Tahdhīb, iv, 318.
(4) Compare the claim of those who believed that 'Allī was dabbat al-ard, below ; cf. Hasan, Sa'ad Muhammad, Mahdiyya, 26. 38, 40.
or his messianic qualities was not accepted by all his Muslim contemporaries, but only by a comparatively small group, of mostly Yemenite origin, who were influenced by an eclectic mixture of thoughts and beliefs drawn from different sources such as Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and the old Arab beliefs, as it will be explained presently. (1)

The first technical usage of the term Mahdi was, as we might expect, close to the above explained primary signification. It had not yet acquired the complicated connotations of the later times. The significance of the term Mahdi at that time was simply political. He was the man whom Allah guided and consequently he could guide people to the "straight path" (as-sirāt al-mustaqīm). He would also vanquish the oppressors and revive the sunna of the Prophet. (2)

This was the Mahdi of men like Näfi' b. al-Aswad who lived through the late Jähliyya period and the early Islam. (3) He is reported as praising 'Allī thus:

He re-built the dome of Islam after its demolition
He alone re-established it and now it is stable.
He restored it after it had collapsed
Like a "Prophet" coming to us ... (4)

(1) See below, 44ff, 58ff.
(2) Ibn-Hajar, Isābā, ii, 1213; Sawā'iq, 27; Mas'ūdī, Ansāb, i, 542; Musnad (Ah.)'i, 1, 157.
(3) Isābā, 1, 8849.
(4) Sīfīn, 564.
Hujr b. 'Adiyy of the Yemenite tribe Kinda, Hukaym b. Jabla of 'Abd-al-Qays and 'Amr b. al-Hamiq of Khuza‘a were apparently of the same mind. It has been mentioned how they murdered 'Uthmân whom they regarded as a usurper and pinned all their hopes on 'Alî. Zayd b. Yuthay' (or Yathîgh) of Hamadân, another Yemenite who was a contemporary of these men, ascribed a hadîth to the Prophet in which he was reported to have said the following words in response to a question concerning who should succeed him:

If you appoint Abû-Bakr you will find him trustworthy, renouncing pleasure in worldly-things and interested in the hereafter. If you appoint 'Umar you will find him trustworthy unfearing in the way of Allah the blame of any blamer. If you appoint 'Alî and I do not think you will do that, you will find him a "divinely-guided guide" (hâdiyan Mahdiyyan) who will lead you to the straight path."

This hadîth is probably the earliest reference to the Mahdism of 'Alî and we suspect that it was invented some time

(1) Above, 12 ; cf. below, 38f.

(2) Mîzân, ii, 106f; Tahdîh, iii, 427ff.

after the appointment of 'Uthmān to the Caliphate and before
the succession of 'Alī (notice the words, 'I do not think you
will do that')(1). In other words, it was perhaps invented as
anti-'Uthmān propaganda because it ignored 'Uthmān altogether
and raised 'Alī above him as "divinely-guided guide"; and this
sort of representation of 'Uthmān as a usurper seriously disabled
his power to govern.(2)

A different version of this ḥadīth is found in many
sources(3) all of which perhaps originated from this same Zayd
b. Yuthay' about whom we know very little except that he was
Hamdānī Yemenite and that he lived in Küfa. One report said
that he related ḥadīth on the direct authority of Abū-Bakr, the
Caliph (d. 12 A.H.) and he probably lived in his time. He also
transmitted ḥadīth from 'Alī, Abū Dharr and Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman.
On the other hand, only one man transmitted ḥadīth from him.(4)
This was Abū-Is'ḥāq as-Sabī'ī (24-129 A.H.) a pro-'Alids Traditi-
ionist whom we shall meet in the third chapter, who related
many ḥadīths about the coming Mahdi. We may note here that Abū-
Is'ḥāq was said to have distorted (afsada) the ḥadīth of the
Kūfians.(5)

(1) Above, 23.
(2) Tamhīd, 55-74.
(3) In his notes on Musnad(Ah.Sh.), ii,157, Ahmad M. Shākir
said that this ḥadīth is also found in Tabarānī, Mu'jam
az-Zawā'id, v,176; and Bazzār.
(4) Mizān, ii, 106f; Tahdh, viii, 63-67.
(5) Mizān, iii,270.
Another proof for the early beliefs in ‘Ali’s Mahdism is found in some verses of poetry ascribed to the above-mentioned Hujr b. ‘Adiyy and others of ‘Ali’s contemporary followers. They clearly stated their firm belief in ‘Ali as wasi and Mahdi. (1)

Thus Hujr said:

'O God, save 'Ali for us.
Save the blessed, the pleasant,
the believer, the professor of God’s unity, the pious.
He is no fool, nor is he ungodly.
He is a "divinely-guided guide" ...
(2)
O God! preserve him and preserve the prophet in him.
He is his wali.
(3)

He approved him as his wasi.

Naṣr b. Muzāhim (4) also ascribed verses to Addiyy b. Hātim of Tayy (d. 68 A.H.) which shows that he believed in ‘Ali’s "divine guidance". In the same place (5) Naṣr reported ‘Amr b. al-Hamīq of Khuzā‘a, who was of the same mind, as saying that he was among the "party" (i.e. ‘Ali’s party) by whom God guided people to the straight path.

(1) Darajat, 423f. Quoting early sources, namely Naṣr, Siffin, 434.
(2) His actual words are "Hādiyan Mahdiyyan".
(3) Wali, like wasi, has different meanings, e.g. relative, benefactor, legal guardian, aid, etc. He meant here the latter meaning.
(4) Siffin, 432.
(5) Siffin, 432.
Likewise al-Ash'ath b. Qays of Kinda (Hujr's tribe) was reported to have similar ideas about 'Ali's charismatic qualities. It seems from some reports that this man was not wholeheartedly behind 'Ali yet we find him describing him as Imam of huda and he even advocated the idea that 'Ali was wasi and wazir of the Prophet. (1)

The poet An-najashi who was a contemporary of these men (2) seemed to have been more extremist in his acceptance of 'Ali's leadership than most of the others. He said,

"We accept what 'Ali has accepted for us even if in his decision is our death. He is the wasi of the messenger of God and his heir ..." (3)

'Abu-l-Aswad ad-Du'ali (d. 69 A.H.) (4), who was one of the intimate friends and supporters of 'Ali, believed that the guidance (huda) was with 'Ali, his leader, and the misguidance was with those who opposed him. He used to say to those who left 'Ali and went to join the Kharijites:

"You went out with a blind eye seeking guidance while this guidance was what

(1) Siffin, 27f; Tab.Tarikh, i, 333ff.
(2) For his biography see Ibn-Qutayba Chu'rā', 288ff and 424.
(3) Siffin, 154.
(4) See his Diwan, ed. by 'Abd.al-Karīm ad-Dujaylī, Baghdad, 1954.
you left behind."(1)

In the poetry of Abū-1-Aswad we also find the poet emphasizing his love for the Prophet's family, especially 'Alī, whom he called al-Muhtadi. He said:

"God knows that my love is sincere for the
Prophet's sons and for al-Imâm al-Muhtadi ..."(2)

In fact, Abū-1-Aswad made it clear that he believed the love of 'Alī and the family was prescribed for Muslims by Allah.(3) Also in his poetry we find a verse which shows his belief in 'Alī's wasiyya; he said:

"I love Muḥammad most strongly
I love 'Abbās, Hamzā(4) and the wasi.(5)"

There is an implicit reference to a Mahdi who was foretold by Ka'b al-Ahbār (d. 34 A.H.)(6) the well-known rabbi, converted

(1) Dīwān, 197. It is interesting to find that the pro-Umayyads also attributed a hadīth to the Prophet in which he prayed to God that Mu‘āwiya may be hādiyan Mahdiyyan. They also related another one in which the Prophet asked Mu‘āwiya to be just if he governed. Cf. Sahīh (T.); Nawāwī, Asmā', 1/2, 102.

(2) Dīwān, 24; Ibn-'Asākir, Tahdîh, Tārikh, vii, 108.

(3) Dīwān, 177. The poet was probably referring to Qur‘ān, 8:41; 33:33; 42:23.

(4) 'Abbās and Hamzā are the Prophet's uncles. See Tabagāt (BS) iii/1, 3-11; iv/1, 1-22.

(5) Dīwān. In Aghānī, xi, 118 the word radiyyā is used instead of wasiyya.

(6) For his biography see Tabagāt, (BS), vii/2, 156.
to Islam from Judaism in the early days of 'Umar b. al-Khattāb. This reference is found in the poetry of the pro-'Alid poet Kuthayyir 'Azza (d. 104 A.H.). (1) He tells us in one of his poems, in which he used the term Mahdi for Muhammad Ibn-al-Hanafiyyā, that Ka'b al-Ahbār told him the news of this Mahdi. The date in which Kuthayyir composed his poem perhaps goes back to the time of his imprisonment with Ibn-al-Hanafiyyā by Ibn-az-Zubayr between 63-64 A.H.

If Kuthayyir was not mistaken, as some sources suggested, (2) this Ka'b had probably familiarized the Judaeo-Christian idea about the coming Messiah (or Mahdi) shortly before his death in 34 A.H. Indeed, we find an explicit hadīth attributed to Ka'b, by 'Abd-ar-Razzāq al-San'āni, (3) that the Mahdi was so called because he will guide people to a matter which is not unknown (to them); he will discover the true Torah and Injil from a place called Antioch. Furthermore, we find support, in Tabarī, for Ka'b's prophetical role in these early days. One story said that when 'Umar went to take over the control of Jerusalem after its conquest, Ka'b was among the Muslims (4) who entered the city.

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(1) Aghānī, viii, 33.
(2) Aghānī, viii, 33. Kuthayyir was asked whether he witnessed Ka'b to relate hadīth on him directly; he said, "No, that was imagination."
(3) Musannaf, ix, 373. The isnād of 'Abd-ar-Razzāq is: Ma'mar (b.Rāshid), Matar (al-Warrāq) on the authority of Ka'b.
(4) Tab. Tārikh, i, 2409, 2503, 2408-9, 2514, 2722-5, 2817, 2946-7.
'Umar found that the temple was very dirty and neglected, therefore he knelt down and began to clean it. He requested his fellow Muslims to do likewise. When Ka'b saw this, he exclaimed "God is great" (Allah Akbar). The Muslims followed Ka'b in his takbîr thus making a great noise. The Caliph looked up in surprise and asked: "What has happened?" He was told that Ka'b pronounced the takbîr and people followed him. When Ka'b was brought to 'Umar, on his order, he said to the Caliph that what you have done (i.e. the cleaning of the Temple) was foretold by a prophet five hundred years before; he added "you are al-Fârûq who was in the prophecy." (2)

There is another account in Tâbarî (3) showing Ka'b's claim that he has full acquaintance with "the unpredictable future". 'Uthmân was returning from Mecca to Medina after his last pilgrimage and during the journey his caravan leader (hadî) sang a song which suggested that the successor of 'Uthmân would be either 'Ali, Talha or Zubayr; but Ka'b (4) who was present among the travellers, said that the successor would be the one who had the she-mule which had a blaze on the forehead (Sâhib ash-Shahbâ').

(1) It is not easy to trace back the origin of these prophecies, but he must be referring to the Old Testament, especially Ezekiel.

(2) Ka'b once claimed that he found 'Umar's description in the Torah. See Tâb. Târikh, i, 2408-9, 2723.

(3) Târikh, i, 2946f.

(4) Târikh, i, 2946f.

(5) The word Shahbâ also is used as a description for Aleppo which was, at that time, like the rest of Syria, under the governorship of Mu'âwiya.
referring to Mu'āwiya.

In view of these accounts it is likely that Ka'b had spoken about the Mahdi in a vein similar to others who had Judaeo-Christian background and who were a source of information for those Muslims(1) who wished to know more about matters such as Gog and Magog,(2) the anti-Christ (ad-Dajjāl), Dābbat al-ard(3) and the Messiah, etc. And Ka'b al-Ahbār (whose name indicates his wide knowledge) was certainly one of the most informed men who could answer questions of this eschatological type. (4)

(c) The Origin of the term Mahdi

It is puzzling that the term Mahdi should have been particularly adopted for this expected "charismatic leader" rather than another term. (5) This problem is perhaps solved by the theory that the term Mahdi meant a translation of Messiah (Hebrew Mashiah, Arabic Masīh). The simple meaning of this term is "the anointed one". Anointment in the Old and New Testament indicates preparation for "divine guidance" which is represented in Arabic by the term huda.

Thus Elijah, the prophet, was directed to anoint Elisha,

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(1) See 'Umar's inquiry about ad-Dajjāl in Tab. Tarīkh, i, 2403.
(3) Dābbat al-Ard literally means the animal of the land.

See below, 109.
(4) See Mu'āwiya's appraisal of Ka'b, Sahih (B).
his successor (wasi). (1) Aaron and those who followed him in the same office were anointed with a holy oil. (2) Saul, David and Solomon and the other Jewish kings were anointed in the same way (3) and called Messiahs of Yahweh. (4) Jesus Christ was anointed by the Holy Ghost as a prophet, priest and king. (5)

The link between the Arabic words mash and hudd is clear in the metaphorical sense of mash, because in this sense the word means "the divine appointment" or the selection of a man for a particular purpose, (6) i.e., kingship, priesthood and prophethood. A modern Muslim historian, ‘Ali al-Wardi, (7) who has traced the origin of the word Mahdi, commented on the relation between the meaning of Messiah and Mahdi. To support his theory, he quoted Isaiah 11:2-6 which reads:

"On him the spirit of Yahweh rests,
a spirit of wisdom and insight,
a spirit of counsel and power,
a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh.
(The fear of Yahweh is his breath).

(1) O.T. 1 Kings 19:16; cf. West Dic. 29f; Bib. Concor. 24.
(3) O.T. 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kings 1:39; 19:50; 2 Kings 9; 11:12.
(4) O.T. 1 Sam. 2:10; 35. Cf. West Dic. 29.
(6) West Dic. 30.
(7) Wa‘az as-Salatin, 387. Quoted from Shaybi, Śila, 106-8.
"He does not judge by appearances,
He gives no verdict on hearsay,
but judges the wretched with integrity
and with equity gives a verdict for the poor of the land ... 
the wolf lives with lamb
the panther lies down with the kid
calf and lion cub feed together ..." (1)

Also he quoted Isaiah 61:1, which reads:

"The spirit of the Lord Yahweh has been given to me,
for Yahweh has 'anointed me'. (2)
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor
to bind up hearts that are broken ..."

Kāmil Mustafa ash-Shaybī (3) gives more support to this theory
with his observation about Abū-Mansūr al-Ijlī, whom he stated
had linked mash and hūdā in the second century A.H. (4) Abū-
Mansūr was executed in 119-120/742 because he claimed to be the
wasi of Muhammad al-Bāqir, the fifth Twelfer Shī‘ite Imām
(d. 117 A.H.). Abū-Mansūr also claimed to be the Mahdi. He
stated that he had ascended to heaven and that God patted him
on his head (masaha ‘alā ra’si-hī) and said to him in Syriac:
"O my son: convey a message from me." (5) Ash-Shaybī also said
that Abū-Mansūr had in mind the example of Jesus the Messiah and

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(1) Jerusalem Bib. Compare this with the hadīth, mustadrak.
(2) In Arabic Allah masahā-nī.
(3) Sīlā, 106-8.
(4) Para (Bagh), 243-5; Firaq (Nawb), 34; Maqālat (Ash.R.), 24.
(5) Para (Bagh), 243-5; Firaq (Nawb), 34; Formative Period, 47.
how he was said to have been "anointed" by the spirit of God.
And for this special relation between Abū-Mansūr and the idea
of mash and Messiah his followers used to swear by the Word i.e.,
Jesus (al-Kalimā). (1)

To emphasize his point al-Shaybānī (2) quoted al-Jāhiz
(d. 255/869) (3) who reported that some interpreters of the
Qur'ān (4) said that Messiah had been so called because he was
anointed (musiha) with the ointment of blessing (baraka) (5);
and that baraka indicates the guidance or hudū. (6)

In addition to the above-mentioned relation between mash
and hudū explained by 'Alī al-Wardī (7) and Kāmil Mustafa al-
Shaybānī, (8) one can point out similarities between the development
of the usage of the term Messiah in the Old Testament (9) and

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(1) Najāt, (Qum.), 47f; Milal (Shahr.A.), 1/2, 14f;
   Fīṣal (A.), 11/4, 185.
(2) Sīla, 106-8.
(3) See his biography in Tabaqāt al-Muṭtaṣila, 28ff, 36,
   45-48, 67.
(4) He did not name those interpreters. See Bukhārī, 106f;
   Tafsīr (Tab. Sh.) vi, 414.
(5) Bukhārī, 106f.
(6) This is only my understanding from the text. See art. "baraka",
   E.I. (2), 1, 1032.
(8) Sīla, 106-8.
(9) Lev. 6:20; 8:10; 10:7; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kin. 1:39;
   19:15; 2 Kin. 9; 11:12.
that of the Mahdi in the Muslim Tradition. But before
mentioning some points of similarities between the development
of the usage of the term Messiah and Mahdi, I should say that
other similarities will be shown during the course of this
thesis. (2)

(1) See Chapter V.
(2) See Chapter VII.
Similarities between the term Messiah and Mahdi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messiah</th>
<th>Mahdi</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) The term Messiah was first used as an honorific title for the Israelite kings and priests. (1)</td>
<td>(a) The term Mahdi was first used for the Muslim Caliphs, Amir and religious leaders. (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) The term was later fixed for an eschatological figure.</td>
<td>(b) The term Mahdi was later fixed for an eschatological figure.</td>
</tr>
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<td>(c) The eschatological meaning of the term is not in the Torah but in the prophetic books. (3)</td>
<td>(c) The eschatological meaning of the term is not in the Qur'ān but in some Traditions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) The Messiah will be a descendant of David ... (5)</td>
<td>(d) The Mahdi will be a descendant of 'Ālī ... (6)</td>
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</table>

(1) O. T. Lev. 6:20; 8:10; 10:7; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kings 1:39; 19:16; 2 Kings 9; 11:12.
(2) See above, 4ff.
(3) O. T. Lev. 6:20; 8:10; 10:7; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kings 1:39; 19:16; 2 Kings 9; 11:12.
(4) See above, 23.
(5) Ps. 110:1-5; Matt. 22:42; Mark 10:47; Acts 2:30; 13:23; Rom. 1:3.
(6) Sahih (T), Fitan, 52; Sunan (D), iv, 151.
CHAPTER II

THE SABA'IIYYA AND MAHDISM

1. The Muslim Historians' Account

Many Muslim historians, both Sunnites and Shi'ites, (1) shared the view that 'Abd-Allah b. Saba', who was sometimes called Ibn-as-Sawda', or the son of the black woman, was the originator of the heretical sect of the Saba'iiyya. Modern research, however, has doubted the matter of Ibn-Saba' and his alleged party, the Saba'iiyya. Many modern scholars wished to give a sound explanation to the phenomenon of Saba'iiyya. Some of them tried to trace the origin of its messianic ideas (2) while others, like Murtada al-'Askari, tried to show the whole story as reflecting the conditions and thoughts of the early Abbasid time in which the historical information about Saba'iiyya and similar matters was recorded. (3) However, the Western scholars' account will be summarized in the next section as our concern here is the Muslim historians' views.

The importance of Ibn-Saba' to this thesis rises from the fact that the Sunnite historians regard him as the originator of many foreign ideas in Islam including the idea of 'Alī's Mahdism, and as the originator of all the movements in Shi'ism. We are going to give a very brief idea about what the Sunnites

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(1) See below, 40-44.
(2) Friedlaender, Z.A. xxiii (1909) 296-327; xxiv (1910) 1-46.
(3) 'Abd-Allah Ibn-Saba', in two vols., Baghdād, 1968/1388; Origin of Isma'īlism, 25; Formative Period, 60f.
think of Ibn-Saba' and Saba'iyya because this subject has been discussed by a great many modern scholars. The Sunnite sources accused Ibn-Saba' and his alleged party of being the seeds of all evil in Islamic history. According to these sources Ibn-Saba' was the author of the fitna(1) which led to the murder of 'Uthmān, the civil wars which followed his murder and to the disintegration of Muslim society.

Al-Baghdādī, who seems to have differentiated between Ibn-Saba' and Ibn-as-Sawdā',(2) said:

"The critical Sunnite scholars say that Ibn-as-Sawdā' felt deeply attached to the Jewish religion and he sought to corrupt the Muslims and their religious principles by fanciful interpretations concerning 'Alī and his children, so that they might believe in him as Christians believe in 'Īsā. He identified himself with the Sabbabiyya ..."(3)

According to Sayf b.'Umar, who was quoted by Tabari(4) and many others,(5) Ibn-Saba' was a Yemenite Jew from Sanʿā' who accepted Islam in order to be able to misguide the Muslims. He

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(1) See above, 21.

(2) Al-Baghdādī was mistaken in his distinction between the two persons; Friedlaender, Z.A. xxiii (1909). This matter will be discussed in 90ff.

(3) Fara (Bash-Halk), 44f.

(4) Tab. Tarīkh, i, 2858f, 2922-8.

(5) Below is a list of those who quote Sayf, 41ff.
began his activities in the middle of 'Uthmān's Caliphate (perhaps about 30 A.H.) with the claim that the Prophet Muhammad would return to life (i.e. rā'ā). He took as proof of this doctrine of rā'ā the Muslim belief in the "Return" of Jesus the Messiah, saying that if Jesus was to return, it would surely be more natural for Muhammad to return than for Jesus. Ibn-Saba' found support for his claims in a Qur'ānic verse which he misinterpreted deliberately; the verse says:

"Verily He who ordained the Qur'ān for thee will bring thee to the Place of Return ..."(1)

From this idea of rā'ā, Ibn-Saba' jumped to the doctrine of wasīyya which Tabari summarized thus:

"There were a thousand(2) prophets before Muhammad and each prophet had a wasī. Therefore Muhammad must have one. His wasī was 'Alī. 'Alī was the last perfect wasī just as Muhammad was the last perfect prophet. Ibn-Saba' then declared that 'Uthmān was a usurper and that 'Alī was the wasī of

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(1) Sūra xxviii, 85. A. 'Alī Yūsuf in his Tr. and commentary on the Qur'ān (1026) says that this verse was revealed at Juhfā on the road from Mecca to Medina ... on the Hijra journey. The Prophet was sad ... and this was given as consolation to him. Cf. also Tafsīr (Tab.); Ahkām (Qurt), xiii, 320f.

(2) This might be a figurative expression to indicate the large number of prophets, cf. Z.A., xxiv (1908) 12f. Al-Baghdādí, Farq (Bagh. Halk) 44, says Ibn-Saba' took this idea from the Torah; (probably Lev. 6:20; 8:10; 10:7; 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13 1 Kin. 1:39; 19:16 etc.)
the Prophet; he urged those who listened to him in the provinces to dethrone 'Uthmān ..."(1)

Sources other than Tabarī add that(2) after his success in getting rid of 'Uthmān and bringing 'Alī as Caliph, Ibn-Saba' and some of his followers claimed that 'Alī was God incarnate. Hearing this, 'Alī was very annoyed. He asked them to repent of their apostasy but when they refused he ordered a number of them to be burned. As for Ibn-Saba' himself, some sources(3) say that he was among the group burned; others(4) say that he was exiled to "Sabat al-Madā'in".

"When 'Alī was killed Ibn-Saba' held that the slain one was not 'Alī(5) but a devil who appeared to the people in the likeness of 'Alī. 'Alī himself ascended to heaven just as 'Isā Ibn-Maryam had ascended there. He said, just as the Jews and Christians lie in affirming the execution of 'Isā, so the Nāsibis and Khawarij lie in alleging 'Alī's

(1) Tab. Tārīkh, i, 2922, 2942ff.
(2) Macglät (Ash.) i, 15ff; Farq (Bagh-Halk), 41-45; Firāq (Nawb.) 19f. Pisal, iv, 186; Milāl (Shahr.A.) i-ii, 11ff; Milāl (Shahr.W.) i, 174ff.
(3) Mizān, ii, 426.
(4) Farq (Bagh-Halk) 41-45; Firāq (Nawb.) 19f.
(5) This is a sort of Docetism, a type of view which was current in Asia and which was adopted by some Christians in respect of Jesus. See below, 54. cf. Z.A. xxiv (1910), 1.
assassination ..."(1)

"When Ibn-Saba' was told of the murder of 'Ali he replied: "Even if you bring us his brain in a bag, we shall not admit the truth of his death, for he shall not die until he descends from heaven and rules over the entire world."

Al-Baghdādi adds:

"This group held that the expected Mahdi is in truth 'Ali and no-one else". (2)

"Some of the Saba'īyya believed that 'Ali is in the clouds, that the thunder is his voice, and the lightning his whip."(3)

Abū-1-Hasan al-Ash'arī (4) and Abū-l-Husayn al-Malati (5) also reported the claims of Ibn-Saba' and his followers that 'Ali was alive and would return before "the last day" and that he would fill the earth with justice, etc. ... They refer to their belief that 'Ali was in heaven and that the thunder was

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(1) Farq (Bagh-Halk), 42; Nāsibīs or Nāsibites is a term of abuse used by Shi‘ites for Sunnites and the Kharijites; for the Shi‘ites the term Rawāfiḍ (rejectionists) is used in the same way by the others.

(2) Farq (Bagh-Halk), 42f. As a matter of convenience I changed the order of this text; also some terms in the English translation had been replaced by suitable ones.

(3) Farq (Bagh-Halk), 42. Cf. the claims of Saysaniyya (Zoroastrians) whose leader Saysan was killed by Abū-Muslim al-Khurāsānī Milal (Shahr.) ii, 43f.

(4) Maqālāt (Ash.), i, 15ff.

(5) Tanbīh, 25f.
his voice. *Al-Maqālat wa-l-Firaq* which is attributed to Saʿd al-Qummi\(^{(1)}\) adds that the Sabaʿiyya, after hearing the news of ʿAlī’s death, refused to believe it. They went to his house and asked permission to see ʿAlī; they were told again that his death was confirmed but they insisted that they did not believe that he was dead.\(^{(2)}\) The writer may have taken this information from similar reports by Muhammad b. Saʿd\(^{(3)}\) in which exactly the same story was told without mention of the Sabaʿiyya. Adh-Dhahabi\(^{(4)}\), on the authority of Ash-Shaʿbī, also mentioned it in connection with Rushayd al-Hajarī.\(^{(5)}\)

In brief, the sources in which we find mention of this story of Ibn-Sabaʿ and his alleged party the Sabaʿiyya are of three types:

(a) Historical works which all, perhaps, are derived from Tabarī, the celebrated Muslim scholar, who reported the account of Ibn-Sabaʿ on the authority of Sayf b. ʿUmar.\(^{(6)}\) These works are those of Ibn-ʿAsākir (d. 571 A.H.);\(^{(7)}\) Ibn-al-Athīr (d. 630 A.H.);\(^{(8)}\)

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\(^{(1)}\) *Maqālat* (Qumm) 21. It is suspected that this book is the same as *Faraḵ* (Bagh); cf. *Formative Period*, 2, 326.

\(^{(2)}\) *Maqālat* (Qumm) 21.

\(^{(3)}\) *Tabaqat* (BS) iii/2, 26; vi, 115.


\(^{(5)}\) See below, 111ff

\(^{(6)}\) *Tab*. *Tārikh*, 1, 2858f., 2922-8, 2954, 3027, 3163-5, 3180.

\(^{(7)}\) *T*. Dimashq, i, 304, 484f., 696, 513, 545, 447, 551.

\(^{(8)}\) *Ath*. *Tārikh*, 53, iii, 95f., 103.
Abū-al-Fidā' (d. 732 A.H.) (1); Ibn-Abī-al-Ḥadīd (d. 655 A.H.); (2) Ibn-Abī-Bakr (d. 741 A.H.); (3) adh-Dhahābī (d. 746 A.H.); (4) Ibn-Kathīr (d. 774 A.H.); (5) Ibn-Khālūd (d. 808 A.H.); (6) and al-Mīrīzī (d. 845 A.H.). (7)

(b) Heresiographical works which usually do not mention their references like those of Sa’d al-As‘ārī al-Qummi (d. 301 A.H.); (8) an-Nawbakhtī (d. 310 A.H.); (9) Ibn-‘Abd-Rabi‘ī (d. 328 A.H.); (10) Abū-l-Ḥasan al-As‘ārī (d. 330 A.H.); (11) Abū-l-Ḥusayn al-Kalatī (d. 377 A.H.); (12) who quoted his material from an early source, i.e., Kushaysh b. Asram (d. 867 A.D.); (13) al-Baghdādī (d. 429 A.H.); (14)

(1) Mukhtasar.
(2) Shar-Nahi.
(5) Bidāya, vii, 167-246.
(6) ‘Ībar (Kh.) ii, 425.
(7) Khutat (Miq.).
(8) Maqalāt (Qumm.), 20, 23, 55, 161. This book is believed to be the same as of "an-Nawbakhtī".
(9) Firaq (Nawb.) 19, 20.
(10) ‘Īqd (MSA), i-ii, 241; ‘Īqd (Azh.) i, 353.
(11) Maqalāt (Ash.) i, 15ff.
(12) Tanbih, 118-121.
(14) Farg (Bagh), 19ff., Farg (Bagh-Halk), 41-45.
Ibn-Hazm (d. 456 A.H.); (1) Isfarā’īnī (d. 471 A.H.); (2) and ash-Shahrastānī (d. 548 A.H.)(3).

(c) Traditionists who investigated the transmitters (rijadi) of hadith and also the text (matn). These are divided into Shi‘ites and Sunnites.

(i) The Shi‘ites like al-Kulīnī (d. 329 or 338 A.H.); (4) an-Nu‘mānī (d. after 342 A.H.); (5) al-Kashšī (d. 379 A.H.); (6) Ibn-Sabawayhī al-Qummī (d. 381 A.H.); (7) at-Tūsī (d. 460 A.H.); (8) Ibn-Shahrā‘- Āshūb (d. 588 A.H.); (9) Ibn-Tawus (d. 673 A.H.); (10) al-Hillī (d. 726 A.H.); (11) Hasan b. Z. al-‘Āmilī (d. 1103 A.H.); (12) Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Hurr al-‘Āmilī (d. 1103 A.H.); (13) and al-Majlisi (d. 1111 A.H.)(14)

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(1) Fisal (A), iv, 186.
(2) Tafsīr.
(3) Milal (Shahr. A.) i-i, 11ff; Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 174ff.
(4) Kāfī, vii, 257-9, 260 quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 146ff.
(5) Ghayba, 167ff.
(7) M.L.Y. Fagīh, i, 213; iii, 90. Quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 146ff.
(9) Manāqib, i, 264f.
(10) Hall, quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 121, 146ff.
(11) Khulāṣa, quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 121, 146ff.
(12) Tahfīz, quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 121, 146.
(13) Tasfīl, quoted from Ibn-Sabā‘, ii, 121, 146ff.
(14) Bihār, vii, 249, 251.
(ii) The Sunnite Traditionalists who refer to the story of Ibn-Saba' are the above-mentioned Ibn-‘Asäkir, Ibn-al-Athîr, adh-Dhahabi, Ibn-Kathîr and Ibn-Hajar. (1) Muhammad b. Sa’d did not mention Ibn-Saba' in his Tabagät (2) but he refers to someone called Ibn-Sab' (with 'ayn) (3) who was one of ‘Ali's students. (4) He also refers to those who believed in ‘Ali's being Dâbbat al-Ard and who believed in his "return" (raj'a). (5) Al-Bukhâri (d. 256 A.H.) (6), Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 A.H.) (7) and Abû-Da'ûd (d. 275 A.H.) (8) referred to the incident in which 'Ali had a number of people burned alive because they apostatized from Islam. (9)

2. Western Scholars' Account

Many western orientalists have suggested solutions to the difficult question of how these messianic ideas linked with the Prophet's family had appeared; and from which sources these ideas

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(1) Lisän mīz.; Fath-.Bar., vi, 491f.
(2) Tabagät (BS), see the Index, vol. IX.
(3) Adh-Dhahabi called him Ibn-Sabu' and said: "no-one related hadîth upon him except Sâlim b. Abî-l-Ja’îd (see Mīzān, ii, 427).
(4) Tabagät, vi, 163.
(5) Tabagät/ iii/1, 26.
(6) Sahîh (B), iv, 130.
(7) Musnâd, (Ah.) i, 217; Musnâd (Ah. Sh.) iv, 349.
(8) Sunan (D), ii, 221.
(9) See above, 39.
were taken. Their interest in studying these matters as one of them, Van Vloten, pointed out\(^{(1)}\) is due to their realization that these ideas, and particularly the idea of the expected Mahdi, were and still are of great significance in the political history of a large number of Muslims though it may be an issue that involves all the Muslims.\(^{(2)}\) Van Vloten also noticed that while many in the West became interested in these studies we find only Ibn-Khaldūn from the East had realized the importance of such an idea influencing the history of the East.\(^{(3)}\) It was difficult for the Western scholars who tried to trace the origin of Mahdism to adopt one theory which could perhaps explain this puzzling question; but they introduced many theories\(^{(4)}\) which can be summarised thus:

(a) The theory of Persian origin of Mahdism

One of the orientalists who gave full consideration to the origin of Shi‘ism and Mahdism was Darmesteter\(^{(5)}\) who, according to Bernard Lewis,\(^{(6)}\) said that this idea of the Mahdi was:

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\(^{(1)}\) La Domination le Chi‘itisme, (Arab. Tran.), 108-136.  
\(^{(2)}\) La Domination le Chi‘itisme (Arab. Tran.) 108ff.  
\(^{(3)}\) Muaaddima, ii, 156-185, 187.  
\(^{(4)}\) We will see in the next section that these theories are not necessarily contradictory. The classification of these theories is quoted from the excellent work of Muhsin ‘Abd-al-Hamīd, Dirasat.  
\(^{(5)}\) Le Mahdi, 15ff. Quoted from Origin of Ismā‘Ilim, 24.  
"imported into Islam by the masses of imperfectly Islamized Persian converts, who brought with them the Indo-Aryan idea of a chosen, God-begotten family, transmitting the Glory of God (Farri Yazdän) from generation to generation, and eventually producing a Saoshyant or Messiah. This conception was transferred to the family of the Prophet and the personality of 'Alī."

Some Western scholars like Guidi, (1) Von Kremer, (2) Dozy, (3) and August Müller (4) agreed with Darmesteter about the Persian origin of Mahdism and Shi‘ism while others, like Wellhausen, (5) Goldziher (6) and Friedlaender, (7) criticized them and gave different explanations to the origin of these ideas. Wellhausen said that there is no doubt that the Shi‘ite ideas coincided with the Persians, but this coincidence is not a proof that the Shi‘ites took their ideas from the Persians. He added that, according to historical sources, Shi‘ism appeared firstly among the Arabs and then was adopted by the mawālī. (8)

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(2) Dirāsāt, 22.
(3) "Assai sur l'histoire de l'Islamisme" quoted from Dirāsāt, 23.
(4) Arab Kingdom; Dirāsāt.
(5) Opposition partei en, quoted from Dirāsāt, 24. cf. Formative Period, 19, 45.
(6) ‘Agīda, 229; Dirāsāt, 29.
(8) Mawālī, plural of mawlâ, which here means a Persian client to an Arab.
Friedlaender also referred to the misleading factors which led some scholars to believe in a Persian origin of Shi'ism and Mahdism. (1) He mentioned only two of these factors, i.e.,

(a) The first factor is that Shi'ism is the official religion of Persian today. (2)

(b) The second one is the exterior similarities between the idea of the divine incarnation in the Imāms and that of Pahlavi-Baah which was persisting in Asia Minor. (3)

(c) A third factor was added (4) as the main reason which perhaps led to this belief in a Persian origin of the idea. That is the reliance on some later heresiographical material which represent the Persians as conspirators who wished to destroy Islam because it challenged their empire. One of these heresiographers is al-Miqrīzi (5), who said that the Persians

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(1) Heterodoxies, 204. Quoted from Dirāsat, 25.
(2) This was refuted by the fact that Shi'ism dominated Persia only after 1500 A.D. Heterodoxies, 2-4. Quoted from Dirāsat, 25. Cf. Gibb, H.A.R., Moh., 121.
(4) Dirāsat, 23.
(5) Dirāsat, 23f. Cf. Miqrīzi, Khuṭat, 1,362. This statement seems to be a mere prejudice against the Persians.
caused many sects to withdraw from the religion of Islam because they associate Islam with the Arabs whom they regard as inferior. The Persians wanted to overwhelm Islam by wars but God has forbidden that. Thereafter, they saw that the best way is to harm it by secret treachery. Some of them accepted Islam outwardly; they attracted the pro-Alid Muslims by showing their love for "the Family" and their condemnation for their usurpers etc. The same view was adopted by Ibn-Hazm and al-Isfar'înî.\(^1\)

(b) **The theory of the Jewish origin**

Wellhausen, Goldziher and Friedlaender, after criticising the theory of the Persian origin of Shi'ism and Mahdism, tried to establish their own theories. Wellhausen adopted a theory of Jewish origin\(^2\), while the other two scholars adhered to Judaeo-Christian origin of the doctrine.\(^3\)

Wellhausen and those who partly agreed with him, found support to their theories in the report of Sayf b. 'Umar and many later historians and heresiographers\(^4\) about the above-mentioned 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' who was said to have been a Jew. They also relied on the statement attributed to 'Āmir b. Sharāhîl ash-Sha'bî, in which he was said to have compared the Râfidîtes

\(^1\) Fisal (A), ii, 91. Tabsîr, 109.

\(^2\) Oppositionparteien, quoted from Dirâsât, 27–29.

\(^3\) Dirâsât, 29.

\(^4\) Above, 41 ff.
(Shi'â) with the Jews. The statement, which was an advice by ash-Sha'bî to his friend Malik b. Mu'âwiya, is recorded by Ibn-'Abd-Rabbi-hî (d. 328 A.H.);(1) and some parts of it by al-Baghdâdi(2) and al-Isfarâ'îni(3). The version of Ibn-'Abd-Rabbi-hî, which was the earliest, reads:

"I warn you against the people of misleading fancies, the worst of them all are the Râfidites. They are the Jews of this nation. They hate Islam as Jews hate Christianity. They confessed Islam, not out of love or fear of God, but out of hatred against the Muslims. Already 'Ali b. Abî-Talîb burned (some of) them, ... and it may be because the affair(4) of the Râfidites is like that of the Jews. The Jews claimed that the kingship belongs only to the descendants of David(5) and the Râfidites hold the kingship belongs only to the descendants of 'Ali b. Abî-Talîb. The Jews said that there is no holy strive (jihâd) except with the awaited Messiah when he appears with a caller calling from heaven(6) and the Râfidites say that there is

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(1) 'Iqd (MSA), i-ii, 24f; 'Iqd (Azh), 1,353.
(2) Farq (Bagh-Halk), 43ff.
(3) Tabsîr.
(4) The word can also be translated 'love'.
(5) See above, 35. Cf. below, Chapter VII.
(6) See below, Chapter VII.
no jihad in 'the way of Allah' until the coming of the Mahdi with Sabah(1) descending from heaven. The Jews delay the sunset prayer until stars interjoin and the Rāfidites do the same. The Jews do not see anything in 'the three time divorce' and the same is with the Rāfidites. (2) The Jews do not believe in 'idda for women (3) and the Rāfidites do likewise ...
The Jews had corrupted (4) the Torah and the Rāfidites corrupted the Qur'ān ... (5) The Jews dislike the angel "Gibril" and the Rāfidites also say that he transferred the wahy to Muhammad instead of 'Alī. Jews do not eat the camels' meat and also the Rāfidites."(6)

Wellhausen stated that the idea which says that the Prophet — any prophet — is a king who represents the sovereignty of God

(1) See Kamāl ad-Dīn, ii, 362ff.

(2) Art. "Divorce", Jewish B., also Karaite Law.

(3) Legally prescribed period of waiting during which a woman may not remarry after being widowed or divorced.

(4) Cf. Karaite Law, i, 15, a Jewish account of this idea of corruption.

(5) He meant that the Rāfidites misinterpret the Qur'ān.

See above, 13 - 21.

(6) Purū'ī, Kāfī, vi, 31ff.
on earth was borrowed by the Shi‘ites from Judaism. (1) The fundamental principle of Shi‘a doctrine is that prophethood is the living personal exposition of divine authority and it continues and will continue in the Caliphate or Imamah. (2) Before Muhammad, there appeared a large and continuous chain of prophets, one after another; as the Jews say: "a fine chain of prophets." (3) It was stated in the Old Testament (4) that the time shall not pass without having a prophet who would succeed Moses out of his own nation. The Shi‘ite idea is that every prophet leaves one wasi living beside him as a successor in case he dies. The Shi‘ite applied this concept to Muhammad claiming that the relation of Muhammad to ‘Ali is like that of Aaron to Moses. (5)

The difference is that the Shi‘ites do not use the term 'prophet' for ‘Ali and his sons, but use other terms like wasi, Imam and Mahdi. (6) Wellhausen added that although the term prophet is not used yet the actual fact of prophecy meant because the Shi‘ites believe that the Imamahs are associated with

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(1) The author refers to the Jew ‘Abd-Allah b. Saba‘ as the originator of these ideas. Oppositionpartei, quoted from Dirasat, 28; cf. Formative Period, 45, 330.

(2) Above, 35.

(3) See below, Chapter VII.

(4) Det, 18.

(5) Above, 15, 17.

(6) Some of the Shi‘ite sect, especially Isma‘ili, believe in a continuing prophecy. Cf. below, 282ff.
(c) The Judaeo-Christian origin of Mahdism

Friedlaender and Goldziher are the most enthusiastic scholars who held the idea of Judaeo-Christian origin of Mahdism and Shi‘ism. Friedlaender, in a well-argued article entitled "Abdallah b. Saba, der Begründer der Si‘a, und sein jüdischer Ursprung", (2) tried to prove that 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' was the founder of the Messianic ideas which were linked with Shi‘ism and that Judaism and Christianity were the sources of his thoughts. (3) Friedlaender noticed the inconsistencies and contradiction of material which speaks about Ibn-Saba', but after careful examination he drew the following conclusions:

(i) All sources agreed that Ibn-Saba' and Ibn-as-Sawdā' are really one person and that al-Baghdādi and al-Isfarā'īni are mistaken in making them two.

(ii) Many sources said that he was a Yemenite Jew from San‘ā’ and his mother is said to be a black woman.

(iii) His messianic ideas seems to be of more Christian origin than of Jewish.

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(1) Quoted from Dirāsāt, 27, cf. Kāfī, 155-166.

(2) Z. A., xxiii (1909), 296-327; xxiv (1910) 1-46. Thanks to my friends Dr. M.H.M. Khayr and Mr. 'Abd-al-'Azīm M. 'Alī who translated from German the general meaning of this article.

(3) In the next section I will re-appraise the validity of Friedlaender's theory.

(iv) Therefore, this man must have been one of the adherents of a Jewish sect which was influenced by Christianity.

(v) There is evidence to show that Judaism in Yemen (before Ibn-Saba') was not exactly the same one which is known to us.

(vi) The nearest assumption is that Ibn-Saba' had had some connection with the Falāshas or the black Ethiopian Jews (notice that Ibn-Saba' was called the son of the black woman and that the Yemenites had social relations with the Ethiopians from very old times).(1)

(vii) The Falāshas' Judaism could be regarded as a good foundation for the ideas of Ibn-Saba' because it was under the Christian influence. They had the same biblical characters because they had the translation of their Torah through the Coptic version. (2) Also the other religious books of the Falāshas' are taken immediately from the Christians; their tradition, myth and eschatology are nearly the same. Their apocryphal books are also the same as the Christians. They derived from IV Ezra all their messianic conception. (3)

(viii) A final conclusion is the possible linkage

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(1) Hittī, Hist. Arab before Islam.
(2) Z.A., xxiv (1910), 27-32.
(3) Z.A., xxiv (1910), 35f.
between the Yemenite Jews and the Saduqite Jews who believed in the divinity of Esra (as it was described by the Qur'an)\(^\text{(1)}\) and that Ibn-Saba' was aware of this idea when he claimed the divinity of 'Ali.\(^\text{(2)}\)

In addition to this, Friedlaender held that Shi'ism has borrowed from Judaism the fundamentals of Mahdism and borrowed from Christianity, through the Manicheans, the idea of "Docetism"\(^\text{(3)}\) which was adopted by the extremists who repeatedly claimed that their dead Imāms were alive and would "return" as Mahdis.\(^\text{(4)}\)

Goldziher\(^\text{(5)}\) supported the idea of Judaeo-Christian origin of Mahdism and Shi'ism. He held that the doctrine of "return" or rai'a has infiltrated to some Muslims' belief through Jews.

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\(^{(1)}\) Sūrā, 9:30.

\(^{(2)}\) Above, 36 ff.

\(^{(3)}\) Docetism is a "tendency in the early church rather than a formulated and unified doctrine which consider the humanity and suffering of the earthly Christ as apparent rather than real. Evidence for its existence is to be found in the N.T. (1 Jn. 4:1-3, 3; 2 Jn. 7; cf. Col., 2:8f) but it reached its zenith in the next generation especially among the Gnostics. In some forms it held that Christ miraculously escaped the ignominy of death ..." ODGCC, 409 and NIDOCC, 305. Cf. above, 39.


and Christians who believe that Elijah was ascended to heaven (1) and that he will "return" to the earth before "the Day of Yahweh" to put everything right. (2) Goldziher added that there is no doubt that Elijah was the first example whom the Shī'ites copied for their Imāms.

Also, he believed that all these messianic ideas of Shī'ism go back to the Semitic transcendental beliefs; although he mentioned other nations, like the Indians who believed in "the return" of Kālhi (3) and the Persians who believed in Saoshyan of Zoroastrianism. (4) Goldziher emphasized his point that Shī'ism and Mahdism were a semitical phenomenon when he said that the Shī'ite movement appeared firstly among the Arabs. He added that even the claims of 'Allī's divinity had appeared firstly in a pure semitic environment and its propagators were pure Arabs, (5) because the Persian elements were not involved until the revolt of al-Mukhtar b. Abī-'Ubayd. (6)

(d) The Theory of Arabic Origin

Louis Massignon (7) is among those who propose an Arabic origin

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(1) O.T., 1 Kin., 17:5; 19:5, Rom., 11:2.
(3) 'Aqīda, 215.
(4) 'Aqīda, 218.
(5) Cf. below, 56; Goldziher added that these Arabs were influenced by Judaeo-Christian ideas.
(6) This idea will be discussed below, 158 ff.
(7) "Lectures at Collège de France", quoted from Origin of Ismā'īlism, 25.
of Mahdism and Shi'ism. According to Bernard Lewis, Massignon "regarded Mahdism as an autochthonous Muslim development growing out of the Qur'an, the Muslim Tradition and Arab folklore, and stimulated by social conditions."(1)

Professor Watt, who points to the Arab origin of Mahdism but does not exclude the other possibilities, says:

"The similarity of these ideas to Judaeo-Christian messianic ideas has often been noted, but this is no mere imitation. Such ideas gave a measure of hope to men in an almost impossible situation, and yet helped them to accept the situation in so far as was inevitable."(2)

Professor Watt raises new points to support this idea in addition to those arguments which were introduced by Friedlaender, Goldziher and Wellhausen(3) opposing the theory of the Persian origin of Mahdism and Shi'ism. He also gives consideration to the arguments of their opponents. His points can be summarised thus:

(i) "Because of later events it is sometimes thought that Shi'ism is more a Persian than an Arab attitude, but careful examination of early historical sources shows that many of the phenomena of proto-Shi'ism are first found among Arabs."(4)

(1) Origin of Ismā'īlism, 25.
(2) Formative Period, 48, 175, 272; "Charismatic Community" Numen, vii (1960), 77-90.
(3) Cf. above, 48ff.
(4) Formative Period, 40.
(ii) The majority of those who hold these messianic ideas seem to be Yemenite originally from South Arabia "a land where civilization had been based on Charismatic leaders, and they must somehow have been influenced by tradition."(1)

(iii) The Charismatic idea of Shi'ism is probably linked with the Arab belief "that good and bad qualities, like nobility and meanness, were transmitted genetically through the family stock; from the exceptional gifts seen in Muhammad, it might be inferred that there was something exceptional about the clan of Hāshim."(2)

(iv) "Such a belief cannot always be clearly distinguished from the belief that in a time of crisis a member of "the family" is the wisest guide."(3)

(v) "Most leaders of revolts (other than Kharijites) during the Umayyad Period made vengeance for "the family" one point in their programme for action; and that is a typical Arab idea."(4)

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(2) Formative Period, 40.

(3) Formative Period, 40.

(4) Formative Period, 40.
3. A New Look at the Saba'iyya

(a) Historical background

The belief\(^{(1)}\) that the Prophet Muhammad did not leave any testament or wasiyya indicating who should succeed him invites the difficult question of how the doctrine of wasiyya and similar messianic ideas developed so soon after his death.

As we have seen in the last few pages, many scholars from both the East\(^{(2)}\) and the West\(^{(3)}\) had tried to answer this question by tracing the origin of the messianic ideas. These ideas began in Islam with the Shi'ites claim of the divine right of 'Ali and his descendants to the Caliphate, and developed into their wasiyya, Imama and Mahdism.

We have seen various theories for the origin of these ideas; the theory of a Persian origin; the theory of a Jewish origin, the theory of a Judaeo-Christian origin and the theory of an Arab origin.

In order to throw fresh light on the subject, we should bear in mind the remark of Professor Watt\(^{(4)}\) which states that it is desirable in a study like this "to link up doctrinal statements with the contemporary political and historical situation, since often the apparently abstract theological assertions have a political relevance."

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(1) This belief is held by the Sunnites. The Western scholars also accept this view.

(2) Cf. above, 41.

(3) Cf. above, 44.

(4) Formative Period, 5.
It is generally accepted that the idea of 'Ali's divine right to inherit the leadership of the Muslims first appeared in Kufa (1) among the Yemenites whom I propose to show were equivalent to the Saba'iyya. The most important factor which led to some of these seeking their salvation in a charismatic leader or Mahdi was their cultural and historical background. Before going into details it is necessary to elaborate this cultural and historical background.

The Arabs of the South, who are known as the Yemenites and the Saba'ites, (2) had previously had an ancient civilization and a long tradition of kingship based upon charismatic leaders. (3) Due to the lack of information it is not easy to discover whether or not their pre-Islamic idea of charismatic leader or king was original, or if it was acquired from the neighbouring nations (i.e. the Persians, the Egyptians, the Israelites, the Indians and the Abyssinians) who believed in the supernatural nature of their kings.

It is certain that South Arabia had intercommunicated with these nations since the ancient times "because it was on the trade route from India to the Middle East. Its kings owed their wealth to the customs which they levied perhaps more than the products of their own land." (4)

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(1) See below, 78ff; Formative Period, 42f.
(2) Cf. below where they are called the Yamaniyya and the Saba'iyya.
(3) Formative Period, 40ff., 175f.
(4) ERE, I, 881.
With regard to the relationship of the Yemenites to the Egyptians, "A sarcophagus was found in Egypt with the epitaph of an ancient Arabian agent in the incense traffic; and in the island of Delos (1) an altar dedicated to Wadd", (2) the most famous idol in South Arabia at the time. (3) In addition to this, a large Yemenite settlement, which had left inscriptions, was found on the caravan route to Gazza.

The Yemenites must also have had some links with the Babylonians and the people of Mesopotamia who, like them, worshipped the celestial bodies. (4) For, in addition to the above mentioned "Wadd", the Yemenites worshipped 'Athtar (probably Ishtar) and al-Magūh (Venus) (5), both of whom were known to the Mesopotamians. Recent archaeological researches (6) have shown that the Babylonian King "Merodach-Baladan" (about 7th century B.C.) had escaped to Elam (7) from the Assyrian King Sennacherib (d. 681 B.C.); and that from there he crossed

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(1) I am not sure whether or not this is the same as Delos of Greek legend. See M. Encyc., 324.

(2) Cf. the Qur'ān, 71:23.

(3) ERE, I, 882.


(5) They worshipped the sun, the moon as well as Nasr, etc. ERE, I, 882.


(7) Elam is a biblical name for a region in S.W. Persia north of the Arabian Gulf. Recent research shows that the country had had a trade link with India. M. Encyc.
"the Lower Sea" (Arabian Gulf) to an island which may be one of the Bahrein Islands in South Arabia. He was said to have taken with him his Gods and the bodies of his dead fathers. (1)

His attacker, Sennacherib, claimed to have ruled over the nations from "the Upper Sea" (Mediterranean) to "the Lower Sea" (the Gulf). (2) He also said that he fought against Mallûkha, which was thought to be in South Arabia. (3) It is interesting to note the similarity, in pronunciation, between the name of the god Nisroch which was referred to in the O.T. (4) as being worshipped by "Sennacherib" and between that of Naṣr of South Arabia. (5)

As for the Abyssinians, they played a very important role in the Yemenite history. Indeed, there is a belief that the two nations were descended from a common ancestor. (6) The theory said that the Abyssinians were dwelling east of Ḥādramūt and migrated, in historic times, to Africa. (7) There is some evidence which suggests that the Abyssinians had dominated the Yemen. It is interesting to note that the

(1) Sumer, xxix (1973), 294, 296.
(2) Sumer, xxix (1973), 294, 296.
(4) 2 Kin., 19:36-7; cf. Hasan, Tār. Siyāsī, i, 23.
(5) ERE, X, 882.
(6) ERE, X, 882. They were both believed to be from the Semitic tribes.
(7) ERE, X, 882
Yemenites and old Ethiopic alphabets differed only slightly.\(^1\)

Later, the Abyssinians were involved in the power struggle, in Yemen, between the Roman and the Persian empires. The Abyssinians supported the Romans, because of their common bond of Christianity, and conquered the Yemen, dethroning its king, Dhū-Nuwās (about 525 A.D.) on their behalf.\(^2\) Dhū-Nuwās, who was said to be a Jew, resisted the Christianisation of his people and, in fact, he massacred the Christians of Najran.\(^3\) Then the Yemenites entered into an alliance with the Persians to protect their country from the influence of the Abyssinians. Sayf b. Dhī-Yazan called upon the Persians to expel the Abyssinians, about the year 575 A.D. and from then onward, until the coming of Islam, the Yemen remained under the influence of Persia.\(^4\)

The remarks of Muslim historians\(^5\) on the conversion of the Yemenites to Islam indicate that those who did not accept Islam were either Jews, Christians or Majūs (Zoroastrians). This is borne out by the advice of the Prophet to his messenger Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, who was sent to the Yemen to implement the Shari‘a, to take jizyā from the Majūs as well as from "the

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\(^1\) ERE, X, 880-1.
\(^2\) Cf. ERE, X, 882; Ṭārīkh, i, 29-32, Dīnaw. Akhbār, 61-65; Tab. Ṭārīkh, i, 901.
\(^3\) Tab. Ṭārīkh, i/ 901-926. The Qur‘ān name them Ashāb al-Ukhdūd (85:12).
\(^4\) ERE, X, 882; Ṭārīkh, i, 30-32, Dīnaw. Akhbār, 61.
\(^5\) Futūḥ, (B), 92, 97ff, 107, 114, 117.
people of the book." The same instruction was sent to the
governor of 'Umān and the governor of al-Bahrayn which seems
to indicate that there was a numerous community of Majūs among
the Arabs. Al-Balādhuri (d. about 279 A. H.) said that the
Persian political control dominated al-Bahrayn for some time and
the population came mainly from the three Arab tribes of 'Abd-
al-Qays, Bakr b. Wā'il and Tamīm. Also among the population were some of the Asbādhīs who worshipped horses and
seemed to be of non-Arab origin. He also mentioned that some
of the 'Ajam (Persians) of Bahrayn accepted Islam while others
chose to remain as dhimmīs. The Zoroastrian ideas, therefore,
were known long before this time and in fact Dīnawarī (d. 282
A. H.) mentions that Dhu Nuwās was said to have worshipped
the fire before his conversion to Judaism.

To this evidence of intercommunication between the Arabs of
South Arabia and the Persians, I add the well-known fact that
the Arabic language had borrowed many words from Persians and
that these words had found their way into the pre-Islamic
Arabic literature.

The association of the Yemenites with the Israelites reaches

(1) Balādhuri mentions that a Qur'ānic verse (5:105) revealed
to defend this action. Futūh (B), 106.

(2) Futūh (B), 106, 107.

(3) Futūh (B), 106ff.

(4) Futūh (B), 107. He said that there was a village
called Isbādh in Hajar.

back until the time of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Saba') and their friendly relations and mutual admiration was well known until the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

Genetically, the Yemenites and the Israelites are both descended from the Semitic tribes and the Israelites nearly always made their way to the Yemen after any persecution. "After the destruction of Jerusalem, Jews migrated to the Yemen and attained considerably influence. One inscription has been found referring to the merciful One, God of Israel and Lord of the Jews." Indeed, the general Semitic name for God IL was in common use in the Yemen as a proper noun and sometimes even as a common noun, though, "it appears that IL went out of fashion as a subject of worship" and that for some length of time they worshipped idols, stars, etc. This appears to indicate that they were influenced by foreign civilization with tradition of idolatry, the most likely two being the Babylonians and the Indians who, as has previously been stated, had links with them through the spices and weapons trade.

(1) O.T., 1 Kin., 10; 2 Chr., 9: PS, 45.
(2) Qur'ān, 27:22; Dinaw. Akhbar, 19ff.
(3) ERE, I, 882.
(4) ERE, X, 881; cf. Margoliouth, Arabs and Israelites, 62f.
(6) Cf. above, 60. The Arab knew the Indian swords and traded with the Egyptians in the Indian spices.
Dr. Jawād 'Ali(1) mentions that the fifth century historian Philostorgius (about 425 A.D.)(2) said that the Himyarites (of Saba’) were adhering to the Abrahamic religious customs such as the Sabbath, but at the same time they were offering sacrifices to the sun, the moon and the local idols. He added that some of them were true Jews who resisted the Christian missionary, as was seen above. (3) Jawād 'Ali also mentions the opinion of Theodorus Lector (about 550 A.D.)(4) which is that the Himyarites were originally Jews (they were converted to Judaism in the time of 'the Queen of Sheba’) who, after a time came to worship idols. (5)

If we go back to their idea of the charismatic leader we will find "in the lists of gods who were invoked, the names of men (especially kings)" and that "most of the kings have some distinctive epithet - 'glorious', 'exalted', 'saviour', as part of their names." (6)

The most astonishing fact is that "it is quite common to find father and son associated as kings of one state; this is probably meant the recognition of son as heir apparent (or

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(1) Tār. Arab., iii, 171.
(2) Tār. Arab., iii, 171; Arabs and Israelites, 62f; cf. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, LXXXV, 211, quoted from Tār. Arab.
(3) Above, 63.
(4) Tār. Arab., iii, 171; Arabs and the Israelites, 62f.
(5) Tār. Arab., iii, 171.
(6) ERE, X, 884.
wasi). Two brothers are also found sharing the title ...(1)
If this statement is correct it is possible to understand why
the Yemenites found it difficult to accept that the Prophet
Muhammad had died without having appointed any wasi.(2) They
regarded a wasi as essential for the maintenance of the
Prophet's pure mode of life (sīra), and for securing the
continuity of tradition. This desire for continuity of tradition
was expressed by their pre-Islamic tendency to revere their
ancestors.(3) One of the months of their year was called "the
month of fathers".(4)

It has been suggested that some of the Yemenites had
apostatized from Islam, immediately after the Prophet's death,
because of their belief in "the hereditary principle of
succession."(5) When Abū-Bakr was chosen as the first Caliph,
one of the Yemenite leaders, a certain Ḥārith b. Surāqa,
prevented his tribe Kinda, who lived in Yemen, from paying the
Zakāt to Abū-Bakr after he quarrelled with Abū-Bakr's provincial

(1) ERE, X, 884.
(2) Ibn-A⊹tham, Futūh, i, 56-87; Yāqūt, M. Buldan, ii, 284ff;
iv, 762ff; quoted from Ibn-Sabā', ii, 291-306.
(3) Cf. above, 60 where "Merodach Baladan" took the bones
of his fathers with him to South Arabia. However, there
is no evidence to show that the Yemenites practised the
worship of ancestors.
(4) ERE, X, 883ff. The worship of fathers may be practised
in this month.
governor. Harith put it clearly that if the Prophet's successor was from his family they would obey him; but as Abü-Bakr was alien from the family they regard those who obeyed him as fools. Harith said in a poem, which is recorded by Ibn-A′tham and Yaqūt al-Ḥamawī: (1)

"We obeyed the Messenger of God when he was among us:
but how odd those who obeyed Abū-Bakr!
Will he hand it (the Caliphate) to Bakr(2) after him.
That is the most mortally blow ...
"

I conclude, from the indisputable relationship of the Yemenites with their neighbours, that they were not under only one nation's influence, as might be supposed from the above-mentioned theories, but that they were intercommunicating with the different cultures, religions and civilizations throughout the centuries. Therefore, I believe that the various theories which try to explain the origin of Mahdism and Shi'ism are not contradictory, but that they are an extension of each other.

Thus, if it is said that the charismatic ideas of Mahdism were originally Persian, it does not necessarily mean that the imperfect Islamised Persians (or mawāli) had brought these ideas with them to Shi'ism, (3) but that some of these Persian ideas had reached Arabia, in particular the South, in the past. It

(1) Ibn-A′tham, Futūḥ, i, 56-87; M. Buldan, iv, 762; quoted from Ibn-Saba′, ii, 290-301; cf. Futūḥ (B), 120-124.
(2) The poet may think that Abū-Bakr has a son called Bakr.
(3) See above, 45. Cf. Origin of Isma′ʿIlim, 24f.
has been shown that the Yemenites and the Persians had intercommunicated through trade and political interests and through the occupation of the Yemen by the Persians. The first places in which the Arabs and the Persians made contact were the coasts of 'Umān, al-Bahrayn and the other inhabited areas of the Gulf; to these must be added the Northern Emirate of al-Hīra which was said to have imported into Arabia some aspects of the Persian civilization.

Moreover, shortly before Islam, a new generation was emerging in central South Arabia from the intermarriage of the Arabs and the Persians. This generation, known as al-Abnā' or the sons, had played an important role in the Yemenite history, and among them were some prominent early Muslim scholars. For example, Wahb b. Munabbih (110 A.H.) and his four brothers, Tāws b. Kaysān (d. 101 or 106 A.H.) and Wabr b. Yuhannis. The last of these, Wabr b. Yuhannis, and Fayruz ad-Daylamī, who was before Islam a Persian state official in Yemen, witnessed the Prophet and related his hadīth. The conversion of some Persians and Zutts to Islam as early as the time of 'Umar b. al-Khattab will be mentioned later.

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(1) See above, 60ff.
(2) Hasan, Tar. Sivāsī, 32ff; Integration of Soc., 105.
(3) Futūkh (B), 146ff; Tabagāt (BS), v, 353, 357, 361.
(4) Tabagāt (BS), v, 395f.
(5) Tabagāt (BS), v, 391.
(6) Tabagāt (BS), v, 368.
(7) Tabagāt (BS), v, 388ff.
(8) Below, 88ff.
To say that the Messianic ideas were borrowed from Judaism implies that some Jewish ideas and traditions (such as the book of Daniel) were familiar to some of the Arabs.\(^1\) The spread of Judaism to the Yemen and to some parts of the Arab Peninsula, especially Yathrib (Medina), Wādī-al-Qurān, Taymā’ and Fadak,\(^2\) was well known.

The Muslim biographers\(^3\) who deal with the life of Muhammad, mention that the Arabs of Yathrib accepted Islam because they were impressed by the prophecies of the neighbouring Jews, that an awaited saviour would come soon.\(^4\) The Arab literature of the pre-Islamic time shows that the Jewish poets, such as as-Samaw’al (Samuel) b. ‘Ādiyā’,\(^5\) were praising the heritage of their fathers and in all probability contemplating their coming Messiah. As-Samaw’al in one of his poems said:

"the news about the Kingdom of David came to my knowledge; so that, I am satisfied and delighted ..."\(^6\)

The scholarship and the deep knowledge of the Ahbār of the Jews was frequently admitted in the early days. Among these Jewish scholars, who spread the so-called Ḥarrā’ī ‘ilīyyāt or anecdotes, were Ka‘b b. Māti‘ al-Himyarī (also known as Ka‘b

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\(^1\) Below, 99ff.
\(^2\) Futūḥ (B) 26f, 41ff, 47.
\(^3\) Ibn-Hishām, Sīra.
\(^4\) See below, Chapter VII.
\(^5\) Asma‘īyyāt, 80. Ishtiqāq, 436.
\(^6\) Asma‘īyyāt, 80.
al-Ahbär),

his two stepchildren Tubayyi\(^2\) and Nawf b. Padāla,

'Abd-Allah b. Sallam\(^3\) and to them I would add the obscure

'Abd-Allah b. Saba',\(^4\). The Jewish faith, therefore, was not

uncommon among the Arabs and in fact Ibn-Hazm\(^5\) mentions some

Yemenite tribes, especially the Himyar and the Kinda, as

originally being Jews. The majority of those who participated

in the first pro-'Alid revolts were, judging from their names,

of the tribes of the Kinda and Himyar, or its branches. Some of

the Muslims of Khuzā‘a tribe, who supported 'Alī, were also said

to be of Jewish origin.\(^6\) For instance, 'Amr b. al-Hamīq of

Khuzā‘a, the important pro-'Alid leader, was descended from a

man called al-Kāhin (Cohen) and from another called al-Qayyin

(the ironsmith) both of which are typical Jewish names.\(^7\)

Thus, it is justified to think of a Jewish origin of Mahdism.

It is also justified to think of a Judaeo-Christian

background to Mahdism. Some features of the idea of Mahdism

are very similar to those of the Judaeo-Christian messianic

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\(^{(1)}\) Ibn-Hibbān, Mashāhīr, 121; Ibn-'Asākir, Tar. Dimashq,

i, 186. Cf. art. "Isra‘ā‘īliyyat" E.I.

\(^{(2)}\) Mashāhīr, 121. Tar. Dimashq, i, 186.

\(^{(3)}\) Tabaqāt (BS), i/1, 159; i/2, 87; ii/1, 34, 54; ii/2, 112;

iii/1, 49, 57, 268.

\(^{(4)}\) Cf. above, 36ff; below, 74ff.

\(^{(5)}\) Jamhāra, 457f.

\(^{(6)}\) Ishtīqāq, 468-480.

\(^{(7)}\) Tabaqāt (BS), vi, 15. Futūḥ (B), 474 where 'Amr himself

was called al-Kāhin.
ideas, as can be seen from the above(1) argument, based upon historical material and from the previous comparison of the terms Mahdi and Messiah. (2)

The fact that Kūfa was built in an area lying between the ruin of the ancient city of Babylon and Hīra, (3) can support the idea that it was inhabited by Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians and others; further evidence can be found in the fact that when 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭab expelled the Jews and the Christians from central Arabia, for some political reasons, many of them settled around Kūfa. (4) Kūfa was originally built in the time of 'Umar (about 17 A.H. /638 A.D.) as a camp-city for the Muslim armies stationed in Iraq. (5) The majority of its population was from the Yemenite tribes and later it expanded rapidly and became the most important city of Mesopotamia. (6) Among the inhabitants of Kūfa were also to be found the Islamized and more civilized Arab tribes of Hīra, Bahrayn and Najran who also were mostly of Yemenite origin.

Ibn-Hazm (7) provides us with a list of some tribes which were originally Christians:

"It was said that all the Iyād, all the Rabī‘a,

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(1) Above, 48, 52.
(2) Above, 35.
(3) Futūh (B) 387ff., Yāqūt, M. Buldan, iv, 322ff.
(4) Futūh (B), 34, 44, 47, 89; Sīla, 250f.
(5) Futūh (B), 387ff; Sīla, 250ff.
(6) M. Buldan, iv, 322ff.
(7) Jamhara, 457f.
the Bakr, an-Namr and 'Abd-al-Qays all of them were Christians. (1) Others who also were Christians were the Ghassân, (2) Banū-al-Hārith b. Ka'āb (of Najran), Tayyi, Ṭanūkh, (3) many of the Kalb and all who lived in Ḥira from Tamīm, Lakhm or any others."

Two things are noticeable from this list, that most of these tribes are of Yemenite origin and that most of them remained loyal to 'Alī and his descendants. (4) Professor W. Montgomery Watt said:

"With such a background (5) it is not surprising that, in the malaise caused by transition from pre-Islamic to Islamic social structure, many of these people from South Arabia turned towards the conception of a superhuman or semi-divine leader." (6)

The political motives of these Yemenite tribes were of secondary importance to their Messianic belief in a wise and

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(1) Ibn-Hazm may be exaggerating. At least some individuals of those are not Christians.

(2) cf. Futūḥ (B), 25f, 154, 185, 224f.

(3) Futūḥ (B) 224; cf. M. Buldan, ii, 491ff; iv, 322ff. It must be noticed that the Tamīm was a large tribe who lived in various parts of the Peninsula. Some of it lived in Bahrayn. See page

(4) After Siffin they supported 'Alids as long as that did not imply the use of arms.

(5) Cf. his statistical study in the Formative Period, 40ff.

(6) Integration of Soc., 106ff.
charismatic person who would bring salvation in a time of upheaval and discontent. (1) This is borne out by the fact that the large proportion of the Northern tribes responded to this tension differently. Being former Nomads living a free life they "wanted an impersonal law to control the state" (2). They do not look for a charismatic leader but to a charismatic community in which all people are equal.

It is unlikely that the Yemenites were consciously aiming at re-creating their former political system in Islamic guise, although the possibility that they were working together to profit from the political situation by supporting 'Ali and his family must not be ruled out. This hypothesis perhaps explains why these people became disappointed in 'Ali, who when he came to power, did not favour them as they had expected; thereby losing the support of the most active group of his followers after the dilemma of "the arbitration" (takhīm) at Sīffīn. (3)

When 'Ali died in 40 A.H., the Yemenites introduced the conception of the Absent Leader or the doctrine of the concealment (ghayba) and insisted that he would return one day as the Mahdi. This confirms that some Alid followers were prepared at this early stage of their history to halt their costly positive support of the family and to accept the reality of defeat "without admitting it". (4)

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(1) Above, 10-12ff.
(2) Integration of Soc., 104.
(3) Sīffīn, 587ff, 598; cf. Ṭab. Tārikh, 1, 3344ff, 3385f., 3409, 3413, 3418.
(4) Integration of Soc., 107.
(b) The Truth about Ibn-Saba'

The story of 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' and the party of the Saba'iyya, recorded by the above mentioned Muslim scholars, may be considered as a good foundation for the study of the Yemenites' role in the propagation of the messianic ideas behind the claims of 'Alī's wasiyya, Imāmā and Mahdīsm, despite what has been said about the authenticity of the story. However, I do not accept the idea of those who have suggested that 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' was the sole originator in Islamic history of the notion of 'Alī's messianic qualities. It will become clear that he was merely one man among many of the same Yemenite views and background; and that his idea was supported by some Persians, Sindi Zutt and Sayabija.

As for the belief that 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' was not even an historical figure, I consider this to be an over-extreme interpretation of the ambiguities and contradictions to be found in the accounts of his life. The historical data giving rise to doubts about Ibn-Saba' may be summarised thus:

(i) His name is differently recorded in different sources.

(1) See above, 40-44.
(2) Above, 36; below,
(3) For those who regard Ibn-Saba' as the originator of these messianic ideas, see above, 41; cf. Friedlaender, Z.A., xxiii and xxiv (1909-1910); Goldziher, 'Agīda, 215; art. "Ibn-Saba'", E.I. (1)
(5) Cf. Z.A., xxiii, xxiv, 20; Bagh, Firaq (T) 41-45; cf. Firaq (Nawb) 19f; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 20f; Maqrīzī, Khutāt, 848.
(ii) As the leader of the Saba‘iyya movement, he is said to have visited a larger number\(^1\) of towns than some scholars\(^2\) have considered possible for one man.

(iii) The accounts of his death are contradictory.\(^3\)

These unsolved contradictions are, however, not necessarily a good reason for the denial of a man's historical existence especially in Islamic history. For instance, the names and lives of Salmān the Persian, Abū-Hurayra and Abū-al-Aswad ad-Du‘alī are not clearly established in the sources which deal with their biographies\(^4\) yet none of these people has been the subject of an argument concerning his historical reality.

The truth about Ibn-Saba' lies inbetween the two extreme lines. He was a man who was under the influence of the foreign messianic ideas long before his conversion to Islam. He found many others sharing the same views with him especially his Yemenite friends, the Persians, the Sindi Zutt and Sayabija or Sababbija (whom we shall discuss soon).\(^5\) The attribution of these messianic ideas to Ibn-Saba' and the calling of a sect "Saba‘iyya" after his name, may be compared with the attribution of the Monophysite ideas to Jacob Baradaeus (al-Barda‘Ī, 6th

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\(^{1}\) Tab. Tārikh, i, 2922.


\(^{3}\) Farg (Bagh-Halk), 41-45; Firaq (Nawb), 19f., Formative Period, 59ff. Ṭāhā Husayn, Fitna, vols. i - ii; 'Askari, Ibn-Saba', i-ii.

\(^{4}\) Isba; Tabaqāt (BS).

\(^{5}\) See below, 88.
after whose name the Monophysite Eastern Christians were called Ya'qiba or Jacobites. Both men were very active in propagating their doctrines. As for Jacob:

"His vast journeys from country to country in Western Asia as well as Egypt are almost incredible for any man who travelled mainly on foot. He is said to have travelled the whole of Syria, Armenia ... the islands of the sea, that is, Cyprus, Rhodes, Chios, Mytilene or Lesbos, as well as the royal city of Constantinople. To these we add the whole of Mesopotamia, Arabia, Sinai and Egypt." (2)

Ibn-Saba' was also supposed to have travelled widely, as has been said before, (3) but the conspiratorial element ascribed to him may be, for political reasons, an historical exaggeration. The report of al-Kashshi (4) states that Ibn-Saba' claimed to be the Prophet of God, who was, to him, 'Alî. Friedlaender (5) noticed al-Kashshi's statement and compared the claims of Ibn-Saba' with the later and similar ones of al-Mukhtar b. Abî-‘Ubayd (d. 66 A.H.) and those of Abû-al-Khattâb al-Asadi. One can add to that the claims of Abû-Mansûr al-' Îjlî and Bayân b.

(2) Eastern Christianity, 182.
(3) Above, 75f.
(4) Z.A., xxiv (1910), 15.
Sim'an an-Nahdī. (1)

These claimants for the agency of a divine person or Mahdi may have had in mind the success of St. Paul, who presented Jesus the Messiah as God-incarnate and himself as His messenger or prophet. (2) Ibn-Saba', their pioneer, was certainly a man of high intelligence and with a great knowledge of both the Old and the New Testament, but he seemed to have underestimated the seriousness of his claim that God was incarnated in 'Alī. He also seemed to have forgotten that the majority of his Arab contemporaries knew the Qur'ānic refutation for such beliefs. (3)

Al-Mukhtār, who had the same aspiration, achieved some success because he was very careful not to show his real ideas and beliefs. It was said that only a small number of his followers knew his tendency to declare himself as a prophet (perhaps of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya). (4) While Ibn-Saba' disclosed all his beliefs about the divine person of 'Alī. Perhaps he was misled by the enthusiastic reception by the Yemenites and their associates in Kūfa of his charismatic ideas of wasiyya; and perhaps when he went too far with his extreme beliefs about the

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(1) Maqālāt (Ash) i, 5-31; Maqālāt (Qumm.), 17-90; Farq (Bagh) 19ff; Firaq (Nawb.) 19-71.
(2) This is, of course, only an assumption from a Muslim standpoint (cf. N.T.).
(3) Qur'ān, 5:17, 73, 115; 9:30-31; 19:34.
(4) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 22; Firaq (Nawb.) 23-25; Milal (Shahr. A.) 197-200, An-Nawbakhtī (Firaq, 25) names Hamza b. 'Amāra al-Barbarī as one of the followers of al-Mukhtār; he adds that Hamza, after the death of al-Mukhtār, claimed that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was God and that he was his Prophet.
divine qualities of 'Ali, he did not find any supporters except for some Persians or some Sindi Zutt and Sayabija whose name can very easily be confused with Saba’iyya. (1)

(c) Classification of the Saba’iyya

As to the Saba’iyya itself, there is evidence to show that the term was interchangeable with the name “Yamaniyya” (i.e. Arabic plural of Yemenite) in the earliest Islamic period and that this use persisted in some places for more than a century. At that time, the name Saba’I indicated that the person was a member of one of the Yemenite tribes all of whom traced their ancestry from Saba’ the son of Yashjub the son of Yarub the son of Qahtan, (2) from whom the town and kingdom of Saba’ (Sheba) allegedly got their name. (3) The attribution of the name Saba’I to a Yemeni expatriate was not uncommon, certainly in the provinces where the later, more extreme, conception of charismatic qualities which some Saba’Is saw in the person of ‘Ali, did not arouse suspicion. (4) This is shown by the fact that a number of early Muslim Traditionists were called

(1) Cf. below, 88.
(2) Jamhara (A), 329ff; 432ff; cf. Ansab, 288ff.
(3) Cf. Ishtigaq (BD), 217f.
(4) Cf. the saying of Ibrahim an-Nakha‘I: “I am not a Saba’ite nor a Murji’ite”. below, 88ff.
Saba’ites without feeling insulted about this. (1) Also the poet al-Farazdaq called the followers of ‘Abd-al-Rahmān b. al-Ash‘ath Saba‘iyya in a sense that they are of Yemenite origin. (2)

Saba’ as a name for an individual was not unusual as Friedlaender suggested. The Arabs, especially the Yemenites, may call their sons after their ancestors. We had in the Yemenite genealogical tree more than one Saba’, i.e. Saba’ Al-Akbar, Saba’ al-Asghar, and from the latter’s sons is the famous scholar ‘Abd-al-Rahmān al-Awzā‘i. (3)

I thus propose to demonstrate that the well-known later heretical sect of Saba‘iyya, which appeared some time after

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(1) These men are mentioned in Al-Sam‘ānī, (Ansāb, 288ff). They are:

(a) ‘Abd-Allah b. Habīrā as-Saba‘ī (d. 13 A.H.)
(b) ‘Amāra b. Shabīb or Sahīb as-Saba‘ī
(c) Abū-Rishdayn Ḥinsh as-Saba‘ī (who lived in N. Africa until 100 A.H.)
(d) ‘Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Asfā‘ b. Wa‘lā as-Saba‘ī (who lived in Egypt and died in 74 A.H.) and his two brothers ‘Alqāma and Surhīl.
(e) ‘Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Mālik as-Saba‘ī (d. after 74 A.H.)
(f) Abū-‘Uthmān al-Habashānī as-Saba‘ī (d. about 126 A.H.)
(g) Abū-Bishr Jabla b. Suḥaym as-Saba‘ī (d. after 126 A.H.)
(h) As‘ad b. ‘Abd-ar-Rahmān as-Saba‘ī (d. after 150 A.H.)
(i) Abū-al-Mughira b. Mu‘ayqib as-Saba‘ī (d. 131 A.H.)

(2) Arab Kingdom, 234. It is possible that al-Farazdaq had in mind the heretical sense here.

"the battle of the Camel" (36 A.H.) and which was allegedly founded by Ibn-Saba', was in fact an offshoot of the equally important earlier Saba'iyya movements but also diverging widely from the aims of these earlier movements. (1) The charismatic ideas associated with the late Saba'iyya had appeared, in different forms, well before Ibn-Saba', as had an identifiable group of propagators of these ideas who were mostly of Yemenite origin. (2) I conclude from this that the Saba'iyya, as political and religious phenomena, can be classified at least in three groups:

(1) The first Saba'iyya began with a moderate political trend demanding that 'Ali should be the Caliph or political successor of the Prophet. (3) During this first stage it was merely a group of individuals who expressed their love for and trust in 'Ali and offered their sympathy to "the Family". Many individuals of this group were from the early Muslims of Yemenite origin who lived in Mecca and later were identified with the Muhajirun (Immigrants) in Medina. They were men such as 'Ammār b. Yāsir, Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān and al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad of Kinda. (4) Some others with them were from the Ansār of Medina (who likewise were of Yemenite origin) and add to them a few more of their mawālī, like Šalām

(1) Cf. below, 85, 87f.
(2) Cf. below, 85, 87f.
(3) Cf. below, 81, 83.
(4) Their biographies are in Tabaqāt (BS), iii/1, 115, 176.
the Persian. (1) They are regarded as the most pious and devoted followers of the Prophet. (2) I am aware of the fact that the late Shi’ites tried to over-emphasize these men’s role in supporting ‘Alī and represented them as the pioneers of Shi’ism; (3) but the obvious fact is that these men did not believe in the doctrine of wasiyya. They only accepted ‘Alī as the charismatic successor of the Prophet. They held that he was the most suitable person for the Caliphate without any detrimental implication to Abū-Bakr and ‘Umar or even ‘Uthmān.

In consistency with his beliefs in ‘Alī, al-Miqdād was said to have hesitated to accept Abū-Bakr when he was chosen as the first Caliph. (4) Though he lately swore allegiance to him with all Muslims, yet he remained loyal to ‘Alī until his last moment. Al-Mas‘ūdī and at-Tabarī tell us (5) that at ‘Uthmān’s election when ‘Abd-ar-Rahmān b. ‘Awf, the head of the Shūra, who was appointed by ‘Umar to elect a caliph after his death, (6) chose ‘Uthmān instead of ‘Alī, al-Miqdād said to him angrily: “I have never seen such a thing as that which smote the people of this house’ (the Prophet’s family) after their

(1) Tabagāt (BS), vi, 9.
(2) The Prophet was reported to have said ”God commanded me to love ‘Alī, al-Miqdād, Salmān, etc.” See Isābā, i, 433f; Istī‘āb, ii, 453.
(4) Ya’qūbi, Tārikh, ii, 103; Nahl (sh.BH) ii, 13, Imamwa-s-Siyāsah, i:
(5) Murūj, i, 440; quoted from Sīla, 51f; Tab. Tārikh, i, 2786.
(6) Above, 11ff.
Prophet's death. I swear by God, O 'Abd-ar-Rahmān, if I find supporters to fight the Quraysh, I will fight them as I did with the Prophet in Badr."(1) Al-Ya'qūbī(2) related that al-Miqdād was seen after the election of 'Uthmān kneeling in sorrow and grief like someone who possessed the whole world and was suddenly deprived of it. It was suggested that al-Miqdād was not satisfied with 'Uthmān until he died before him in 33 A.H. (3)

Another Yemenite who preferred 'Alī altogether and gave him strong support was Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān. He was said to have been told "the secret knowledge", especially the Malāhim or the eschatological matters. (4) When the news of Alī's election to the Caliphate came to him in Kūfa, he, despite his illness, asked someone to call the Muslim congregation to a meeting. (5) When they came, he addressed them telling them the news of 'Uthmān's murder and 'Alī's election. He advised his Kūfi brethren to fear God and support 'Alī. He disclosed his belief that

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(1) Badr is the first decisive battle which the Prophet fought against the Quraysh. See Ṭāḥrīkh, i, 1281-1359; Ibn-Hisham, Sīra; Tabagāt (BS), iii, 115.
(2) Ṭāḥrīkh (Ya'qūbī).
(3) Tabagāt (BS) iii/1, 115. Cf. Sīla, 51f.
(4) Sahīh (M).
(5) It was the habit of the Muslims to use the call for prayer (as-Salāt jamī'a) for general meetings. Murūj, ii, 23; Sīla, 50.
'Ali was on the right path (‘alā al-hudā) first and last. He said, "'Ali was the best of all those who passed after the Prophet and the best of all those who will remain until the Last Day". Then he thanked God that he had remained alive until he witnessed 'Ali's reign; and lastly he advised and urged the Muslims, especially his two sons, to seek martyrdom under 'Ali's banners. (1)

'Ammār b. Yaśir was not less in his enthusiasm to support 'Ali. Tabarasi related that (2) after Abū-Bakr was chosen as the first Caliph, 'Ammār stood up and said to the Quraysh that the House of their Prophet must come first. 'Ammār added: "they are the ones who should inherit his position. They are more capable of managing the religious affairs; they are the most sincere to his people, so tell your friend (Abi-Bakr) to return the right to its holders before you lose everything ... and before the affliction occurs ..." (3) Later, 'Ammār accepted Abū-Bakr and 'Umar as Caliphs like the rest of the Muslims. 'Umar even gave him the governorship of Küfā for a short period; but after 'Umar's death, he strongly supported 'Ali for the position of the Caliph. When 'Abd-ar-Rahmān wished to decide between 'Ali and 'Uthmān, he came to the Muslims in the Mosque, after consulting with them individually, and asked for their

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(1) Kurūǧ, ii, 23.
(2) Iḥtiāj, quoted by Shīrāzī, Darajāt, 260.
(3) Iḥtiāj, quoted from Shīrāzī, Darajāt, 260.
final opinion. 'Ammār said: "If you want the Muslims to be undivided, then swear allegiance to 'Ali." Al-Miqdād supported 'Ammār in this. A quarrel then took place between the followers of 'Ali and those of 'Uthmān. 'Ammār confirmed his point with an argument similar to the one he raised after Abū-Bakr's election. (1)

He was enthusiastic and sharp in his comment to the extent that one of the Qurayshite insulted him with the name of his slave-mother, Summuyya, and advised him to leave the Quraysh alone and to mind his own business. (2)

After the general bay'a to 'Uthmān and during his first six years in power, 'Ammār accepted the fact of his Caliphate, but later on, he was one of the leaders of the movement which ended with the murder of 'Uthmān and the election of 'Ali in his place. 'Ammār fought with 'Ali in "the battle of the Camel", before which, he was canvassing for the people to join 'Ali's army. He also participated at Siffin where he was killed. Before his death he used to say: "even if they (Mu‘awiya and his army) defeated us until we had to retreat to the date-palms of Hajar, we will still insist that we are on the right path ('alā al-hudā) and that they are on the wrong one ('alā al-bāṭl). (3)

(1) Darajāt, 260; Ṭab. Tārīkh, i, 2785.
(2) Ṭab. Tārīkh, i, 2785.
(3) Sahīh (B), Saūd, Pitan; Muṣnad, (Ah.) ii, 161; Siffin, 364; Ṭabagāt (BS), iii/1, 180.
The second group of the Saba'iyya believed in the doctrine of wasiyya. They held some views in common with the first group, namely those concerning 'Ali's especial merits and qualities. Some of them were already quoted (1) as believing in 'Ali's Mahdism but it is unlikely that they were involved with those who believed in 'Ali's divinity. Their belief in 'Ali was well expressed by one of them, 'Amr b. al-Hamiq al-Khuza'i who led the Egyptian forces which participated in the murder of 'Uthmân. (2)

This man and his friend Hujr b. Adî (who were both Yemenite) were campaigning for 'Ali against Mu'awiya and his supporters before the battle of Siffin. (3) 'Ali was told that they were swearing and insulting their enemies and he, therefore, sent his messenger to stop his enthusiastic followers behaving in such a manner. The two then came to 'Ali and in a very emotional expression 'Amr b. al-Hamiq apologized:

"O Commander of the believers! I love you not, nor swore allegiance to you for a reason of kinship between me and you. Nor for the sake of power which could make me noble. But only for the fine qualities which you have: (a) You are the cousin of the Prophet; (b) and the first person who believed in him; (c) and

(1) Above, 13-30.
(2) Above, 21ff and cf. Tabaqat (BS), iii, 1, 36.
(3) Siffin, 115; cf. Akhbar (Dinaw), 165.
the husband of (Fatima) the noblest of the nation's women; (d) you are the father of the Prophet's offspring who remained among us; (e) and the greatest among the Muhājirūn who had the greatest share in the holy strive (jihād). For these reasons, if I were asked to remove the firm mountains or to drain the waters of the oceans until I die on doing such thing which would strengthen your party and weaken your enemies, I would never think that I had fulfilled my duty toward you."(1)

'Ali was said to have blessed him and prayed to God "to guide him to the straight path". On the same occasion Hujr b. 'Adi said to 'Ali:

"Our reins are under your direction and at your service! If you go east we will go east and if you go west we will go west ..."(2)

Apart from what has already been said about Hujr's belief in 'Ali's charismatic qualities, (3) there is insufficient evidence to classify him among the third extreme group of the Saba'iyya, yet to be examined, (4) who believed in 'Ali's divinity. The later usage of the Saba'iyya as a term of abuse first occurred in connection with this Hujr and his friends in an official letter sent to Yu'āwiya in 51 A.H. by Ziyād b. Abī-hĀ, the governor of Siffin, 115f. Cf. Formative Period, 40.

(1) Siffin, 115f.
(3) Above, 14, 25.
(4) See following page.
Iraq. This letter, which was a pre-meditated, false accusation, with the express purpose of eliminating those who supported the Alids and opposed the Umayyads,(1) described Hujr and his rebellious Kūfī associates as 'at-Turābiyya(2) and as-Saba’iyya and directed that these men be put to death.

Hujr and his associates were executed by Mu'āwiya, not because they held non-Islamic ideas, but simply because they threatened the integrity of the Umayyads' rule.(3) This does not rule out the fact that there were extreme elements among his contemporary Kūfīs and that some of them may have participated in the rising led by Hujr.

(iii) The mention of the execution of Hujr and his friends for being Saba‘ites loyal to 'Alī, makes it necessary to discuss more fully the extremist group called ghulāt.(4) Some accounts suggested that the probable date for the beginning of this group was before the period in which Ibrahim an-Nakha‘ī (d. 96 A.H.) denied that he was either a Saba‘ite or Murji‘ite.(5) However, in the light

(1) Tab. Tārikh, ii, 136.
(2) Turābiyya is taken from Abū-Turāb (literally the father of the dust), a nick-name used for 'Alī. Cf. Tabāqāt (BS), ii, 4. Tab. Tārikh, ii, 129.
(3) Tab. Tārikh, i, 136; Tabāqāt (BS).
(4) Above, 36ff.
(5) Formative Period, 49, 59f.
of the above mentioned letter of Ziyād (51 A.H.), it is certain that the term Saba‘iyya must have been used as a term of abuse and humiliation sometime before this date. The available early material suggests 36 A.H. as the date for the emergence of the extreme Saba‘iyya doctrines. (1) (The time between Ziyād’s letter and this date is only 13 years). Therefore, there is no convincing argument to oppose this date as the time of the emergence of the ghulat. (2)

The statement of Ibrāhīm an-Nakha‘I (himself a Saba‘I by descent) suggests that the only cause of humiliating a Saba‘I is in his being accused of believing in ‘Alī’s divinity or similar doctrines. The mere partisanship to “the Family” is not regarded as a heresy as Ibrāhīm himself and many others were mentioned in the list of the moderate Shi‘a (3), yet they were the most respected scholars in their time.

(d) The Zutt and the Sava‘iija

Many Muslim historians, traditionists and heresiographers, who were mentioned above (4), named this group of the ghulat, who believed in ‘Alī’s divinity, as the Saba‘iyya. The official Shi‘īte sources called them, especially those who were executed

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(1) Cf. above, 41-44.
(2) Sīla, 121-146.
(4) Above, 41-44.
by ʿAlī, the Ẓūṭṭ. Consultation of numerous sources mentioning the Ẓūṭṭ shows that they were always linked with the confused name "the Sabbabija", "the Sabbābiyya", "the Sabāṭija", "the Sayayija" or "the Sayabija". (1) This confusion could, however, be a deliberate tashīf (misspelling) on the part of the Shiʿite historians, with the intention of associating more extreme elements of the Sabaʿiyya with the Ẓūṭṭ. Al-Kashshi, (2) al-Kullānī (3) and Ibn-Shahrābūn (4) tell us that after ʿAlī had defeated Talha, Zubayr and their party in "the battle of the Camels", seventy of these Ẓūṭṭ came to greet him and pay homage to him. They spoke to him in their own language (5) saying: "You are you"; he asked: "Who am I?". They replied: "You are God". Then ʿAlī executed them. Thus, the Shiʿites, perhaps hoped to answer the claims of the Sunni historians that Shiʿism arose from a heretical movement by showing that they had, in fact, developed from the more moderate Alids of the early period. It could be, however, a scribal error and perhaps the correct

(1) Tab. Tārīkh, i, 196, 3125, 3134, 3181; iii, 1044f, 1076, 1167-70, 1426; Futuh (B), 221f, 230-5, 274ff, 520-24, 615, 624; Farq (Bagh), 225f. Farq (Bagh.Halk), 31, 39f, 41-5, 55, 73f, 93, 140, 169, 201, 223; Maqālat (Ash), see the explanation of Jawāhiri, Sīhāh, quoted from Darajat, 386. Cf. below, 90ff.
(2) Ikhtiyār, 106-109, 307f; quoted from Ibn-Sabaʿ, ii, 118-148.
(4) Manāṣib, i, 264f, quoted from Ibn-Sabaʿ, ii, 118-148.
pronunciation is Sayābija as in Jawāhirī (d. 385 A.H.)\(^{(1)}\)

Another example of this confusion is found in the work of al-Baghdādi\(^{(2)}\), in his distinction between the personality of 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' and that of Ibn-as-Sawdā'; al-Baghdādi said that the latter:

"Identified himself with the Sabbābiyya(?)

among the Rawāfīd when he found them the most extravagant in the heresy of the people of fancy and he stealthily introduced his blunders by means of allegorization".\(^{(3)}\)

The reference of al-Baghdādi was a statement of 'Amīr b. Sharāhil ash-Sha'bī (d. 104 or 107 A.H.), which was also quoted by Ibn-'Abd-Rabbi-hī, (d. 328 A.H.)\(^{(4)}\). Friedlaender, who supports the theory that Ibn-Saba' and Ibn-as-Sawdā' are the same person, said that\(^{(5)}\) if the attribution of this statement to ash-Sha'bī was correct, then it was possible that al-Baghdādi had misunderstood it. With the support of Ibn-'Abd-Rabbi-hī and al-Isfarā'īnī\(^{(6)}\) (d. 471 A.H.), it is not possible to say that al-Baghdādi has misunderstood the statement!

There are only two possibilities left to explain this

\(^{(1)}\) Siḥāh, quoted from Darajāt, 386f.

\(^{(2)}\) Farq, (Bagh. Halk) 42-45.

\(^{(3)}\) Farq, (Bagh. Halk) 45.

\(^{(4)}\) 'Iqd (MSA) i-ii, 241; 'Iqd (Azh), i, 353.

\(^{(5)}\) Z.A., xxiv (1910) 21-43.

\(^{(6)}\) Tabsīr.
confusion.

(i) That al-Isfarāʾīnī relied on al-Baghdādí and that al-Baghdādí relied on Ibn-`Abd-Rabbihī and that the latter either misunderstood the statement of Ash-Shaʿbī or that he understood it correctly but it was misspelled after him by a copyist. This is a distinct possibility because the original text of Ibn-ʿAbd-Rabbihī was said to have been badly written. (1) The confused statement in the Mss. reads thus:

Min hum ʿAbd-Allah b. Saba nafā-hū ila Ṣabāṭ
al-Madāvin wa ʿAbd-Allah b. Sabbab nafā-hū
ila Abū-al-Karūs ...” (2)

(ii) The other possibility is that ash-Shaʿbī mentioned only ʿAbd-Allah b. as-Sawdāʾ and that the other person Ibn-Sabaʿ was later added to the text. The aim of ash-Shaʿbī in not mentioning Ibn-Sabaʿ could be, like that of Ibrāhīm an-Nakhaʾī, to disown the heretical sect of the Sabaʿiyya (3) by attributing it to Ibn-as-Sawdāʾ who came from al-Hira and not Sanʿāʾ and who identified himself with the Sayabija and not the Sabaʿiyya. (4)

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(1) See introduction of Muhammad Saʿīd al-ʿUryān to al-ʿIqd al-Farīd, edition of 1940, 16-17.

(2) Cf. ʿIQd, ed. of “Azhariyya Press” (1928/1346), 353. Similar statement is also found in Malāṭī, Tanbīḥ, 118-121.

(3) Z.A. XXIV (1910), 21-22.

The suggestion that 'Āmir ash-Sha'bī created the whole
tory of the Sayabija is not true because they were mentioned
by numerous Muslim historians of the early period. For example,
at-Ṭabari, (1) al-Jawāhiri (2) and al-Baladhuri (3) have confirmed
their existence. The latter tells us that the Sayabija and the
Zutt originated from "Sind", a region in the Indian sub-continent, (4)
and that they were brought from there as prisoners of war by
the Sassenid army; and he suggests that there was a large
number of them who were completely persianized. Al-Baladhuri
also mentions that before the time of Islam, some of them were
living on the coast of the Gulf, while others were living on the
borderland between Arabia and the Persian dependency of Iraq.
He adds that they were either nomads or professional soldiers
in the Sassenid arm. (5)

After the spread of Islam the Sayabija and the Zutt were
mentioned in connection with the Asāwira (6) who were fighting

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(1) Ṭab. Tärikh, i, 1961, 2561ff, 3125, 3134, 3181; iii, 1044f,
1076, 1167-70, 1426.
(2) Jawāhiri (d. 386 A.H.) was one of the great Muslim philologists,
see his Sibāh for his biography see Yaqūt, Dic. of Learned,
i, 269.
(3) Futūh (B), 221, 230, 235, 520, 524, 538, 615, 624.
(4) Sind now is one of Pakistan's provinces.
(5) See above, 63-89.
(6) Asāwira were said to be the noblest of the Sassenid
soldiers. cf. Futūh (B), 393f.
along with the Sassanid army against the Muslims, who invaded Persian during 'Umar b. al-Khattāb's Caliphate. Al-Baladhurī says that when the Muslim forces, led by Abū-Ḥūsān al-Ash'arī, besieged the town of Al-Ṣūs, the Asāwira, who were the pioneers of the Imperial army of "Yazdajard", were confused by the news of the siege and the continued ascendency of the Muslims. Their leader, who was called Siyāh, which it is worth noticing was sometimes misspelled "Sabah", (1) indicated to Abū-Ḥūsān that he, along with his division of the army, would accept Islam if certain conditions were met. These conditions were:

that they would be allowed to fight with the Muslims against the Persians; that they would not be involved in any of the Arabs' inter-tribal disputes; that they would be protected, by the Muslims, from any attack; that they would be free to settle wherever they liked; that they would be free to choose their Arab allies or wala', and finally that they would be considered to be among the noblest in the division of the booty and ātā'. (2)

Abū-Ḥūsān could not accept these demands without consulting 'Umar the Caliph. Eventually, 'Umar asked him to accept their conditions and since then the Asāwira have been Muslims. Al-Baladhurī said that the Ātūt and the Sayabija followed them in accepting Islam. (3)

It is very interesting to note that, regardless of the

(1) Pronounced with ḥā but also mixed up with Saba', Futūḥ (B), 520f. Cf. Tab. Tārīḵ, i, 2562.

(2) Futūḥ (B), 519; Tab. Tārīḵ, i, 2562ff.

(3) Futūḥ (B), 520.
social and economic factors, the cause of the mass conversion of
the Asāwira, the Zutt and the Sayabija was an old prophecy.
Al-Baladhurī reports that this prophecy, which was speculated
about in the Persian army, said that the Muslims' riding animals
will drop their dungs in "the `Iwān of Istakr". When the
Muslims besieged al-Sus, Siyāh reminded his officers of this
prophecy. He drew their attention to the continued Muslim
advance in the Persian Empire and urged them to withhold their
opposition and embrace Islam.

It is more interesting to note that, in all probability, the
source of this prophecy was the Book of Daniel, which was well-
known to the people of this area. This will be discussed in
greater detail later on.

Further information about the Sabbābija and the Zutt suggests
that from the first they were prepared to accept the prophet's
family as their charismatic leaders. Al-Yadā'īnī states
that when Abū-Mūsā returned to Basra with his enlarged army,
after their successful campaign, the Asāwira, the Zutt and the
Sayabija who came with the army to live in Basra asked for
information about the nearest relations of the Prophet in order
to give them their wala'. They were told that the only Mudarite
tribe near to the Prophet in Basra, at that time, was Tamīm.
Therefore, they became the mawāli of this tribe and refused any

(1) The residence of the Emperor; cf. Futūh (B), 522.
(2) Above, 93, and below, 99ff.
(3) Futūh (B), 522, 533; cf. below, 120-5.
(4) Futūh (B), 520.
offers. (1) About the same time four thousand of them found their way to Kūfa taking similar attitudes. (2)

Abū-Ḥiknāf reports that the Sayabija and the Zutt were on the side of ʿAlī in his first struggle against Talḥa and Zubayr. About the time of ʿUthmān's murder they were employed by the provincial governor as guards in the bayt al-Mal (treasure) of Basra. When Talḥa and Zubayr tried to invade Basra the Sayabija resisted them under the leadership of ʿUthmān b. Ḥanīf, who was sent by ʿAlī to replace the previous provincial governor. After the defeat of Ibn-Ḥanīf they continued to fight under the command of Ḥukaym b. Jabla of ʿAbd-al-Qays, until he was killed. (3) A large number of them were captured with Ibn-Ḥanīf and were persecuted after the battle by Zubayr while about four hundred were killed during the course of the fighting. (4)

Ṭabarī reports that the Sayabija who survived the attacks of Talḥa and Zubayr participated with ʿAlī in the battle of the Camel. (5) They were fighting against his enemies under the banners of his most extreme followers ʿAbd-al-Qays. It is likely that the Sayabija and the Zutt had had an earlier contact with this tribe since they were all living on the coast of the Gulf.

(1) Futūḥ (B), 394, 520.
(2) Futūḥ (B), 394. Their allies in Kūfa are not named but certainly they would be the nearest possible to the Prophet.
(3) Tab. Ṭarīkh, 1, 3122ff; Daraǰāt, 387ff, 391ff; below, 103f.
(4) Daraǰāt, 388.
(5) Tab. Ṭarīkh, 1, 3180ff.
before the time of Islam. (1) It is also noteworthy that the first allies of the Sayabija and the Zutt in Basra were the Tamīm, some of the branches of which were said to have settled in the Gulf. (2)

Is this earlier contact between some of the Arab tribes and the Sayabija and the Zutt, the explanation of why they found themselves sharing the same views and attitudes towards their new life when they came to live together in Basra and Kūfa? I believe this is the case, for it has always been found that there are similarities in thought and ideas between the Arab tribes who previously inhabited the Yemen and the Gulf and the non-Arab groups who intercommunicated with them. They were all prepared to believe in a charismatic leader coming from the Prophet's family. By seeking their salvation in a charismatic leader they proved true the idea; in a time of stress and tension men's conduct is controlled by deep-seated urges according to tradition. (3) There is no need to repeat that there is also a Judaeo-Christian element involved in the beliefs of these groups. It has been mentioned that the Asāwira, the Zutt and the Sayabija were themselves under the influence of the Judaeo-Christian traditions, such as the Book of Daniel. (4)

On the other hand, it will be seen later (5) that the Book of

(1) Above, 63.
(2) Above, 63.
(3) Formative Period, 44.
(4) Above, 93f. and below, 99ff.
(5) Below, 99ff.
Daniel was itself based upon the visions of this prophet during the period of the Israelite captivity in Babylon and it is assumed that some of its messianic ideas were originally borrowed from the people of this area.\(^1\)

After this quick survey of the historical material concerning the Sayabija and the Zutt, it is not impossible to classify them as one of the groups of the Sabā'iyya. This view can be supported by the following points:

(i) The statement of al-Baghdādí that "'Abd-Allah b. as-Sawdā' supported the doctrine of the Sabbabiyya\(^2\) should be reconsidered in the light of the above mentioned explanation of the many confused versions of the name.\(^3\) I suspect that the word here should be read as "Sayabija". To this may be added the fact that the Sayabija were communicating with the Yemenites before and after Islam.

(ii) They fought on the side of 'Alī, before the battle of the Camel, under the command of Hukaym b. Jabla, who was reported by Ṭabari to be the first man in Basra to offer his support and protection to Ibn-Saba'.\(^4\)

(iii) Ṭabari mentions 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' among those who led 'Abd-al-Qays in the battle of the Camel and he also

\(^{\text{1}}\) Cf. Ottley, R.L., Religion of Israel, 152-165; cf. below Chapter VII.

\(^{\text{2}}\) Farq (Bagh-Halk), 44.

\(^{\text{3}}\) Above, 88-91.

\(^{\text{4}}\) Tab. Tārīkh, 1, 3125, 3180f; Futūh (B) 323f; Darašāt, 381ff; Above, 37f.
mentions the Sayabija and the Zutt among those who participated. Therefore, it is most likely that Ibn-Saba' contacted them at this time, if not before.

(iv) The people who were said to be executed by 'Ali after the battle of the Camel, for calling him God were sometimes called the Sayabija and the Zutt and sometimes the Saba'iyya.

(v) The name Sayabija, as has been shown, was confused with that of the Saba'iyya. It was very difficult for the editors of the early Ms. to distinguish between the two terms. Therefore, the nick-name Saba'iyya may have been extended to other names, such as Sayabija. For instance, al-Ash'ari mentions the Sayabija as the followers of 'Abd-ar-Rahman b. Sayaba. The Sabbabiyya is also mentioned as a derivative from the Arabic verb Sabb (to swear or denounce). It was used as a term to describe 'Ali's most extreme followers because they used to insult the three Caliphs. Other explanations can also be found.

(vi) The Sayabija and the Zutt were regarded by Mu'awiya and

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(1) Tab. Tarikh, 1, 3125, 3180; Futuh (B), 523f.
(2) Above, 89f.
(3) Above, 89.
(4) Formative Period, 60.
(5) Macalat (Ash.) i, 36.
(6) Farq (Bagh.Halk), 41. Ibn.Sabbâb is also mentioned; cf. Macab (Qumm.), 19ff.
his successors as natural enemies of the Umayyad dynasty and this position is mainly reserved for the Saba'iyya movement. It may not be a coincidence that Mu'awiya expelled the Sayabija and the Zutt from Basra, and probably Kufa, about the same time as he suppressed the revolt of Hujr b. 'Addi and his Kufi friends, whom Ziyad called at-Turabiyya and as-Saba'iyya. It was said that al-Hajjaj and the Caliph al-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik also expelled a large number of them to Antioch, Syria and Wasi't.

Very few people have realised the serious effect of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, especially the Book of Daniel, on the early beliefs of the imperfect Islamized Arab and 'Ajam. Their first direct contact with the eschatological prophecies of the Jews and the Christians probably occurred about 17 A.H. during the siege of the town of al-Sus. This town, until then under the dominion of Persia, had a large number of Christians, and maybe Jewish, inhabitants.

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(1) Above, 87.
(2) Some of the Sayabija were brought from "Sind" by Muhammad b. al-Qasim. Some of them served as prison guards for al-Hajjaj; see Yezid b. Mufarrigh al-Himyar'i's poem Aghani, xviii, 68.
(3) Futuh (B), 221f., 523f.
(4) Vloten, Van, Arab Dominion (Arabic Tr.), 109-147.
(5) Al-Sus was in the Persian region of Al-Ahwaz, Futuh (B), 531.
Tabari says that when the Muslim armies tried to conquer the town some Christian priests and monks shouted a prophecy to the Muslims from the fortress. This prophecy was to the effect that the town could only be conquered by the Anti-Christ (ad-Dajjal) or by those who had him amongst their number. (1)

Apparently, the Muslims paid no attention to this warning and completed their conquest of al-Sus. It has been shown previously that around the same time a large number of the Asawira, the Sayabija and the Zutt accepted Islam because of a similar prophecy. (2) After that, the legend of ad-Dajjal grew steadily; its propagators made use of one hadith (to be examined later) (3) in which the prophet was reported to have warned the Muslims of ad-Dajjal. In another version of the hadith he was said to be concerned that ad-Dajjal might be his contemporary Sa‘if b. Sa‘id (sometimes pronounced Ibn-Sayyad). (4) Luckily for the propagators of this legend, this Sa‘if was among the Muslim armies who captured the town of al-Sus. Thereafter, the suspicions of some people that he was ad-Dajjal increased to such an extent that they attributed to him a miraculous utterance, by which he was supposed to have ordered the doors of the fortress to open. (5)

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(1) Tab. Tarikh, i, 2565.
(2) Above, 94.
(3) Below, chapter VII
(4) Sahih (B), iv, 76; Sahih (M), ii, 377; Sunan (D), ii, 140; Sahih (T), ii, 93; Tab. Tarikh, i, 2565f.
(5) Tab. Tarikh, i, 2565.
From this early historical reference to ad-Dajjāl I infer that the idea of a Messiah or a Mahdi developed after the idea of the Anti-Christ. Ad-Dajjāl, according to the Judaeo-Christian tradition, would resist the Messiah, (1) therefore, if there was an anti-Christ there must be a Messiah or Mahdi. This can be supported by the assumption that the Muslims at that time seemed to be more concerned with ad-Dajjāl than with a Messiah or Mahdi. For instance, 'Umar b. al-Khattāb was reported by Tabari (2) to be very keen to know everything about ad-Dajjāl. He used to ask "the people of the Book" about him repeatedly. On his way from the Jābiya in Syria to Jerusalem, 'Umar met a rabbi whom he asked about ad-Dajjāl. The rabbi answered "ad-Dajjāl will come from the Jews, from the tribe of Benjamin and you Arabs will kill him near Lydd." (3)

It should be noticed that neither 'Umar in his question, nor the rabbi in his answer, mentioned a Messiah or a Mahdi. Only the Arabs are mentioned. There is little doubt that the source for the late development of such prophecies was the Book of Daniel. Certainly, there was a revivalist movement for the study of eschatology among the contemporary Jews and Christians. (4)

(1) See Art. "Armilus", J.R., ii, 118f; N.T. 1 John 2:18; 22; 4:3; 2 John, 7; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 4:1.
(2) Tab. Tāríkh, 1, 2403f.
The need for this study arose from the emergence of the Muslims as a great power and the break up of the Persian and Roman Empires.

To the Jews, the Book of Daniel was the base for the frequent prediction of the coming of a Messiah. A contemporary Jewish observer put it in another way, saying:

"The fall of Persia and Byzantine Empires (7th cent.) raised Jewish Messianic hopes and in the 8th century three pseudo-Messiahs appeared:
Abū-‘Īsā al-Asfahānī in Persia, Severus or Serene in Syria and Yudghan in Hamadan." (1)

Somehow or other, through the so-called Isrā‘īliyyat, the revived study of eschatology among the People of the Book, affected Muslim thought. (2)

The earliest references to the prophet Daniel are found in the writing of at-Tabari and al-Baladhuri about the events of the year 17 A.H. (3) They say that when the Muslims conquered the town of al-Süs they were shown the dead body of Daniel. The Muslims were interested to know more of this prophet, as their religion urged them to believe in all true prophets and their books. (4) They were told that he came to Babylon among the Israelite captives of Nebuchadnezzar (5) and lived there for the

(1) N.S.J.E., 1329.
(2) Above, 69, of. art. "Isrā‘īliyyat" E.I. (2)
(3) Tab. Tarīkh, 1, 2561-68, Futūḥ (B), 533.
(4) Qur‘ān, 2:284. Daniel is among the unnamed prophets in the Qur‘ān.
rest of his life, where he died. His body was kept in Babylon until the people of al-Süs asked the King of Babylon for it because they wished him to be their intercessor with God for rain. (1)

Obviously, the Muslims discovered that a book was attributed to Daniel and it became very popular among them during the first days of 'Umar b. al-Khattāb. Some reports state that the Book of Daniel was copied by a man of the tribe of 'Abd-al-Qays, (2) who was one of the Muslims living in al-Süs. This man used to read publicly from the Book of Daniel and probably interpreted it in a manner favourable to the pro-'Alids. When this became known to 'Umar, he had the man brought before him in Medina and punished and, indeed, threatened him with further punishment if he should ever read it publicly again or give it to someone else to read it for him, and he even went as far as to order him to destroy it. (3)

'Umar justified his action by telling the story of a similar incident which took place during the Prophet's lifetime and in which 'Umar himself copied some information from the People of the Book. He said that when the Prophet saw the book (4)

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(1) Tab. Tārīkh, 1, 256ff; Futūh (B) 533f.
(2) Taqīd al-‘Ilm, 51, cf. Asad, Masādir, 55f.
(3) Taqīd, 51; Masādir, 55.
(4) My colleague Imtiyāz Ahmed believed that this book may be the Book of Daniel but unfortunately there is no ground for this belief. See his thesis The Place of Hadīth and Sunna in early Muslim thought. (Edinburgh University 1974), 140.
in his hand, he asked him what it was? He replied that it was a book which he had copied from the People of the Book to increase their knowledge. Then the Prophet became so angry that he blushed. (1)

Despite 'Umar's orders, the Judaeo-Christian traditions, especially the Book of Daniel were spreading. This can be concluded from the fact that another incident was reported to 'Umar: this time the man who was involved was called Subaygh and he came from Basra. Al-Zuhri (2) says that one day when Subaygh was asked to comment on some theological problems, after the battle of Harūrā, he refused to do so and explained that he promised not to discuss theology since 'Umar had advised him not to, after he punished him and destroyed his books. (3)

I believe that the above unnamed man of 'Abd-al-Qays who was spreading the Book of Daniel was the pro-'Alid Hukaym b. Jabala. (4) There are several good reasons to support this belief: firstly, Hukaym was of the tribe of 'Abd-al-Qays; secondly, he lived in the town of al-Süs; thirdly, he had some links with the Sayabija and Zutt since he had served as a provincial governor in "Sind" (their original homeland) for a short time before his dismissal by 'Uthmān (5) and had worked with them in support of 'Alī in Basra; and fourthly, he became one of the

(1) Taqīd, 51; Maṣādir, 55.
(2) Al-Malātī, Tanbih, 138.
(3) Tanbih, 138; on the authority of Tawus b. Kaysān.
(4) Above, 95.
most active believers in the Messianic qualities of 'Alî and consequently he was one of 'Uthmân's most bitter enemies. In fact, he participated in his murder. (1)

If the assumption that the man who propagated the Book of Daniel was Hukaym b. Jabala is true, then an important conclusion can be drawn. By re-interpreting its messianic ideas in favour of 'Alî and his family, Hukaym had prepared the way for more extreme ideas about 'Alî's Mahdism or superhuman nature. This becomes clearer when Hukaym's early connection with 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' and the Saba'iyya, both of whom mainly derived their messianic ideas from the Judaeo-Christian Tradition, is recalled. (2)

Another conclusion can also be drawn; the pro-'Alîd elements had, from the beginning, taken the Book of Daniel and similar Judaeo-Christian tradition as their source of information, but only after re-interpretation and sometimes attribution to the Prophet. (3) This conclusion is supported by the fact that some of the early Muslims, like 'Abd-Allah b. 'Amr b. al-'Ās, who were said to have some knowledge of the tradition of the People of the Book, believed, through their interpretations of these prophecies, that the house of the Prophet will gain power after the murder of 'Alî and the abdication of al-Hasan. Ibn-

(1) See above, 22-26.
(2) See above, 36-40, 48-55.
(3) Cf. below, Chapter V.
'Amr expressed his hope that al-Husayn b. 'Alī, who was on his way to Kūfa, would win in accordance with an old prophecy. (1)

(1) Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 279. It will also be mentioned, below, 247, that 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar b. al-Khattāb contemplated the prophecy that a man from 'Umar's family will fill the earth with Justice (a kind of Mahdi). Also see their ideas about the beast of the earth or Dābbat al-Ard; below, 115ff.
CHAPTER III

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF MAHDISM

It has been shown in the previous two chapters that 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭalib was believed to be the wasī of the Prophet, the Mahdi and even God incarnated. Various elements which were behind these beliefs were explained. A brief reference had also been made to the motives which led some of 'Alī's followers to change their previous ideas and believe that he, despite his death, was alive and would return one day as a Mahdi or God incarnate Messiah. (1)

In this chapter the ideological development of the concept of his Mahdism will be discussed. This development took place gradually after the appearance of the tremendous political difficulties which 'Alī encountered during his Caliphate. (2) Certainly, there was a very great difference between the dreams of the Messianic Utopia, which 'Alī was supposed to achieve, and the bitter realities of social and political uncertainty. (3)

When 'Alī came to power, Islamic society was already facing a painful trial. The crisis may have appeared to be political but in fact it was a socio-religious phenomena. The Muslims had to choose between two attitudes which seemed to be irreconcilable. Either they would lead an ascetical life, following the rigid self-control adopted by 'Umar b. al-Khattāb (4) and his predecessors:

(1) Above, 36-55.
(2) Tab. Tārīkh, i, 307ff.
(3) Above, 13-20.
(4) Tab. Tārīkh, i, 27ff.
or they would follow the indulgent new life of luxury and enjoyment, which was becoming common due to the expansion of the Islamic state, without the strong control of the Shari'a or Islamic law. (1)

The suggestion that the first trend represents the opinion of 'Ali's followers and that the second trend represents the opinion of Mu'awiya's followers is just not true; (2) representatives of both trends were to be found in both parties. The Kharijites and the group known as "the Neutralists" also chose the ascetic life. Roughly speaking, however, it can be said that 'Ali and many of his followers wished to follow a life based on the principles of uprightness drawn from the Qur'an, the Sunna of the Prophet and the standard practice of "the divinely guided Caliphs"; and indeed 'Ali himself spared no efforts to see his wish come true. (3)

Before the majority of the Muslims finally made their choice, and adopted a third moderate attitude, (4) they had to suffer the

(1) Cf. above, 11f.

(2) This wrong idea is a Shi'ite one. Siffin, 95, 211, 235, 250, 262, 327 571; cf. Dr. Al- ShaybI, Shi'ite thought, 13-19.

(3) Tab. Tārīkh. 1, 3404f., 3474ff. 'Ali used to pray that God may guide him with the guidance of "the divinely guided Caliphs". Cf. above, 5f.

(4) It might be assumed that the Shari'a oppose the enjoyment of life but this is not true. See the Qur'an, 7:31, 32; 17:28; 18:7, 28; 102:6. For more information about this moderate attitude, see Formative Period, 72-75.
serious consequences of the struggle between the first two
groups, namely, the civil war which followed `Uthmān’s murder,
the socio-religious chaos caused by this war, the disappointment
of `Alī, with his disobedient army, the disappointment of his
followers after the political victory of Mu‘āwiya and the
occurrence of a tendency toward sectarianism prevalent among
the followers of `Alī after Siffin.

Some of the extremist followers of `Alī, such as al-Asbagh
b. Nubāta (1) who served as the head of `Alī’s shurta (police),
Kudayr ad-Ḍabbī, (2) Rushayd al-Hajari (3) and Jabir b. Yazīd aj-
Juʿfī, (4) who believed in his Messianic qualities, were compelled
to change their beliefs by the collapse of all their hopes.

1. `Alī as Dābbat al-ard (Elijah) (5)

The people listed above, and most probably many other
extremist followers of `Alī, came to believe that he was not
the Messiah or the Mahdi which they sought, but that he was a
Messianic figure, that is, the mysterious eschatological
character Dābbat al-ard or "the beast of the earth". They based

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(1) Tabagāt (BS) vi, 157; Ishtiqaq, 243; Mīṣān, 1, 271.
(2) Mīṣān, iii, 410f.
(3) Mīṣān, 11, 51f.
(4) In Tabagāt (BS) (vi, 240) his death date is given as 128 A.H.
while Mīṣān (1, 384) mentions that he died in 167 A.H. The
last date seems to be incorrect.
(5) The explanation of this connection between Elijah and
Dābbat al-ard will be clear soon.
their belief on the following Qur'anic verses, which mention the appearance of this "beast of the earth" as one of the signs of "the Last Day":

"Thou shalt not make the dead to hear, neither shalt thou make the deaf to hear the call when they turn about, retreating. Thou shalt not guide the blind out of their error, neither shalt thou make any to hear, save such as believe in our signs, and so surrender. When the word falls on them. We shall bring forth for them out of the earth a beast that shall speak unto them: 'Mankind had no faith in our signs'." (Qur'an 27:82)

These men probably understood these verses in the light of the circumstances which were facing 'Ali. They believed that the phrase "the word falls on them" referred to 'Ali's contemporaries because they refused "the guidance" which he was offering to them. The extremists saw that the people of Syria were united under the leadership of Mu'awiya despite the belief that they were not "on the right path", whilst the people of Kūfa and Basra were ignoring 'Ali. The Kūfites and the Basrites withheld their positive support even after they realised that they were mistaken in forcing 'Ali to accept the arbitration or tahlīm. His repeated appeals to them to stand firm and fight were ignored and having lost all hopes of their support,

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(1) Tab. Tārīkh, 1, 3385-3413.
(2) Tab. Tārīkh, 1, 3329ff; Siffin, 546ff; Akhbār (Dīnaw) 188.
he began to attack them vigorously whenever he addressed them. (1) The historical material in Ṭabari(2) shows that his disappointment was so great that he did not hide his wish to be dead.

He indicated clearly and repeatedly that his followers could be likened to those who were described in the above quoted verses and, therefore, he used to quote the Qur'ānic verses which condemned the Unbelievers and described them as the deaf, dumb and blind who reject guidance. (3)

Were these strong attacks of 'Alī on his contemporaries and condemnation for his feeble followers the cause of the beliefs of the extremists that he was Dābbat al-ārd who "shall speak unto them: 'mankind had no faith in our signs'"? (4) There does not appear to be enough evidence to support this but it can be concluded from the circumstances. On the other hand, there is such evidence to show that the Muslims were concerned to know about the interpretation of Dābbat al-ārd; especially the Kūfites who were living under the influence of the Malāhim stories or eschatology. (5) It is interesting to note that the pious Muslims, especially the Kūfites, at the time of fitna always thought that the Last Day was at hand. For instance, 'Abd-ar-Razzāq al-San'ānī(6) relates that one day the followers

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(1) Ṭab. Ṭārīkh, i, 3385-3455.
(2) Ṭab. Ṭārīkh, i, 3409, 3412.
(3) Ṭab. Ṭārīkh, i, 3455.
(4) Qur'ān, 27:82, above, 109f.
(5) There were especial places in Kūfa for the story-tellers; Ṭab. Ṭārīkh, vi, 48.
(6) See al-Muṣannaf, xi, 385.
of Ibn-Mas‘ūd (d. 32 A.H.)\(^{(1)}\) came to tell him that the Hour has come; they were terrified when they saw the sky of Küfa turning dark red, with storm of sand, after a violent weather condition. Ibn-Mas‘ūd assured them that the Hour would not come unless certain signs were to be seen.\(^{(2)}\)

Similarly, during ‘Alī's lifetime some Küfites propagated the idea that he was Dābbat al-ard who was represented to them as the Old Testament character "Elijah" who is believed to be coming before the Messiah.\(^{(3)}\) This belief in ‘Alī, held by men like Rushayd al-Hajari, Habbat al-Uranī\(^{(4)}\) and the above listed people\(^{(5)}\) continued to spread among ‘Alī's followers to an extent that worried him. He tried, therefore, to refute these false claims and told his followers that Dābbat al-ard was something else.\(^{(6)}\)

Habīb b. Suhbān\(^{(7)}\) told of how he witnessed ‘Alī on the minbar of the Mosque of Kufa speaking about Dābbat al-ard. ‘Alī said: "Dābbat al-ard eats by its mouth and breaks wind

\(^{(1)}\) ‘Abd-Allāh b. Mas‘ūd was one of the great Companions of the Prophet; for his biography see Tabaqāt (BS) iii, 106; vi, 7; Asmā', i/1, 289ff.

\(^{(2)}\) Al-Mugannaf, xi, 385f.

\(^{(3)}\) Below, 118f., and Chapter VII.

\(^{(4)}\) Tabaqāt (BS) vi, 123.

\(^{(5)}\) Above, 109.

\(^{(6)}\) See his opinion about Dābbat al-ard in Tafsīr (Tab.) xx, 14-17.

\(^{(7)}\) He was said to be an authority in hadīth; Tabaqāt (BS) vi, 115; Mizān, ii, 52.
with its bottom". Then Rushayd said to him: "I witness that
you are this Dabbat al-ard". 'Alî condemned him severely. (1)

It will be shown that this man developed the belief of
'Alî being Dabbat al-ard even after his death. He was one of
those who established the doctrine of raj'a. (2) It is inter-
esting to note that the doctrine of raj'a was linked with the
belief that 'Alî is Dabbat al-ard rather than with the belief
that he is the Messiah or Mahdi as will become obvious in the
following story of 'Amr b. al-Asamm to be found in Ibn-Sa'd. (3)
This does not deny the fact that there was still a small group
who believed in 'Alî's Mahdism.

Continuous discussions and differences of opinion had
developed about the verses of Dabbat al-ard, not only among the
extremist followers of 'Alî, but also among the orthodox
companions of the Prophet and their followers: (at-Tabi'in). (4)
This is clear from the orthodox commentary of the Qur'ân which
shows that these verses were interpreted in many ways because
they occurred in the most ambiguous (mutashâbih) parts of the
Qur'ân. (5)

The orthodox believers held that Dabbat al-ard would
appear at a time when the people were ignoring "the commandment
of good and the forbidding of evil" (al-amr bi al-ma'rif wa

(1) Misân, ii, 52.
(2) See below, 123.
(3) Tabaqât (BS) iii, 26; cf. below, 124.
(4) See Tafsîr (Tab.) xx, 13-16; Qurtubi, Ahkâm, xiii, 234-238;
Rasî, Mafâtîh, vi, 390f; Zamakhshari, Tanzîl.
san-nahyī 'an al munkar). It is interesting to note that some of these interpretations go in line with the above explained extremist view; (1) more interesting to note is that in one of his letters 'Ali himself referred to the fact that the people were ignoring this injunction. (2)

It is clear from the following interpretation that most of the ideas about Dābbat al-ard are taken from the Judaeo-Christian traditions or the so-called Isrā'īliyya. The source of this Isrā'īliyya is the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation and some of its ideas are very similar to those found in these two books. (3)

The following description of Dābbat al-ard is attributed to Ibn-az-Zubayr, Abū-Hurayra and Ibn-Jurayj (4) by al-Tha‘alibī and al-Mawardī: (5)

It is a beast which will be a compound of various animals. It has the head of a bull, the eyes of a hog, the ears of an elephant,

(1) See the explanation of the phrase "When the word falls on them", above, 110.
(2) Tab. Tārikh, i, 3394.
(3) Jerusalem Bible, Dan. 7:3-28; 8; Rev., 13:2ff; art. "Isrā'īliyya", E.I. (2)
(4) Qurtubi, Abkām, xiii, 236. Zamakhsharī, Ṭanzīl. Rāsī, Makātīb, vi, 390f.
(5) Qurtubi, Abkām, xiii, 236.
the horns of a stag, the neck of an ostrich, the breast of a lion, (1) the colour of a tiger, (2) the back of a cat, the tail of a ram, the legs of a camel, (3) the voice of an ass; and that she will bring with her the rod of Moses and the seal of Solomon; she will strike with the rod all the believers on the face and mark them with a white dot (4) so their faces will become shiny; and will strike with the seal likewise the unbelievers turning their faces dark. (5)

'Abd-Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-Ās said that this "beast of earth" was al-Jassāsa, a description of which was said to be given to the Prophet by Tamīm ad-Dārī, who had been a Christian. (6) Ibn-'Amr used to say that it would emerge from the hill of as-Safā near the Ka'ba or from the territory of at-Tā'if or somewhere else. (7) Wahb b. Munabbih said that it would appear from the sea of Sidom

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(1) Cf. Dan. 7:4; Rev., 13:2, where similar beasts are found.
(2) Dan. 7:6; Rev. 13:2.
(3) Zamakhshārī says that the difference between any bone joint and the other is 12 dhīrāʾ with the forearm of Adam. Cf. Tafsīr.
(4) In some versions of Traditions it was said that it will write on the forehead Kāfir or Mu'min according to the situation of every individual.
(5) Ahkām, xiii, 236; cf. Tafsīr (Tab.) xx, 14-17.
(6) Sahīh (M), Malāḥim and Fītan, xviii, 79-84.
(7) Tafsīr (Tab.) xx, 15; Qurtubi, Ahkām, xiii, 237.
Hudhayfa b. al-Yamân said that it would appear from Mecca near Safâ when Jesus the Messiah performs the Tawâf with the Muslim round the shrine of the Ka'ba. He added that it would distinguish between the believers and the unbelievers; it is so swift that none can overtake or escape it.

The report of Hudhayfa also shows that it would be a compound of various animals, an idea which is similar to that of John's revelation (13:1).

"Abd-Alläh b. 'Umar b. al-Khattäb and Hudhayfa b. Usayd also support this view. The former said that it would appear and disappear twice, the first time in the desert and the second time in towns and then it would appear for the third time at the most noble temple (of Ka'ba). The latter said that for three days it would emerge from the earth with the speed of a running horse and, even then, only a third of its body would have emerged from the ground.

Some said that it would be the fasîl of the she-camel of the prophet Sâlih. Others said it would be the serpent of

(1) Qurtubî, Abkâm, xiii, 237. Wahb took his idea from Dan. 7:3.
(2) In Muslim eschatology Jesus will descend as a Mahdi; he will perform all the duties of Sharî'â and rule according to its laws. Sahîh (M) xxviii.
(3) The same idea of the dominion of Elijah is found in the Judaico-Christian literature; J.E., v, 378.
(4) Tafsîr (Tab.), xx, 14; Qurtubî, Abkâm, xiii, 235. Quoting Abu-Dä'ud at-Tayâlisî.
(5) Cf. Tabagät (BS) vi, 15.
(6) Qurtubî, Abkâm, xiii, 237. Tafsîr (Tab.) xx, 14.
the Ka'ba; this view is attributed to Ibn-'Abbās. (1) Muhammad b. Ka'b said that 'Alī Ibn-Abī-Ṭālib was asked about Dābbat al-ard; in reply he said: "I swear by God it has no tail and it is not the serpent of the Ka'ba either." Al-Māwardī in his commentary on this said that it is an implicit indication from 'Alī that Dābbat al-ard is human, although he did not state it explicitly. (2)

The view that Dābbat al-ard is a human being is also supported by what al-Qurtubī relates, on the authority of 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, that "the beast of the earth" will be in the shape of a human being and it will reach the clouds. (3) Al-Qurtubī says that the later commentators of the Qur'ān said that the nearest possibility is to hold that the term beast is a figurative expression for a human being who will speak and argue with the people of heresy and kufr. (4)

Some commentators disagree with this, saying, that the word tukallimu-hum which is supposed to indicate the beast's ability to speak should be read taklumu-hum which means to wound them, but this is refuted by the fact that the majority of the Qur'ān readers read it tukallima-hum; and that although Ibn-'Abbās read it taklumu-hum yet he said that it will speak to them to distinguish between the believer and the unbeliever. (5)

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(1) Qurtubī, Ahkām, xiii, 236.
(2) Ahkām, xiii, 236.
(3) Ahkām, xiii, 237; also cf. the claim of the extremists that 'Alī is in the cloud, above, 36-41.
(4) Ahkām, xiii, 236.
(5) Ahkām, xiii, 238. He said she will mark the believer with a shiny mark on the face and will mark the unbeliever with a sima or black wound likewise.
After finding so much confusion and contradiction among the orthodox commentators on this matter, it is not strange to find the extremist followers of 'Ali expounding these ideas and making use of the orthodox material. Firstly, they adopted the idea that Dābbat al-ard is not a real beast but it is a human who to them was 'Ali b. Abī-Ṭalib; that is, the idea which said that a certain eschatological person was figuratively called Dābbat al-ard, suited their new messianic idea that 'Ali was Elijah instead of the Messiah or Mahdi.

In the above mentioned hadīth of Hudhayfa b. 'Usayd, which, it should be noted, was transferred by the pro-'Alid Abū-at-Tufayl, the messianic feature is clear. The rest of the hadīth states that, after the appearance of Dābbat al-ard, people will enjoy brotherhood and friendship, they will share wealth equally and will become good neighbours and friends. Noticeably, the same thing is attributed in the Judaeo-Christian tradition to Elijah who will turn the hearts of the fathers to the sons etc., (Malachi, 4:5); and whose spirit was believed to be transformed to John the Baptist who preceded Jesus Christ.

In another hadīth it was said that Dābbat al-ard will "anoint" (tamsahu) the believers with the rod of Moses and will

(1) Above, 116; cf. Tafsīr (Tab.), xx, 14.
(2) Tafsīr (Tab.), xx, 14; cf. Qurtubi, Ahkām, xiii, for his biography see Tabaqāt (BS) v, 338.
(3) Cf. Isai. 40:3; Mala. 3:1; Matt. 11:10-14, Jerusalem Bible, 1340; see below, 348 ff.
mark the unbelievers with the seal of Solomon. As has already been seen this is a messianic image. (1) The earlier reference to the belief that ‘Ali was Dābbat al-ard is attributed to ‘Ammār b. Yasir. This is reported by Jābir b. Yazīd (2) who said that a man came to ‘Ammār and asked him to explain a verse in the Qur‘ān which caused him to doubt his faith. ‘Ammār asked him, "what verse"? The man replied that it was the one which mentions Dābbat al-ard; and he added "What Dabba is that?" ‘Ammār said to him: "follow me; I swear by God I will never sit, eat or drink unless I show you it." The man followed ‘Ammār who went to see ‘Alī b. Abī-Talib; they found him eating. ‘Alī invited them to eat with him and ‘Ammār did so; the man was astonished that ‘Ammār sat and ate; and when ‘Ammār went he said to him: "Praise the Lord! you swear by God you will not sit, eat or drink unless you show me it!" ‘Ammār replied, "I did show you - if you understand!" (3)

However, this story was probably invented by Jābir b. Yazīd who was an enthusiastic believer in the idea of ‘Alī being Dābbat al-ard and who also advocated the return (raj‘a) of ‘Alī. This will be discussed later. (4) Another contemporary

(1) Above, 115. It is very interesting to note that the Twelfers adopted this by attributing to ‘Alī the same work of Dābbat al-ard, see Kāfī, 117f.

(2) Jābir himself was advocating that ‘Alī was Dābbat al-ard; therefore it is not unlikely that he invented this Tradition.


(4) Below, 223 ff.
of 'Ammār, al-Asbagh b. Nubata, who was once 'Alī's Shurta (police) chief and his emissary to Mu‘āwiya, upheld the same belief. He said that Mu‘āwiya b. Abī-Sufyān said to him once(2), "0 company of Shī‘a! you claim that 'Alī is Dābbat al-ard!" Al-Asbagh replied: "We say that the Jews said so." Then Mu‘āwiya ordered that the rabbi Ra‘s al-Jālūt be brought before him. Mu‘āwiya then asked him, "Woe unto you, do you find Dābbat al-ard mentioned in your tradition?" The rabbi answered, "Yes". Mu‘āwiya asked, "What is it then?" The rabbi answered, "It is a man". Mu‘āwiya said, "Do you know his name?". The rabbi answered, "Yes, his name is Elia"; (or Eli, a contraction of Elijah). (3) Al-Asbagh said that Mu‘āwiya then turned his face towards him and said, "Woe to you O Asbagh! What a similarity of pronunciation exists between Eli and 'Alī!"(4)

If this story is true, and I do not see any reason why it should not be, it indicates two important facts: firstly, it shows that the contemporary Jews were similarly concerned with "the beast of the earth". Obviously the source of their belief

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(1) Tab. Tārīkh, index, 44; Ghadrī, i, 202.
(3) This is not the actual wording of the story but gives its general meaning. See Haqq al-Yaqīn, ii, 6. Cf. Bib. Reader Encyc. and Concor., 119.
(4) Haqq al-Yaqīn, ii, 6.
was the interpretation of the vision of Daniel.\(^1\) Secondly, to them the beast of the earth was Elijah; that, of course, is in accord with the interpretation of "the four beasts" and "the horns" in the Book of Daniel, as the Kingdom and the Kings. In the same place\(^2\) it is mentioned that at the time of the End the one who is "like the son of man" will come on a cloud.

As we have seen, Dābbat al-ard is believed to judge and distinguish the believers from the unbelievers; likewise Elijah in the Jewish Apocalyptic is believed "to judge and destroy the wicked and to recognise those who had trusted in him."\(^3\)

The following are the main points of comparison between 'Alī and Elijah:

**Similarities between 'Alī and Elijah**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) Elijah was among those Israelites who lived in a state of constant readiness for war to appease Yahweh.(^4)</th>
<th>(a) 'Alī, in the same way, devoted himself to the holy strife of Islam and became the great hero of the early Muslims.(^5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\(^1\) Dan., 7:3-28.
\(^2\) Dan., 7:13-14.
\(^3\) J.E., v. 378.
\(^4\) P. Bib. Envo., 274.
\(^5\) Ibn-Rishām, Sīra.
(b) Elijah devoted himself to stamping out the heathen with passion and violence, as his age required, and he was not completely successful. (1)

(c) Elijah did not die the death of all mankind but had been gathered up to heaven in a whirlwind and remained alive there. (3)

(d) Elijah was envisaged as the forerunner of "the great day of the Lord" and also the forerunner of the Messiah. (5)

(e) Elijah was one of those who were promised by Moses as legatees or wasīs, and he passed the message to Elisha. (7)

(b) 'Alī, likewise, used force to curb his opponents, who in his view were ungodly, but the age was so violent that he died before his complete success. (2)

(c) 'Alī, to the extremists, had never died but had gone to heaven in a cloud; the thunder was his voice and the lightning his whip. (4)

(d) 'Alī was also represented as Dābbat al-ard who will come before "the Last Day" and will precede the Mahdi. (6)

(e) 'Alī was said to be the wasī of Muhammad and he passed his message to his children in succession. (8)

(1) P.Bib. Encyc., 275.
(2) Tab. Tārīkh.
(3) P.Bib. Encyc., 275.
(4) Farq (Bagh-Halk) 42f; Above, 36f.
(5) Matt. 3:4; Mk. 1:6;
(6) Mīzân, i, 381f; Above, 112-118.
(7) P.Bib. Encyc., 275.
(8) Above, 13.
2. The Doctrine of raj'ā (return)

After the death of 'Alī, the extremists easily found an idea to keep their messianic hope alive. It has already been said (3) that shortly before his murder 'Alī complained of the lack of positive support from his followers. (4) This perhaps indicates a tendency towards quiescence and retreat among his followers which found expression in the doctrine of "concealment" after his death.

Naturally, "concealment" ends with "the return" of the concealed who can therefore be awaited (muntasar); the first was termed ghayba and the second was termed raj'ā.

The link between the doctrine of raj'ā and that of the resurrection of the dead, on one hand, and the doctrine of raj'ā and the transmigration of souls, on the other hand, has always been suspected by some scholars (5) and will be discussed

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(1) P. Bib. Encyc., 275.
(2) He said 'Alī can bring 'Ād and Thamūd and the old centuries, cf. below, 124.
(3) Above, 110f.
(5) Friedlaender, ZA, xxiii, 12; Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 67.
It was shown previously\(^1\) that the idea of \(\text{raj'\äa}\) was first introduced to the Muslims during 'Uthmän's Caliphate (disputably) by 'Abd-Allah b. Saba' whose main purpose in doing so was to strengthen the belief that 'Alî was the \text{wasi}\ of the Prophet who would "return", according to him, like Jesus; and until the Prophet's return 'Alî would be his \text{wasi}\ as Aaron was the \text{wasi}\ of Moses.\(^2\)

The idea of \(\text{raj'\äa}\) provided 'Alî's exhausted supporters with a ready-made excuse for discontinuing their struggle against Mu'āwiya and his Syrian army, on one hand, and the Kharijites on the other, and they readily took advantage of it on his death.\(^3\) This is clear from the report of the highly respected Muslim historian Muhammad b. Sa'd who said on the authority of 'Amr b. al-Asamm\(^4\), that al-Hasan b. 'Alî, who succeeded his father, was told that there were some people among the Shî'a of 'Alî who claimed that 'Alî was Däbbat al-ard (Elijah) and that he had not died but would "return" before the Last Day. Al-Hasan said: "They lie! They are not his supporters, they are his enemies! If we knew that he would return we should not distribute his heritage and allow his widows to re-marry."\(^5\)

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\(^1\) Above, 36-41.

\(^2\) Above, 15ff.

\(^3\) Surely this tendency was one of the causes which led to the abdication of al-Hasan.

\(^4\) \(\text{Tabaqat (BS)}\) iii, 1,26; \(\text{Mīrān}, 11, 52\).

\(^5\) \(\text{Tabaqat (BS)}\) iii, 1,26, similar utterance is attributed to Ibn-'Abbās.
Ash-Sha'bī named one of those extremists who believed in the ra'īa as Rushayd al-Hajari. Adh-Dhahabi\(^1\) reports, on the authority of ash-Sha'bī that Rushayd confessed, in his presence, that he and some others went to al-Hasan b. 'Ali immediately after the death of his father and requested that he would let them see "the commander of the believers".\(^2\) Al-Hasan told them that he had died, to which they replied: "No. He is alive and he is fully conscious (yafrif or ya'raq tahta ad-dither)." Al-Hasan said: "Well, if you knew this (secret) then come in, but do not agitate him."\(^3\) Another version of the story is reported by Ibn-Hibban;\(^4\) who adds that Rushayd said to al-Hasan: "He died according to you! but I swear by God that he is now breathing like anyone who is alive." Rushayd also claimed that al-Hasan allowed him to enter and when he saw 'Ali he taught him the secret matters (eschatological) which would occur in future.\(^5\)

There is further information which suggests that there

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\(^1\) Mizān, ii, 51ff.

\(^2\) This is the common title of every Caliph; it does not prevent other titles being used as Murtada al-'Askri believed in his book 'Abd-Allah b. Saba', ii, 124ff.

\(^3\) Mizān, ii, 52.

\(^4\) Quoted from Dhahabi, Mizān, ii, 51.

\(^5\) Ash-Sha'bī said to Rushayd: "If you lie, then God damn you." Rushayd further claimed that he knew the secret of suffering and death or 'ilm al-manāya wa al-balāya. Cf. Šila, 87f.
were others who shared the belief in 'Ali's concealment and raj'a with Rushayd. Among them, according to some reports, were Ja'bir b. 'Abd-Allah al-Ansārī (d. 78 A.H.); (1) Ja'bir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 A.H.); (2) Kudayr ad-Dabbī, (3) Muslim b. Nudhayr (4) and Sālim b. Abī-Hafsa (d. after 132 A.H.). (5) The last is of the tribe of 'Ijīl which later produced many other extremists such as al-Mughīr b. Sa'id (k. 119 A.H./737) and Abū-Mangūr (121 A.H./742 A.D.) who also believed in raj'a. (6)

It is not definite that Ja'bir b. 'Abd-Allah al-Ansārī was among those who believed in raj'a since the Shi'ite sources are inclined to enlist the most respected followers of the Prophet to their cause. There seems to be only one person who indicates that Ja'bir b. 'Abd-Allah was a believer in raj'a, that is, Zurara Ibn A'yan (7) who reports al-Bāghir, the fifth Twelfers Imam, as saying that Ja'bir knew the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse which says:

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(1) A respected companion of the Prophet; for his biography see Tabaqāt (BS), iii, 2,114. Also see A'yan ash-Shī'a xvi, 15, 167-199; Bidāya and Isāba.
(2) Tabaqāt (BS) vi, 240; Mizān, i, 379-384; A'yan ash-Shī'a xvi, 15, 199-225.
(3) Mizān, iii, 411.
(4) Tabaqāt (BS), vi, 195; Tahdh, ix, 139.
(5) Tahdh, iii, 433f; Mizān, ii, 110ff.
(6) Below, 129ff.
(7) See A'yan ash-Shī'a, xvi, 15, 167ff; Mizān, ii, 69f.
"Verily, He who ordained the Qur'an for thee will bring thee to the Place of return ..." (1)

It has already been mentioned that this same verse, which the Twelfers take as evidence for the raj'a of their awaited Mahdi, was used by Ibn-Saba' as proof of the wasiy and raj'a. (2)

Almost all the sources agreed that another Jābir, called Ibn-Yazīd al-Ju'fī, believed in the return of 'Ali. (3) The most serious allegation made against him was by Ibn-Hibbān (4) who said that he was a Saba'i, a companion of Ibn-Saba', and that he used to say that 'Ali would "return" to this world. Many Traditionists (5) also said that Jābir al-Ju'fī believed in

(1) Qur'ān, 28:85; cf. above, 38.
(2) Above, 37, 38; also cf. below, 138f.
(3) Mizān, 1, 379; Tabagāt (BS) vi, 240; Riḍā al-Kashshā and many other sources quoted in A'Eyn ash-Shī'a, xvi, 15,199-225.
(4) Mizān, 1, 379-384.
(5) There is some information which indicates that Jābir b. Yazīd believed in raj'a through transmigration of souls. Al-Mufaddal ad-Dabbi who was said to have written a book about the transmigration of souls related a Tradition, on Jābir's authority, which supports this accusation. (See below 133ff; cf. A'Eyn ash-Shī'a, xvi, 15,206). In addition Jābir was asked how he would greet the expected Mahdi and in reply he said to the man who asked him: "If I tell you, you would regard me as an unbeliever"; Mizān, xvi, 15, 381.
raj'a and claimed that he had fifty thousand bab (door) of knowledge, which he had learned from the House of 'Ali and that he had gained this knowledge, which he did not disclose, after being given a drink by al-Baqir. His belief in 'Ali being Dabbat al-ard has already been mentioned and is further supported by his belief in a Mahdi other than 'Ali,(1) which he did not mention by name.

It seems that Jabir al-Jufi did not believe in the Mahdism of Ibn al-Hanafiyya, as did most of those who were disappointed by the decline of 'Ali and his first two sons. Jabir remained loyal to the descendants of 'Ali from his wife Fatima, i.e. 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin and his son al-Baqir, until his death in 128 A.H.(2)

However, the ideas of those who believed in the Mahdism of Ibn al-Hanafiyya and his concealment and raj'a after his death will be discussed fully in the next section(3) since the main concern of these pages is to explain the idea of those who believed in the raj'a of 'Ali himself, therefore, in this case, the chronological order is not important.

As for Kudayr ad-Dabbi (d. after 45 A.H.) he was reported by adh-Dhahabi as being one of those who believed in the raj'a of 'Ali. Simak b. Salama also reported him as saying in his Salat: "Peace be to the Prophet and the wasi ('Ali)".(4) Another man

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(1) Above, 109ff; cf. Mīzan, i, 379.
(2) A'yun ash-Shī'a, xvi, 15, 199-225.
(3) Below, 138ff.
(4) Mīzan, ii, 110.
who seems to have believed in raj'ā is Sālim b. Abī-Ḥafṣa of the tribe of 'Ijl (d. after 132 A.H.). He was said to be even more extremist in his views than the others. In his tawāf around the Ka'ba he used to call upon God to damn Banū-Umayya and 'Uthmān. Despite his adherence to Shi‘ism, Jarir the poet used to say that he abandoned Sālim because his extreme ideas made him an enemy of the Shi‘a. (1)

Al-Mughīra b. Sa‘īd al-‘Ijli, although he is not a contemporary of 'Ali but came after these men, maintained their views. He used to say (2) that if 'Ali wished, he could raise the ancient tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd, (3) along with many, from the dead. When al-Mughīra was questioned by al-A‘mash (4) about his source of information of 'Ali's ability to raise the dead, he, like Jābir al-Ju‘fī, claimed that he once went to one of the Prophet's family, who gave him some water to drink which inspired him and gave him all knowledge. (5) Al-Mughīra was put to death by the Umayyād Amīr Khalid b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Qasrī in 119 A.H. for making these heretical claims. More information about him and his ideas will be given later. (6)

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(1) Mizān, ii, 110.
(2) Ibn-Qutayba, 'Uyān al-Akhbār, ii, 149, quoted from Mahdiyya, 77.
(3) For more information about these tribes, cf. Qur'ān 11:61ff.
(5) This is parallel to the claims of Rushayd al-Hajarī.
(6) See below, 184f.
It appears from the examination of the above mentioned material that the doctrine of ra’i’a had passed through two stages. At first the doctrine was rather simple and speaks of the personal return of certain individuals. This can be termed the simple or personal ra’i’a.

Obviously, this found ground in the Judaeo-Christian traditions which speak of the concealment and return of Moses, Elijah, and Enoch. The resurrection or the return of the dead expressed in Isaiah (25:19) and Daniel (12:1-4) also provides ample opportunity for such an idea.

The extremists also supported the doctrine of ra’i’a with the Qur’anic verses which defend the doctrine of resurrection of the dead before the last judgement. Some of these Qur’anic verses could well be misunderstood or deliberately twisted and used as a proof for the idea of ra’i’a. The most often quoted example of this is the verse which speaks of the concealment of Moses.

An example of this misunderstanding occurred when ‘Umar b. al-Khattab, under the shock of the Prophet’s death, claimed:

(3) O.T. Gen. 5:24; Qur’an, 19:56, 57; Qurṭubi, Tafsīr, xi, 119.
(4) Cf. art. “Resurrection”, J.E.
(5) Qur’an, 2:28, 258; 3:49, 156; 6:36; 10:56; also see the term ba’th in al-Mu’aṣṣa al-Mufahra.
(6) Qur’an, 2:51; 7:142.
that he had not died but returned to God as Moses had done and that he would return. 'Umar, who obviously misunderstood the verse,\(^1\) abandoned this belief after he was reminded by Abū- Bakr that the Prophet himself prophesied his death.\(^2\)

The extremists who held the doctrine of raj'a quoted this verse as well as the Traditions, which speak of the second coming of Jesus.\(^3\) They also quoted verse 259 of Sūra 2 which refers to the man who exclaimed that God does give life after death.\(^4\) This last example was quoted by the Twelfers as well as by those who believed in the return of Ibn-al-Ḥanafiyya who will be discussed later.\(^5\)

The second stage of raj'a was a rather serious one; not only did it have a religious foundation but it was supported by philosophical concepts borrowed from the Indo-Iranian idea of the transmigration of souls. Some aspects of Greek and Gnostic philosophies were also involved in the doctrine of raj'a at this late stage.\(^6\) The teachings of the extremists, who were the forerunners of the Batinīs, and their complete dependence of these aspects, is well known.\(^7\)

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\(^1\) Taḥaṣṣāt (BS) ii, 2, 54. Tab. Taʿrīkh, i, 1815ff; Bidayā.
\(^2\) Ibn-Hishām, Sīra.
\(^3\) Above, 35ff.
\(^4\) He was said to be Ezra, cf. Tafsīr (Tab.); Qurtubī, Tafsīr.
\(^5\) Below, 132ff.
\(^6\) See art. "rujūʿ" in E.I.\(^1\); Milal (Shahr.W.) i, 152; Maqālaq (Ash) i, 5f.
\(^7\) Art. "rujūʿ" and also arts. "Sabʿīyya" and "Shīʿa", E.I.\(^1\), Origin of Ismāʿīlim, 23ff, 44ff.
Before quoting some examples which may help to clarify this point, I should mention that the acceptance of these ideas by some Arabs was probably due, in some measure, to the Arabs' pre-Islamic belief of the inheriting of special human excellences through the clan stock. (1) Later on, the concept of spiritual parenthood was introduced by Bāyan b. Sim'an, Abū-al-Khattāb and Abū-Mansūr al-'Ilī, it was a different matter. (2)

The first clear example of the belief in the rajī'a through the transmigration of souls, is found among the followers of Abū-Hashim, a grandson of 'Alī by his son Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. His followers believed that the divine spirit inhabited the backbone of the Prophets and that after their passing of their wasīs until it reached their Imām Abū-Hashim who, after his death in 97 A.H./715-716 A.D., passed it to either 'Abd-Allah b. Mu'āwiya according to some, (3) or Muhammad b. 'Alī al-'Abbāsi according to others. (4) This point will be dealt with later. (5)

It appears that the so-called Rāwandiyya are a continuation of those who believed in the wasiyya of Muhammad b. 'Alī al-'Abbāsi. Tabarī relates (6) that a man called al- Ablagh (some-}

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(1) See above, 55-58; Formative Period, 40.

(2) Shaybānī, SiILA, 123, 125, 129; Shi‘ite Thought, 25-27;

MaqālaT (Ash) 1, 13.

(3) Milal (Shahr.W.) 1, 151; MaqālaT (Ash) 1, 6; Firaq (Nawb) 28ff.

(4) MaqālaT (Ash) 1, 21; Milal (Shahr.W.) 1, 151; Firaq (Nawb) 28ff.

(5) Below, 190f.

(6) Tab. Tarīkh, iii, 418; also quoted by Ibn-al-Jawzī, Talbīs, 103.
times called al-Abras) claimed that the spirit which was in Jesus (Christ) transmigrated to 'Ali b. Abi-Talib and from him to the Imams until it reached Muhammad b. 'Ali al-'Abbasî and his son Ibrâhîm al-Imam. (1) Ibn-al-Jawzî, who quotes Tabari, said that some of these Rawandiyya were killed and crucified by Asad b. 'Abd-Allah al-Qasîf. (2)

Some years after this incident the survivors of the Rawandiyya came to 'Abû-Jafar al-Mansûr, the second 'Abbasid Caliph and said to him: "You are you", i.e., you are God. (3) Ibn-al-Jawzî added that this sect was still in existence in his time, (597 A.H.) (4)

Ibn-al-Jawzî confirmed this by quoting an-Nawbakhti who said in his refutation of the extremists' ideas (Kitâb-ar-radd 'ala al-shulât), (5) that his contemporary Is'haq b. Muhammad an-Nakha'î al-Abmar believed in the divinity of 'Ali b. Abi-Talib and claimed that each time he re-incarnated in different

(1) Ibrâhîm was supposed to be the first 'Abbasid Caliph but he was killed by Hurwân the second before the complete victory of the 'Abbasid revolt. The 'Abbasid alleged that he passed the leadership to his brother al-Saffah who established their dynasty.

(2) Talbîs, 103.
(3) Firaq (Nawb) 41-47.
(4) Talbîs, 103.
(5) This book seems to be lost but it was quoted by many early scholars like al-Khatîb al-Baghdâdî, see Talbîs, 97; Fihrist (Tûs.) 99.
bodies. The first time he was al-Hasan, the second time al-
Husayn, etc. (1) Besides his quotation from an-Nawbakhti, Ibn-
al-Jawzi quoted other authorities (Transmitters) who indicated
that there was a group in al-Madā'in who also held the views of
Ishaq called al-Ishaqiyiyya. (2)

Muslim heresiographers, like Abū-al-Hasan al-Ash'arī
d. 324 A.H.) referred to an earlier group who also believed
in raj'a through transmigration of souls. Among them are al-
Mufaddaliyya who took their name from the extremist al-Mufaddal
b. 'Umar al-Ju'fī. He was a pupil of Ja'far as-Sādiq and a
friend of Abū-al-Khattāb al-Asadi who was said to be the
originator of the Bātini movement. (3)

Nothing more was known about al-Mufaddal except that he
is a Sayrafī (broker) and that he, along with his followers
who split from al-Khattābiyya, (4) believed in the divinity of
as-Sādiq.

The discovery of a book attributed to al-Mufaddal b. 'Umar
made it possible for scholars to learn more about his ideas and
the beliefs of his followers. 'Arif Tamir, a specialist in the
Bātini studies, found the book among an Ismā'īlī collection of

(1) Talbīs, 97; cf. Maqālāt (Qumm.) 44ff. The similarity is
clear between this and the Zoroastrian ideas.

(2) Talbīs, 97; see also Milal (Shahr.W.), 1, 188.

(3) Origin of Ismā'īlimism, 32; Shi'ite Thought, 26ff; Sīla,
quoting al-Kashshāi, Tārīkh, 191. Quoted from 'Arif

Mss. in the village of Misyäf in Syria. From its name al-Haft wa al-azilla, which literally means "the successive fall and shades", one can assume that the book speaks about the transmigration of souls. 'Arif Tämir, who wrote an introduction to the book both in Arabic and French, (1) said (2) that it contains strange ideas (about the transmigration of souls) as well as various and rich expressions like azilla (shades), ashbääh (ghosts), Qibääh (domes), anwär (lights), hujub (veils), Nujabääh (highbred), abwääh (doors) and musükhiyya (transformation). (3) He added that these terms made the book nearer to the extremists viewpoint and far from the beliefs of the moderate Isma‘ilism.

There is little doubt that al-Mufaddal b. 'Umar is the real author of this book (4) because the Shiite historian al-Tüsi (5) mentions that he wrote a book. But the most significant fact is that the ideas expressed in the book are similar to those attributed to him in other sources, (6) as it will be explained later.

The main theme of the book is that God has created the

(2) Haft, (Arabic introduction), 25.
(3) The meaning of these terms is explained in Haft, 33.
(4) 'Arif Tämir, however, thinks that the book is not the original work of al-Mufaddal. See 26.
(5) Fihrist (Tüs) 337.
(6) Cf. the following hadîth (below, 137f) which is attributed to him by Kulİnİ, Käfi, (F) 1, 272.
aila before the ḥāshīḥ and the ḥībūn before the arvāḥ (spirits) and the last before the ḏābān (bodies) etc. (1) The spirits were classified by God before the existence and then they descend to this world. They would transmigrate from shape to shape or from one body to another, (2) according to the pre-existence classification. (3) For instance, the birth and death of the Imāms or wasīs are different from those of ordinary men. (4) Life and death to the Imāms were likened to a suit which a person could wear whenever he needed it and put it off whenever he wished. (5)

Thus, Isaac and Ishmael, the sons of Abraham "returned" to life in the bodies of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī and his brother al-Ḥusayn because their raj'ā was needed. (6) Their father, 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib, who implicitly represents Abraham, would return as Dābbat al-ard, (7) and the belief in his raj'ā is a very important

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(1) Ḥaft, 33ff.
(2) Ḥaft, 39ff.
(3) Ḥaft, 37ff.
(4) Ḥaft, 93-96.
(5) Ḥaft, 101.
(6) Ḥaft, 97-101.
(7) This makes it clear that the belief in 'Alī as Dābbat al-ard was, since the beginning, connected with the extremists' belief in the transmigration of souls, cf. above, 109ff. Compare this with the biblical belief that John the Baptist was in fact Elijah, see Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:10-14.
condition for salvation. (1)

It is very interesting to note that the Twelvers scholars who did not believe in the transmigration of souls and regarded it as heresy, had transmitted some Traditions which could eventually lead to the belief.

Al-Kulînî relates on the authority of al-Mufaddal b. 'Umar a Tradition in which he claimed to have asked al-Baqir about the knowledge of the Imām and alleged that al-Baqir replied:

"O Mufaddal. God has created five spirits in the Prophet: the spirit of life ..., the spirit of strength ..., the spirit of desire (shahwa) ..., the spirit of faith ..., and the Holy Spirit ... If the Prophet dies the Holy Spirit would "pass" to the Imām! The Holy Spirit will not sleep, forget, play or be arrogant ... with the Holy Spirit the Imām sees the unseen." (2)

Al-Kulînî also related that Abū-Bairr(3) claimed to have heard Ja'far as-Sādiq saying:

"this Spirit is greater than the archangels Jibrīl and Mīkā'īl, it was with the Prophet and after him dwelt with the Imāms." (4)

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(1) Haft, 180ff. It will be seen that the Twelvers denied the transmigration of souls, yet they accepted raj'a.

(2) Kāfirī, (F), i, 272.

(3) Kāfirī, (F), i, 273, he was one of as-Sādiq's pupils, see al-Kashshī.

(4) Kāfirī, (F), i, 273. This seems to be an amazing belief, from the Sunnite point of view, because it makes the Twelvers' Imāms something like divine incarnation.
It has also been attributed to as-Sādiq that God had created the bodies of the 'Alids from the uppermost heaven and created their spirits from above that, or

"God had created our spirit from the light of his greatness, then created our bodies from a clay stored under the Throne (‘arš) and that the light "passed" to it, and thereafter became human from light (basharan nūrāniyyin). Surely no-one else has a share in this especiality." (1)

The following example, which is very close to the idea of ra‘īa, is more interesting: Al-Kulīnī says (2) that Ibrāhīm b. ‘Umar al-Yamani relates on the authority of as-Sādiq this hadīth:

"If we said that something would be fulfilled in a certain individual (of our family) and it did not happen, then it would happen to his children or his children's children."

3. Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, another Mahdi

Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya is the third son of ‘Alī b. Abī-Talib. He was called Ibn-al-Hanafiyya (the son of the woman of Banū-Hanīfa) to distinguish him from the other sons of ‘Alī whether they were of his first wife Fatīma, the Prophet's

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(1) Kāfī (F), 1, 389. Cf. below, 297-300.
(2) Kāfī (F), 1, 535.
daughter, or of other wives, for 'Alī had had many children from various wives whom he married after the death of Fatima. (1)

Before going into details about the Mahdistic ideas which developed around the person of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya during his lifetime and even after his death in 81 A.H., (2) it is better to throw some light on the historical and social background of his time.

It is hoped that the previous discussions in chapters II and III of this thesis have made it clear that even as early as the time of 'Alī's Caliphate the demand for a charismatic leader was so great that some people sought in him supernatural qualities. (3) The exaggeration in such a demand was undoubtedly unIslamic. The Qur‘ān emphasized the sufficiency of the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad. (4) In another expression the emphasis, in Orthodox Islam, is not laid on the person of the leader but on the adherence to the Qur‘ānic values and rules.

(1) 'Alī also was said to have another son called Muhammad Abū-al-Varaq, Magātil, 46ff; 78ff; Tab. Tārikh, i, 3470ff.
(2) There are contradicting reports about the date of his death, but this seems to be the right account. See Tabagāt (88) v, 80-85. Cf. Aṣma‘, 1, 86.
(3) It should be mentioned that only a few people sought these "supernatural qualities" and called him God; the rest of them were either seeking a charismatic leadership or a charismatic community. For more information about this see Ramen, vii (1960-1), 77ff.
the adherence to the Sunna of the Prophet and the standard practice of his divinely guided Caliphs. But the failure to achieve these objectives and the surrender to those who initiated fitna have led the Muslims into a worse situation since the time of 'Uthmân.

On the political front, the Muslims were deeply divided, despite the outward unity after the abdication of al-Hasan and seizure of power by Mu'āwiya. This outward unity continued for nearly ten years, during which Mu'āwiya spared no effort to show that he was really interested in keeping all Muslims together. This is clear from the terms which he offered to al-Hasan before his abdication particularly his promise to make him his successor. Whether or not Mu'āwiya was sincere in this, is not our concern here but that he seems to have succeeded in holding the whole Muslim Caliphate under control until the death of al-Hasan in about 49 or 50 A.H. (1)

After the death of al-Hasan the explosion was inevitable; because the people of Iraq, especially the Kūfītes who mainly consist of Yemenites and mawālī, were still longing for an 'Alid to succeed to the Caliphate. They probably waited for the peaceful death of Mu'āwiya to have al-Hasan as his successor; but when this hope failed by the early and unfortunate death of al-Hasan, (2)

(1) See Majātil, 58; Tabaqāt (BS).
(2) This is apart from the different Kharijītes movements.
(3) Aṣma', 1, 158; Majātil, 73ff.
(4) It was said that al-Hasan was poisoned by Mu'āwiya's agents in order to get rid of him and to appoint Yasīd in his place as successor. See Majātil, 73ff.
and the clear desire of Mu'awiya to have his son Yasíd as his successor, the Kufites had either to revolt or to continue in their quiescent state and silent hope for a messianic miracle. Apparently both trends found supporters: the zealots like Hujr b. 'Addi (k. 51 A.H.) and his Kufi associates chose to resist the Umayyads showing their readiness to use force, if necessary, in order to restore the right of the Prophet's family, while the representatives of the Utopic or messianic trend, like Rushayd al-Hajarí and Habbat al-'Uraní, preferred to propagate speculations that heaven would send them back their beloved 'Ali; (1) or according to others, heaven would send a Mahdi from 'Ali's children. It was shown above (2) that this group (or groups) did not accept the leadership of al-Hasan and perhaps for the same reason they did forsake al-Husayn. They awaited the personal raj'a of 'Ali or the appearance of a Mahdi from his offspring.

After the suppression of the Kufites' revolt, which was waged by the zealots, and the execution of their leader Hujr, Mu'awiya himself died in 60 A.H. (3) Before his death he appointed his son Yasid as his only successor and this, of course, annoyed al-Husayn, the full brother of al-Hasan (who in time became the beloved martyr of many Muslims). The appointment of Yasid increased the hatred and dislike for the Umayyads and their provincial governors, who tried every

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(1) Above, 39f.
(2) Above, 73, 124-131.
(3) Tabaqat (BS), vii, 2, 128; Asma', 1, 2, 102.
possible means to ensure that their subjects would accept Yazid as Caliph. (1)

At the same time a number of those who disliked the Umayyads were looking forward to see al-Husayn put his claim to the Caliphate and indeed the people of Kufa sent their messengers asking him to come to Kufa so that they might be able to swear allegiance to him as Caliph. (2) The details of what had happened after this in Kerbelä', where al-Husayn was killed, are well known; but it is noteworthy to mention that his brother Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya, as well as his cousins 'Abd-Allah b. 'Abbás and 'Abd Allah b. Ja'far had opposed his move and advised him to preserve himself and not to listen to the Shi'a of Kufa who had disappointed both his father and brother. (3)

When al-Husayn was killed the majority of the Muslims, especially the pro-'Alids of Iraq, were again looking for a spiritual as well as a political leader around whom they could polarise their opposition to the Umayyad regime which had become an unacceptable rigid tyranny.

Men like 'Abd-Allah b. as-Zubayr, al-Mukhtar b. Abi-'Ubayd and probably 'Abd-Allah b. Umar b. al-Khattab realised the need for such a leader and therefore they put themselves, one way or another, as candidates for the Muslims' leadership, whereas Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and his Hashimit family were

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(1) Tab. Tārikh (Q) vi, 189f.
(2) Magātil, 95ff; Tab. Tārikh (Q) vi, 194.
(3) Magātil, 109; Tab. Tārikh (Q) vi, 194ff.
reluctant to repeat the bitter experience of al-Hasan and al-Husayn.(1)

In the absence of a Hashimite resistance Ibn-as-Zubayr declared himself Caliph in Mecca and in fact he was able to capture all the Hijās as well as the provinces of Yemen and Iraq after the death of Yasīd in 63 A.H. The brief victory of Ibn-as-Zubayr over the Umayyads had eased the tension and the uncertainty caused by the unjust rule of Yasīd and his governors which led to the death of al-Husayn and many members of his family.

But as soon as the zealous pro-Alids felt the weakness of Ibn-as-Zubayr and his isolation from their cause, they tried to influence the course of events by joining the mission of the Penitents (at-Tawwâbîn), led by Sulaymân b. Surad of Khusā'î, (2) who worked for the revenge of al-Husayn's blood.

Eventually the penitent movement achieved nothing except that it paved the way for the more extreme elements of Kūfa to spread some fantastic ideas about the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. This, of course, was helped by the socio-religious and political upheaval caused by the injustice of the Umayyads. (3) The most serious example of these grievances was the suppression of the Prophet's family, the persecution of their followers, who were mainly of Yemenite origin, and their discrimination against the mawāli who now, perhaps,

(2) Tāhācat (BS) vi, 15.
(3) Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 124ff.
outnumbered the Arab of the north, (1) who were the favourites of the Umayyads.

The increase of the opposition to the Umayyads and consequently the support for the 'Alids made the Caliph and his provincial governors more repressive. Ziyad b. Abī-hālīfī, whom Mu‘āwiya lately claimed as his brother, repeatedly imposed curfews on Kūfah after the revolt of Hujr, (2) people were prevented from gathering in large numbers and were subject to interrogation. There was a famous saying attributed to Abū-Is'haq as-Sabī'ī that,

"people had suffered humiliation when al-Hasan b. 'Alī died and Ziyād was claimed to be the son of Abū-Sufyān and when Hujr b. Addi was killed." (3)

This atmosphere of political oppression was suitable for the growing of myths and legends. For instance, Harthama b. Sālim, (4) 'Urwat al-Bāriqī (5) and Sa‘īd b. Wahb spread (6) Traditions that 'Alī himself prophesied the death of al-Husayn in Kerbela. Similar prophecies or miracles were also attributed to 'Alī by Maytham at-Tammar (7) and 'Abd-Khayr al-

(1) Formative Period, 45ff; Arab Kingdom, 69ff.
(2) Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 111ff.
(3) Maqātil, 76; cf. Ibn Abi-'l-Hadīd, Nahāj, iv, 18.
(4) Ishtiqāq, 199; Siyyīn, 152.
(5) Siyyīn, 152.
(6) Siyyīn, 152. This man was called the "tick because of his adherence to 'Alī, see Tahdb, iv, 95f.
(7) Isāba, iii, 504; quoted by Shaybī, Sīla, 87.
Hamadānī. (1) Even the natural death of Ziyād b. Abī-hi (d. 53 A.H.) which was one of the dearest wishes of the Kūfites, was said to be caused by a legendary animal called an-Naqqād. (2)

Many people, especially in Kūfa, were attracted by these legendary beliefs because they found satisfaction in them; indeed some people found that they were able to justify their quiescence and betrayal of al-Hasan and al-Husayn. Some even invented prophecies attributed to the Prophet, ‘Alī and al-Hasan which said that Mu‘awiya would win the fight for the Caliphate. The example of this is found in the narrative of Sufyān b. al-Layl (3) who claimed that he came to al-Hasan, after he abdicated to Mu‘awiya, and told him that he had humiliated the Believers. Al-Hasan’s reply to this was:

“We are a family who would follow the truth if we knew it; and I heard my father ‘Alī say that he heard the Prophet say: ‘the days and nights shall not pass unless my nation is united under a man who ... had a big throat and who would eat without satisfaction.” (4)

(1) Sīfīn, 152. Cf. Tab. Tārikh, iii, 2529.
(2) See Mas‘ūdī, Nūrūj, ii, 69. Quoted from Sīla, 87.
(4) Some sources recorded Traditions in which the Prophet allegedly condemned Mu‘awiya. See Ibnu-Hajar al-Haytāmī, Taṣ‘īr al-Janān, a treatise in which he defended Mu‘awiya against these claims. Edited on the margin of Sawā‘iq, Cairo, 1312 A.H.
(referring to Mu‘āwiya). I swear by God that I do not like to possess the whole world with one drop of blood. I heard my father say that he heard the Prophet say: 'he who loves us with his heart and supports us with his hand and tongue will be with me in ‘Ilīiyīn (the uppermost heaven); and he who loves us with his heart and supports us with only his tongue will be in the second position in heaven, and he who loves us with his heart and could not support us with his hand or tongue will be in the next position.'

It is very interesting to note that the narrator of this hadīth has quoted another hadīth (with some modification) which is often used by some orthodox 'Ulema to justify their quietism and their acceptance of "any actual or 'de facto' authority" (with some modification)

by their classification of the obligation of "commanding the right and prohibiting the wrong" (or al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa n-nahy 'an al-munkar).

The quoted hadīth indicates that this obligation could be fulfilled in a man's heart even if he could not fulfil it with his tongue and hand. That is because "commanding the right

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(1) Mizān, ii, 171: Maqātil, 67f; A‘yān ash-Shī‘a, xxxv, 183-5.
(2) It is possible that the hadīth of Sufyān is prior to the Sunnite one.
(3) Formative Period, 48.
and prohibiting the wrong" require a positive attitude toward the unjust rulers who fail to apply the Shari'a and this positive attitude involves using hand (force) and tongue (speech) therefore, it is assumed that the hadith might be exploited for apologetical reasons.

This suggestion can be supported further by another hadith, which is also attributed to Sufyân. He claimed that al-Hasan gave him the good tidings of a coming Mahdi whom he called Imam al-phaqq. (1)

If the attribution of these hadiths to Sufyân is correct, it confirms my earlier point that some section of the pro-'Alids were prepared, at this early time, to look for another Mahdi; a Mahdi who would not involve them in any revolutionary moves, as al-Husayn did, but the one who would believe in a cautious and waiting policy or, in a modern expression, 'Fabian tactics'.

After the death of al-Hasan and martyrdom of al-Husayn, their third brother, Muhammad Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, was the only suitable 'Alid to be the wanted Mahdi. (2) The policy of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, as it was understood from the reports of Ibn-Sa'd and some other scholars who wrote his biography, (3) was to let the Umayyad regime collapse without any interference and this, of course, was the same desire of a large number of the pro-'Alids at that time. Ibn-al-Hanafiyya confirmed his policy when

(1) Magātil, 67.
(2) He was the only adult survivor of the Family after al-Husayn.
(3) Tabaqāt (BS), v, 70; Tahdhīh, ix, 354.
he advised those who wanted to fight the Umayyads to be "like a dove of the holy temple of Mecca until the time comes."(1)

The following statement, attributed to him, is also in line with this policy:

"God bless he who controls himself, his hand and tongue and stays away (at home); then he will be rewarded for his patience if he is still faithful to his beloved (the Prophet's family). Surely the bad deeds of the Umayyads are quicker (in their self-destruction) than the sword of the opposing Muslims. Surely the sovereignty of the righteous will be established (on earth) by God when He wills. He who waits until this comes will be with us in the top, and he who dies will find God's paradise better and immortal."(2)

Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was also said to have put it clearly that he was not seeking power but that he would only accept the Caliphate on condition that there should be no argument, even between only two Muslims, about his leadership. (3) He, sometime, expressed his hope that the Caliphate might be brought to "the Family" as the bride used to be brought to her groom. (4)

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(1) Tabaqat (BS) v, 70.

(2) Tabaqat (BS) v, 70. The authenticity of this hadith might be questioned.

(3) Tabaqat (BS) v, 76f.

(4) Tabaqat (BS) v, 70. Therefore we can say that Sa'ad Muhammad Hasan was not right in claiming that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was collaborating with al-Mukhtar, see his book Mahdiyya, 97-106.
The last statement, then, left the door open for any individual or group of Muslims to work for the unity of the Muslim community in the name of the Prophet's family.

This made it possible for al-Mukhtār b. Abī-'Ubayd of Thaqīf to claim the agency of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya who was perhaps, already, thought to be the expected Mahdi. Al-Mukhtār was a man of high intelligence and many other skills. He gained experience through his association with many groups. He was first among 'Ali's followers, then he became a Kharijite and after that he joined al-Husayn's movement and was arrested and exiled. After the martyrdom of al-Husayn, he joined Ibn-as-Zubayr in Mecca but after a short time he slipped back to Kūfa disappointed with Ibn-as-Zubayr. In Kūfa he was imprisoned for the second time, this time by Ibn-as-Zubayr's provincial governors of Kūfa. From his prison he wrote to try and divert the Penitents' movement into another direction by persuading them that something should be done, for the sake of the Family and Muslims as a whole, other than a suicidal mission to atone for their betrayal of al-Husayn.

Apparently, he failed to stop the Penitents' revolt, but he succeeded in convincing some of them, as well as a large

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(1) Tāḥḥīd, 189; Ibn-Abī- Bakr quoted this from Kitāb al-'Umma of Abū- Nu‘aym al-Isfahānī.
(2) Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 147.
(3) Tab. Tārīkh (Q) v, 569-571.
(4) Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 147.
(5) Tab. Tārīkh (A), v, 560ff; vi, 7f.
number of the Kūfites, to join him to implement the following programme:

"Appliance of the Qur'ānic rules, following the Sunna or the standard practice of the Prophet, vengeance for 'the Family', defence of the weak and the Jihād against the evildoers." (1)

It is a common belief, especially among the Western scholars (2) that al-Mukhtār is the first originator of the idea of Mahdism in Islam, but this belief is simply incorrect because when al-Mukhtār came to Kūfa, he found it familiar to the idea and prepared to accept any such claim. (3) As Bernard Lewis admitted, Kūfa was "a city well fitted by circumstances to be the starting point and centre of such a movement." (4) That is because the extreme messianic ideas were well known since the time of 'Aīl. The proof for this, in addition to what was already being said about the Kūfites' belief in 'Aīl's messianic qualities, is found in the poetry of the first century Shī'a, which suggests that the good tidings of the Mahdi were transmitted by the narrators.

Kuthayyir 'Assa (d. about 105 A.H.) was already quoted above as saying that the news of al-Mahdi came to him from Ka'b. (5)

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(1) Formative Period, 44. Cf. Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 569.
(3) Above, 71.
(4) Origin of Ismā'īlim, 26.
(5) Above, 27ff; Ashārī, ix, 16.
Al-Sayyid al-Himyarī also emphasized in his poetry the role of the early narrators in spreading the news of a coming Mahdi. (1) Whether or not these claims are true, they are enough in themselves to indicate that the people of Kūfa were speculating about the coming of a Mahdi some time before al-Mukhtar. It is very interesting to note that some of the Kūfites even applied the term Mahdi for men who were not originally from the Prophet's family, whereas the existing Traditions prophesied the coming of a Mahdi from only this family. The example of those alien Mahdis are found in Ibn-Sa'd who said that some people believed that Mūsā b. Talha b. 'Ubayd-Allāh, a contemporary of al-Mukhtar and Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, was the Mahdi. (2)

Ibn-Sa'd also mentioned that Bilāl b. 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar b. al-Khattāb, another contemporary, was believed to be the Mahdi. (3)

More interesting is the argument of those who opposed al-Mukhtar and refuted his claim to be the agent of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and his (disputable) allegation that he is a prophet himself. (4) For instance, the poet al-Mutawakkil al-Laythī suggests that al-Mukhtar was neither the agent of Ibn-al-

(1) Ashārī, vii, 236; cf. below, 179ff.
(2) Tabaqāt (BB), v, 120.
(3) Tabaqāt (BB), v, 243; cf. above, 106.
(4) It was said that al-Mukhtar claimed to be a prophet to his closest friends and he was trying to imitate the style of the Qur'ān, cf. above, 77f.
(5) Tab. Tarīkh, 11, 686, 705.
Hanafiyya, nor was he a prophet, but that he was worse than the eschatological figure of *ad-Dajjal*. (1) The poet adds:

"If the knowledge of the unseen was with your friend (al-Mukhtar) then the news of this matter would have come to you through the narrative of the *ahbār* (of the Jews). It would have been a clear matter in the past through the *anbā'*, and the *akhbār*. (2)

The poet's reference to *ahbār*, *ad-Dajjal*, *anbā'*, (narrators) and *akhbār* indicates that the people of his time were under the influence of the so-called Qussās and the narrators of Malāhīm, who were affected by the *Isrā'Iliyyat*. Indeed, it is assumed from Tabarī that when al-Mukhtar came to Kūfa there was at least one special place for Qussas in one of Kūfa's mosques. (3)

It might be understood from the poet's argument that the claims of al-Mukhtar are entirely false. However, al-Mukhtar did not invent all the Messianic ideas which were applied to Ibn-al-Hanafiyya; he simply tried to make use of them. The evidence for this is the acceptance of the Yemenite tribes as well as the *mawālī* of his claims that he was the agent of Ibn-

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(1) In the Muslim Tradition *ad-Dajjal* is one-eyed; and coincidentally al-Mukhtar has lost one eye (see Tab. *Tarīkh*).

In the Jewish Tradition, *ad-Dajjal* also is one-eyed and is called "armilus" or "the encounter" of the real Messiah.


(2) Tab. *Tārīkh* (Q), vi, 70f.

(3) Tab. *Tārīkh* (Q), vi, 48. Cf. art. "Isrā'Iliyyat" *E.I.* (2)
al-Hanafiyya, the Mahdi. For instance, Sa'id b. Munqidh, ath-Thawrî, Si'r of Hanîfa, Aswad b. Jarîd of Kinda, 'Abd-ar-Rahmân b. Shurayh of Shaybân and Qudama of Jam'î went to Mecca to ask Ibn-al-Hanafiyya his opinion of the claims of al-Mukhtâr. When they found Ibn-al-Hanafiyya not hostile to al-Mukhtâr they came back to Kûfâ intending to support al-Mukhtâr in his claims, the latter made use of those emissaries when he called the pro-'Alid to a general meeting and told them that some Shi'a came back from Imam al-haqq whom he called the wellbred chosen and son of the best of all men etc. The point is that when al-Mukhtâr ended his speech 'Abd-ar-Rahmân b. Shurayh of Shaybân, one of the emissaries' leaders, stood up and confirmed that al-Mukhtâr was the agent of "al-Mahdi b. 'Ali\). It should be mentioned that he did not have to convince them of the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya but only to confirm the agency of al-Mukhtâr.

Another example was that when al-Mukhtâr made his first contact with Ibrâhîm b. al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i, the very influential Yemenite leader in Kûfâ, he sent him some of his Yemenite friends to urge him to join al-Mukhtâr who had come to Kûfâ as agent of the Mahdi. When they came back to al-Mukhtâr and told him that Ibrâhîm was still hesitant to accept him, he

(1) These men are either of Yemenite origin or of the Rabi'a who were the allies of the Yemenites.
(2) Tab. Tarîkh (Q), vi, 16.
(3) This is not Ibrâhîm an-Nakha'i, the famous scholar. He is the son of al-Ashtar, one of the commanders of 'Ali's forces in Siffin.
went himself with a delegation (among them was the famous scholar ash-Sha’bî)\(^1\) and a forged letter which read thus:

"In the name of God ... From the Mahdi
Muhammad to Ibrâhîm b. al-Ashtar, peace be to you! In your presence I thank God who has no partner ... I have sent to you my aid my trustee and intimate friend whom I chose for myself and advised him to fight my enemies ..."\(^2\)

After some hesitation Ibn-al-Ashtar accepted al-Mukhtâr and the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya; and this acceptance indicated that the idea of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya's Mahdism was very popular and generally current among the Yemenites and their allies from the Rabi'a and the mawâli'.

If this argument was accepted, would it then be possible for us to establish any link between the followers of al-Mukhtâr, whom the heresiographers called al-Mukhtarîyya or sometimes al-Kaysâniyya,\(^3\) and between the earlier Saba'îyya who had similar messianic ideas. This hypothesis will be examined in the next chapter.

\(^{1}\) *Tab. Tārika* (Q), vi, 16f.

\(^{2}\) Al-Mukhtâr used the word Mahdi for Ibn-al-Hanafiyya on several occasions. *Tab. Tārika* (Q), vi, 16ff.

\(^{3}\) These two terms will be explained below, 155ff.
CHAPTER IV

AL-KAYSANIYYA: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN EARLY AND LATE DEVELOPMENT OF MAHDISM

1. Mahdism as a Bridge for Political Struggle

It has been shown in the previous chapter how the claims of al-Mukhtar that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was the Mahdi were met in Kūfa with great enthusiasm. In a relatively short time al-Mukhtar was able to win the support of the Kūfites and to mobilise them, mainly against the Umayyads, (1) in an army of several thousands by which he was able to control Kūfa. (2) In the year 66 A.H. al-Mukhtar was able to send his forces twice to fight the Syrians. Eventually his forces defeated the Syrians and killed the former governor of Kūfa, 'Ubayd-Allah b. Ziyād, along with many others who were responsible for the murder of al-Husayn. (3)

In the name of Mahdism al-Mukhtar was able, for the first time in Islamic history, to establish a state which, although it did not last for long, yet cut off the whole eastern part of the Islamic Caliphate. (4) He, therefore, became a competitor for the leadership of the Muslims along with 'Abd-al-Malik b.

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(1) Beside the Umayyads there were Ibn-as-Zubayr and the chiefs of Kūfa.
(2) Kūfa was at this time under the control of Ibn-as-Zubayr.
(3) For more information see Tab. Tarīkh incident of years 66 and 67 A.H.
(4) Akhbār, (Dinaw), 286ff.
Yarwan who controlled Syria and Egypt, and 'Abd-Allah b. as-Zubayr who controlled Hijas and Yemen. The difference between al-Mukhtar and his two competitors was that, while they introduced themselves plainly as candidates for the Caliphate, he was reluctant to do so, claiming that he was only an agent of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, working for the establishment of his leadership. It is clear from several historical reports\(^1\) that when al-Mukhtar made his claims for Ibn-al-Hanafiyya he was not interested in his Mahdism as much as in hiding his political aspirations. This also might be the case with the later claimants, such as Hamsa b. 'Amara and Bayan b. Sim'an, who had similar ambitions. For instance, when Ibn-al-Hanafiyya showed his readiness to come to Kufa to join his victorious agent al-Mukhtar, the latter ridiculed, or rather threatened him, by claiming to his Kufite associates that a sign of "the true" Mahdi should be that his body would not be harmed when the sword strikes him. Ibn-al-Hanafiyya who was, until then, living under the oppression of Ibn-as-Zubayr in Mecca, understood the hint that he would not only be unwelcome to al-Mukhtar but if he went to Kufa he might be killed. Therefore, he changed his plan, preferring to stay under the yoke of Ibn-as-Zubayr in Mecca rather than go to Iraq to share the power of al-Mukhtar which was originally supposed to be his.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Tab. Tārīkh (Q) v, 571-3; vi, 12-14, 97ff.  
Magātil, 125.  

\(^2\) Tabagāt (RS) v, 74; Faru (Bagh.) 47, cf. Mahdiyya, 102.
Dr. Kāmil Mustafā al-Shaybānī notices that al-Mukhtar was the pioneer of the extremists who came after and who claimed the agency of one Imam or another. (1) They all had in common Mahdism, or sometimes the claim of prophethood which was connected with Mahdism, as a bridge for their political ambition. We shall see how they developed the concept of transference of charisma from among the Prophet's Family to themselves. Instead of mere "political agency", they claimed their spiritual parenthood (wasiyya) which is more emphatic and significant than "the agency". (2)

2. The Link between the Saba'iyya and the Kaysāniyya

In order to find a sound explanation of the similarities in the ideas of the Saba'iyya and the Kaysāniyya, and to find justification for the enthusiastic reception which al-Mukhtar had in Kūfa, (3) one should try to find satisfactory answers to some questions: firstly, to what extent the existing socio-religious and political situation which al-Mukhtar promised to change was unacceptable? and secondly were al-Mukhtar's messianic ideas a continuation of old beliefs?

To answer the first question, one should recall al-Mukhtar's programme for action (quoted above) (4) in which he

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(1) Sila, 100ff.
(2) Below, 169ff.
(3) See above, 139ff.
(4) Above, 150.
promised:

"Appliance of the rules of the Qur'ān and Sunna, vengeance of the Prophet's Family; defence of the weak and jihad against evildoers."(1)

It was largely believed that the Umayyads, who succeeded the first four Caliphs (the Rashidūn), did not observe the rules of the Qur'ān and Sunna. They, for instance, abandoned free election to the Caliphate, through shūra, in order to establish their family; they practised favouritism in their policies which divided the Arab tribes into ruling class and masses; they added wood to the fire of tribalism between the northern and the Yemenite tribes to keep themselves above the antagonistic parties as arbitrators and hence maintain their control; they prevented al-mawālī, or the non-Arabs who accepted Islam, from having the equal political rights which Islam grants them;(2) and, lastly, they severely suppressed the Prophet's Family and their sympathisers who they thought were potentially serious opposition.(3)

These and many others were the bad mistakes which the Umayyad rulers made, and which makes them unacceptable to the

(1) Defence of the weak implied that al-Mukhtār is committed to the mawālī cause; see Formative Period, 44-47.
(2) For example, the mawālī were prevented pension (‘atī) and they were subject to heavy tax. See Arab Kingdom, 243ff.
(3) Especially after the move of Hujr b.‘Addī in 51 A.H. and that of al-Husayn ten years later.
pious and the distinguished Muslims as well as to the oppressed masses, especially the people of Iraq, a large number of whom were Mawālī. The questions of the suppression of al-mawālī (which has been studied in detail by the modern western orientalists), (1) and of the persecution of the Prophet's Family, were more crucial in the history of this period than any other issue; added to these were the Umayyads' atrocities against the holy cities of Mecca and Medina during Yazīd's time.

Prior to the movement of al-Mukhtar there were numerous risings against the Umayyads. One can cite the Kharijites' risings; the emergence of the Zubayrites as an independent force which sought the revival of Islam as it was practised in the time of ar-Rashīdīn; the several pro-‘Alid revolts like that of 'Abd b. ‘Adda, al-Husayn b. ‘Alī and lastly that of Sulaymān b. Surad of Khusā'ī. All these risings indicate clearly the dissatisfaction and discontent of the large proportion of Muslims with the Umayyads. (2) By the time of al-Mukhtar's emergence in Kūfa, the hatred against the Umayyads was at its climax; but for the misfortune of the Islamic revivalism the ideas which dominated Kūfa were not totally Islamic. Therefore we found al-Mukhtar appealing not only to the clear facts of the Qur'ānic teachings, ignored by the Umayyads, but to legendary thinking obsessed by the messianic ideas in the sub-conscious of the mawālī and their Yemenite associates.

(1) Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom; Van Vloten, Arab Domination; Watt, W.M., Integration and Formative Period.
(2) Tab. Tārīkh, years 59-68.
At this point, it is convenient to answer the question, "Were al-Mukhtār's ideas a continuation of old beliefs?" To answer this, one needs to compare his ideas or, more accurately, his followers' ideas, and that of the Saba'iyya which were discussed more fully in Chapter III.\(^{(1)}\)

Before one attempts to make this comparison it is better to clarify the confusion that exists in relation to the Mukhtariyya and the Kaysāniyya, both of which were until now believed to be invented for the followers of al-Mukhtār. The cause of this confusion is the pejorative usage of such names in early period Islamic history.\(^{(2)}\)

It is clear from the etymological analysis of the word Mukhtariyya that it is a combination of the name al-Mukhtār plus the Arabic syllable "iyya" which is equal to the English syllable "ism" when it normally added to a name of an ideologist.\(^{(3)}\) The same can be said about al-Kaysāniyya which is obviously taken from the name of an obscure person called Kaysān. There is no argument that al-Mukhtariyya are the followers of al-Mukhtār, whereas this argument exists in the case of al-Kaysāniyya, which has various explanations, as we shall see in the course of this discussion.

It is of great significance to this study to know whether

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\(^{(1)}\) Above, 36-106.

\(^{(2)}\) Below, 283ff; Formative Period, 45.

\(^{(3)}\) Note that this formation is not confined to ideology but can also be used for the attribution to a clan, i.e. the Mudāriyya and the Hāshimiyya; cf. below, 187.
or not there is any difference between the Mukhtāriyya and the Kaysāniyya in order to be able to trace the development of the messianic ideas attributed to them. It is also almost certain that any idea attributed to al-Mukhtāriyya after the death of al-Mukhtār in 68 A.H., is not his own, because there is a very remote possibility that he was concerned about what would happen to Ibn-al-Hanafiyya after al-Mukhtār's unexpected defeat and death in Küfa. This is supported by the fact that al-Mukhtār was not interested in telling his followers what sort of Mahdi Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was! The available historical material does not say more than that he claimed to be the agent of the Mahdi and nothing was said about the function of this Mahdi. (1) It is most likely that al-Mukhtār deliberately preferred to leave the Küfites with their old beliefs and imagination of a coming messianic time in which Ibn-al-Hanafiyya or any other 'Alid would be the figure-head; (2) meanwhile, al-Mukhtār concentrated on the means by which he could maintain his power and credibility. The badāʾ doctrine, for example, has a close relation to this. (3)

With regard to al-Kaysāniyya, all the explanations of the name accept that it is attributed to a man called Kaysān, but there is much dispute about who this Kaysān was. Some scholars say that he was al-Mukhtār b. Abī-‘Ubayd himself.

(1) Tab. Tarīkh (Q), vi, 16ff. Faraq (Bagh.) 23-38ff. Firaq (Nawb.) 20ff.
(2) Cf. above, 147-149.
they give more than one reason why he was so called. (1) Other opinion is that this Kaysän is a mawla of 'Ali b. Abī-Tālib who instructed al-Mukhtār, encouraged him to avenge al-Husayn's blood, and eventually informed him about his killers. (2) The third opinion is that this Kaysän was "almost certainly the man with the kunya Abū-'Amra, who was the most distinguished of the mawālī supporting al-Mukhtār and chief of his bodyguard." (3) As these reports seem to contradict each other, some of them must be discounted. I believe that the first one can be excluded because there is insufficient historical material to support it. There remains the second and third opinions. The second one which says that Kaysän is the mawla of 'Ali seems to be sound because it is expected that such a man, whose name was given to a serious sect, should have witnessed 'Ali and followed him and such a member's authority and loyalty would not be questioned; but, against this, is the report of Abū-Mikhnaf who listed Kaysän the mawla of 'Ali among those who were killed in Siffin about 38 A.H. (4)

It is possible that the report of Abū-Mikhnaf is not accurate (5) and that Kaysän who, at the time, was called Abū-

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(1) Faraq (Bagh.) 23, 38; Mawālī (Ash) 1, 18, Milal (Shahr. W.) 1, 147ff.
(2) Fisal, The Origin of Ismā'īlism, 27.
(3) Formative Period, 45.
(4) Tab. Fārikh, 1, 3293.
(5) The report seems to be pro-Husaynids against the Hasanids.
'Amra lived until the time of al-Mukhtār and that, for political reasons, he changed his walā' and added to his name the kunya Abū-'Amra. Another possibility is that 'Alī had two mawla(1) both of whom were called Kaysān, (2) the first Kaysān was killed in Siffin and the second survived and he is the same Abū-'Amra who lately associated himself with the tribe of 'Urayna.

Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence for both suggestions, but ash-Shahrastānī, whose account is usually accurate, seems to have extra information which led him to state that:

"Al-Kaysāniyya are the followers of Kaysān, the mawla of the Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī."(3) Ash-Shahrastānī suggests that this same Kaysān was said to have been studying (fatawmadhā) under the care of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya; and his followers believed in him ... that he possessed all the secret knowledge from the two lords (‘Alī and his son Ibn-al-Hanafiyya); and accordingly there is no Kaysān other than Abū-'Amra the leader of the mawla.(4)

If this account is accurate, it is now convenient to go back to the second question with which this discussion was opened: "Were al-Mukhtār's messianic ideas a continuation of old beliefs?"

Consideration of the following points could make the answer affirmative:

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(1) Abū-'Amra was called mawla of 'Urayna, a branch of the Yemenite tribe Bajila. See Tab. Tarīkh, ii, 634ff; Ishtigāq, 226, 515.
(2) 'Alī had also had two sons, both of whom were called Muhammad. Cf. above, 138.
(3) Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 147ff.
(4) Sīla, 116f. Cf. Tab. Tarīkh, index, 484.
(i) The historical reports in Tabari confirm that the followers of al-Mukhtar were called Saba'iyya. Sources earlier than Tabari also support the identification of the Mukhtar-iyya and Kayssaniyya with Saba'iyya. This is clear from the work of al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya (d. 99 A.H.) entitled Kitab al-Iri'a', which has lately been discovered and edited by Josef Van Ess.

(ii) It was shown above that a large proportion of the Saba'iyya were compelled by circumstances, especially due to mutual disappointment between them and 'Ali, to develop their belief in his Mahdism and then called him Dabbat al-arid. When they saw the time was opportune they supported the claims of Kaysan and al-Mukhtar that the Mahdi was Ibn-al-Hanafiyya.

(iii) Kaysan, the inspirer of al-Mukhtar, was said to be a mawla and pupil of 'Ali. Therefore, he is a good link between the earlier and late extremists. This is borne out by the fact that his life and activities were very obscure.

(iv) Al-Mukhtar himself emphasized the fact that his ideas, which sometimes seemed to be unorthodox, had had their

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(1) Tab. Tarih (Q) vi, 24f, 83; al-Malati, Tanbih, 14ff, Sila, 100.

(2) Al-Hasan was an opponent of ShI'a and in particular the Kayssaniyya whom he nick-named the Saba'iyya. His work, Kitab al-Iri'a', was known to Dhahabi, Tar. Islam, iii, 359, and to Ibn-Hajar, Tahdhib, ii, 320. Ess, J.V., edited the work with an introduction in an art. entitled "Das Kitab al-Irga'", Arabica (1974, Leiden) xxi, 20.

(3) Above, 109-122.
roots in the old beliefs. (1) For instance, when he invented the heresy of "the chair of 'Alī"(2) he compared it with "the ark" or the tabūt of the Israelites and added that "everything happening in this nation (umma) must have had its equivalent in the previous nations", referring to the Jews and Christians who were the sources of the Saba'ite ideas.(3)

(v) Al-Mukhtar always showed his respect and reliance on the Malakim stories which were normally taken from the Isrā'iliyyat. (4)

(vi) His ideas were embodied in the larger movement of the Kaysāniyya which was in existence before his appearance and after his death.

(vii) More significant is the comparison between the messianic ideas and origin of the Saba'iyya on the

(1) Tab. Tarikh (Q) vi, 82f; cf. the Tradition which says that this nation is following the footsteps of the previous nations. Sila, 110f.

(2) Tabarī gave details of the story of 'Alī's Chair; he said that al-Mukhtar had asked once the family of Ja'da b.Habira, whose mother was Umm-Hāni' the sister of 'Alī, to bring him one of 'Alī's Chairs; they apologised that they did not have one, but after al-Mukhtar's insistence they realised that any chair would be accepted as a relic. Thereafter the Saba'iyya dressed the chair with garment and silk and worshipped it. Among the tribe who participated in this worship were Nahd, Shakîr and Khārîf. See Tab. Tarikh (Q) vi, 82-85.

(3) Above, 48ff. 52f.

(4) Above, 99ff., Akhbār, (Dinaw), 293. 102f.
one hand and those of the Kaysāniyya on the other. After such comparison Wellhausen(1) confirmed that the latter was an off-shoot of the Saba‘iyya. His view can be summarised as follows:

“There were both from the Yemenites and the mawāli‘; they both inhabited the same place, Kūfa; they shared the belief in wasiyya and the charismatic nature of an ‘Alid Imām; they believed in “the concealment” and raj’ā of this Imām after death as Mahdi; they were rejected by the distinguished ‘Alids for their extremist views.”

Friedlaender, (2) another western scholar, was not enthusiastic about the idea of the link between the Saba‘iyya and the Kaysāniyya. Although he criticised Wellhausen, yet he admitted that there are similarities between the messianic ideas of the two groups; he thought that these similarities did not mean that the two implied the same thing. The differences which he noticed were that the Saba‘iyya waited for the raj’ā of ‘Alī, while the Kaysāniyya waited for the raj’ā of his son Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya; the Saba‘iyya had its Mahdi (‘Alī) in heaven, the lightning is his whip and the thunder is his voice, while the Mahdi of al-Kaysāniyya is in earth in Mount Radwa and his weapon is an earthly one (horses

(1) Arab Kingdom, 67ff., 501-504.
and flag etc.). (1) Friedlaender added that the cause of this confusion between Saba'īyya and Kaysāniyya was the attribution of the followers of al-Mukhtār to the tribe of Saba' which can be mixed up with the attribution to the heretical sect of the Saba'īyya. (2)

I believe that Friedlaender was not right in his criticism. Firstly, because the followers of al-Mukhtār were not all of Yemenite origin. Secondly, I found that the term Saba'īyya was used in relation to the followers of al-Mukhtār, not in the ordinary sense, as he suggested, but in the pejorative one. More significant is that this pejorative usage was found in the poetry of al-`A`shā al-Hamadānī, who, as a Saba'i by descent, certainly did not mean the original meaning of Saba'i. (3) Thirdly, the two points of divergence between the Kaysāniyya and the Saba'īyya, which Friedlaender mentioned, can be explained in the light of the analysis of Saba'īyya which was introduced in Chapters II and III. It was mentioned that the Saba'īyya were not simply a heretical sect created by one individual, namely Ibn-Saba', but were a very wide socio-religious phenomenon developing in various forms in various periods. (4)

It is worth mentioning that in late Shi'ite thought, if

(1) Reference to the poem of Kuthayyir, Aghānī, viii, Shi'ite Religion, 101.
(2) Z.A., xxiv, (1910) 17. Also cf. above, 58ff.
(3) Tab. Tārikh (Q) vi, 83f.
(4) Above, 36ff., 107.
a certain group rejected the idea of development with time, or in other words, rejected the continuation of wasiyya, this group would be called the wāqifīyya or those who confined their loyalty to one Imām and waited for his raj'ā. (1)

In this manner one can say that a small group of ‘Alī's followers were wāqifīyya and they maintained the name "Saba'īyya" despite the fact that the majority had changed their loyalty to his son Ibn-al-Hanafiyya (2) and changed their name to the Kaysāniyya.

Thus, it is not strange to find the Kaysāniyya modifying and re-orientating the extreme Saba'ite trend which held the divinity of ‘Alī, while those who insisted on maintaining the ideas of his divinity were regarded heretics not only by the orthodox Muslims but by the Kaysānites themselves who accepted most of their ideas. The reference here is to the Kaysānite poet as-Sayyid al-Himyarī (d. 173 A.H.) who attacked the extremists who worshipped ‘Alī despite his passing the wasiyya after his death to his son Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. (3)

In fact as-Sayyid al-Himyarī and some others, who will be mentioned later, were representing the view of only one group of the Kaysāniyya which can be regarded as somewhat moderates. Al-Kaysāniyya were united as long as their Nahdi

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(2) After the death of al-Hasan and Husayn, namely after 61 A.H.
(3) This is the Kaysānites' idea, Z.Ar., xxiv (1910) 2; cf. Ibn-'Abd-Rabbi-hi, 'Iqd.
Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was alive. It is well known that he survived, after the death of al-Mukhtar and the suppression of his movement (67 A.H.), for about 13 years during which he continued to preach the message of peace and self-control to his followers. (1) Ibn-al-Hanafiyya competed in this field with his nephew 'Ali Zayn-al-'Abidin the son of his brother al-Husayn (d. 94/712) who also rejected the use of force against the usurpers of his family. (2)

The optimistic and wise sayings of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya kept his followers united but also led them into a false hope that he might one day declare himself the Imam al-Mahdi who would sweep away the unjust rule of the Umayyad.

3. Development and Division of al-Kaysaniyya

When Ibn-al-Hanafiyya died before achieving these hopes, his followers al-Kaysaniyya were divided into three groups:

(i) Those who believed that he did not die, but he was in "concealment" and his hiding place was Mount Radwa (3) and he would "return" as a Mahdi to abolish oppression and establish justice.

(ii) The Karbiyya, who followed Ibn-Karb and another man

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(1) For some examples of this see above, 148.
(2) For more information about this see below, 217ff.; Shi'ite Religion, 101ff.
(3) Mt. Radwa is in Hijaz, some miles from Mecca.
called Hamza b. 'Umara al-Barbari, also believed that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was not dead but concealed (they mention no place for his concealment). Hamza, a mawla, who was said to be a resident of Medina and probably of Kufa for some time, developed this belief further by claiming that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was God and that he was his prophet. This is similar to the notion of the Saba'iyya regarding 'Ali.

(iii) The last group were called al-Hassimiyya, (not to be mixed up with the Hassimiyya, the clan of Hashim), the followers of Abü-Hassim the son of Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya. They believed that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya had delegated the leadership or the wasiyya to his son who seemed to have won and re-organized the large proportion of the Kaysaniyya. Some of his followers, like Bayân b. Sim'ân (d. 119 A.H.) and 'Umar b. Abî-'Affî (d. about 119 A.H.) also believed that he was the Mahdi; Bayân later claimed that he was the prophet of Abü-Hassim and this perhaps indicates that he believed in his divinity.

(1) Maqalat (Ash) i, 19; Maqalat (Qumm.) 26f, 32ff, 56; Firaq (Hawn.) 25; Fars (Bagh.) 27. Origin of Isma'ilism, 27; Formative Period, 49.

(2) See the distinction between them in the Formative Period, 39, 154.

(3) Maqatil, 126. Tarīkh (Ya'q.) iii, 98; Milal (Shahr.W.) i, 150ff; Sīla, 118.

(4) Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 153.
Before discussing the importance of this last group in the history and development of Mahdism, the first two groups, which are equally important, will be commented upon. Mentioning some names would help in doing so; but, regarding the first group, one notices that it, unlike the other two, has no name other than Kaynâniyya and this might lead us to believe that this group was headed by Kaysan Abû-'Amra himself for some time after the death of al-Mukhtâr and Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. This assumption might be supported by the fact that the historical references which gave almost in detail the account of Kaynân's movements during the revolt of al-Mukhtâr, did not mention anything about his death, whether during the fighting or after it; this is despite of his being one of the most distinguished leaders of the revolt.

4. **People who are connected with the Kaysânîyya**

It is not possible to name all who were mentioned as being Kaynânites or Mukhtârites, but some of them are the above mentioned as-Sayyid al-Himyarî and Kuthayyir 'Assa of Khusâ'a (d. 105 A.H.) (both of whom were called the poet of Kaysânîyya), the latter's friend Khandaq al-Asadî (d. 100 A.H.) and Abû-t-Tufayl 'Amir b. Wâthilâ who is not specifically mentioned.

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(1) *Milal* (Shahr.W.) i, 153; *Magâlât* (Ash.) i, 5f, 23; *Firaq* (Nawb.), 30.

(2) *Tab. Târikh*, see index, *Akhbâr* (Dinaw), index, *Tabaqât* (BS) index.

among the Kaysāniyya, but it is understood from the following information that he was among their circles.

(a) Abū-ṯ-Tufayl Ṭāmir b. Māthila

This man was counted among the young companions of the Prophet Muhammad and was said to be the last of them to die, around the year 100 or 110 A.H. (1) Abū-ṯ-Tufayl was among those who fought Siffin with 'Alī, he was a great lover of the Family. This is clear from a statement which says that sometime after the death of 'Alī, Mu‘āwiya wished to see him and asked him how much he loved 'Alī, and how sad he was after his death. Once they met, Abū-ṯ-Tufayl answered:

"My love for 'Alī is like the love of the mother of Moses (the prophet) when she delivered him as a baby to the sea, (2) and my sorrow, after his death, is like that of elderly parents who miss their only son; and to God I complain that this is not enough." (3)

There is no mention of his political activity during the twenty four years between the murder of 'Alī and that of al-Husayn, until the movements of at-tawwābin and al-Mukhtar. After this, the sources mention that Abū-ṯ-Tufayl was in close relation with Ibn-al-Hanafiyya by the time of al-Mukhtar's

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(1) Tabagāt (88) v, 338; vi, 42; Tab. Tarīkh, ii, 1054; Aḥṣānī, xii, 159.
(2) Qur‘ān, 28:7-10.
(3) Ibn-Kathīr, Rīdāya, ix, 190.
movement. Some of these sources\(^1\) suggest that he played an important role in the movement of al-Mukhtar; certainly he was once an emissary between Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and al-Mukhtar.\(^2\)

If the attribution of the following poem to Abü-t-Tufayl is accurate\(^3\) it indicates that he believed in the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and advocated this belief even after the collapse of al-Mukhtar's movement. In this poem he urged his friends (Ibn-Sa'd suggests that there were about seven thousand troops remaining in Hijas with Ibn-al-Hanafiyya after the death of al-Mukhtar)\(^4\) not to be shaken by the sad circumstances which forced Ibn-al-Hanafiyya to leave Mecca to Ibn-as-Zubayr and accept the invitation of his rival 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān. Abü-t-Tufayl said:

\begin{quote}
O my brothers! O my Shi'a!
Do not scatter. Support the Mahdi!
Muhammad (Ibn-al-Hanafiyya) O Muhammad
of welfare!
You are the only Imām, the purified, "the divinely guided".
Certainly not Ibn-as-Zubayr ...

or even the one\(^5\) to whom we intended to ride!
\end{quote}

\(^1\) Ibn-Kathīr, Ridda, ix, 190.

\(^2\) Ashā'īr, vii, 159.

\(^3\) Farq (Bagh), 53, Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ārif, 341, Ibn-Khaldūn, 'Ibar, 1, 118.

\(^4\) Tabaqat (BS) v, 80.

\(^5\) He means 'Abd-al-Malik b. Marwān who afterwards asked Ibn-al-Hanafiyya either to swear allegiance to him or to leave his territory, cf. Tabaqat (BS) v, 79f.
It was said that Abū-ṭ-Tufayl believed in the raj'a of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya after his death, but this did not prevent some scholars from relating hadīth on his authority. Among these hadīth is one about the Mahdi which will be mentioned in Chapter VI.

(b) Khandaq al-Asadī (d. 100 A.H.)

It is said, in al-Aghsni, that Khandaq was the person who dragged Kuthayyir the poet into the movement of the Khashabiyya. The Khashabiyya was originally a name used for those who constituted the army which was sent by al-Mukhtar to release Ibn-al-Hanafiyya from the jail of Ibn-az-Zubayr. They were so called because they armed themselves with khashab or "wooden clubs" in order not to offend the sanctity of the city of Mecca. Later

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(1) Ibn-Qutayba, Ma'arif, 341; Ibn-Khaldūn, ʻIbar, i, 118.
(2) Ṭabaqāt (B3) v, 338; vi, 42; Ibn-Kathir, Bidāya, ix, 19; Usāba, iv, 207f; in Aṣnārī, xiii, 166f, he related the story of Dhī-al-Garnāy which indicate raj’a.
(3) See viii, 34.
(4) A‘yān aṣh-Shī‘a, xxx, 122. There is a suggestion that they armed themselves with wooden clubs not for the sanctity of Mecca, but because the awaited Mahdi did not proclaim himself, (cf. Ritter, H. art. "Kaysāniyya" E.A.; Formative Period, 48). The fact is what I stated above because the same people who armed themselves with khashab in Mecca were fighting with swords in Kūfa under the command of al-Mukhtār. It is interesting to note that fighting with khashab later became one of the signs of the coming Mahdi. For instance the Sudanese Mahdi (d.1880) was widely believed after winning his first battle with khashab.
the term *khashabiyya* became a nick-name for all the followers of al-Mukhtar and the Kaysāniyya; (1) and in this more general sense, it is used for Khandaq and his friend Kuthayyir. For the latter was not among the army of "the wooden clubs" but among those who were imprisoned in Mecca with Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. This perhaps indicates that the contact between Kuthayyir and Khandaq took place before this time (67 A.H.)

Very little is known about Khandaq, who like most of the *da'is* of the pro-*Alid* extremists of the time, lived in ambiguity, except that he was of the tribe of Asad, which later produced the extremist Abū-l-Khattāb al-Asadī, and that he lived in Mecca. His name is sometimes confused with that of another man called Khandaf (with خدا) whom the Shi'ite sources classified as one of ten men who were very close to 'Ali b. Abī-Tālib during his Caliphate. Al-'Āmilī, however, tried to rule out the suggestion that this Khandaf is the same Khandaq, but the matter is still debatable. Al-'Āmilī said that he saw an unconfirmed report which attributes a book to Khandaq al-Asadī. This book, he added, is called: *at-Tansī 'alā 'Ali bi-l-khilāf.* (3)

If this attribution is correct it perhaps indicates that Khandaq al-Asadī was also a contemporary of 'Alī and was one of the Saba'iyya, but, he later, like many, joined al-Kaysāniyya in Mecca. During the life of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya he was in his company.

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(1) Cf. above, 158.

(2) *'Ayn ash-Shī'a*, xxx, 118-122.

(3) *'Ayn ash-Shī'a*, xxx, 118.
along with his friends Kuthayyir and the above mentioned Abū-t-Tufayl. (1) Later, after the death of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, they all believed in his raj'a although Abū-t-Tufayl was angry with Kuthayyir for his friendly attitude towards the Umayyads; and Khandaq had to reconcile them because of the fact that Abū-t-Tufayl was threatening to kill Kuthayyir for his betrayal. (2)

Abū-l-Faraj stated (3) that Khandaq al-Asadī and Kuthayyir believed, beside the raj'a, in the transmigration of souls (tanāsukh al-arwāḥ), which was connected with some minor groups of the Kaysaniyya as will be mentioned later. (4) Sometime after the death of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, Khandaq tried to lead a movement in favour of the 'Alids. With this move came his fate in about 100 A.H. It was said that he expressed the intention to his friend Kuthayyir that he wanted to make use of the annual occasion of hajj and try to get the support of the Muslim pilgrims for the cause of the Family. Kuthayyir was said to have assured his friend Khandaq that he would support his family financially in case he was arrested or killed. This assurance made it possible for Khandaq to dare to stand and address the large crowd of pilgrims, who normally come on the 9th of Dhu-al-Hijja, from every direction, to congregate (wuqūf) on Mount 'Arafā, (5) calling them to support the 'Alids against

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(1) Aḥbānī, viii, 27-32; Farg (Bagh.) 53; Firaq (Mawb.) 29.

(2) Aḥbānī, viii, 27-32.

(3) Aḥbānī, viii, 34.

(4) Below, 183-187.

(5) 'Arafā or 'Arafāt is a sacred mount some miles from Mecca; for the rite of pilgrimage, see art. "hajj" E. I. (2)
their Umayyad usurpers. Khandaq was killed on the spot by the Umayyads. (1)

(c) **Kuthayyir b. 'Abd-ar-Rahman of Khuzā'ī**

After the killing of Khandaq nothing happened to Kuthayyir, who was highly respected by the Umayyads for his literary attainments. He was, and still is, counted among the most celebrated poets of Arabia, but in spite of the above qualities, he was said to be foolish in his religious and political extravagancy. (2) Being a Yemenite from Khuzā'ī, he found himself in an environment sympathetic towards the Family and this is why he was easily enlisted to their cause by the Kaysānite Khandaq.

Although Kuthayyir identified all his life with Shi'ism and the love of the 'Alīds, yet he was on good terms with the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd-al-Malik and his successors and, surprisingly, he dedicated a large part of his wonderful poetry to them, to the extent that Abū-al-Faraj relates the saying:

"There is no one who enriches poetry by praising the rulers like Kuthayyir." (3)

People sometimes even called him the poet of the Caliphs.

It seems that Kuthayyir was among the first pro-'Alīds who made full use of the Shi‘ite principle of at-taqiyya (dissimulation) which means that one could act against one’s religious beliefs in order to be able to live in peace and harmony with one’s

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(1) *A‘yān ash-Shi‘a*, xxx, 118-121.
(2) *Aḥāb*, viii, 27, 32.
(3) *Aḥāb*, viii, 27.
stronger opponents. In fact, such a trend was current in Shi'ism since the victory of Mu'awiya following Siffin. It was already stated above(1) that this attitude towards quietism explains many of the seemingly extremist views which were wrongly thought to be revolutionary but which were, in reality, a clever reconciliation with the de facto state.(2)

From the historical information in our possession, it appears that Kuthayyir came to sell his poems to the Umayyads after the death of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya which he, like the rest of the Kaysaniyya, denied. During Ibn-al-Hanafiyya’s lifetime, Kuthayyir was usually in his company even during his difficult days of siege in Mecca by Ibn-as-Zubayr.(3) Afterwards he travelled with him to 'Abd-al-Malik, sometime after the collapse of al-Mukhtar’s movement. Meanwhile, Kuthayyir composed many poems in which he advocated the belief that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was the promised Mahdi; an example of this was already quoted above(4) where he related the good tidings of the Mahdi on the authority of the Jewish convert Ka'b al-Ahbār.

When Ibn-al-Hanafiyya died, Kuthayyir dedicated his famous poems to proving the Kaysinite belief that he was alive and would "return" one day as the awaited Mahdi. There is no need to quote his well known verses, found in many sources and also

(1) Above, 73, 107.
(2) Formative Period, 48.
(3) Above, 174.
(4) Above, 27, 150.
translated by Nicholson, (1) in which he calls on Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. Not long before his death in 105 A.H., Kuthayyir seemed to have come in contact with the idea of transmigration of souls (tanäsukh) with which the doctrine of raj'ā is sometimes explained. Abū-al-Paraj quoted many incidents which left no room to deny that Kuthayyir until his last moment, on his death bed, believed in raj'ā and tanäsukh. (2)

(d) As-Sayyid al-Himyarī (105-173 A.H.)

If the legacy of tanäsukh is correct, and it is not likely to be so, the soul of Kuthayyir would have been passed to As-Sayyid al-Himyarī who lived between 105 and 173 A.H. (3) As-Sayyid is the last famous person to be mentioned in connection with the Kaysaniyya as such. (4) Many comparisons could be drawn between him and Kuthayyir in relation to their lives, religious beliefs and even poetical style. (5)

From his name (al-Himyarl) one notices that he was also of Yemenite origin. He was a great lover of the Prophet's Family

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(1) Donaldson, Shi'ite Religion, 101 quoting Literary History of the Arabs, 216.
(2) Ḥanīfī, viii, 34ff.
(3) Ironically the death of Kuthayyir was in 105 A.H., the same year as-Sayyid was born. Cf. Ḥanīfī, vii, 24, F. Našīrīvāt, 24.
(4) Origin of Ismā'īlim, 28-37.
(5) For example as-Sayyid quoted from Kuthayyir many verses cf. Ḥanīfī, vii, 9f.
and the 'Alid in particular. His ability to compose poetry, especially on the occasions of praising the Family, is highly respected. Many critics of Arabic poetry placed him in the first category of the immortal poets of Arabia during the second century A.H. Unfortunately, most of his work was lost because he was abandoned by the transmitters of poetry for his heretical views regarding Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and 'Alī and also for his hijā' to all those whom he regarded as usurpers including Abū-Bakr and 'Umar. (1) We can imagine how great this lost treasure of poetry was if we bear in mind that he was able to convey into poetry all the existing hadīths of his time, in which the Prophet was reported to have praised the Family. Thus, as-Sayyid used to challenge the traditionists to give him a single hadīth of this kind which he did not use in his poetical arguments. If someone accepted the challenge by giving him a hadīth he would compose a poem on the spot to include that in his poetry. (3)

Although as-Sayyid devoted himself and his poetry to the 'Alids, he, like Kuthayyir, accepted the de facto authority and even dedicated some of his poems in praise of the Caliphs. Luckily he spent most of his lifetime not under the repulsive Umayyads' rule but under the Abbāsids who, as they are of the clan of Hashim, are counted among the Family; but still there is no justification for him, from a Shi'ite or rather Kaysanite viewpoint, to praise or accept them as rulers.

(1) Ashāni, vii, 15.
(2) Cf. below, Chapter V.
(3) Ashāni, vii, 15; above, 177.
It is interesting to note that as-Sayyid had found a way, other than taqiyya, by which he justified his action; that is to say, he regarded the Abbasid rule as a preliminary step that would ultimately lead to the appearance and establishment of the authority of the awaited Mahdi (Ibn-al-Hanafiyya).

As-Sayyid expressed the view in one of his poems, composed to praise the Abbasids on the occasion of the appointment of al-Hādī (d. 170) and his brother Harūn ar-Rashīd (d. 193) as crown princes in succession, that the Abbasid dynasty would continue to rule for fifty more years and afterwards the awaited Mahdi, who would be followed by 'Isa b. Maryam, would appear. (1)

Ironically, as-Sayyid one day, perhaps about 161 A.H., composed a poem in which he invoked the concealed Ibn-al-Hanafiyya to "return" quickly because his prolonged stay (2) in Mount Radwā makes the Kaysānites the subject of mockery for their enemies.

As-Sayyid's strong belief in raj'a and tanasukh was connected with funny jokes which were recorded in the literary works of the period. Abū-al-Faraj, for instance, relates that one day a man came to make fun of as-Sayyid because of his belief in raj'a. The man asked him: "Do you believe in raj'a?"

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(1) Aghānī, vii, 14. The appointment took place in 162 A.H.
Cf. this idea with the hadīth of black banners, below.

(2) From the date which he mentioned in the poem (70 years of concealment in Radwā) we knew that he composed it about 161 A.H.; see Aghānī, vii, 32, Ibn-aj-Jawzī Muntazim, year 179; Bihar, ix, 166, 617; Maqālāt (Qumm.), 31f.
As-Sayyid answered: "Yea! and this is my faith!" The man then asked him to lend him some money until the time of raj'ā and he would then give him a 100% interest when he "returned". As-Sayyid answered quickly: "Yes! and more!! but on condition that you give me an assurance that you will "return" as a human being and not a dog or a pig! for then my money would have gone!!" (1)

This belief in raj'ā and tanāsukh indicates that as-Sayyid, like Kuthayyir, came under the influence of more extremist groups who themselves were under the influence of the Indo-Iranian ideas. A short look at the heresiographical works(2) would indicate that some forms of these ideas were adopted by the other two sub-sects of the Kaysaniyya, namely the Karbiyya and Hashimiyya which were developed by Hamza b. 'Amara, Bayān b. Sim'ān, 'Abd-Allah b. 'Amr al-Harb, 'Abd-Allah b. Mu'āwiya and their followers. (3) These groups were not away in time from Kuthayyir and as-Sayyid. In fact, more extreme elements of Shi'a who followed the Fātimite (4) line and believed in raj'ā and tanāsukh were contemporaries of as-Sayyid and Kuthayyir.

I refer here to al-Mughīra b. Sa'id al-'īlī (d. 119 A.H.)

(1) Aḥānī, vii, 8.
(2) Maqālaūt (Qumm.) 28-70; Maqālaūt (Ash.) 1, 6, 19. Milal (Shahr.); Fīraq (Nawb.).
(3) See below, 183-189.
(4) The Fātimite here meant to be the whole descendants of Fātimah and not only the Ismā'īlīs.
and Abu-Mansūr from the same tribe of 'Ijl (d. 121 A.H.).

Before the Mahdistic ideas of these groups are discussed, a final word must be said about as-Sayyid; this relates to the confirmation of Abū-al-Paraj, himself a pro-'Alids, that as-Sayyid never abandoned his Kaysanite beliefs, including those of 

raifā and tanāsukh. Abū-al-Paraj quoted many sources which denied that as-Sayyid had composed the poems, known as al-Ja'fariyyāt, in which he allegedly had repented of his extremist views. Abū- al-Paraj also related some stories which confirm as-Sayyid's belief in 

raifā and tanāsukh until his death.

Concerning al-Karbiyya who had some ideas in common with the below mentioned al-Harbiyya, there is no need to repeat how Abū-Karb ad-Darir (d. approximately 90 A.H.) rejected Abū-Hāshim and developed the belief in the concealed Mahdi, Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. Unfortunately, very little is known about this man; but Hamza b. 'Amara who followed him developed his ideas further by claiming that the charismatic qualities which were found in Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was God incarnate and he was his messenger. Hamza supports this by further claims that al-Bāqir, a great grandson of 'Alī (d. 113 A.H.) and the fifth Imam of the Twelfers, had accepted his authority and that he used to visit Hamza secretly every night.

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(1) See Naqālāt (Ash.) i, 6-9; Piraq (Nawb.) 34, 37, 52ff; Nilal (Shahr.) i, 176ff.

(2) Aghānī, vii, 5ff.

(3) Naqālāt (Qumm.), 174, editor's notes.
It was stated that many pro-'Alids in Kūfa and Medina had followed this Hamza and among his followers were Bayān b. Sim‘ān and Sā‘īd of the tribe of Nahd. After the death of Hamza, Bayān, who was killed by the Umayyad Amīr Khalid al-Qasrī in about 119 A.H., exploited his ideas which makes the transference of charisma from an ‘Alid to a non-‘Alid possible. Bayān took the doctrine of incarnation and that of transmigration of souls as the basic elements of his philosophy.

If a historical report is to be trusted, this man, and not Abū-l-Khattāb al-Asadī (d. 137 A.H.), (who will be mentioned later), was the first person to use ta‘wīl, or the esoteric interpretation of the Qurʿān, to support his personal claims in the Imamate.

For instance, he accepted the Sab‘ite heresy which makes ʿAlī a divine person; and he was probably the first person who explained the raj‘a of ʿAlī with the transmigration of his soul to his son and wasī, Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. Therefore, Bayān was able to jump to the conclusion that he possessed Ibn-al-Hanafiyya’s charisma.

The Qurʿānic verses which he quoted and re-interpreted to suit his ideas were verse 84 in sūra 43, verse 210 in sūra 2 and verse 138 in sūra 3. The first of these reads:

“He who in heaven is God and in earth is God.”

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(1) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 33; Firaq (Nawb.) 25; Milal (Shahr.) i, 150ff.
(2) Maqālāt (Ash.) i, 5f, 23; Firaq (Bagh.) 255, Milal (Shahr.W.) i, 152f.
(3) Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 152f.
(4) Cf. Shaybī, Sīla, 136-140; Origin of Ismāʿīlism, 32ff.
Bayān concluded therefore that 'Alī is God who is concealed in heaven (cloud).

Verse 210 in sura 2 reads:

"What do they look for, but God shall come to them in the cloud - shades, and the angles."

In addition, there are many reports which show how Bayān and his followers interpreted, in different ways, the transference of charismatic qualities to himself from the Imams. The report which says that he followed Abū-Karb and Hamza b. 'Amara showed that he, with them, rejected Abū-Ḥāshim, while other reports indicate that at least some of his followers accepted Abū-Ḥāshim as wasī and believed that he passed the charisma to Bayān. (1)

Bayān also is reported to have claimed that he was a prophet (probably Abū-Ḥāshim) and that the Qur'ānic verse 138 in sura 3 is referring to him. This verse says:

"This is 'an exposition' for mankind, and 'a guidance', and an admonition for such as are godfearing."

Accidentally the Arabic word which is rendered "exposition" in the translation is bayān; the verse originally referred to the Qur'ān which is described as guidance and admonition. (2)

This claim reminds us of another extremist Abū-Mansūr al-'Ijli who maintained that 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib was God. Abū-Mansūr also claimed that he himself was al-Kiff as-Sāqīt min as-samā', referring to the Qur'ānic verse 52 in sura 44 which reads:

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(1) Fīraq (Nawb.) 30; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 34, 37.

(2) Cf. Tafsīr (Tab.); Qurtubi and Rāzī.
"Even if they saw lumps falling from heaven, they would say, 'a massed cloud'!"(1)

This claim of Abū- Mansūr, who seemed not to be of Kaysanite background, (2) indicates that he also claimed divinity. In fact he stated it clearly, elsewhere, that his authority did not only come from earth through the wasiyya of the Imam al-Bāqir, the fifth Imam from Fatima line, but through his ascendance to heaven where he met God who anointed him (masaha 'ala ra'asi-hi), spoke to him in Syriac and commanded him to preach his message. (3)

It will be noticed from this statement that Abū- Mansūr, who is sometimes said to be of the tribe of 'Ijl and sometimes of 'Abd-al-Qays, had had an Aramaic as well as Christian origin, (4) and lived in an environment not far from the Persian influence; (5) and all that, of course, had its reflection on his messianic ideas which in some of their aspects can be regarded as a continuation of the former extreme messianic tendencies prevalent in Kūfa at the time.

(1) This verse condemns the non-believers who saw the clear signs but rejected them. See Rāzī, Tafsīr, vii, 688ff.
(2) This does not mean that Abū- Mansūr is isolated from the previous movement of Saba'iyya.
(3) See above, 184., cf. Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 9; Fīraq (Nawb.) 34; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 46f; Milāl (Shahr W.) i, 178.
(4) Both the tribes of 'Ijl and 'Abd al-Qays were converted to Islam from Christianity. Cf. Ibn-Hazm, Jamhara, 457f., Šīla, 353; arts. "'Ijl" and "'Abd-al-Qays" E.I. (2); above, 52f, 58f.
(5) Formative Period, 46f, 49.
To explain these different, and sometimes amazing, views of the successive claimants of charisma of Mahdism, one should bear in mind the nature of the rapid development of these foreign ideas in the society of Kūfa which already was described as the meeting place of streams of different religions and cultures.\(^1\)

Evidence for this is to be found in the ideas of the last group of the Kaysāniyya, namely al-Hashimiyya, which were parallel to those of the group who later showed their interest in the line of the Hasanīs and Husaynīs, namely al-Mughīra and Abu-al-Khattāb.

(f) Abū-Ḥāshim and the Ḥāshimiyya

As has already been said,\(^2\) Abū-Ḥāshim was able to win over a large proportion of those who believed in his father's Mahdism. The historical material studied by Dr. Kamīl Mustafā ash-Shaybī\(^3\) showed that Abū-Ḥāshim, unlike his father Ibn-al-Hanafīyya, was interested in the leadership of the Shīʿa and the Muslims as a whole. It is almost an accepted fact that Abū-Ḥāshim had tried to reorganise the Kaysāniyya and al-Mukhtarīyya; and thus, after some modification of their ideas, the new sect was named al-Ḥāshimiyya after his name.\(^4\)

Some reports show that Abū-Ḥāshim was able to establish a

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\(^{1}\) Above, 138ff.

\(^{2}\) Above, 168ff.

\(^{3}\) Sīla, 118.

\(^{4}\) Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 7, 20ff; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 38, 69, 177; Fīraq (Nawb.) 27, 46. Cf. above, 170.
secret organisation in Kūfa and Khurāsān managed by a collection of men called dā‘īs (or recruiting officers). The dā‘īs came from the same old folk of the Saba‘iyya and the Kaysāniyya whose continuous efforts to overthrow the Umayyads at last manifested themselves in the ‘Abbāsid revolution, as will be explained later.

The Sunnite as well as the Shi‘ite sources agree that Ābu-Ḥāshim had a wide knowledge of many old religious beliefs, cosmology and philosophy. (1) From this association with knowledge came his followers’ claim that he possessed the secret knowledge of prophecy, passed to him through wasīyya. There are some reports which show that Ābu-Ḥāshim tried to exploit the belief in his “secret knowledge”. Ābu-al-Faraj, for instance, relates that Ābu-Ḥāshim used to check the movement of the Kaysanite poet Kuthayyir through his spies to be able to tell him where he was and what he was doing! (2) This was perhaps to prove to Kuthayyir, who did not accept the claim of Ābu-Ḥāshim, that he was the wasī of his father and had inherited his secret knowledge. Kuthayyir, however, was convinced that Ābu-Ḥāshim could see the unseen. Therefore, he was, to him, a prophet (but not Mahdi). (3)

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(1) Tahdī, vi, 16; Naqātil, 126; Nīlal (Shahr.W.) i, 150.
He was said to have influenced the thinking of Wāsil b. ‘Atā‘; Tabagāt al-Katāsila, 16f.
(2) Aḥsanī, viii, 34.
(3) Another statement in Aḥsanī (viii, 34) shows that Kuthayyir believed that prophecy is inherited by all the members of the Family; even their small children, to him, are prophets.
If this incident regarding Kuthayyir is true, it justifies the accusation of some orthodox scholars that Abu-Hashim was an extremist and consequently his hadith is of very little value. Add to this that his contemporary, Muhammad b. Shihab as-Zuhri (d. 124 A.H.), the famous scholar, although he related the hadith on Abu-Hashim's authority, yet he said that Abu-Hashim's brother al-Hasan b. Muhammad b. al-Hanafiyya was more reliable in his hadith that Abu-Hashim. As-Zuhri accused him of collecting the hadith as-Saba'iyya, an accusation which shows his attachment to Saba'iyya.

One of the hadiths which Abu-Hashim exploited to support his messianic claims, is the one in which the prophet was reported to have said: "After each hundred years God would renew His religion through a mujaddid."(2) Abu-Hashim, however, died before the close of the first century of the Muslim era, about 97 A.H., in a place called al-Humayma near Damascus, where he went to visit his cousin Muhammad b. 'Ali b. 'Abd-Allah b. Abbas and his family who, for political reasons, exiled themselves there.(3)

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(1) Tahdh, vi, 16.

(2) Mujaddid is a reviver of religion whose appearance is expected at the close of each century. For the hadith of mujaddid see below, 201-203; Sunan (D), Trad. 4291.

(3) Akhbar (Dinaw), 332; Tab. Tarikh, index, 524; Tarikh, (Ya'q.) iii, 72.
5. **The sub-sects of the Hāshimiyya**

The sudden death of Abū-Hāshim\(^1\) was an important event both in the history of Mahdism and that of Islam, because the followers of Abū-Hāshim, whom we have seen under the influence of foreign messianic ideas, split into four groups:\(^2\)

(i) The first group claimed that Abū-Hāshim was not dead but alive and would "return" as the expected Mahdi. Among the few names which were connected with this group is that of Abū-Shujā' al-Ḥārith\(^3\); a report also shows that Bayān b. Sim'ān or his follower 'Umar b. Abī 'Afīf later adopted this view but added to it the divinity of Abū-Hāshim and the claim that Bayān is his messenger.\(^4\)

(ii) Another group maintained that Abū-Hāshim was succeeded by his brother 'Alī and that the wasiyya must always remain in his offspring until the last Imam who would be the Mahdi before the Last Day. Al-Qummi mentioned that this group were the pure Kaysāniyya.\(^5\)

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\(^1\) It was suspected that Abū-Hāshim was poisoned by the Umayyads on his way to Ḥimayma, see Maqātil, 126; Ismā’īl, ii, 107f.

\(^2\) See heresiographical works and Origin of Ismā’īlim, 28ff.

\(^3\) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 34; it seems that this man is the same 'Abd-Allah b. al-Ḥārith.

\(^4\) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 39, Miraq (Nawb.) 28ff.

\(^5\) Cf. above, 103f.; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 28; Miraq (Nawb.) 28.
(iii) The third group are the followers of 'Abd-Allah b. Mu'āwiya, a great grandson of Ja'far b. Abī-Ṭālib, 'Alī's full brother, who tried to establish his leadership in Kūfa during the last years of the Umayyads but was forced to take refuge in Mada'in where he was able to build a short lived state. Later 'Abd-Allah b. Mu'āwiya was overtaken by the 'Abbāsid revolution and killed by Abū-Musā in about 130 A.H. The significance of 'Abd-Allah and his movement is that by this time the association of Mahdism, with the Indo-Iranian idea of "divine light" is emphasised. The idea says that the divine light is always transmigrating (tamasakha) from a special body to another until the last body who would be the awaited saviour (maṣbīḥūt) or Mahdi. These ideas were propagated in Kūfa by many, but we know only one man called 'Abd-Allah b. 'Amr b. Harb (most probably a mawla) of Kinda and a former Kaysanite from Bayūn's followers. 'Abd-Allah b. Mu'āwiya being non-'Alid exploited this view as well as that of Ibn-al-Bārīth because they made it possible for him to claim the charisma.

(1) For his biography see Magātīl. 161-169, Tab. Farīkh, x, 48, 93-5; Asbāb, xi, 71ff. Also see Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 384ff, 390, 393ff, 488ff, 540, 544.

(2) Abū-al-Faraj (Magātīl, 161ff) mentioned that among his followers were some Zoroastrians (sandīqs).
(iv) The last group claimed that Abū-Ḥāshim had delegated the Imamate to the above mentioned Muhammad b. 'Ali (d. 125 A.H.) the father of the 'Abbāsid dynasty. This claim is recorded in many historical as well as heresiographical works, (1) and is supported by the statement of the early Shī'ite historians. For instance, al-Ya‘qūbi (d. 284 A.H.) said that Abū-Ḥāshim advised his "legatee" Muhammad b. 'Ali to notice the secret of the number 12 and sent his naqībs to the provinces, accordingly, to spread his da'wa. (2) Dīnawari, (3) however, mentioned that Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Abbasī had started his movement with those naqībs and conveyed to them the above-mentioned hadīth of the mujaddid but without reference to Abū-Ḥāshim. Modern research doubted the matter of this wasiya but some scholars raised some points which increased the possibility of its correctness. (4)

The circumstances showed that Abū-Ḥāshim, who headed the Hanafite line of the Family, found himself in a similar position to the 'Abbāsids who, like himself, were trying to counter the growing influence of the

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(1) Tābaqat (BS) v, 240f; Ismā‘il, ii, 107f, Mas‘ūdī, Isbrā‘, 292; Naqātil, 126; Firaq (Nawb.), Nilal (Shahr.), cf. below, 242 ff.
(2) Ya‘qūbi, Tārīkh, iii, 72.
(3) Akhbār (Dinaw.) 332f.
(4) Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 503f; Formative Period, 53, 153ff.
Hasanites and the Husaynites; of course, their influence found expression in the abortive revolts of Zayd b. 'Ali, a grandson of al-Husayn and founder of the Zaydiyya movement, (1) and the abortive revolt of Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah b. al-Hasan known as an-Nafs az-Zakiyya (pure soul) and also great grandson of al-Hasan. (2)

The revolutionary movements of those who take as their Imam Muhammad al-Baqir and his son Ja'far as-Sadiq also indicate the growing influence of the Fatimite line, because round al-Baqir and Ja'far gathered the founders of the Isma'ilism and the predecessors of the Twelfers.

It seems impossible now to discuss each of these groups separately because the purpose of this chapter is only to show the development of Mahdism in its Kaysanite context; but during the course of study in the next chapter we will discuss them considerably. (3)

(1) Nagātīl, 129, Milal (Shahr W.) 1, 154-162. Cf. below, 228.
(3) Below, 217.
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contains the final, ultimate and definite facts of divine revelation.\(^1\) Surprisingly, the Qur'an, being the basic foundation for any legal or doctrinal thoughts, does not refer to the promised Mahdi or Messiah.\(^2\) There are only some Qur'anic verses which indicate God's promises to the Muslims to make them victorious and prosperous.\(^3\) Many conditions were laid for the fulfilment of these promises, but the awaiting of a deliverer or Charismatic Mahdi is not one of them.

Thus, the first Muslims, who were under the influence of the foreign messianic ideas and who were concerned to show that the hope for such an expected leader was Islamic, found that these verses were not enough to serve this purpose. Therefore, they turned to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, which was technically called Sunna, hadith or Tradition, to find clearer support for the idea in them.

The Sunna or hadith is regarded as the principle of jurisprudence, the second source for the Muslim teachings and, unlike the Qur'an, its authenticity was (and according to some scholars still is) the subject of vast studies.\(^4\)

To give a verdict on a hadith as being 'sound' (sahih) or

\(^{(1)}\) Mahdism in the end leads to the absolute authority of the claimant because he is "divinely guided" and this can lead to the claim of revelation.

\(^{(2)}\) The Muslims' idea of the second coming of Jesus will be discussed later.


\(^{(4)}\) See Muqaddima, 484.
CHAPTER V

HADITH AS A BASE FOR MAHDISM

1. The Nature of the Problem

As may have already been seen, the idea of Mahdism(1) played a crucial role in the past history of the Muslims; and until recently the belief in an expected Mahdi was one of the most important factors which justified many socio-religious and political changes in the Muslim community, it remains to be seen whether these changes were to the good or to the bad. To elucidate, taking for example the Muslims of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, until this time if the social tendencies were to accept the de facto situation without admitting their legality, the masses would hope that the odd situation would be brought to an end by the promised restorer, the Mahdi; and if the social tendencies were to reject that situation violently, the way would, almost certainly, be prepared for any revolutionary leader who would find the claim of Mahdism or at least the claim of the office of mujaddid(2) necessary for his success.

It was to be expected that such an important idea, which dominates the whole course of Islamic history, must have had its roots or its clear support in the Qur'an, which to any Muslim

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(1) The Muslims' belief in the second coming of Jesus, which will be discussed in p. 373ff is related to this idea.

(2) The idea is referred to above, 189 and will be discussed in p. 201.
'good' (hasan) or 'weak' (da'if) is in no way an easy job for a Muslim because of the gravity of the involvement; if one said that a certain hadith is sahih, one's verdict might be followed by some Muslims and hence that hadith become part of their religion. Equally, if one denied the authenticity of a certain hadith, one's responsibility would be greater because one's verdict would exclude a particular notion from being practised or believed. Thus, the pioneer Muslim scholars have suffered much in establishing the authenticity of hadith. To understand the efforts which the early Muslim scholars made in collecting and then scrutinising the authentic from the unauthentic sayings attributed to the Prophet, one may take as an example the work of al-Imām al-Bukhārī, the celebrated Muslim scholar (d. 256 A.H./870 A.D.) who selected his book al-Jāmi' as-Sahih, which contain only about 4,000 hadith, from about 100,000 hadith.

Ibn-Khaldūn, commenting on the development of the sciences of hadith, which reached their height by the time of al-Bukhārī, gave sufficient account in his Muqaddima. (2)

It is clear from his account that all these efforts, to establish the reliability of hadith, were necessary because of the prevailing tendencies to attribute unauthentic sayings to the

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(1) Cf. al-Masayfī Ḥashim, Al-Bukhārī Muhaddith and Fasih. Al-Bukhārī did not mention the hadiths of the Mahdi.

(2) Muqaddima (R.Tr.) ii, 448. Ibn-Khaldūn also discussed the sciences of nāsīkh and mansūkh. For fuller account see Ibn-as-Salāh, Introduction to sciences of hadith; Ibn Kathir, Summary of the sciences of hadith.
Prophet, as his words were the unopposed arbitrator among the community. One of the reasons for this attribution to the Prophet was that shortly after his death various races with various cultural and religious backgrounds accepted Islam but, at the same time, it was difficult for some of them to disassociate themselves completely from their old heritage. Therefore, they tried (as much as possible) to inject into Islam their old views.

The second reason for the attribution of hadīth to the Prophet was an internal one. That is to say, due to the diversity of opinion among the Companions in facing the new problems created by the rapid development of the society, a serious schism and sectarianism had occurred in the following generations. Each party found it necessary to support his viewpoint on the disputed matters with hadīth of the Prophet; the one who found such a base for his argument would be proved right and hence, in some cases, the fabrication (mut'ta') of hadīth was greatly dissipated. (1)

2. Hadīth of the Mahdi and the hope for future restoration

One of the matters which dominated the thinking of the early sectarianist leaders as well as of the imperfectly Islamized masses (between about 60 A.H. to the close of the third century of hijra) was the idea of the promised Mahdi.

The idea was first brought to the Muslims' mind during the time of distress and discontent by the foreign elements referred to as

(1) Other reasons for fabrication were mentioned, see Ibn-al-Qayyim, Manār al-Sayyīb, al-'Alī.
to in the previous chapters. (1) How this foreign idea came to be an accepted Islamic belief to almost all parties is the puzzling problem.

The answer for this could be found in the attitude of the respected Muslim 'Ulema (Traditionists) of Kūfa, in which the ḥadīths of the Mahdi had developed, toward al-Mukhtar b. Abī-'Ubayd of Thaqīf, the first sectarianist who declared the appearance of the Mahdi (Ibn-al-Hanafiyya).

It was clear that the 'Ulems of Kūfa, like the masses, were convinced that their contemporary political upheaval could only be dealt with through the belief in a charismatic leader. (2) Let us take as an example the attitude of the famous scholar 'Āmir b. Sharāhī ash-Sha'bī towards al-Mukhtar and his claims of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya's Mahdīism.

In a self-styled confession, reported by Tabari, (3) ash-Sha'bī admitted that although he knew that al-Mukhtar was lying in his claims, yet he went with him and several others to convince the military leader Ibrāhīm b. al-Ashtar with a forged letter (4) that al-Mukhtar was the agent of the Mahdi. Ash-Sha'bī said he did this because he liked the revolt (al-khurūj) with al-Mukhtar. (5)

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(1) Chapters III and IV.

(2) It is true that some 'Ulema did not believe in such charismatic leader.

(3) Tab. Fīrāq (Q), vi, 16f.

(4) Cf. above, 144 - It is possible that he discovered the forgery later but he did nothing about it.

(5) Tab. Fīrāq (Q) vi, 16f. Ash-Sha'bī later escaped from al-Mukhtar. Tabaqāt (BS) vi, 173.
If this was the position of a highly respected Traditionist who, instead of condemning the forgery of al-Mukhtar, acted in a way that showed his approval, then one can imagine the enthusiasm of the ignorant masses in receiving any legend connected with this idea which was seen as the only hope for deliverance from the Umayyads.

After the fall of al-Mukhtar and the death of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, there were three trends among Muslims concerning the speculation of the future. The first trend was that of the pro-Umayyads who saw the position of Islam as more stronger under the Umayyads than ever and believed it would continue to be so under their dynasty because they were the just rulers, God chosen caliphs and the guardians of religion. This view was held by a considerable number of Muslims and was defended by the poets and 'Ulema of the Court.

The second trend was that of pessimism adopted by some 'Ulema of Kufa and Basra especially after the failure of the numerous revolts against the Umayyads, the last of which was that of 'Abd-ar-Rahman b. Muhammad b. al-Ash'ath (d. after 90). Many of the 'Ulema who participated with Ibn-al-Ash'ath were hoping that the move might end the tyranny of al-Hajjaj and with him the Umayyad dynasty, but unfortunately al-Hajjaj was able to crush it and persecute a large number of the partisans. Thus appeared

(1) The same decade witnessed the fall of the Zubayrids who stimulated the hope of many Muslims.
(2) See Diwan of Jarir, al-Parasdaq, al-'Akhtal.
(3) Tab. Tariikh (Q) vi, 366-374.
the disappointment and pessimism which were expressed through the publication of a large number of hadiths. For instance, they related on the authority of the Companion 'Abd-Allah b. Mas'úd the following:

"God has not created anything that has no end at which it will stop ... Islam today is firm and advancing but soon would reach its end, and will decrease until the day of resurrection. The sign for this is that poverty will prevail and those who are bound by blood will be apart from each other ..."(1)

Another hadith attributed to the Prophet was: "the coming time would be worse than the present one until you meet your Lord (on the day of resurrection)"(2) Yet another hadith, "owe to the Arabs from a disaster (sharr) which becomes nearer. After sixty years (of hijra) the trust would be booty, the charity would be looted, the testimony would be only for friends and the rule would be with fancy."(3) Or, "the hour shall come when the wicked ones remain"; (4) or, "after a hundred years (of the Prophet's time) God will send a cool wind with which the souls of the believers will ascend to Him.", or "any new-born soul after a hundred years (of the Prophet's time) is unwanted by God."(5)

(1) Al-Malatí, Tābīn, 67.
(2) Irshād (Bukh. Intcr.) x, 324.
(3) 'Abd-ar-Rassāq, al-Musannaf, xi, 373.
(4) Irshād (Bukh. Intcr.) x, 324.
(5) Ibn-al-Qayyim drew the attention to the non-authenticity of this kind of hadiths in Manār, 109.
Although some of these hadīths were clearly mentioned in the (mawdū'at) fabricated hadīths yet they indicate the strong pessimism at the time of their publication.\(^{(1)}\)

In contrast with this pessimism there was the third optimistic view which said that "the time would not pass until the earth be filled with justice as it was filled with injustice."\(^{(2)}\)

The dominant feature of this trend was the messianic expectation, but it is also found that some groups were most practical and realistic in their optimism because they paid no attention to "the awaiting" or expectation of a Mahdi. The Kharijites, for example, maintain that injustice and oppression can always be checked by armed struggle or revolution. The Mu'tazilites laid more emphasis on "commanding the good and forbidding the bad" or (al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf wa-an-nahy 'an al munkar). The earlier Sunnites also, unlike those who came after them, were not dominated by the messianic thinking\(^{(3)}\) but still were hopeful of the restoration of the future.

This Sunnite hope for restoration manifests itself in the idea of the mujaddid which is not totally messianic. The idea is expressed in a hadīth (quoted above)\(^{(4)}\) which says "After each hundred years God would renew for this nation its religion through a mujaddid". The authenticity of this hadīth is

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\(^{(1)}\) Ibn-al-Jawzī, Mawdū'at, iii, 192; Sayūtī, al-lā'āli', ii, 389.

\(^{(2)}\) This is an introductory part of a hadīth which will come later.

\(^{(3)}\) Abū-al-Hasan al-Ash'āri, Abū-Hanīfa and al-MĀturidi did not refer to the idea of Mahdi in their creeds. See art. "Mahdi", \(\text{E.I.}^{(s)}\)

\(^{(4)}\) Above, 189.
questioned by some scholars(1) because it was first mentioned by Abū-Hashīm and was used by his followers to support his messianic claims and then that of the 'Abbāsids. But some Sunnite sources(2) regard this hadīth of the mujaddid as authentic. The earlier notion was that a single person will be raised at the end of each century to revive the Islamic religion. The Sunnites tried to identify the persons of those mujaddides through the past centuries. Thus, they regard 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz the mujaddid of the first century; al-İmām Mālik b. Anas (or ash-Shāfi'i) of the second, al-Bukhārī of the third, Abu-Hāmid al-İsfara'Inī of the fourth, al-Ghazālī of the fifth, and so forth. But recently Abū-l-A'lä 1-Mawdūdī, a modern Sunnite scholar, criticized this view because, according to him the Arabic pronoun man (in the hadīth) does not denote a single person but more than one person, and the word ra'ūs does not mean the close but "the head" of the century and hence he concludes that:

"raising a person of 'number of persons' at 'the head' of a century clearly means to suggest that he or 'they' will exercise a dominating influence on various branches of knowledge and trends of thought and life prevalent in their age. "(3)

Ahmed 4o! n, also a modern 9nnaite scholar, maintained(4) that

(2) Sunan (D.) Trad. No. 4291.
(3) A Short History of the Revivalist Movement in Islam, 32f.
although the hadīth of the mujaddid resulted from the belief in a Mahdi, yet it represents more reasonable and realistic hope for religious revivalism. Ahmed Amīn did not discuss the authenticity of the hadīth of the mujaddid itself as he did with those of the Mahdi—an indication of his acceptance.

Near to the idea of the mujaddid is that of the promised Mahdi but the latter idea was more attractive to the different religious sects and ethnic groups than the former. That is, perhaps, because the supposed authority of the Mahdi is absolute in comparison with that of the mujaddid, for the Mahdi is infallible and divinely guided; whilst the mujaddid is only (mu'tahid) using his reasoning to solve the existing (and the would be) problems of his time. Therefore, the multitude of hadīths were invented to express the belief in this restorer Mahdi.

3. **Analytical Study of these hadīths**

A brief look at the hadīths which speculate on the coming of the Mahdi will show that some of these hadīths give the good tidings of a Mahdi who will be raised from the Prophet's family and in particular the offspring of his daughter Fatima. Other hadīths, in contrast with this Fatimite Mahdi, speak implicitly or explicitly of a Hashimite Mahdi or 'Abbāsid Mahdi, or Sufyānid Mahdi or Tamīmite Mahdi or Qahtāmite Mahdi or a Mahdi from the mawali. There is also a hadīth which denies completely the existence of a Mahdi other than 'Isā (Jesus). *(1)*

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*(1)* Sunan (BM) ii, 495; al-Hākim, Mustadrak, iv, 441; Mīzān, iii, 535. Cf. Maanār, note p. 142. For the Muslims' belief in Jesus' descent see below, chapter VII.
After a thorough and careful study of the numerous hadiths of this kind, I came to the conclusion that all these hadiths are weak (da'if) and contradictory (mudtarib); therefore, their attribution to the Prophet Muhammad is to be very much doubted.\(^1\)

The hadiths of the Mahdi were collected by some early Muslim scholars such as al-Tirmidhi, Abū-Da'ūd, Ibn-Majā, al-Hākim, at-Tabarānī, 'Abd-ar-Razzāq, Abū-Ya'la, al-Mawsili and al-Bazzar.\(^2\) Before going into details one should draw attention to some important points.

First, the people who brought out (akhrajā) the hadiths of the Mahdi used to relate them without noticing their contradiction. For instance, Abū-Da'ūd related a hadith which says that the Mahdi will be from the Prophet's family and from the son of his daughter Fatima while he related the other hadith of the 'Abbāsid Mahdi, etc.\(^3\)

The second and most important point is that al-Bukhārī and Muslim, who were regarded as the highest and most reliable authorities on hadith, had excluded the hadiths of the Mahdi from their (Sahih) books; and this, of course, is a clear indication that they consider these hadiths as unreliable. For the matter of the Mahdi could not just be ignored by anyone who was living in their time, a time full of Mahdism speculation.\(^4\)

\(^1\) This will be explained later during the course of discussion.


\(^3\) Sunan (D) iv, 151. Cf. Trad. 429. Cf. Sunan (BM) ii, 517-519.

\(^4\) Bukhārī died in 256 A.H./870 A.D. and Muslim died in 261 A.H./865 A.D.
The third point is that the critics of these hadiths of the Mahdi concentrated on criticizing the transmitters (sanad) and paid poor attention to the text (matn) and therefore it was possible for the advocates of Mahdism to claim 'the soundness' of these hadiths because they said that their meaning is mutawatir(1) or at least they musta'aq(2) support each other even if they are of lower degree of 'soundness'.(3)

The fourth point is that Abū-'Abd-Allah al-Hākim al-Misābūrī is the scholar who enthusiastically insisted that the hadiths of the Mahdi are Sahīh. It was said that the tashih (correction) of al-Hākim is like nothing because he was hasty in his judgements.

However, to prove the soundness of these hadiths the method of study must include examination of three things: the transmitters (sanad) of the hadith; the soundness or otherwise of the text (matn); and finally, the meaning of the hadith in the light of the Qur'anic teachings.

(1) As for the study of sanad of the hadith of the Mahdi there is no need to go over again the ground covered by the valuable study of Ibn-Khaldūn in his Muqaddima where he discussed in a well-argued chapter: "The Fatimid. The opinion of people

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(1) The Mutawatir is the hadith which was transmitted by numerous people who cannot normally agree to lie.

(2) The Musta'aq is the hadith which is transmitted by a number of people less than those of the Mutawatir.

(3) The claim of Tawātur is referred to in Mahdiyya, introduction and Ahmad Amin, Mahdi and Mahdawiyah, 106f.
about him, the truth about this matter.\textsuperscript{(1)} The only thing which is against Ibn-Khaldūn's argument is his saying at the end of his chapter: "these are 'all' the Traditions published by the religious authority concerning the Mahdi and his appearance at the end of time. One has seen what they are like. Very few were above criticism."

Firstly, Ibn-Khaldūn said, "these are 'all' ..." but he mentioned only about 25 hadīths, while Ibn-Hajar in his al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar fī 'alāmāt al-Mahdi al-Muntasar mentioned over 50 hadīths.\textsuperscript{(2)} Secondly, he said, without specification: "Very few are above criticism,"\textsuperscript{(3)} but when one goes back to study the sanad and matn of these hadīths one would find that this statement is not correct. I was quite convinced that any sanad of these hadīths contains at least one man of either Shi'ite sympathy (this included those who were of-Hanafite, Fatimite or 'Abbāsid sympathy) or of anti-Shi'ite sympathy (and this includes those who were involved in the inter-tribal and dynastic conflicts).

(ii) Concerning the matn of the hadīth there are some 'īlal (defects) in the text itself which are represented by contra-

\textsuperscript{(1)} Cf. 
Mugaddima \textsuperscript{(R. Tran.)} ii, 156-86.

\textsuperscript{(2)} This book was until now in MSS. Two copies were available for me through the University of Edinburgh library from Cairo and Berlin, cf. Brockelmann, GAL, ii, 388, cf. Goldschière, \textit{'Aqīda}, 380.

\textsuperscript{(3)} Ahmad Muhammad b. Siddīq attacked Ibn-Khaldūn for this vague sentence in his treatise \textit{Ibrāhīm al-Wahab al-Maknūn min kalām b. Khaldūn} quoted from Ahmad Amīn, Mahdawiyya, 106f.
diction, confusion and disagreement. To prove this one should mention some examples of these hadīths. The following pages will be provided with a table which intends to show some of those contradicting statements concerning from which branch or group the Mahdi will come. (1) Also some of these hadīths will be mentioned in the appropriate place under the heading of the Fatimite Mahdi, the 'Abbāsid, the Sufyānid, etc; (2) thus trying to recognise which hadīth was used and for whom, and if possible identify the suspect transmitters in the sanad who might have invented it.

(1) Only the meanings of the hadīths will be mentioned, references will be made to the appropriate place of the texts.

(2) Cf. below, 117 ff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the hadīth</th>
<th>attributed to</th>
<th>the source(s)</th>
<th>The suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Mahdi is from the sons of Fatīma</td>
<td>Umm-Salāmā</td>
<td>Ibn-Mājā &amp; others (1)</td>
<td>Ziyād b. Bayān and 'Alī b. Nufayl (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Mahdi is from my 'itra from the sons of Fatīma.</td>
<td>Umm-Salāmā</td>
<td>Abū-Dā'ūd &amp; others (3)</td>
<td>-do- (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Mahdi is from my 'itra (5)</td>
<td>Ibn-'Awf</td>
<td>Abū-Nu'ayn (6)</td>
<td>Suwayd b. Ibrāhīm and Tālūt (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. Sunan (BM), ii, 519; cf. Sunan (D) iv, 151.
3. Sunan (D) iv, 151; cf. Sunan (BM) ii, 519; Musnad (Ah.M.), ii.
5. 'Itra literally means one's own sons, but it is also used for cousins and relatives. This version, which omits the sons of Fatīma, could refer to the 'Abbāsids.
7. For Suwayd and Tālūt b. 'Abbād see Mīzān, ii, 247, 334.
8. Sunan (BM) ii, 517f; al-Ḥakim Mustadrak, quoted from Manār, 145.
9. Ziyād was a client of Banū-Hashim and one of their most extreme supporters (d.133) cf. Mīzān, iv, 423ff. According to Tahdīh (XI, 329) he died 136. Al-Ḥakim's version had 'Umar b. Qays instead.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the hadith</th>
<th>attributed to</th>
<th>the source(s)</th>
<th>the suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(v) The Mahdi is from the sons of my uncle 'Abbās</td>
<td>'Uthman b. 'Affān</td>
<td>Dāraquṭnī (1)</td>
<td>Muhammad b. al-Walīd (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) The Mahdi comes after &quot;the black banners&quot; (3)</td>
<td>Thawbān and others (4)</td>
<td>Ahmad and others (5)</td>
<td>Khālid al-Hazzā' and Ibn-Lahī'ā (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) ... a man called as-Saffāh will appear at the end of time&quot;...</td>
<td>Abū-Sa‘īd</td>
<td>Bayhaqī and others (7)</td>
<td>'Atīyya al-‘Awfī and others (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) *Sunan* (Dar.) quoted from *Sunan* (BM), (ii, 519) "Sindi footnotes". cf. *Kanz al-‘Ammāl*, vii, 188.

(2) *Tahdīh*, ix, 503.

(3) *Ar-rāyāt as-sūd*, this hadīth which speaks about the "black banners" is said to be "invented for the 'Abbāsid". cf. below, 270ff.

(4) It is also related on the authority of 'Abd-Allah b. al-Ḥārith b. Jaz'.


(6) Khālid died in 141; he served as an official of the 'Abbāsid state and so was Ibn-Lahī'ā (d. after 174 A.H.) cf. *Kisāʾ*, i, 42f; ii, 475ff.

(7) *Musnad* (Ah.M.), Bayhaqī quoted from *Bidāya* (BK) x, 50, 59.

(8) For those men see *Tahdīh*, iv, 223; vii, 225.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the ḥadīth</th>
<th>Attributed to</th>
<th>The source(s)</th>
<th>The suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(viii) From among 'us' ... as-Saffāh, al-Mundhir, al-Mansūr and al-Mahdi.</td>
<td>Ibn-‘Abbās</td>
<td>al-Hakim (1)</td>
<td>Isma‘īl b. Ibrāhīm and his father (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ix) There is no Mahdi but 'Īsā (Jesus)</td>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>Ibn-Mājā &amp; others (3)</td>
<td>Muhammad b. Khālid (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(x) 'Īsā will marry from banū-Judāh</td>
<td>Abū-Hurayra?</td>
<td>Maqrīzī</td>
<td>Unknown (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xi) The Mahdi is from my nation ...</td>
<td>Abū-Sa‘īd</td>
<td>Tirmidhi &amp; others</td>
<td>Abū-‘s-Siddīq, Zayd al-‘Amīr (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xii) The Mahdi is from me ...</td>
<td>Abū-Sa‘īd</td>
<td>Abū-Da‘ūd &amp; others (7)</td>
<td>Abu-Nadra, Qatāda, ‘Umrān al-Qattān (8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Mustadrak, quoted from Muqaddima, ii, 179.
(2) Tahdhīḥ, i, 167, 279.
(3) Sunan (BM) ii, 495; Hakim, Mustadrak, iv, 441 quoted from Manār, 141; cf. Wāzān, iii, 535; Musnad (Ah.M.) ii, 411; Ibn-Hajar, Suwā‘īq, 98f.
(4) Muhammad b. Khālid is discussed in Tahdhīḥ, ix, 143ff. Many sources said that this ḥadīth is invented by him. See Manār, 142f.
(5) Kuṭṭāṭ, ii, 350; quoted from Kashmiri, Taṣrīḥ, 293.
(6) Sunan (T) ix, 74; Musnad (Ah.M.) ii, 645; Sunan (BM) ii, 518. For these men see below, 229.
(7) Sunan (D) Trad.No. 4282; Musnad (Ah.Sh.) ii, 118; Sunan (T) ix, 75.
(8) Abū-Nadra (d.108); Qatāda (d.117) and ‘Umrān al-Qattān (d. after 117); see Tahdhīḥ, viii, 130ff, 351ff; x, 302f. cf. below, 228.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the hadith</th>
<th>attributed to</th>
<th>the source(s)</th>
<th>the suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(xiii) The Mahdi is from the Sufyānids ...</td>
<td>Hudhayfa?</td>
<td>Abū-l-Faraj</td>
<td>Khalid b. Yazīd (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xiv) The Sufyānī will fight the Mahdi</td>
<td>Hudhayfa</td>
<td>Qurtubī (2)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xv) ... a man his uncles are from the tribe of Kalb</td>
<td>Umm-Salama</td>
<td>Abū-Dā'ūd (3)</td>
<td>Unnamed man and Abū-l-Khalīl (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xvi) ... a man from Qahtān will rule ...</td>
<td>Abū-Hurayra</td>
<td>Bukhārī (5)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xvii) The Qahtānī will come after the Mahdi, he is not less than him ...</td>
<td>Artāt b. al-Mundhir</td>
<td>Ibn-Hajar (6)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xviii) A Tātimite called al-Muq'ad will rule before the Hour</td>
<td>Abū-Hurayra</td>
<td>Sayūlī</td>
<td>Unknown (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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(1) Ṭabāhī, xvi, 88; cf. below. The sanad of this hadīth and text are not known.
(2) Tadhkīra, 195.
(3) Sunan (D) iv, 152; Sunan (T) ix, 18; Musnad (Ab) iii, 17; vi, 316; cf. Manār, 145.
(4) Abū-l-Khalīl was hesitant about his authority, cf. Manār, 145 and for his biography cf. Tadhīh, iv, 402ff.
(5) Iṣrāḥād (Bukh. inter) x, 202. The sanad of al-Bukhārī is mentioned below, 243ff.
(6) Iṣrāḥād (Bukh. inter) x, 203. Quoting Hu'aym b. Hammad, the Pītān.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the hadith</th>
<th>attributed to</th>
<th>the source(s)</th>
<th>the suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(xix) ... a man from the mawāli called Jahjah will rule.</td>
<td>Abū-Hurayra</td>
<td>Tirmidhi and others (1)</td>
<td>'Umar b. al-Hakam (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xx) The Mahdi is from my sons, his colour is an Arab and his body is an Israelite ...</td>
<td>Abū-Hurayra</td>
<td>Tabarānī (3)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxi) He is of my family his name is mine.</td>
<td>Ibn-Mas′ūd and others</td>
<td>Ahmad and others (4)</td>
<td>Zirr, 'Āsim, Sufyān (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxii) ... and his father's name is my father's name</td>
<td>Ibn-Mas′ūd</td>
<td>Tirmidhi and others (6)</td>
<td>'Amr b. 'Ubayd, Zirr and others (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Sunan (T) ix, 73.
(2) 'Umar is a client (mawla) of the Ansār, see Tabagat (BS) v, 207; Mīzān, iii, 191.
(3) Quoted from Ibn-Hajar, Sawā'iq, 98.
(4) Musnad (Ah.sh) v, 196f; Sunan (T) ix, 74; Sunan (D) iv, 151.
(5) Cf. below, 232ff.
(6) Sunan (T) ix, 74; Musnad (Ah.sh.) v, 196f; Sunan (D) iv, 151.
(7) For 'Amr b. 'Ubayd see Mīzān, iii, 273-280. For the other men see below, 232ff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The meaning of the hadith</th>
<th>attributed to</th>
<th>the source(s)</th>
<th>the suspect transmitter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(xxiii) ... His father’s name is like my son’s (al-Hasan) name</td>
<td>Kulīnī</td>
<td>Twelfers and Ibn-Hajar</td>
<td>Unknown (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxiv) The Mahdi is from the spine of al-Hasan.</td>
<td>'Ālī</td>
<td>Abū-Dā‘ūd (2)</td>
<td>'Amr b. Abī-Qays and Abū-Is’hāq (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxv) The Mahdi is from the offspring of al-Husayn</td>
<td>'Ālī and Ḥudhayfa</td>
<td>Kulīnī and others (4)</td>
<td>'Abbās b. Bakkār (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxvi) ... His kunya is Abū-'Abd-Allah</td>
<td>Ḥudhayfa</td>
<td>Abū-Mu‘aym (6)</td>
<td>Al-‘Abbās b. Bakkār.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(xxvii) ... His kunya is Abū-1-Qāsim</td>
<td>Jābir</td>
<td>Qummi (7)</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Sunan (D) iv, 153; also see Ibn-Hajar’s correction of this hadīth Sawā‘iq, 100 and that of Ibn-al-Qayyim, Manār, 151.
(3) For these men see below, 237.
(4) Kāfī, 295f.; Mīṣān, ii, 382.
(5) See Mīṣān, ii, 382. Dhahābī mentions the sanad of this hadīth and its text when he discussed al-‘Abbās b. Bakkār.
(7) Kasāl-ad-Dīn, 1, 423ff. cf. ii, 361ff.
Another uncertainty in the text of these hadiths is the different estimation of how long the Mahdi will rule; in some hadiths it was mentioned that he will rule seven, or eight or nine years. One version defined only seven years; while others mentioned five, seven or nine. In the latter estimation al-Tirmidhi reports that the transmitter Zayd al-'Ammi was the one who confused the time in the text, (1) but about the first estimation Abu-Da'ud mentions other transmitters as responsible for this confusion. (2) 'Abd ar-Razzak as-Sanani, Ibn-Maja and al-Nakim's versions confirmed that the Prophet himself was reluctant to define the time for the Mahdi's rule. (3)

Ahmad Amin, a modern Muslim scholar, raised a point of criticism regarding this short prescribed time for the mission of the Mahdi. He said that no-one can conceive that only five or (at the most) nine years are enough to fill the entire earth with justice after it has been filled with injustice and oppression. He added that this would be against the rules of nature (sunnat Allah). (4) Ahmad Amin's notice will lead to the following point:

(iii) To compare the idea of waiting for a Mahdi to bring justice, miraculously, with the Qur'anic teachings, which had

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(1) Sunan (T.) ix, 18, 75.
(2) Sunan (D) Tr. No. 4286-8.
(3) Al-Muqaddima, xi, 372; Sunan (EM) ii, 518; cf. Muqaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 168.
(4) For this expression in the Qur'an see 17:77; 33:38, 62; 35:43; 40:85. Ahmad Amin, Mahdawiyya.
required the Prophet Muhammad to preach the message of heaven to earth in accordance with the means known on earth\(^{(1)}\) and which require his followers, the Muslims, to be subjectivists, or more accurately to share responsibilities for any change in the Muslim society (umma), one notices that certain contradictions and disagreements exist between the two notions.

Firstly, the hadîthes which advocate the idea describe only a few years (discussed above by Ahmad Amin) during which the earth will be filled with justice, etc. This, clearly, cannot be done through the ordinary means but through miracles. Meanwhile, the Qur'ânic teaching is not in favour of this sort of achievement.\(^{(2)}\) For this reason the mission of the Prophet Muhammad himself was prolonged to about twenty-three years; and the Mahdi cannot be exceptional. The mission of the Prophet Muhammad constitutes certain concepts\(^{(3)}\) for any revivalist who opposes the ungodly world. That can be put as follows:

(a) The missionary must spread his teaching among certain people who would revolutionize their mental, moral and practical attitudes in accordance with that teaching and reject those who adhered to the old practices.

(b) At a certain point the ungodly (ruler or masses) will encounter the changes in their society and consequently the struggle for power will follow.

\(^{(1)}\) Qur'ân, 17:90-95, cf. Tafsîr (T.) and Qurtubî.


(c) When this confrontation becomes inevitable, preparation for the struggle will follow, and to achieve the final aim, "the spread of justice and abolition of oppression and injustice", means the complete seizure of power from the oppressors, and this will take a long time.\(^{(1)}\)

The second contradiction between the teaching of the Qur'ān and the hadīths of the Mahdi lies in the idea of the 'expectation' of 'awaiting' itself. The Muslim who expects or awaits the coming of the Mahdi to restore the justice, etc., is not obliged to do reform of any sort;\(^{(2)}\) while the Qur'ān demands every individual Muslim to work\(^{(3)}\) for his salvation for this world and the world to come,\(^{(4)}\) and this would not be achieved unless one fulfilled one's duty which included reforms through "commanding the good and forbidding the evil."\(^{(5)}\)

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\(^{(1)}\) The point is that the prescribed time for the Mahdi to achieve these things is not enough; therefore, the authenticity of these hadīths is doubted.

\(^{(2)}\) Fīsāl (BH) iv, 171, cf. Formative Period 48, and above, Chapters I and II.

\(^{(3)}\) Qur'ān, 18:80, 95; 35:18.


\(^{(5)}\) Cf. above, 197-202; cf. Tafsīr (T) xi, 148ff.
4. The Fāṭimite Mahdi and inter-tribal and sect conflicts

(a) The growth of the Fāṭimite influence after 'Alī Zayn al-‘Abidin (d. 94 A.H.)

In chapter IV we have seen how the Kaysānites or the Mukhtārites polarized their opposition to the Umayyads in the name of a charismatic leader from the Prophet's Family and how, for many reasons, they found Ibn-al-Hanafiyya (the father of the Hanafite line), (1) the suitable person whom they wanted as Mahdi. We also have seen the various sectarian elements which emerged following the death of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya and then finally the emergence of Abū-Ḥāshim, his son, with his serious efforts to take power from the Umayyad dynasty on behalf of the Family. (2)

In the next few pages the growth of the influence of the Fāṭimites, the main branch of the Family, will be examined and this, of course, includes the examination of their sub-divisions (i.e. Hasanites, Husaynites, Zaydites). The final aim of this section, and the following sections of this chapter, is to trace the application of hadīth for supporting the claims of certain individuals who pretended Mahdism or who were believed to be the Mahdi.

It was stated above (3) that one of the most important factors which divert the most extreme supporters of the Family

(1) The term Hanafite should not be mixed up with similar term used for the followers of the late legal school of Abū-Hanīfa an-Nu‘mān b. Thābit (d. 150 A.H.)

(2) Cf. above, 147 ff.

(3) Above, 138 ff.
from 'Ali (Zayn al-‘Abidīn) the son of al-Ḥusayn to his uncle Ibn-al-Hanafiyya is the desire of the former to keep out of politics. 'Ali Zayn al-‘Abidīn, who was twenty-four years old at Kerbala battle, witnessed much persecution of his family because of their involvement in politics. Therefore, he adopted very strict isolation with asceticism. For this asceticism, which was accompanied by deep sorrow and indulgence in worship, he was later proclaimed by Sufis as one of their pioneers. He spent most of his life in Medina and Mecca where he studied the knowledge of his age until he was regarded as one of the most learned men of Hijāz. He was revered by all Muslims for his deep knowledge, his righteousness and his being the oldest survivor of al-Ḥusayn’s sons, to an extent that provoked the jealousy of Hishām, the son of the Caliph ʿAbd-al-Malik, when they met during the (tawāf) circumambulation of Ka‘ba.

Despite the special relation of the Kufites with the Family he rarely went to Kufa or Iraq; that is, perhaps, because he held them responsible for the disappointment and fate of his family. There are various statements which show that he disliked them and especially the extremists of the Saba’iyya. He used to say to them: “O people love us only the love of Islam ..."

(1) The term Zayn al-‘Abidīn is a ḡarb which means "ornament of the worshippers".

(2) Sufism tolerated the seizure of power by the secular rulers, cf. Sīla, 147-162.

(3) Al-Parasdaq celebrated this incident in a long poem, Dīwan (F).
your (extreme) love brought shame for us." (1) At the same time he used to emphasize his rejection of the idea of especial qualities or charismata of the Family.

It is, perhaps, for this condemnation that the extremists of the Kaysāniyya ignored him and the whole Fatimite line, instead, they concentrated on the Hanafite line as sufficient representation of the Family. (2)

The historical material quoted by Canon Sell and D.M. Donaldson, (3) which show that Zayn al-‘Ābidīn and his uncle Ibn-al-Hanafiyya were contesting upon the right to be Imam or wasī, is obviously a later Shī‘ite invention. The purpose was to prove that Zayn al-‘Ābidīn was recognised in his lifetime as wasī and the fourth Imamite Imam; and that people were interested in his leadership. The earlier date for the occurrence of such interest in a Fatimite leader, after the death of al-Husayn, would be some time after the death of his brother Ibn-al-Hanafiyya (81 A.H.). The most accurate date would be after the death of Zayn al-‘Ābidīn himself in 94 A.H.

(b) Muhammad al-Ṣaqīr and the anti-Hanafite extremists

Muhammad al-Ṣaqīr is the son of ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn and brother of Zayd, the founder of the Zaydites. Like his father

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(1) Ṭabaqāt (BS) i, 158; v, 158. Cf. Ṣila 148 quoting the Shī‘ite ash-Shaykh al-Mufīd Irshād, 238, 239.

(2) It is interesting that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya himself condemned the extremist views. See Ṭabaqāt (BS) v, 67; Tab. Fārīkh (Q) vii, 153

(3) Shī‘ite Religion, 107.
he was also of non-political mind, engaged in gaining and spreading knowledge in Hijāz, (1) and there he built up a very good reputation as a scholar and pious ascetic. He inherited the sympathy of the Muslim masses who had been devout followers of his father. Despite that, and despite the increasing tyranny of the Umayyad rule, he, unlike his brother Zayd, stuck to his father's principle of keeping out of politics. Therefore, he condemned severely those who tried to involve him as their Charismatic Leader.

Those are Bayan b. Simʿan, al-Mughīra b. Saʿīd and Abū- Mansūr al-ʿIjli (2) who, as Professor W. Montgomery Watt (3) observed, showed special interest in the descendants of Fāṭima, particularly the Husaynites.

It is interesting to note that the extremists, in most cases, were inclined to have their Imam from the weaker branch of the family because with such a person the outstanding figures of the extremists could claim the agency of the Imam; (4) but with a strong Imam, interested in leadership, like al-Husayn b. ʿAlī, Abū-Ḥāshim (during his lifetime) and Zayd b. ʿAlī, the extremists could not claim this agency.

For instance, al-Mughīra, according to some reports, (5)

(1) For his biography see Ṭabaqāt (BS) v, 235f; Tahdib, ix, 350.
(2) See Milāl (Shahr. W.) i, 152, 176f, 178ff.
(3) Formative Period, 51ff.
(4) Cf. the claims of al-Mukhtār with Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, the above mentioned persons with al-Baqir, Abū-al-Khattāb with as- Sādiq etc., see above, 138 ff.
(5) Milāl (Shahr. W.) i, 176; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 55; cf. Fīraq (Nawb) 54f.
claimed for some time to the agent (or Prophet) of al-Bāqir, maintaining that the latter was God\(^1\) incarnated. After the death of al-Bāqir in 114 A.H. or 117\(^2\) al-Mughīra claimed to his followers that he would "return" as the Mahdi and that after his rajʻa the archangels Jibrīl and Mīkāʻīl would swear allegiance to him between the Corner (rukn) of the Kaʻba and the Maqām of Ibrāhīm.\(^3\) It is worth mentioning that this same phrase is a part of a hadīth which says:

"There will be a difference of opinion at the death of a Caliph. A man from Medina will leave and flee to Mecca. People from Mecca will come to him and will drive him out. He will be unwilling. They will render the oath of allegiance to him between the Corner (rukn) of the Kaʻba and the Maqām of Ibrāhīm ..."\(^4\)

However, this hadīth will be scrutinised and explained later where the Sufyānīte Mahdi is to be discussed.

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\(^1\) Some reports confirmed that al-Mughīra was an anthropomorphic and it is concluded that his ideas were derived from Gnosticism especially Manichaeism. Al-Bāqir had condemned al-Mughīra severely. Cf. Milāl (Shahr.W.) i, 178. Fīrāq (Mawb.) 53ff; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 77; Maqālāt (Ash.) i, 6ff.

\(^2\) It is quite certain that al-Bāqir died before 119 A.H. in which al-Mughīra himself was killed. Cf. Asma', i, 87, Tahdīh, ix, 351 (quoting al-Bukhārī.)

\(^3\) Milāl (Shahr.W.) i, 178.

\(^4\) Sunan (D) Trad.No. 4266; cf. Mugalīda, (R. Tran.) ii, 165.
Many references\(^{(1)}\) mentioned that after the death of al-Bāqir, al-Mughīra b. Sa‘īd also believed that the dead Imam passed the wasiyya to Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah an-Nafe az-Zakiyya and that he is the awaited Mahdi. From this statement it seems that al-Mughīra changed his mind about al-Bāqir's Mahdism and raj'ā; but a second look at the meaning of raj'ā at this time\(^{(2)}\) will lead to the conclusion that al-Mughīra probably believed in raj'ā through transmigration of souls, and accordingly al-Bāqir will "return" in the body of an-Nafe az-Zakiyya.

A modern scholar\(^{(3)}\) doubted that al-Mughīra believed in the Mahdism of an-Nafe az-Zakiyya because the latter was only 19 when the former was killed in 119 A.H., but this doubt will be expelled when we know that an-Nafe az-Zakiyya was believed to be the Mahdi since his childhood (this topic will be expanded on later.)\(^{(4)}\)

Like al-Mughīra in his belief in the imama of al-Bāqir, Abū-Mansūr of 'Ijl claimed that he was al-Bāqir's agent; later he developed this by claiming that he was a messenger commissioned by God. "He seems to have been the first to attach cosmic importance to 'the Family of Muhammad', for in some strange way he identified the 'Family of Muhammad' with heaven and 'the party' (Shī'a - presumably his own following) with earth".\(^{(5)}\)

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\(^{(1)}\) \textit{Wilal} (Shahr. W.) i, 176ff; \textit{Farq} (Bagh.) 238ff; \textit{Firaq} (Nawb) 52ff.

\(^{(2)}\) Cf. \textit{above}.

\(^{(3)}\) Muhammad Muhyi ad-Dīn 'Abd-al-Hamīd, footnotes, cf. \textit{Farq} (Bagh.) 238.

\(^{(4)}\) See below, 232-ff.

\(^{(5)}\) \textit{Formative Period}, 51f.
Abū-Mansūr seemed to have been active in propagating his ideas shortly after the persecution of the extremists (al-Mughīra and Bayan, k. in 119 A.H.). He was able to form a terrorist organisation which practised strangulation to achieve some political aims, but soon this was discovered and Abū-Mansūr was put to death by the governor of Iraq in 121 A.H.

Some historical reports show that some of his followers (al-Mansūriyya) believed like al-Mughīriyya in the Mahdism of Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya; and if these reports are correct, it signifies that the Hasanite branch of the Family was, for some time, a suitable base for the claims of several extremists; and that the young Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya was as good as the silent (Sāmit) Husaynite Imams. Thus, it is assumed that when an-Nafs az-Zakiyya grew up and showed a considerable interest and skill in leadership, the extremists abandoned him as they did Zayd and found refuge in the circle of as-Sādiq.

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(1) Abū-Mansūr was said to have claimed that his sons would inherit the Imamah, after his death; a lot of money was brought to his son al-Husayn who also was killed by the 'Abbāsids after the Umayyads' fall.

(2) Al-Ashʿari and Ibn-Hazm said that al-Mansūriyya are two sects; one believed in an-Nafs az-Zakiyya and the other maintained that the Imamah is in the offspring of Abū-Mansūr. *Fīsal* (A) iv, 142, *Milal* (Ash.W.) i, 24f.

(3) *Fīsal*, iv, 142; *Maqālāt* (Ash.) i, 24f.

(4) *Below*, ii, 228; for the expression Sāmit see *Below*, 291.
By this time the supporters of the different branches of the Family had published many fabricated hadiths all of which speculate on the coming of the Mahdi but these hadiths differed greatly concerning the name and signs of this Mahdi. As we have seen above, (1) a large proportion speaks of the Mahdi as coming from the offspring of Fatima. This perhaps was to counter the strength of the Hanafite line, which was in turn inherited by the 'Abbásids who were racing to seize power from the Umayyads.

Quoting some of these hadiths will be sufficient to indicate the growing interest in the Fātimites and also indicate the growing inter-fighting between the different branches of the Family, or more accurately, their followers.

Among the hadiths which were apparently used to support the Mahdism of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya is this one which was related by Abū-Da'ūd (2) on the authority of Fitr b. Khalīfa (d. 153) on the authority of al-Qāsim b. Abī-Bassā (3) on the authority of Abū-t-Tufayl on the authority of ‘Alī who said the Prophet said:

"If only one day of the whole duration of the world remained, God would send a man of my family who will fill the world with justice, as it had been filled with injustice."

Both Fitr b. Khalīfa and Abū-t-Tufayl were among the Khashabiyya, the followers of al-Mukhtār who believed in the Mahdism of Ibn-

(1) Above, 203-216.
(2) Sunan (D) Trad. No.4283; cf. Muqaddima (R. Tr.) ii, 162.
(3) He died between 114 and 125 A.H. Nothing was said about his political views, cf. Tahdh, viii, 310.
Furthermore, the reliability of Pitr was disputed by hadīth critics and this was later confirmed by Ibn-Khaldūn. (2)

The Fātimite followers who were working to counter the influence of the Kaysāniyya did not reject this hadīth but changed the wording as follows:

"... a man from me (Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was not)
whose name will be like my name and whose father's name will be like my father's." (3)

It will be mentioned that this hadīth was used by the Hasanites to support the claims of an-Naīz az-Zakiyya. Another point is that in the sanad of the latter version the transmitter Pitr, who is a pro-Hanafite, is omitted and replaced by Sufyān ath-Thawri. Also Abū-t-Tufayl was replaced by Zīr b. Hubaysh. Both Sufyān and Zīr were pro-Fātimite and Sufyān was a Zaydi who later supported an-Naīz az-Zakiyya. (4)

In reply to this Fātimite distortion, the Kaysanite related (5) on the authority of Yāsīn b. Shaybān al-‘Ijīlī (6) on the authority

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(1) For Abū-t-Tufayl see above, 172; for Pitr see Tahdīh, viii, 300ff. Mīzān, iii, 363f.
(2) Mugaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 163, cf. above, 225.
(3) Sunan (D) Tr. No. 4283, other versions of similar wording are found in Tirmidhi, al-Hākim and Ahmad b. Hanbal. Cf. above.
(4) For Sufyān see Maqāšī, 147, 205, 292; Tahdīh, iv, 111ff.
   For Zīr see Tahdīh, iii, 322.
(5) Muznad (Ah. M.) ii, 645; Sunan (Maj.) ii, 519.
(6) Yāsīn is hardly known to anyone, he was only known to the Traditionists by this hadīth; regarding this sanad al-Bukhārī said it was disputed, a strong word of criticism. Cf. Tarīkh (Bukh.) 1/1, 317; Mugaddima, ii, 174; Mīzān, iv, 359.
of Ibrāhīm the son of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya on the authority of his father on the authority of his grandfather 'Ali that the Prophet said:

"The Mahdi is from among 'us', the people of the House (in general) God will give him success in one night." (1)

Yet the pro-Hanafite produced another hadīth which seems to be more messianic than the previous one. This is of Abū-s-Siddīq al-Nājī (d. 108 A.H.) on the authority of Abū-Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (d. 64 A.H.) who said the Messenger of God said:

"At the end of my nation, there will come forth the Mahdi. God will give him spring rain to drink, and the earth will sprout forth its plants. He will give money away in fairness. The cattle will become numerous, and the nation will be great. He will live seven or eight - that is (years)."

This Tradition, which was transmitted by al-Hākim, was given in various versions by Tirmidhi and Ahmad b. Hanbal. (2) Although all the different chains of sanad go back to Abi-s-Siddīq an-Nājī, whose political views are unknown, yet the wording sometimes is confused. Abū-s-Siddīq was criticised by Ibn-Sa‘d (3) who said that his hadīths were refused (by Traditionists). At-

(1) Another Trad. is "God will cause him to repent and guide him after he was not so". Shakīr's footnotes, Musnad (Ah.Sh.) 11, 645.

(2) Musnad (Ah.M.) iii, 37, 52; Sunan (T).

(3) Tabagāt (BS), vii/1, 164.
Tabari stated that Abu-e-Siddiq was a worthy Shi'ite. It is understood from another statement by Tabari that this man remained in the camps of 'Ali during the rebellion of his tribe, Banu-Najija, against him, which took place after the battle of Harura'. (1) Nothing was said about his later activities but his being one of those who believed in Ibn-al-Hanafiyya's Mahdism is highly suspected. As may have already been noticed Abü-s-Siddiq lived during the period of the Kaysanite influence.

The version of this hadith according to Ahmad b. Hanbal is also of interest because its similarity in some aspects to the Kufite conception of the Mahdi given by Sa'd al-Qumli. (2) Ahmad related that the Prophet said:

"I give you the good tidings of the Mahdi, he will be raised in 'my nation' in a time of disputes, diversion of opinion and shocks (salsab'il). He will fill the earth etc. ... the people of heaven and earth will be pleased with him; he will distribute money justly and will fill the hearts of Muhammad's nation with wealth ... life after him is worthless." (4)

The Fatimite followers who may also make use of such hadith interpret it later in favour of their successive Mahdis. They

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(1) Tab. Tarikh, i, 3436; iii, 2530, 2548.
(2) Musnad (Ab. M.) ii, 645; cf. Maqalat (Qum.) 30f.
(3) This is against the notion that the only Mahdi is Jesus, cf. above, 210; below, chapter VII.
added to it a description of the character of the Mahdi as follows: "He has a bald forehead and an aquiline nose, well formed." (1) This description was fitting with an-Nafs az-Zakiyya; and it is not by chance that among the transmitters of the hadith is 'Imrān al-Qattān who, according to one statement, joined the movement of an-Nafs az-Zakiyya in Kūfa. This statement said that 'Imrān al-Qattān gave a legal decision (fatwā) during the revolt of Ibrāhīm, (2) the brother and deputy of an-Nafs az-Zakiyya in Kūfa, which caused much shedding of blood. (3) The hadith also has in its sanad Qatāda b. Du‘āma who is accused of being mudallīs (4) as well as of being Qadarite. (5) As for Abū-Nadra (Mundhir b. Mālik d. 108), another transmitter, Ibn Sa‘d said: 'He was trusted (in relating hadith) but still some did not accept his hadith. Ibn-Ḥibbān said Abū-Nadra was among those who err (in hadith). Al-Bukhārī did not mention his hadith as evidence." (6)

(c) Zayd b. 'Alī (d. 121) and the Zaydiyya

Zayd is the second son of 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn; his mother

(1) Sunan (D) Trad. No. 4285.
(2) For Ibrāhīm’s biography see Maqātil, 315-386.
(3) Tahdīh, viii, 130ff.
(4) The term mudallīs in the terminology of hadith means that the transmitter did not actually hear the text from the upper transmitter so he is mudallīs or 'hiding his authority'.
(5) The Qadarites or the Mu’tazilites were behind an-Nafs az-Zakiyya, Maqātil, 293ff.
(6) Tahdīh, x, 302f.
was a slave-girl given to him by al-Mukhtar b. Abī 'Ubayd.\(^{(1)}\)

Zayd shared many virtues and qualities with his brother al-Sa'iqir, but the outstanding quality of Zayd is that he was able to reconcile asceticism and revolution; he was regarded as one of the great mystics and at the same time he was the first Fatimite, after al-Husayn, to lead a revolution against the Umayyad personally.

"It seems certain that he and his followers reject any ideas of quiescent or hidden Imam and insisted that the Imam is not entitled to claim allegiance until he has publicly asserted his Imamah... the messianic movement just considered had been irrational, giving vent to material grievances and spiritual yearnings but having no considered plan for taking over the administration of the Caliphate. Zayd, on the contrary, was over rational..."\(^{(2)}\)

"In general Zayd was trying to verbalize a wide band of proto-Shi'ite feeling behind his attempt to gain control of the Caliphate". At the same time, "he saw that, in order to rule the Caliphate effectively, he must have the main body of the Muslim opinion (Sunnites) behind him, and must therefore accept the view of

\(^{(1)}\) Maqātil, 127.

\(^{(2)}\) Formative Period, 52f.
this body ..."(1) But the reconciliation was
difficult because "even (his) modified accept-
ance to Abū-Bakr and 'Umar, however, seemed to
some to involve a partial denial of the
charismata of 'Alī and the clan of Hashim, and
probably lost Zayd the support of many who
believed in these charismata."(2)

Despite the rejection (rafd)(3) by these groups of the
extremists of Zayd (and vice versa) he was able to win the support
of a large proportion of the Küfite opposition especially the
Mu'tazilites and the Traditionists (ashāb al-hadīth). (4) Some-
time in the year 121 A.H./739 A.D. Zayd led an abortive revolt in
Kūfa after which he was killed, his body crucified and a large
number of his followers persecuted. (5)

It is not likely that Zayd himself claimed the Mahdism
because his relation with Wāsīl b. 'Atā' and his Mu'tazilite sect
would prevent such claim. The Mu'tazilite officially denounced
this belief(6) by excluding it from their creed.

However, it is likely that Zayd won a large support of the
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(1) Formative Period, 52f.
(2) Formative Period, 53.
(3) It was said that the term rafidā which is used as a nick-name
for the Shi'ites, is first used by Zayd to those extremists
who rejected Abū-Bakr and 'Umar. Other explanations are
also given.
(4) Maqātil, 44ff; Millal (Shahr.W.) i, 154-162.
(5) Maqātil, 135ff.
(6) Although 'Amr b. 'Ubayd was one of the Mu'tazilite leaders,
yet transmitted the above mentioned hadith, 212;
Sunan (D) Trad. No. 4282.
Kufites through the hadiths which speak about the Fātimite Mahdi—those having been already made public before his time. This assumption can be supported by the report that Zayd and his followers maintained that the Imam must be a descendant of ‘Alī and Fātimah no matter whether he was a Hasanite or Husaynite. It is noteworthy that this goes in line with the reconciling attitude which Zayd adopted. A second support for the theory that the Zaydiyya movement benefited from the hadiths of the Fātimite Mahdi is the application of the term Mahdi to Zayd by a sarcastic Umayyad poet who, after the crucifixion of Zayd, wrote:

We crucified Zayd on a trunk of a palm-tree.
We have never seen a "Mahdi" crucified on a trunk!!

It should be noticed that the poet wanted to say that the true Mahdi or Messiah cannot be crucified following the example of ‘Īsā, according to Muslim belief; and it is implicitly understood that some believed in the Mahdism of Zayd although that is not an official Zaydite viewpoint.

The movement of Zayd gave rise to a new sect which tried to reconcile the moderate supporters of the Family, the

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(1) Cf. above, 117ff.

(2) Above, 226ff. Professor Watt suggests that this might be a late development, see Formative Period, 52ff.

(3) Mas‘ūdi, Murūj, 11, 183, quoted from Sīla, 115.

(4) Yaṣīd b. Abī-ṣ-Zayād who was a Zaydite propagandist related one hadith about the Mahdi; see Maqātil, 145.
Mu'tazilites and the Sunnite Traditionists, known at that time as as'hab al-hadith. Although the movement of Zayd was brutally dealt with, yet his descendants and followers made several risings. They sometimes succeeded in taking over in some parts of the Caliphate. Their last state was in Yemen until the 1960's. 

It is almost impossible to give a full account of the Zaydite movements, creeds, risings and their relation to other contemporary sects. The place for such study would be books of history, heresiography, and modern Islamic studies. It is convenient now to consider one of the most remarkable Mahdistic movements in Islamic history which comes shortly after Zayd and which was said to have some links with the Zaydites, namely the movements of Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah an-Nafs az-Zakiyya (the pure soul).

(d) Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya (100-145 A.H.)

The first Fātimite ever to declare himself the Mahdi was this Muhammad who was a great grandson of al-Hasan b. 'Alī. He also had al-Husayn b. 'Alī as his maternal great-grandfather. Muhammad was born about 100 A.H., a time which witnessed the decline of the Hanafite line after the death of Abū-Hāshim (d. 98) and the emergence of the influence of the 'Abbasids and the Fātimites. The last two were competing for leadership of the strong opposition against the Umayyad rule. The Fātimites, who

(1) Art. "Zaydiyya", EI.(1)
(2) For more reference see EI.(1)
consisted of the Hasanites and the Husaynites were, most probably, watching the movements of their cousin Muhammad b. 'Alī, the Father of the 'Abbāsid dynasty, after his agents claimed that he inherited, according to some reports, the Imamah from Abū-Ḥāshim.\(^1\) The Husaynites were represented in this struggle by two men, the above mentioned Zayd and his nephew Ja'far as-Sādiq, the son of al-Ṣāqīr.\(^2\) The reaction of the two men to the struggle for power was totally different. While Zayd saw that his duty was to stand firm and fight the Umayyads and hence spread his movement in order to take the lead from the 'Abbāsids, as-Sādiq maintained the quiescent attitude of his father. Later, as-Sādiq, it appears had entered into some sort of alliance with the 'Abbāsids against the Hasanite and the Zaydite as will be mentioned later.\(^3\)

The Hasanite were headed by 'Abd-Allah b. al-Ḥasan, who seemed, at one time, to be the oldest and most respected man of all the Family (Banū-Ḥashim).\(^4\) But apparently, due to his old age, he decided not to compete personally for leadership.

Several historical statements show that by the time of his son Muhammad's birth, many people were waiting for a new born Mahdi especially after the decline of the Ḥanafite branch and the spread of many hadiths speculating on the advent of a Mahdi.

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\(^1\) Cf. above, 190f. Other material showed that their claims came after 127 A.D., cf. below, 262f.

\(^2\) For his biography see Ibn-Khallikan, Wafiyyat (B), ii, 112. Tahdib, ii, 103f; Milal (Shahr.W.) i, 165ff.

\(^3\) See Ṣagāṭīl, 207f, 233, 248, 251f, 254f, 273.

\(^4\) Ṣagāṭīl, 179-184.
Abū-l-Faraj al-Isfahāni related some anecdotes which suggest that even some members of the Family at this early time were convinced that the coming of the Mahdi would be soon. He mentioned how a daughter of 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib and a grand-daughter, both of whom were called Fatima, were searching among the newborn babies of the Family for the Mahdi until they finally thought they recognized him in Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah b. al-Ḥasan.

The signs foretold were that, his name will be Muhammad, his father's name will be 'Abd-Allah, his mother's name will be formed of three letters, the first letter is H (ḥā') and the last one is D (dāl); he will have between his shoulders a black dot, the size of an egg, as a seal, and he will have on his tongue a knot (rutta).

It is possible that these anecdotes, attributed to the two Fatimas, were invented later by the Traditionists supporting an-Nafs az-Zakiyya shortly before his revolt in 145 A.H. Support for this assumption is to be found in two verses by the poet.

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(1) Cf. above, 266.
(2) Maqātil, 237ff, 241ff.
(3) Maqātil, 237ff, 241ff. For their biographies see Tabaqāt (BS), viii, 341, 347.
(4) The mother of Muhammad was called Hind (three letters in Arabic HND). This prophecy became a ḥadīth, cf. Maqātil, 240.
(5) This also became a ḥadīth with sanad going back to Abū-Hurayra, Maqātil, 242. Tab. Tārikh, vii, 552ff mentioned that Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya had a defect in his tongue.
Salama b. Aslam al-Juhani, \(^{(1)}\) the meaning of which is:

Verily, what 'the Traditionists' relates will become clear!!

When the son of 'Abd-Allah (Muhammad) declares himself (the Mahdi)\(^{(2)}\)

He has 'a seal' which God did not give to anyone else but him.

He has signs of righteousness (birr) and guidance (huda).

It is interesting to note that most of the Traditions in the books of hadīth which speak about the Mahdi, especially those of the Fatimite Mahdi, can be applied to this Muhammad, an indication that most of them were designed for him or at least he was prepared to confirm to them.\(^{(3)}\)

Thus, it might be anticipated that the hadīth (quoted above)\(^{(4)}\) which says that the name of the Mahdi will be like the Prophet's name and his father's name will be like his father's name was invented later to suit an-Nafs az-Zakiyya, but again we find in poetry some verses which clearly indicate that since his birth Muhammad was recognised as the Mahdi\(^{(5)}\) and, therefore, there is little doubt that his father gave him this name intentionally.\(^{(6)}\)

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\(^{(1)}\) *Maqātil*, 243.

\(^{(2)}\) This indicates that the poet composed this before the revolt of Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya.


\(^{(4)}\) P. 212.

\(^{(5)}\) *Maqātil*, 237, 239, 242f, 253f.

\(^{(6)}\) *Maqātil*, 244f. In page 245ff, the rejection of his father might be due to his disappointment or might be a Husaynīite invention.
From this, one can conclude that long before the birth of an-Nafs az-Zakiyya, the pro-Fāṭimite and anti-Hanafite propaganda had concentrated on refuting the belief that Ibn-al-Hanafiyya was the Mahdi. This is done not by denying the hadīth which says "the name of the Mahdi will be like the Prophet’s name", (1) but by adding to it a sentence which says: "And his father’s name will be like the name of the Prophet’s father." (2) Of course, this was sufficient to exclude Muhammad Ibn-al-Hanafiyya.

When an-Nafs az-Zakiyya was only 27, his reputation as being the Mahdi was public and "the common people persistently called him the Mahdi," (3) to an extent that roused the jealousy of ‘Abd-Allah b. ‘Alī, better known as al-Mansūr, the second ‘Abbasid Caliph. Al-Mansūr was planning to give the title al-Mahdi to his son Muhammad (4) who was born in 127 A.H. shortly before his dynasty took power. This was to counter the Fāṭimites claim, as will be mentioned later. (5) Al-Mansūr once confessed to his aide Muslim b. Qutayba that he was only hopeful in calling his son Muhammad, al-Mahdi, he knew that neither he nor Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya were the Mahdi. (6) Of course, this

(1) Above, 412 cf. Sunan (D), Trad. No. 4282.
(2) Sunan (D) Trad. No. 4282-3; cf. 226.
(3) Magātil, 244.
(4) Muhammad b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Mahdi later became his father’s successor. He became Caliph in 158 A.H. after his father’s death.
(5) Below, 266ff.
(6) Magātil, 247.
statement goes against various reports by Abū-l-Faraj which show that al-Mansūr and many members of his family had previously recognised and even swore allegiance to an-Nafs az-Zakiyya as being the Mahdi who will deal with the Umayyads and their injustice. (1)

The pro-Fātimite Traditionists, putting in mind such claims, related the following hadīth on the authority of Harūn b. al-Mughīra, on the authority of 'Amr b. Abī Qays, on the authority of Shu‘ayb b. Khālid, on the authority of Abū-Is‘hāq as-Sabī‘ī who said that ‘Alī looking at his son al-Hasan (the great-grandfather of an-Nafs as-Zakiyya) said:

"This son of mine is a lord, as he was called by the Messenger of God. From his spine there will come forth a man who will be called by the name of your Prophet and who will resemble him not physically but in character (yashbaha-hu-fī l-khulua wa lā yashbaha-hu fī l-khalq). He then mentioned the story 'he will fill the earth with justice ...'." (2)

Several critical remarks were made on the sanad of this hadīth by several scholars. For example, Harūn was accused of being a Shi‘īte and disputed (authority). (3) Concerning 'Amr, Abū-Dā'ūd said "His Traditions contained errors". (4) "As to

(1) Maqātil, 239f., 253f.
(2) Sunan (D) iv, 151ff; Muqaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 163f.
Abū-Is'ḥāq, even though hadīth on his authority are published in the two sahīh, it is well established that he became confused at the end of his life. His transmission of the authority of 'Alī is not continuous.\(^1\) Added to this is the fact that Abū-Is'ḥāq was also a mudallīs and a fanatical Shī'ite who related several pro-Alī hadīths,\(^2\) without hearing them from their source.

More interesting is that the transmitter Harūn b. al-Mughīra, whose birth date is unknown, related another pro-Fātimite hadīth on the authority of 'Amr b. Qays on the authority of Muṭarrif b. Tarīf on the authority of an obscure man called Abī-Ḥasen on the authority of another obscure man called Hilāl b. 'Amr who said:

"I heard 'Alī say: The Prophet said: 'A man will come forth from Beyond the River (Transoxania) whose name will be al-Ḥārith b. Harrāth. In his 'avant-garde' (Muqaddimā) there will be a man whose name will be Mansūr. He will pave the way— or prepare the way—for the Family of Muhammad, as Quraysh prepared the way for the Messenger of God, every believer must help him ..."\(^3\)

Al-Ḥārith in the text, perhaps referred to al-Ḥārith b. Surayj, a contemporary of an-Nāfi' as-Zakiyya, who led a revolt in Khurāṣan during the last decade of the Umayyad's rule.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Munqaddimā (R. Tran.) i, 164, cf. above, 226f.

\(^2\) Cf. Tahdhīb, viii, 65-67, Misān, iii, 270.

\(^3\) Sunan (D), Trad. No. 4290; cf. Munqaddimā, ii, 164.

\(^4\) Tab. Tārikh, ii, 1513, 1565-1572, 1575-1585, cf. The Index, 115.
Hārīth was urged in a poem by the pro-Shī'ite poet al-Kumayt to raise "the black banners" which will come before the Mahdi. (1)

Hārīth b. Harrāth in the text of the hadīth could also be a nickname for Abū-Salama al-Khallāl a civilian leader of the 'Abbāsid revolution who was said to be not wholeheartedly with the 'Abbāsids but with the Fātimītes; (2) or a nickname for Abū-Muslim al-Khurasānī who led the 'Abbāsid armies against the Umayyads and similarly was said to be of Fātimite sympathy. (3) The Muqaddima in the text could mean the leadership of al-Mansūr and his brother as-Saffāh. In either case the followers of the Fātimītes, especially of the Hasanītes, were hoping that the authority would be passed to them immediately.

Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya himself believed strongly and sincerely that he was the Mahdi and that any other ruler was a usurper. An historical report shows that since his childhood he was convinced that the good tidings of his appearance were foretold by the Prophet because in him all the signs of the one who will fill the earth with justice, etc., is found. Abī-l-Faraj reported that since his early youth, Muhammad used to go into hiding, calling himself the Mahdi in the messages which he sent to people to support him. (4)

(1) Cf. Tab. Tarīkh (Q) vii, 99f. For the connection between the Mahdi and these "black banners" see above, 209 and below, 270ff.

(2) Tab. Tarīkh, ii, 1616, 1649, iii, 5-7, 16, 20ff, 24, 27ff, 34, 58ff, 71; cf. Akhbār, (Dinaw.) 334.

(3) Tab. Tarīkh, for number of pages see Index 548.

(4) Maqātil, 239.
It was mentioned earlier(1) that al-Mughîra b. Sa'îd and some other extremists were propagating his Mahdism before he was 19, and when he was 27 he took the lead, perhaps to curb any new claims for his leadership. Another report shows that until that time, in which the Umayyads were divided after the death of al-Walîd b. Yazîd (126 A.H.) the whole house of Hâshim were behind Muhammad; this was in addition to the support of several prominent scholars and Qâdis in Medina and Kûfa(2) who opposed the Umayyads. It is perhaps at this time that other members of the Family, mainly the 'Abbâsids and the Husaynite Ja'far as-Sâdiq, tried to reduce the influence of Muhammad. Their propagandists began to publish prophecies or hadîths that the 'Abbâsid were the ones who would deal with the Umayyads and not Muhammad;(3) and that Muhammad, who was given the title an-Nafs az-Zakîyya (the pure soul), would be killed near the outskirts of Medina on a place called ahîr as-Zavît or "the stones of oil". (4) It is perhaps, not by chance that all these prophecies against Muhammad go back to Ja'far as-Sâdiq who opposed his Mahdism.

However, what happened to Muhammad will be seen when the 'Abbâsid movement is discussed. (5) But, before that, some light must be cast upon the Umayyad attitude toward these Messianic ideas and movements.

(1) Above, 220f.
(2) Magâtil, 253f.
(3) Magâtil, 233, 254f, 256.
(4) Magâtil, 248.
(5) Below, 262ff.
5. Mahdism and the Umayyads

(a) The application of the term Mahdi to the early Umayyad Caliphs

It was expected that the Umayyads would oppose the idea of Mahdism and condemn it as an element of unrest or a shelter for the political opposition against their regime, but surprisingly, the truth was different. The Umayyad Caliphs found that the Mahdistic trend was fashionable and everyone was speaking about the question of the Mahdi, therefore they wanted to make use of this trend. Firstly, by benefitting from the quiescent attitude of the believers in the Mahdi and, secondly, by trying to apply the idea to themselves.

By the time of Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik (ruling between 96-99 A.H.) the pro-Hashimite elements publicized already many hadiths about the expected Mahdi who, it was said, would be from the Prophet's Family. The pro-Umayyads did not remain inactive but tried to create their own interpretation of the matter of the Mahdi. They first tried to include themselves in the Family by claiming that 'Abd-Shams, their ancestor, and Hashim, the Family's ancestor, were the sons of one father and therefore the Prophet's Family included all Banū-'Abd-Manāf. (1) Secondly, some of them claimed that the Mahdi could be either 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz or as-Sufyānī (both to be discussed later). (2) Thirdly, they encouraged the poets who were ready to picture them as heirs

(1) Below, 248ff.
(2) Below, 248ff.
of the divinely guided Caliphs and liked the use of the term Mahdi for themselves.

In addition to the numerous examples, quoted above, it was found that al-Parazdaq in one of his verses praised Sulaymān using nearly the same words as a Tradition about the eschatological Mahdi who would fill the earth with justice and equity as it had been filled with injustice and oppression. Al-Farazdaq said: "You did perform justice and mercy for the people of earth (after the lack of that), just like the coming of the Prophet Muhammad who came after Fatra." Al-Farazdaq also said of the same Caliph:

"God has seen in you the best one who could be chosen for Caliphate and its greetings; because if he (the Caliph) walk on earth, the clouds would especially prevent him from the heat of the sun. I saw you filling earth with justice and light after it was in darkness. Indeed, the oppression was vanished from its roots when you came (to the Caliphate)."

It is obvious that this meaning is the same meaning as in the above mentioned Tradition. The possibility that al-Farazdaq, once a Shī'ite, did not know this Tradition is very remote. Even

(1) Above, 7 ff.
(2) Sunan (D) iv, 151.
(3) Fatra is the period between the Prophet and his predecessors.
(4) Nāṣī'īd, ii, 1014.
the other Umayyad poets like Jarīr and Nahār b. Tawsī‘ā(1) were possibly affected, in their usage of the term Mahdi, by the struggle between the followers of the Prophet's Family and that of the pro-Umayyads, over the claims of the Caliphate or Imamah, which by now has Mahdism implications.(2) That is very clear in some verses of Nahār b. Tawsī‘ā in which he praised Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik whom he called al-Mahdi. The poet even quoted the Tradition which speaks about "the Black Banners" (al-rāvāt al-sūd) which would be the sign of the coming of the Mahdi.(3)

(b) The Sufyānī Mahdi

The matter of the Sufyānī is quite an interesting one. It developed not only out of the struggle between the pro-Shī'ites and the pro-Umayyads but it also reflects dynastic fighting inside the House of Umayya. It is known that the founder of the Umayyad dynasty was Mu‘āwiya b. Abī-Sufyān. Before his death (in 50 A.H.) he appointed his son Yasid as his successor but when the latter died four years later his son Mu‘āwiya II succeeded him for only a very short time.(4) Mu‘āwiya II, who was a minor, resigned the throne willingly and asked the Muslims to select their own Caliph; when he died suddenly a few weeks later the power was

(1) Cf. Nāqā'id, i, 364. Tab. Tarīkh, ii, 1084, 1198, 1226, 1251, 1301.
(2) See above, 74.
(3) Nāqā'id, i, 364. The idea of "black banners" will be examined below, 270, and cf. above, 209.
captured by the other branch of the Umayyads, the Marwânids.

Their first Caliph, Marwân b. al-Hakam, remained in office for only several months during which he married the wife of Yazîd b. Mu'âwiya, perhaps in order to keep his ambitious son Khälid under control, because he felt that the Marwânids wanted to usurp him. It was said that Khälid was unhappy because of this marriage and Marwân was equally unhappy with Khälid. Marwân once insulted him by calling his mother names; when Khälid told her she was angry enough to kill her husband.

The Caliphate did not go to Khälid but to 'Abd-al-Malik, the strong son of Marwân, who was the real founder of the Marwânite dynasty and who ruled for twenty-one years (65-86 A.H.). Khälid and the Sufyânid branch had little chance of winning back the throne although Khälid did not give up hope.

Some historical reports show that Khälid was watching contemporary Shi'ite movements and their success in gathering supporters through the Messianic expectation. Accordingly, he invented the hadîths of the Sufyânite Mahdi.

Abū-l-Paraj, who related this, doubted that Khälid invented the matter of "the Sufyânî"; Abū-l-Paraj maintained that the hadîths of the Sufyânî were very popular and were transmitted by the learned and laymen. However, a modern Muslim scholar, namely

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(2) Tab. Tarîkh (Q) vii, 34ff. Cf. Tabaqat (BS) v, 28f.
Said Muhammad Hasan, noticed(1) that Abū-l-Paraj was a pro-Shī’ite and the pro-Shī’ites were anxious to prove the ḥadīth of the Sufyānī because it has a relation to the ḥadīth of the Mahdi as will now be shown. The Shī’ites may also call this Sufyānī the Kālbita, the man whose maternal uncles were the tribe of Kalb.(2) It is to be remembered that Khālid’s father, Yazīd, had his maternal uncles in the tribe of Kalb (his mother was Maysūn the Kālbita).(3)

The following ḥadīth was related by the pro-Shī’ite to support their Mahdi who will counter the Sufyānī (his anti-Christ). The ḥādiṯ (part of which was already quoted) said:

"... A mission will be sent to him(4) from Syria. They will disappear (Yukhaṣaf bī-him) in the desert between Mecca and Medina. When the people see that, the saint (abdāl) from Syria will come to him, and groups (‘asāb) of the Iraqis, and they will render the oath of allegiance to him. Then a man from Quraysh will rise, whose maternal uncles are from Kalb. He(5) will send

(1) Maḥdiyya, 178.
(3) Taḥḥīṭ, ii, 204, 428.
(4) To the Mahdi. This ḥadīth is found in the Muqaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 165f. The translation has to be corrected because Rosenthal seemed to misunderstand the ḥadīth.
(5) The Mahdi.
a (military) mission to them, and it will defeat them. This is the mission of Kalb. No success will come to those who did not witness (the seizing of) booty of Kalb. He(1) will distribute the money and act among the people according to the Sunna of their Prophet. He will plant Islam firmly upon earth. He will last seven years. (2) Then he will die, and the Muslim will pray for him."

In the late versions of this hadīth, (found in the work of the Sunnite scholar al-Qurtubī), (3) the man from Kalb is mentioned frankly as the Sufyānī and his encounter named as al-Mahdi. (4)

The versions of al-Qurtubī are clearly of very late origin because it represents al-Mahdi as the saviour of the Muslim of Spain and Maghrib after the decline of the Muslim dynasties there. The Sufyānī is represented as the anti-Mahdi or dājjāl.

It is noteworthy that the hadīths of the Sufyānī from the Sufyānite point of view did not find their way to the collection of hadīth normally dealing with the Mahdi, and therefore many of them had disappeared. But the effect of these hadīth on some Muslims' minds was felt in Islamic history until recently. Sa'd

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(1) The Mahdi.

(2) Abū-Dā'ūd who related the hadīth said: "someone said on the authority of Hishām nine years, others said seven years".

Cf. above, 2/4. Sunan (D) Trad. No. 4286f; Muqaddima, 11, 166.


(4) Tadhkira, 195ff.
Muhammad Hasan quoted the Western scholar Lammens as saying that after an earthquake which happened in Palestine in 1927 A.D., a Muslim in the streets of Beirut connected this natural phenomenon with the nearness of the appearance of the expected Sufyānī.

Back in Islamic history it is found that Khālid b. Yazīd, who invented the Sufyānī, died in 84 or 90 A.H. without achieving his purpose; but it is most likely that his offspring maintained his ideas. Forty-two years after Khālid's death, one member of his family, namely Abū-Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah as-Sufyānī claimed to be the expected Sufyānīte Mahdi. He revolted in 132 A.H. in Syria and thousands of followers supported him. Obviously he failed to achieve his Mahdistic promises, as did Khālid before him.

It should be noticed that the Marwānids, to undermine whose authority Khālid invented the idea of the Sufyānī, found their own Mahdi in 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz whose advent was, similarly, said to be foretold in prophecies.

(c) 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz

Several historical reports show that many contemporary Muslims of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz believed that he was the Mahdi.

(1) Mahdīyya, 180.
(2) Mahdīyya, 179f. Cf. Tahdīh, iii, 128.
(3) Tab. Tārikh, iii, 43, 53ff.
One of those people was the famous scholar Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib (d. 94 or 100 A.H.). According to Ibn-Sa'd a man came to Sa'īd and asked him: "Who is the Mahdi?" Sa'īd replied: "Have you entered the house of Marwān?" When the man said that he did not enter, Sa'īd requested him to do so, and said he would see the Mahdi. After doing as he was told, the man came back to Sa'īd and said: "I entered the house of Marwān but I did not see a person to whom I could point and say that is the Mahdi." To this Sa'īd replied: "Have you see the ashajj (the one who has a mark on his face) 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz the one who was sitting on the Sarīr (bed or throne)." The man said: "Yes I have." Then Sa'īd said: "He is the Mahdi."

If this saying is truly of Sa'īd b. al-Musayyib, one could conclude that he did not take as authentic the numerous hadīthhs which speak about the Mahdi of the Prophet's Family. It is obvious that most of these hadīthhs prophesy the coming of a Mahdi whose name is like the Prophet's name etc., and that cannot be applied to 'Umar.

Another man who was said to have described 'Umar as the Mahdi was Muhammad b. 'Alī, the father of the 'Abbāsid dynasty. It was related that this Muhammad said: "The Prophet is from...

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(1) Some said that he died in 93 or 94 A.H. Cf. Asmā', i, 220, while Ibn-Mu'īn said that he died in 100 A.H., Tahdh, iv, 84-88.
(2) Tabaqāt (BS) v, 245.
(3) Sarīr can be interpreted throne or bed. In contrast with what attributed to Sa'īd, Tāwus believed that he was not the Mahdi.
(4) Tabaqāt (BS) v, 245. Cf. Mahdiyya, 182ff.
us (the Banū-Ḥāshim) and the Mahdi is from the Banū-'Abd-Shams (the Umayyads) and we do not see anyone among them as the Mahdi but 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-‘Azīz."(1)

With another chain of transmitters Ibn-Sa'īd(2) also related that a man came to the same Muhammad and said that he was told that the Mahdi was from the Prophet's Family. Muhammad answered: "Yes, that is true but he will be from (our cousins) Banū-'Abd-Shams", as if he was referring to 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-‘Azīz.(3)

However, it is likely that this story of Muhammad b. 'Ali al-'Abbāsi is invented by the pro-Marwānids or the anti-'Abbāsids; first to show that the Umayyads are from the Family and second, to disprove the claims of Muhammad b. 'Ali's followers. One recalls that Muhammad b. 'Ali, according to Tabarī(4) and Dīnawarī(5), had sent his emissaries about 'Umar's time to Kūfa and Khurasan to propagandise for himself and family. Some other reports show that the basic argument of his followers was that he inherited the Imams from Abū-Ḥāshim who inherited it from his father, Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, the Mahdi of the Kaysāniyya.(6)

People who spread the idea of 'Umar's Mahdism might base their belief on some prophecies which go back to 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar, a companion of the Prophet, and to his father 'Umar b. al-

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(2) Tabaqāt (BS) v, 245. Cf. Mahdiyya, 183.
(3) Above, 241.
(4) Tārīkh, ii, 1358ff.
(5) Akhbar (Dinaw.) 332ff.
(6) See above, 187f., and cf. below, 262f.
Khaṭṭāb, the second Caliph of the Prophet. According to Ibn-Sa'd\(^{(1)}\), Ibn-'Umar used to say: "Who is this man from the offspring of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb whose face is marked and who will fill earth with justice as it was filled with injustice?"\(^{(2)}\) A similar version is attributed to 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb himself. 'Abd-Allah b. Dīnār (d. 127 A.H.)\(^{(3)}\) said that Ibn-'Umar said: "We were speculating that this matter (of the Caliphate) will not end until a man from the offspring of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb takes charge, who will follow his sīrā (behaviour) his sign is a mark on the face." We\(^{(4)}\) believed that this man is Bilāl the son of 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar who had a dot (ṣāmā) on his face until God raised 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz, whose mother was the daughter of Āsim the son of 'Umar.\(^{(5)}\)

It is obvious that the pro-Marwānīs took these prophecies and developed them further by saying that one day 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz was struck on the face by one of his father's horses. When his father 'Abd-al-'Azīz b. Marwān saw a bleeding mark on his son's face he rejoiced and cried: "You are blissful if you become the ashābi of Banū-Marwān."\(^{(6)}\) They further claimed that

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\(^{(1)}\) *Tabaqāt* (BS) v, 243; cf. *Mahdiyya*, 182.

\(^{(2)}\) Cf. the *ḥadīth* of the Mahdi, *above*, 224ff.

\(^{(3)}\) See *Āmma*, ii, 264f; *Tahdīh*, v, 201ff.

\(^{(4)}\) This is, it seems, the idea of Ibn-Dīnār as 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar d. 73 A.H. before the Caliphate of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz.

\(^{(5)}\) *Tabaqāt* (BS) v, 242.

\(^{(6)}\) *Tabaqāt* (BS) v, 243, *Āmma*, ii, 14-24. This indicated that there were previous prophecies about such a person.
when 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Aziz was chosen as Caliph by his predecessor Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik on his death bed (d. 99 A. H.) people heard a clear voice (from an unseen heavenly being) which uttered a poetical line, the meaning of which is:

"From now on it (the Caliphate) became delightful, and firmly established, its pillars have been raised through 'Umar the Mahdi."(1)

Indeed, 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Aziz, once Caliph, acted in a manner which led many Muslims to think that he made true the Messianic dreams in a Mahdi "who will fill the earth with justice as it has been filled with injustice." In his asceticism and high sense of justice he was comparable with his grandfather 'Umar b. al-Khattāb.(2)

Even before his succession to the Caliphate he was a just provincial governor. When al-Walīd b. 'Abd-al-Malik gave him the governorship of Medina he was keen to consult the 'Ulema. He also was against the tyranny of the other Umayyad provincial governors, namely al-Hajjaj who complained to the Caliph al-Walīd that 'Umar gives asylum to the Iraqis who oppose al-Hajjaj and the Umayyad rule. Consequently, al-Walīd asked 'Umar to resign and in his place two men were appointed.(3) Nevertheless, 'Umar was respected and loved by all the Muslim sects including the Kharijites and the Kaysānites, when he became Caliph. The latter respected him most because of his love of the Family and for this

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(1) Cf. Mahdiyya, 183.
(3) Tabaqāt (BS) v, 245; Tab. Tārikh (Q) vi, 481f.
the Kaysānite poet Kuthayyir 'Azza(1) praised him thus:

"When you became the Caliph you did not
curse 'Ali。(2)
you did not terrify any innocent person.
You did not follow the saying of evildoers.
You spoke the plain truth!
Indeed, the signs of 'divinely guidance'
appears when one speaks!!
What you have said was proved true through
what you have done.
Thus, every Muslim became happy with you!!

(d) Mahdism and Tribalism

(i) The Qahtānite Mahdi

It has been noted above(3) that the Qahtānites as a whole,
and especially those of Iraq and Khurasān, were mainly of pro-
Hashimite sympathy,(4) believing in their charismata; while the
Muḍarites were inclined to support the Umayyads. This division,
however, was not strictly observed as the situation might vary
according to the motives and interests of the individuals or of

(1) Tabaqāt (BS), v, 291.
(2) The Umayyads used to curse ‘Alī b. Abī-Ṭalib and his Shi‘a
publicly in all their sermons.
(3) Cf. 58ff.
(4) The whole family of Ḥashim, until about 100 A.H., was
united behind the 'Alīds.
Thus, the main body of the Qahtānites, up to the rise of Ibn-al-Ash‘ath (81 A.H.) were resting their hopes on a charismatic Mahdi from the Family who would deliver them from the Umayyads’ tyranny. But the successive failure of the Family to regain power from the Usurpers made some of the Qahtānites think of having their own charismatic leader. It was said that they began to speculate on the coming of an eschatological Qahtānite ruler who, according to one narration, would dominate the world for twenty years. (2)

They found expression for this hope in a hadīth which, strangely enough, found its way to al-Bukhārī who, as it was said above, excluded all the hadith of the Mahdi from his Sahīh. (3)

Al-Bukhārī related the hadīth of the Qahtānite on the authority of ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Uwaysī, (4) on the authority of Sulaymān (b. Bilāl), (5) on the authority of Thawr (b. Zayd al-Āyli), (6) on the authority of Abū-l-Ghayth, a mawla

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(1) For instance, the Qahtānites of Syria were pro-Umayyads, and the Kalbite in particular were pro to the Sufyānids branch.

(2) Irshād (Bukh. inter.) x, 203.

(3) Cf. above, 204f.

(4) This man is a shaykh of al-Bukhārī, but some scholar said that he was weak in hadīth, cf. Mīsān, ii, 630.

(5) A mawla of Quraysh and of Berber origin, ‘Uthmān b. Abī-Shaybā said: "his hadīth is not reliable", cf. Tahdīh, iv, 175f; Tabagāt (BS) v, 311.

of 'Abd-Allah b. Muti', on the authority of the Companion Abū-Hurayra who reported the Prophet Muhammad as saying: "The last hour shall not come until a man from Qahtān drives (rules) the people with his stick". This 'stick' was interpreted as his use of force because the Qahtānīte would dominate his kingdom violently. (2)

The story of the Qahtānīte was later expanded by some traditionists, for instance, Irtāt b. al-Mundhir of Hamdān (or Ilhān) (3) who died in 162 A.H., was reported to have said: "The Qahtānīte will come forth after the Mahdi; he will follow his footsteps (in his just role); he will rule for twenty years." (4)

Similar hadīth was attributed to 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Qays b. Jābir as-Sadāfī on the authority of his father on the authority of his grandfather, who reported the Prophet as saying: "The Qahtānīte will come after the Mahdi. I swear by He who sent me with truth, he is not inferior to the Mahdi." (5)

Ibn-Hajar, who seemed to have accepted the idea, commented that if the hadīth of Irtāt b. al-Mundhir is correct, the Qahtānīte

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(1) See Tahdhīb, iii, 445; for Ibn-Muti' cf. Tab. Tārīkh, index, 338; Tahdhīb, vi, 36.
(2) Irshād (Bukh. inter.) x, 203.
(3) For Irtāt see Tahdhīb, i, 198; for Ilhān see Ishtiqāq, 419, 433.
(4) Irshād (Bukh. inter.) x, 203; Sayūtī, Hawī, ii, 80, quoted from Taṣrīḥ, 295.
(5) The transmitter 'Abd-ar-Rahmān and his forefathers are unknown. Irshād (Bukh. inter.) x, 203f. Quoting Nu'aym b. Hammād K. al-Fītān which is included in Hawī.
will be in the time of 'Isa (Jesus) who, according to other hadiths, will descend at the time of the Mahdi and rule for forty years. But Ibn-Hajar raised the question, "How the Qahtanite will lead people with 'stick' in a messianic time supposed to be full of peace and tranquillity?"; he answered that 'Isa might delegate to the Qahtanite some of his power in some matters.

The hadith of al-Bukhari might have been the basis of the claim of an early Qahtanite pretender of Mahdism, namely, 'Abd-ar-Rahman b. Muhammad b. al-Ash'ath of Kinda, who, according to Mas'udi, had claimed to be the expected Qahtanite. He planned to revolt in Iraq against the Umayyads' provincial governor, al-Hajjaj, but later expanded his ambitions, intending to overthrow the whole Umayyad dynasty. There is not sufficient historical material to show how he advanced his Messianic claims but he certainly was working for his interest and not for the Hashimites. He succeeded in mobilising the whole Iraqi opposition, especially his own people and the mawali who had suffered most from al-Hajjaj and the Umayyad; and this might explain why the mawali were interested to make public the above mentioned hadith.

(1) Irshad (Bukh. inter.) x, 202f.
(2) Irshad (Bukh. inter.) x, 202f.
(3) Tab. Tarikh, index, 43, 351.
(4) Tanbih, 314. Quoted by Van Vloten, Arab Dominion, (Arab. Tran.), 121.
of the Qahtânite. (1)

(ii) The Kalbite

After the defeat and death of Ibn-al-Ash'ath, Kalb, another Yemenite tribe, speculated on the coming of a charismatic leader among them. Reference has been made above to the (Sufyânîte) man of Quraysh whose maternal uncles are from Kalb. (2) Most probably some members of the tribe gave more weight to their relation to the Sufyânîte and his legend and therefore they gave him another name, the Kalbite.

It is suspected that Khâlid b. Yazîd, who was said to have invented the hadîth of the Sufyânî, might also have invented the Kalbite's story, with the intention to rally behind him his strong maternal uncles (Kalb). It seems that there is no relation between the Qahtânîte and the Kalbite Mahdis, although Kalb is a branch of Qahtân. The Kalbite Mahdi is said to be half Qurayshite (Umayyad) whereas the Qahtânîte is supposed to be anti-Umayyads. (3)

(1) The last two hadîths may be of late date; approximately after the time of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Asîs who tried his best to undermine his predecessors' policy of "divide to rule", but after his early death, tribalism became even worse.

(2) Ibn-al-Qâyyim held that the hadîth of the Kalbite whose maternal uncles are from Kalb is 'sound', Cf. Manâr, 144f, of Sunan (D) iv, 152; Musnad (Ah.sh.) iii, 17; vi, 316.

(3) It is said that the Qahtânîte will continue the mission of the Mahdi of the Family.
revolt of Ibn-al-Ash'ath came to the Caliph 'Abd-al-Malik, he sent to Khālid asking him for his advice in dealing with the revolt. This, in itself, indicates that Khālid and his maternal uncles were not collaborating with Ibn-al-Ash'ath and the Qahtānites. (1)

(iii) The Temīmite

It is obvious from the following two hadīths referring to the obscure Temīmite that the tribe of Banū-Tamīm of Mudar also had wanted to associate themselves with the contemporary Mahdistic aspirations. But it seems from the material that their longing for a Temīmite Mahdi came later, perhaps after the 'Abbāsid rule which came after a bitter tribal rivalry during the last days of the Umayyads. The 'Abbāsids-'Alids conflict is clear from the text of the hadīth related by Tabarānī, (2) the most significant part of which reads:

"... The Prophet took the hand of (his uncle) al-'Abbās and the hand of 'Alī and said: 'The spine of this one - al-'Abbās - will produce descendants until the whole earth shall be filled with injustice and crime, and the spine of that one - 'Alī - will produce descendants until the whole earth shall be filled with equity and justice. When you see this (happen)"

(1) Cf. Tab. Tārikh (Q) VI, 339ff.
then take care of the Tamīmite youth. He will advance from the East. He will be in charge of the flag of the Mahdi."(1)

In another hadīth transmitted by Abū-sh-Shaykh b. Hayyān,(2) the Tamīmite youth is named al-Muq'ad or al-Muq'id, but this time he will not be in charge of the flag of al-Mahdi but will be the deputy of 'Īsā, the Messiah. This hadīth, which is obviously unauthentic, is attributed to Abū-Hurayra who is reported to have said that the Prophet said:

"'Īsā will descend and kill the anti-Christ and live on earth for forty years, ruling according to the Qur'ān and Sunna. When he dies people will appoint, as his successor, a man from Banū-Tamīm called al-Muq'ad; when the latter dies, three years will not pass before the Qur'ān is perished from hearts and books!"(3)

(iv) The Mahdi of the mawāli

It is to be expected, in this environment of tribalism, which was until then of the Arab, that the non-Arab Muslims, who

(1) Ibn-Khaldūn noticed that among the transmitters of this hadīth are 'Abd-Allah b. 'Umar al-'Umarī and 'Abd-al-Allah b. Lahi'a, both of whom are weak. Muqaddima, ii, 184.
(2) Quoted from Taṣrīḥ, 231f; cf. Sayūṭī, Ḥawl, ii, 89.
(3) It is remarkable that both the Tamīmite and the Qahtānites are linked with either 'Īsā or the Mahdi.
were called *mawāli* or client, would join the race to attain a position in these messianic expectations. It is to be noted that most of the *mawāli* have had an Indo-Iranian or Judaeo-Christian background; the majority are believed to be Persians or Persianised groups.\(^1\) Their belief in a charismatic Mahdi was deep-rooted in their old traditions. Some of them had experienced the worship of kings long before; and therefore their expectation for a future saviour was greater than that of the Arabs.

It was seen above that the idea of Mahdism itself was the product of these elements. Because of their longing for a charismatic ruler, they joined first the Saba‘iyya movement, which believed in the Mahdism of ‘Alī, and then that of al-Kaysāniyya\(^2\) which believed in his son Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, and latterly they backed the ‘Abbāsid pretenders until they established their sovereignty. But when they were finally disappointed with all the branches of the Family, they turned to their old beliefs. The movements of Zanādiqa, the Khuramiyya and the Muqanna‘iyya were the manifestation of this trend.

Thus, some Muslim sources\(^3\) accused these elements, especially the Persians, of planning to restore their old sovereignty by using the name of the Family first, and then by inventing hadīths which speculate on the coming of a ruler from the *mawāli*. The names of Khidash, one of the first ‘Abbāsid recruiting

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\(^1\) More details were given above, 88-8; cf. Formative Period, 44-47; art. "Mawali", E.I.\(^1\)

\(^2\) Above, 13ff.

\(^3\) Mas‘ūdī, Nuru‘, iii, 305; iv, 55; Farq (Bagh.) 294-312.
officers, and Abū-Muslim al-Khurasani, the actual military leader of the revolution, are given as examples. Khidash was said to be of Zoroastrian\(^{(1)}\) mind and so was Abū-Muslim.\(^{(2)}\) According to some sources the latter was worshipped by a group called al-Razamiyya. Al-Baghdādi\(^{(3)}\) mentioned another group called Abū-Muslimiyya (derived from the name of Abū-Muslim) which maintained that the latter was God incarnate; and when he was killed by the second 'Abbāsid Caliph al-Mansūr (about 136 or 7) apparently for his being too dangerous, they held that Abū-Muslim was not dead and that he was the expected Zoroastrian Mahdi (Saoshyant)\(^{(4)}\) who, as this tradition tells: "If only one day of the whole duration of the world remains, an expected saviour from Zoroaster offspring will come to fill earth with justice as it was filled with injustice." Surprisingly, this is the same as the hadīthē, already quoted, which are attributed to the Prophet Muhammad.\(^{(5)}\)

A modern scholar observed that the Batini interpretations of the Qur'ān and Sunna, especially those of the Kaysānite groups, helped a lot of foreign ideas, from Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity, to pass as Islamic ideas. He added that the clever men of those faiths tried very hard to

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\(^{(1)}\) Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 1503, 1588, 1593, 1639, 1640.
\(^{(3)}\) *Farq* (Bagh.) 257; cf. *Magālāt* (Ash.) i, 21f.
\(^{(4)}\) Cf. art. "Salvation" (Iranian) E.R.E., xi, 137f.
\(^{(5)}\) Cf. above, 224 ff.
reconcile their old beliefs and Islam.\(^1\)

Some other pretenders such as Bābik al-Khurrāmī, al-Muqanna', and Miziyār\(^2\) expressed their beliefs and motives more frankly. The influence of these men grew strong in some parts of Persia after the death of the Caliph al-Ma'mūn, who was pro-mawāli. The followers of these men called themselves al-Muhammira (the redders) in opposition to the 'Abbāsid followers who were called al-Musawwida (the blackers) and the Umayyads who were latterly called al-Mubayyida (the whikers).\(^3\) Detailed accounts of Bābik al-Khurrāmī and his movement are given by Tabarī and most of the early Muslim historians.\(^4\)

Those who were not associated with these plainly un-Islamic revolts found a hadīth, attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, which expresses their hope in a charismatic leader of their own. Several Sunnite collections relate this hadīth.\(^5\) For example, the Imam Muslim, who comes second to al-Bukhārī in his accuracy,

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\(^{(1)}\) Van Vloten, Arab Dominion, (Arab. Tran.) 82-90.

\(^{(2)}\) For Bābik see Tab. Tārīkh, iii, number of pages see index.

\(^{(3)}\) Cf. Arab Dominion, 125-128.

\(^{(4)}\) For al-Muqanna' see Farq (Bagh.) 257f; Milāl (Shahr. W.) i, 154; 'Ibar (Dh.) i, 235, 240. For Miziyār see 'Ibar (Dh.) i, 389; Farq (Bagh.) 268.

\(^{(5)}\) Sunan (T.) ix, 73. Tirmidhi said this hadīth is good but strange.
said that we were told by Muhammad b. Bashır al-‘Abdi(1) and ‘Abd-al-Kabir b. 'Abd-al-Majid Abü-Bakr al-Hanafi(2) and 'Abd-al-Hamid b. Ja'far(3) who said that he heard 'Umar b. al-Hakam(4) on the authority of the Prophet say:

"The days and nights shall not pass until a man from the mawāli, called Jahjah, rules."(5)

Despite this, the mawāli did not cease to believe in various Mahdis of various sects in various times. This point will be dealt with later when the development of Shī'ism will be discussed in Chapter VI.

6. Mahdis and the 'Abbāsides

(a) The 'Abbāsides' claim to wasiyya

It was stated above(6) that the fourth, and perhaps the largest group of the Hāshimiyya (the followers of Abü-Hāshim) had claimed that the wasiyya or charismata had been passed to the 'Abbāsides after the death of their leader. This claim is

(1) Apparently added to 'Abd-al-Qays although he might be one of their mawāli; he was a tailor in Basra, and this occupation is of significance; he died in 252 A.H. Tahdh, ix, 71f.

(2) He died in Basra in 204 A.H. Tahdh, v, 370f.

(3) 'Abd-al-Hamīd was said to be "Qadarite"; he also supported an-Nafs as-Zakiyya (d.153 A.H.) Tahdh, vi, 111f; Mizān, ii, 539.

(4) According to Ibn-al-Tawsi, Bukhārī said his hadīth had gone (is nothing). Tahdh, vii, 436f; Mizān, iii, 191.

(5) Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.) xviii, 36.

recorded in many historical as well as heresiographical works, (1) and is also supported by the statements of the early Shi'ite sources. For instance, al-Ya'qūbi (d. 284 A.H.) (2) said that Abū-Ḥāshim advised his 'legatee' (wasi) Muhammad b. 'Alī, the father of the 'Abbāsid dynasty to notice the mystery of the number 12 and send his recruiting officers (naqībe) to the provinces accordingly, to spread his message (da'wa).

Dīnawārī, (3) also mentioned that Muhammad b. 'Alī had started his movement with those naqībe and conveyed to them the above-mentioned hadith of the mujaddid (4) but without reference to number 12 or to Abū-Ḥāshim.

Modern research, however, doubted the matter of this wasiyya but some scholars lately raised some points which increased the possibility of its correctness. (5)

Although there is nothing to show that Muhammad b. 'Alī and his son and successor Ibrāhīm the Imam, had believed in such wasiyya passing to them, yet they were prepared to exploit this belief. "They were even prepared to employ an extremist like

(1) Ta'rikh, ii, 1586 ff.
Mas'ūdī, Isḥāf 292; Maqātil, 126; Firaq (Nawb.) 29, 41 ff.
Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 21; Faraq (Bagh.) 256.
(2) Ta'rikh (Ya'q) 111, 72.
(3) Akhbār (Dīnaw.) 332 f. He only mentioned some names.
(4) Above, 187, 202 ff.
(5) Cf. Professor Montgomery Watt, Formative Period, 53, 153 ff;
Wellhausen, Arab Kingdom, 503 f; Donaldson, D.M., Shi'ite
Religion, 124.
Khidāsh (d. 736 A.D.) it would seem, though they had to disavow him in the end. (1)

Several historical reports show that the city of Kūfa, which was already accommodating many Shi‘ite extremist ideas, was the centre of the ‘Abbāsid propaganda; from there, the recruiting officers travelled to Khurasān and Humayma where Muhammad b. ‘Ali and his ‘Abbāsid family stayed. (2) After the death of Muhammad in 125 A.H., his son Ibrāhīm took over, and under his brilliant leadership the seeds which were planted in by the naqībe in Kūfa and Khurasān produced their fruits. The agents were able to win for him the support of many people who did not even "distinguish between his person and his name". (3) This, of course, is due mainly to the secrecy of the movement and the abilities of the most distinguished agent Abū-Muslīm al-Khurasāni.

To elucidate further, in the year 129 A.H., Abū-Muslīm was able to declare the revolution by raising "the black banners" in Khurasān, but about the same time Ibrāhīm was arrested in Humayma and sent to Damascus on the request of Marwān II, the last Umayyad Caliph. The rest of the ‘Abbāsids had escaped to Kūfa under the guidance of Abū al-‘Abbās ‘Abd-Allah b. ‘Ali, Ibrāhīm’s brother. (4)

Shortly after this, Ibrāhīm was murdered in prison. (5)

(1) Formative Period, 151; cf. Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 1588, 1593, 1639f.
(2) Akhbār (Dīnaw.) 339, 358f; Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 1726f.
(3) Art. "Mahdi", E.I. (1)
(4) Akhbār (Dīnaw.) 339ff. For the term "black banners" cf. below, 270.
(5) Tab. Tārīkh (Q) vii, 422 436ff; Akhbār (Dīnaw.) 358.
his death seemed to have caused some confusion in Kūfa regarding his successor. Abū-Salama al-Khallāl, the chief dā‘ī of the city who was looking after the ‘Abbāsids in their hiding place, was said to have preferred an ‘Alid to succeed to the Imamate but his efforts were in vain because of the strong pro-‘Abbāsid sympathy in Khurasān and Kūfa which may have caused the ‘Alids to refuse Abū-Salama’s offers.(1)

Consequently, Abū-al-‘Abbās ‘Abd-Allah b. ‘Alī succeeded to the Imamate and resumed the contact with Abū-Muslin in Khurasān urging him to speed up his thrust against the Umayyad provincial governor and his forces.(2)

By 132 A.H. Abū-Muslin had captured all Khurasān and was able to counter and eventually defeat the Umayyad Caliph Marwān II in the decisive battle of az-Zāb. Marwān II, who escaped with the remainder of his troops to Egypt via Syria, was killed in the same year by the forces of Abū-Muslin which had been sent for this purpose.(3) Kūfa was prepared to welcome publicly Abū-al-‘Abbās ‘Abd-Allah b. ‘Alī as the new caliph, who, in his first speech, condemned the Umayyads and promised to vanquish their oppression; he also threatened his enemies and warned them that he called himself as-Saffāh or the Butcher, a title by which he

(1) Tab. Tārīkh (Q), vii, 423, 448ff; Mas‘ūdī, Murūd, vi, 93-96 quoted from Shi‘ite Religion, 130.
(2) Akhbār (Dīnaw) mentioned that Abū-Muslin came himself to Kūfa to swear his allegiance to Abū-al-‘Abbās, cf. Tab. Tārīkh (Q) vii, 353-412.
(3) Akhbār (Dīnaw.) 365ff. Tab. Tārīkh (Q) vii, 437ff.
has since become well-known.\footnote{Tab. Tārīkh (Q) vii, 426.} As-Saffāh, who received the oath of allegiance from his subjects, appointed his brother Abū-Ja'far, also called 'Abd-Allah b. 'Alī, as his crown prince. Abū-Ja'far, in time, was known by his title al-Mansūr.\footnote{This will be explained below, 267.}

(b) The 'Abbasid Mahdi

It has been seen how the 'Abbasid made use of the contemporary and popular messianic belief in a Mahdi from the Prophet's Family. Besides the hadiths of the "black banners", which will be discussed soon,\footnote{Below, 270} some other hadiths were used, not necessarily with their approval, which depicted the various Caliphs as representatives of divine guidance, the shade of God or his agent on earth.\footnote{Tab. Tārīkh (Q), vii, 356, 452, 505ff.} Thus, they identified the Caliphs with the Mahdistic notions by applying the existing hadiths of the Mahdi to them, secondly by creating others which serve the same purpose, and thirdly by adopting names or titles which indicate these meanings.

For instance, the following hadīth was related,\footnote{By Bayhaqi, quoted from Bidaya, x, 50. The transmitters between Bayhaqi and 'A'mash are omitted.} \footnote{Called Sulayman b. Mahrān, d. 148 A.H. He was said to be a Shī'ite. Tahdh, iv, 225.} on the authority of al-'A'mash\footnote{Tab. Tārīkh (Q), vii, 426.} on the authority of 'Attiyya al-
'Awfī(1) on the authority of the companions of Abū-Sa'īd who reported the Prophet as saying:

"A man from the people of my house will appear at the end of time and occurrence of Fītan (civil war); he is called 'as-Saffāh'. He will give money without counting." (2)

Although as-Saffāh, in his first action as Caliph, increased the salaries of all people, yet there is no historical support for the suggestion that he claimed to be the Mahdi to whom the other ḥadīths gave the same virtue of generosity. On the other hand there is nothing to show that he refused such a ḥadīth which added to his charismatic image.

After the death of as-Saffāh in about 136 A.H., his brother Abū-Ja'far 'Abd-Allah b. 'Alī succeeded him. Abū-Ja'far, threatened by the growing influence of Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah an-Naṣr az-Zakiyya, who claimed to be the Mahdi, adopted for himself the title al-Mansūr which means the victorious, and gave his son Muhammad (also Ibn-'Abd-Allah) the title Mahdi. He claimed that the promised Mahdi, whose name will be like the Prophet's name, etc., according to the ḥadīth, is not an-Naṣr az-Zakiyya but his son Muhammad whom he appointed as his successor. (3)

(1) 'Āṭṭiyya b. Sa'd b. Janāda (d. 111 A.H. or 127). He was also a Shī'ite, Tahdhī, vii, 225.

(2) Similar ḥadīths are found in other collections of Sahīḥ but without mentioning the name of this eschatological Imam and without calling him Mahdi. Cf. Sahīḥ (Bukh.) and Sahīḥ (M).

(3) Maqātil, 240; Tab. Tūrīkh (Q), vii, 508. Cf. above, 232-240.
Al-Mansür himself was thought of as the Mahdi by a heretical sect called the Rawandiyya. The Rawandiyya believed that al-Mansür was God incarnated and his prophet was his military commander Abū-Muslim al-Khurasanī. Some sources described the Rawandiyya as having developed in Khurasan out of a branch of the Kaysāniyya who had similar notions regarding certain people. It is understood that the Rawandiyya itself was divided into three branches, the first two of which seemed to have aimed at re-establishing the Persian sovereignty in Islamic guise. The first group is the Abūmuslimiyya who, after the execution of Abū-Muslim by al-Mansūr, changed their belief in the latter's divinity and held that Abū-Muslim was not dead but concealed, and would return as the awaited saviour (Saoshyant). From this branch, it was said that the Khurrāmiyya, the followers of the later insurgent Bābik al-Khurrāmi (a grandson of Abī-Muslim) developed their beliefs.

The second group of the Rawandiyya was the Rizāmiyyas, the followers of Rizām, who also shared the view that the wasiyya

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(1) Firaq (Nawb.) 30, 35ff, 41f, 46; cf. Tab. Tārikh (Q) vii, 505ff.
(2) Firaq (Nawb.) 30, 35ff, 41f, 46. Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 20; Milal (Shahr.w.) 1, 154. Farq (Bagh.) 257. Cf. Formative Period, 153f.
(3) For the cause of his execution see above, 260. Cf. Akhbār (Dinaw.) 380, Tab. Tārikh (Q), vii, 479.
(4) See Akhbār (Dinaw.) 402.
(5) Milal (Shahr. W.) 1, 153f; Firaq (Nawb.) 42. Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 21f. Tab. Tārikh, iii, 132.
or Imamate was transferred from Abū-Ḥāshim to the 'Abbasid and from them to Abū-Musli̇m al-Khurasānī; the Rizāmiyya also believed in the divinity of Abū-Musli̇m and transmigration of souls. (1)

The third group was the Hurayriyyas, the followers of Abū-Hurayra ar-Rāwandi. (2) They, unlike the other two, believed that the wasiyya passed from the Prophet immediately to the 'Abbasid through their father al-'Abbās who, as Muhammad's uncle, deserved the Imamate more than 'Alī and his 'Alīds. This group, perhaps, developed during the reign of the third 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi, who seemed to have encouraged such claims because of his open quarrel with the 'Alīds. (3)

Concerning the Caliph al-Mahdi, who ruled after his father's death in 158 A.H. until his own in 169 A.H., many people thought that he was the promised one whose appearance was heralded by the occurrence of "the black banners", while others saw him as an ordinary but just Caliph compared with 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz of the Umayyads. Supporting this latter view is the confession of his father al-Mansūr who once said that he knew that neither his son Muhammad nor an-Nafs az-Zakiyya were the promised Mahdi. (4)

(1) Faraq (Bagh.) 41f; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 64f, 195.

(2) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 65; Piraq, 42, also cf. page 46f where another man called 'Abd-Allah ar-Rāwandi. It appears that the latter was the originator of the Rāwandiyya movement and from his name the title Rāwani, applied to the former, is taken.

(3) Cf. Formative Period, 153-156.

(4) Ibn-Kathīr quoted by Sindi's footnotes on Sunan (BM), ii, 517f. cf. Maqātil, 247.
represent the conflict between the 'Alīds and the 'Abbasids' sympathisers which continually dominated their relationship for centuries.

(c) The hadīths of the black banners

"The black banners" is an English translation of the Arabic term ar rāwāt as-sūd the appearance of which was believed to be the herald of the appearance of the promised Mahdi. Many hadīths stated that the people who hold the black banners will be the forerunners of the Mahdi who will prepare the way for his authority.

Some traditionists (1) declare these hadīths as non-authentic and therefore regard them as an invention of the pro-‘Abbasids who, for uncertain reasons, chose the colour black as their sign. The pro-‘Alīds tried to make use of these hadīths by adding to them extra meaning which might serve the cause of their expected Mahdi. Examples of both trends will be mentioned during the course of discussion. But the clearest pro-‘Abbāsid hadīth is the one which was transmitted by Khālid b. Mahrān al-Hazzā', an official of the ‘Abbāsid state who, before his death in 142 A.H., served as secretary in the treasury of Basra. (2) Khālid related on the authority of Abū-Qilāba (3) on the authority of Abū-Asmā'.
ar-Rahibli(1) on the authority of Thawbän(2) who said that the Prophet said:

"Three will fight with each other at (the place where) your treasure (is). All of them are the sons of a Caliph. (3) None of them will get it, then, black flags will arise from the East. (4) They will kill you in slaughter such as there has never been before. He (5) then mentioned something that I do not remember. (6) He continued: 'When you see him, render the oath of allegiance to him, even if you must creep over the snow for he is the representative of God, (Khalifa) the Mahdi." (7)

Ibn-Lahi'a, who also was an official of the state but seemed to be of pro-'Alīds' sympathy, (8) related a hadīth which is not

(1) Called 'Amr b. Marthad (d. before 79); Tahdh, viii, 99.
(2) Ibn-Bajdad or Jahdar, he was a mawla of the Prophet d. 54 A.H., Tahdh, ii, 31.
(3) This can be a reference to inter-dynastic quarrels between the Umayyad which followed the succession of Walīd b. Yazid to the Caliphate in about 125 A.H. Tab. Tārikh.
(4) Khurasan.
(5) The Prophet.
(6) The speaker is Thawbän.
(7) Sunan (BM) ii, 219; Musnad (Ab. M.) v, 277; cf. Muqaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 180.
contradictory to this one, but at the same time can be interpreted in favour of the 'Alīids' Mahdi, as was the case with an-Nafs az-Zakiyya. This hadīth reads as follows:

"People will come forth from the East (Khurasān) they will pave the way for the Mahdi ... "(1)

Ibn-Lahi'a related this hadīth on the authority of another Shī'ite called Abū Zura'ā 'Āmir Ibn-Jābir of Ḥadrāmūt who was said to have believed with the Sabā'īyya that 'Alī b. Abī-Talib was in the clouds. (2)

Another contemporary of Ibn-Lahi'a, Yazīd b. Abī-az-Ziyād (d. 136 A. H.) (3) related another hadīth about 'the black banners' which will forerun the Mahdi, who seems to be not of the 'Abbāsids.

"... My people will experience misfortune, exile and punishment, until people shall come from the East with black flags. They will ask for goodness but they will not be given it. They will fight and they will be victorious. And they will be given what they had asked for, but they will not accept it."(4) Eventually, they will hand (the

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(1) Sunan (BM) ii, 519; cf. Muqaddima, ii, 180f; cf. the claim of an-Nafs az-Zakiyya above, 23f.

(2) Mizān, iii, 250.

(3) Mizān, iv, 423ff.

(4) There seems to be no historical explanation for this confusion. It might be the pro-'Alīd hope that the 'Abbāsid will hand the power to their Imams as al-Ma'mūn lately did. cf. below, 301f.
Caliphate) over to a man of my family. He will fill it with equity, as they\(^{(1)}\) had filled it with injustice. Those among you who live to see that happen shall go to them,\(^{(2)}\) even if it is necessary to creep over the snow."\(^{(3)}\)

Ibn-Khaldûn, remarking on this hadîth, said that religious leaders (traditionists) have pronounced openly the weakness of the Tradition of the flags that was transmitted by Yazîd on the authority of Ibrâhîm (an-Nakha'î) on the authority of 'Alqâma\(^{(4)}\) on the authority of 'Abd-Allah (b. Mas'ûd). Ibn-Khaldûn reported Abû-Usâmâ\(^{(5)}\) as saying: "Were he (Yazîd) to swear me fifty oaths, I shall not believe him. Is that Ibrâhîm's way (mudhhab)? Is that 'Alqâma's way? Is that 'Abd-Allah's way?" An indication that these men were not extremists who could transmit such material.

The hadîthas of the black banners were not necessarily invented during the 'Abbâsid revolution. Most probably they were of an early date but not as early as the life of the Prophet. Some

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\(\text{(1)}\) 'He' refers to the Mahdi and 'They' to the 'Abbâsids.

\(\text{(2)}\) In the above hadîth of Khâlid, it is read as 'him'.

\(\text{(3)}\) Sunan (BM) ii, 517f; Mustadrâk (Hâk.), cf. Muqaddima (R. Tran.) ii, 173.

\(\text{(4)}\) Two Ibrâhîms are mentioned as transmitters on 'Alqâma's authority: Ibrâhîm b. Suwayd and Ibrâhîm an-Nakha'î, the latter was 'Alqâma's nephew d. 96, cf. Tahdh, i, 126, 177; vii, 279.

\(\text{(5)}\) Hammâd b. Usâmâ d. 201 A.H., Tahdh, iii, 3f.
evidence indicates that an early Umayyad Caliph, namely Sulaymān b. 'Abd-al-Malik who died in 99 A.H., was associated with the terms 'black banners' and 'Mahdi' by the contemporary poet Nihār b. Tawsī'a. The poet, in praising the Caliph Sulaymān, said:

"He has a 'black banner' under which the Muslim are united ...
and by which the infidels are defeated
Because of (our) obedience to 'the Mahdi'
nothing is left, but that (banner) ..."(1)

In contrast with this, the pro-Hashimite poet al-Kumayt (d. 126 A.H.) requested the insurgent al-Hārith b. Surayji (k. 128 A.H.) and his associates to raise the black banners against the people of oppression and misguidance (the Umayyads). According to Tabarī, al-Kumayt composed his poem about 117 A.H., a few years after the death of Sulaymān. (2)

Concerning al-Hārith b. Surayj, who was said to have adopted for himself the title 'the man of the black banners', sources mentioned that he revolted against the Umayyad Caliph Hishām who refuted the reformative policies of 'Umar b. 'Abd-al-'Azīz

(1) Unfortunately the translation cannot be exact as the original text, therefore transliteration is necessary; it reads:

La-hu rāvatun bi th-thaqri sawdā' lam tazal
tutaddu bi-hā l-amshrikīna jumū'u
'ala ta'ati al-Mahdiyyi lam yabqa ghavra-hā
Fā-'Ubnā' wa amr al-Muslimīn jami'u

(2) Tab. Tārikh (Q) vii, 99f. For al-Kumayt's biography, see Aghānī.
and re-introduced the old system of heavy tax (imposed upon the mawāli) and favouritism (against the Yemenites). Al-Hārīth's revolution continued for about thirteen years until his death in 128 A.H. during the Caliphate of Marwān II. (1)

While some sources said that he only claimed to be the forerunner of the Mahdi or 'the man of the black banners' others suggested that he claimed to be the Mahdi himself. Jahm b. Safwān was said to have been asked by al-Hārīth to read his sīra from a book (possibly one of the malāhim's books or a book written by Jahm). One can grasp the political importance of such work for the cause of al-Hārīth if one remembers that his main following were either of Persian origin (e.g. dahāgin) or of Yemenite origin, both of whom believed strongly in a charismatic leader or Mahdi. (2)

It seems that the claim of his Mahdism, if it is true, was not originally his, for he, in one of his agreement with the Kemāni, another Yemenite rebel, stated that they should only follow the Imams of hudā who are specified somewhere else as the Family of Muhammad. (3)

Furthermore, Tabarī and Ibn-Kathīr mentioned that Naar b. Sayyar, the Umayyad provincial governor of Khurasān was frightened that his opponent al-Hārīth might really be the man of the black banners, (4) an indication that Naar had already heard of

(1) Tab. Tārikh (Q) vii, 94-98, 109-130, 309f, 330ff.
(2) Bidaya, x, 26f. cf. Van Vloten, Arab Dominion (Arab. tran.) 60.
(3) Tab. Tārikh, ii, 1567, 1932.
(4) Tab. Tārikh, ii, 1919; Bidaya, x, 26f.
such a prophecy; for he had sent to him saying: "If you are
that (man) I swear by God you would destroy the fortification
of Damascus and depose the Umayyad dynasty." Al-Hārīth, in
reply, confirmed his claims to Nasr who sent him some financial
help\(^{(1)}\) promising that he would join him if he was able to enter
the town of Rayy after the defeat of al-Kirmānī.\(^{(2)}\)

Consulting several sources I found that there was some
basis for the prophecy of the black banners but the materials
were mostly related by some Jewish converts like Ka‘b al-Ahbara
and another man called Yusūf. For instance, Dhahabī related\(^{(3)}\)
on the authority of Hammād b. Salama\(^{(4)}\) on the authority of
Humayd\(^{(5)}\) on the authority of Bakr b. ‘Abd-Allah al-Muznī\(^{(6)}\) who
said that a Jew called Yusūf confessed Islam (before the Caliph-
ate of ‘Abd-al-Malik, who was a friend of his); Yusūf once
passed by the house of Marwān, ‘Abd-al-Malik’s father, and then
made a remark the meaning of which is: "woe to the nation of
Muhammad from the people of this house." Bakr said that he

\(^{(1)}\) One can be surprised how Naar offered al-Hārīth this help
without accepting his leadership; but one can see that
Naar wanted to play off al-Hārīth against al-Kirmānī.

\(^{(2)}\) Tab. Tārīkh, ii, 1919; Bidaya, x, 26f.

\(^{(3)}\) Tārīkh ISL, iii, 278.

\(^{(4)}\) D. 167 A.H., he is regarded as trust transmitter, Tahdh,
iii, 11-16.

\(^{(5)}\) Humayd at-Tawīl (d.142); some criticised him of being pro-
‘Abbasid but all agree that his transmission is accepted
if he say "I hear", Tahdh, iii, 38ff.

\(^{(6)}\) D. 106 or 108 A.H., cf. Tahdh, i, 484.
asked him "for how long?". Yusuf replied: "Until the black banners come from Khurasan."

Also al-Bayhaqi related on the authority of Ka'b that the black banners will come out from Khurasan; nothing will stop them until they are raised in Ilya' (Jerusalem). According to Ibn-Kathir, similar versions are attributed to Abü-Hurayra by Ahmad and Bayhaqi.

Were those prophecies of the black banners originally a Jewish idea invented to express their hope of a return to Jerusalem which was promised by the contemporary pseudo-Messiahs of the East (i.e. Isfahân, Hamdân and possibly Khurasan). The pseudo-Messiahs of this time were Serenus (about 720 A.D.), Abü-'Isa al-Isfahân (d. before 86 A.H.) and his contemporary Yudgan of Hamadan. But there seemed to be no Jewish basis for the belief in black banners forerunning the Messiah and indeed no obvious connection between these movements and the colour black at all. However, the question of those pseudo-Messiahs will be dealt with more fully in Chapter VII. (3)

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(1) Bidaya, x, 51.
(3) Below, 312ff.
CHAPTER VI

MAHDISM AFTER JA'FAR AS-SÄDIQ UP TO 260 A.H.

The most important personality among the 'Alīds around whom the Mahdistic claims of the extremists had gathered, was Ja'far as-Sādiq, the son of al-Bāqir (d. 148 A.H.) Before going into details it should be mentioned that the success of the 'Abbasid to the Caliphate in 132 A.H. which was witnessed by as-Sādiq brought about many changes in the old forms of Shi'ism.

The first of these changes was the realization of the 'Abbāsid rule brought about was the open confrontation between themselves and the Fātimites. The third change which the 'Abbāsid rule brought about was the open confrontation between themselves and the Fātimites. It was natural that these changes would lead to the subsequent formation of Shi'ism and also to a new conception of Mahdism.

It is doubtful whether Ja'far as-Sādiq himself was interested

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(1) The Hashimite here means the whole clan of Hashim, cf. above, 117f.
(2) This does not mean that the Hanafite followers disappeared totally. For instance, as-Sayyid al-Himyari, who believed in Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, lived until 173 A.H.
(3) Those are mainly the Zaydites and the Hasanites. The Husaynites attitude was changeable.
in claiming the position of Imamate or wasiyya. If he had accepted the title Imam, it would have been in its religious concept, somewhat similar to that of his contemporaries and friends al-Imâm Malik b. Anas and al-Imâm Abû-Hanîfa. For it is certain that as-Sâdiq was maintaining the policy of 'keeping out of politics' adopted by his father al-Bâqir and his grandfather Zayn al-ʻĀbidîn.

This judgement on as-Sâdiq's political stand is supported by the following points: his theological views, which sometimes involve politics, seemed to be in contrast with most of the late official Shî'ite ones. For instance, concerning the question of tafdîl (preference) between the Caliphs Abû-Bakr, 'Umar and 'Alî, he was reported as having expressed a high regard for Abû-Bakr, who was his maternal great-grandfather, and for 'Umar. He seemed to have recognised their Caliphate as rightful; but at the same time he regarded 'Alî, his paternal great-grandfather, as afdal (most excellent). (1)

Added to this is the fact that as-Sâdiq, as it was seen above, (2) opposed the Mahdism of his cousin Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya in such a way that made some scholars think that he was in alliance with the 'Abbâsids against whom Muhammad revolted. But it seems that as-Sâdiq's utterances against the Mahdism of his cousin were intended to warn his relatives and their supporters not to over-estimate their power in comparison with the 'Abbâsids' power.

(1) In this as-Sâdiq was said to have been inspired by the Zaydites; Formative Period, 162.
(2) Above, 232ff.
Accordingly, it was reported, as-Sādiq refused the offers of the 'Abbāsids’ agent Abū-Salama al-Khallāl to make him the Caliph after the death of Ibrāhīm al-Imām who was later succeeded by his brother as-Saffāh. The refusal of as-Sādiq was based upon the idea that Abū-Salama and his associates had worked for a long time for the 'Abbāsids; their loyalty would resist change. In his answer to Abū-Salama he quoted this verse:

When one lights a fire, are its flames for another!!
Or does one gather wood in the rope of another?(1)

This quiescent attitude of as-Sādiq toward politics made it possible for the extremists, who were not absorbed by the 'Abbāsids’ movement, to find refuge in his circle. Among those extremists there were some dangerous men like Abū-al-Khattāb al-Asādi, al-Mufaddal b. ‘Umar al-Ju’fī, Bazīgh b. Mūsā al-Hā’ik, Nawūs, Abū-Ja’far al-Ahwal (Shaytān at-Taq or Mu’mīn at-Taq) and Hishām b. al-Hakam.(2) It is not possible to cover, in this thesis, all their views on different matters of theology and politics, as our concern here is only their Mahdiitic ideas and how they were developed by their students and hence played a crucial role in forming the later Mahdiitic notions.

After the death of as-Sādiq in 148 A.H., his followers were divided into several groups upon the question of Imamate:

(i) Those who believed that as-Sādiq had passed the Imamate before his death, to his son Ismā’īl and then to the

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(1) Mas’ūdī, Murūj, vi, 93-96, quoted from Shi‘ite Religion, 130.
(2) Reference to these men will be made occasionally, cf. below, 298f.
latter's son, Muhammad. (1)

(ii) Those who held that after as-Sädiq's death his other son Müsa al-Kázim had succeeded him according to his will (wasiyya).

(iii) Those who believed that as-Sädiq was succeeded either by his son Muhammad or by his elder son 'Abd-Allah al-Aftah, (2) who died a few months after his father. They derived their name, al-Aftahiyya, from his title.

(iv) Those who held that as-Sädiq was not dead but concealed and would return as the Mahdi. Those were called the Nawusiyya after the name of their leader Ibn-Nawüs. (3)

The last two groups are of little significance to this study because in addition to the lack of information about their founders and followers, they disappeared shortly after the death of as-Sädiq. (4) It is believed that their followers were absorbed in other groups which can be classified with some looseness under the heading of the Ismä'iliyya and the Mūsāwiyya and which will be examined in the following pages. Before doing so, it must be said that this examination will be as brief as possible because

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(1) Al-Mubarakiyya believed that the Imam after Ja'far is Muhammad b. Ismā'il because Ismā'il had died before his father; Piraq (Nawb.) 58, 61.

(2) Al-Aftah means the flat or broad-footed. Cf. Formative Period, 160.

(3) Very little is known about this man. Magālat (Ash.) i, 25; Piraq (Nawb.) 47, 57.

(4) Origin of Ismā'iliism, 30ff; Formative Period, 271.
more than a century must be covered from the death of as-Sādiq in 148 A.H. until the death of the eleventh Imam al-Hasan al-
'Askari in 260 A.H.

1. The Ismā'iliyya

The Ismā'iliyya is a loose term derived from Ismā'il b. Ja'far and used for various groups which existed in various places and at various times. They all agreed that the seventh Imam is the expected Mahdi (al-Qā'im al-Muntazar); therefore they were also called the seveners (as-Sabsiyya). (1) But they disagreed about who this seventh Imam was. Some said that he was Ismā'il Ja'far who, according to them, succeeded to the Imamate in his father's lifetime and that he was the immortal Mahdi, some said that the seventh and the Mahdi was his son Muhammad appointed by his grandfather as-Sādiq when his son Ismā'il died in about 133 A.H., and others said that the Imamate of Muhammad b. Ismā'il came through the wasiyya of Abū-al-Khattāb who received it from as-Sādiq before the former's death in 138 A.H. The Ismā'iliyya were also called the Bātiniyya and the Ta'limiyya, the explanation of which will be stated later. (2)

As it was observed, most of the sources discussing the development of Shi'ism point to Abū-al-Khattāb al-Asadī as having been the originator of the ideas which were later known to us as the Ismā'īlism. (3) The full name of Abū-l-Khattāb is

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(1) Art. "Sab'iyya, E.I." (1)
(2) Below, 290, see also Ghazali, P. Batinivva, 11-17.
(3) Bernard Lewis, Origin of Ismā'īlism, 32ff.
Muhammad b. Abī-Zaynab Miqlās; he had the title al-Asādi because he was a mawlā of the tribe of Banū-Asad. His date of birth is not known but he was said to be a disciple of both as-Sādiq and his father al-Bāqir; his intimate friendship with as-Sādiq indicates that he was quite young when al-Bāqir died in 117 A.H.(1)

Sometime before his execution in 138 A.H. Abū-l-Khattāb started to spread extravagant claims about the divinity of as-Sādiq. He preached that the latter was God incarnated (theory of divine right), a belief which is attributed to preceding extremists, regarding ‘Ali, Ibn-al-Hanafiyya, Abū-Hāshim and al-Mansūr, etc.(2) Abū-l-Khattāb, as his predecessors did with the above mentioned names, claimed to be the agent of the Imam as-Sādiq and his Prophet. As-Sādiq was compelled to disavow him before his revolt against the ‘Abbāsid Caliph al-Mansūr, because his claim could threaten the orthodox beliefs and the state.

"The disavowal of Abū-l-Khattāb by Ja'far seems to have caused great consternation among the Shi‘a and many pages of the Twelvers Shi‘ite works are devoted to explanations of it."(3)

This is, perhaps, because Abū-l-Khattāb, before his apostasy, related many hadīths on the authority of the Imams which dealt with basic principles of Shi‘ism and were important to the collections of Twelfers traditionists.(4)

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(1) Maqālāt (Ash.) 10ff; Maqālāt (Qumm.) 50ff, 81ff, 186; Milal (Shahr. W.) i, 179; Fīraq (Nawb.) 58-61.
(2) Cf. the claims of al-Mukhtar, Bayan, Abū-Mansūr, etc. above, 155f.
(3) Origin of Ismā‘īlism, 32.
(4) Kashshī, Minhāj, under Abū-l-Khattāb, quoted by Origin of Ismā‘īlism, 32f.
Although there was no obvious connection between Abū-l-Khattāb and the Kaysānite extremists yet he endorsed the Kaysānite concept which says: "Religion is (knowing) a man (the Imam) and his obedience", i.e. ad-Dīn ta'at rajul. (1) Accordingly he adopted the allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān (ta'wīl) and thus he taught that Heaven and Hell mentioned in the Qur'ān were merely persons and had no super-terrestrial meaning. (2) Prayer is a man, fasting is a man, sin is a man, adultery, etc. For this strange interpretation Abū-l-Khattāb was accused of teaching libertinism (Ibāhā).

Abū-l-Khattāb also accepted the belief in the mystery of numbers; for example numbers 7, 12 and 70, and in this he was certainly under the influence of the preceding extremists like al-Mughīra, Abū-Mansūr and their followers. (3) Number 7, which the Khattābis reserved for the last Imam was a mysterious number in many old faiths. (4) It is suspected that the idea of the mystery of numbers, which later dominated Ismā'īlī thinking, may be borrowed from Gnostic or Hellenistic philosophies which also influenced the Judaic-Christian thinking. (5)

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(1) Milal (Shahr. W.), 1, 236.
(2) Origin of Ismā'īlism, 33.
(3) Sila, 200ff.
(4) The philosophy of numbers later occupied Fadl-Allah of Istarbād who, for his concentration on studying numbers and hurūf (letters), was called al-Hurūfi. Cf. Sila: Shi'ite Thought, 179-244.
(5) The companions of Moses to the Mountain, according to the Qur'ān (7:155) were 70. Jesus' disciples were 12. Cf. Browne, E.J., Lit. Hist. of Persia, ii, 243.
As to the relation between Abū-l-Khattāb, the founder of Ismā'īlī ideas and Ismā'īl himself, nothing is known; but it is assumed that after the disavowal of Abū-l-Khattāb by as-Sādiq the former might have contacted Ismā'īl before his death in 133 A.H. This assumption is supported by an-Nawbakhti's statement which confirms that the Ismā'īliyya and the Khattābiyya are one sect. (1) Added to this is the fact that after the death of Abū-l-Khattāb, most of his followers believed in Muhammad the son of Ismā'īl as their Imam. (2)

Shortly before this, al-Mufaddal b. 'Umar, a follower of Abū-l-Khattāb, who later was accepted by the Twelfers, was warned by as-Sādiq to leave his son Ismā'īl alone. Al-Kashshī (3) reported as-Sādiq as having said to al-Mufaddal:

"O unbeliever, O idolater! What is there between you and my son? ... What do you want from my son? ... you want to kill him."

This statement, if it is correctly attributed to as-Sādiq, (4) shows the Khattābis to be on friendly terms with Ismā'īl. Indeed, "Massignon has gone as far as to suggest that the Kunya Abū-Ismā'īl which al-Kashshī gives to Abū-l-Khattāb refers to Ismā'īl.

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(1) Firāq (Nawb.) 58f.
(2) Firāq (Nawb.) 58-64; Milal (Shahr.W.) 179, 191ff; Maqālāt (Ash.) 1, 26f.
(3) Minhāl, 206-211 quoted by Origin of Ismā'īlism, 39.
(4) The statements of al-Kashshī, who is a Twelver Shi'ite, should be taken carefully because of his rivalry with the Ismā'īlis.
b. Ja'far and that Abū-l-Khattāb was the adoptive 'spiritual' father of Isma‘īl."(1)

The spiritual parenthood, referred to above, became the substitute for the old-fashioned claims of appointment (wasiyya); but both notions were the result of the re-incarnation theory of the divine light, which was known to the ancient East.

For instance, al-Mubārak, a disciple of Abū-l-Khattāb, and his followers al-Mubārakiyya, claimed that the divine light which was in Ja'far as-Sādiq had been passed to Abū-l-Khattāb and through him to as-Sādiq's grandson Muhammad b. Isma‘īl.(2)

When Muhammad b. Isma‘īl died in about 198 A.H.,(3) the time was ripe for yet another development; that is, the formation of the doctrine of Sāmit and nātiq Imams (i.e. 'silent' and 'speaking' Imams) which was developed by Maymūn al-Qaddāh, his son 'Abd-Allah and an obscure man called Hamdān Qumut.(4)

As for Maymūn al-Qaddāh and his son 'Abd-Allah, who seems to have played the major role in forming the Isma‘īli doctrines, there are many confused statements in many sources about their origin, the time in which they lived, and the places in which they dwelt.(5) This confusion was due to a number of factors, one of which was the secrecy they adopted for their movement, and

(2) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 83f, 103, 217; Firaq (Nawb.) 58ff; Origin of Isma‘īlim, 32ff.
(3) Origin of Isma‘īlim, 32ff.
(4) Origin of Isma‘īlim, 32-43.
(5) Origin of Isma‘īlim, 54ff.
which was maintained by their descendants' sect. The first Isma'ili works were made available after the establishment of their first state in Bahrain by the Charmethians in about 281 A.H.

The second factor was the hostile attitudes of the non-Ismâ'îli authors, namely the Sunnites and the Twelfers, who were encouraged by the 'Abbâsids, whose authority was terminated by the Ismâ'îli in North Africa and Egypt in about 324 A.H./(910 A.D.

The majority of the Sunnite sources seem to agree that Maymûn was the son of a dualist(1) called Daisän(2) b. Sa'id, a Persian mawla who originally came from Ahwâz. Maymûn became a Muslim but not wholeheartedly. He and his son 'Abd-Allah were disciples of as-Sâdiq and lived in Mecca, Basra, Kūfa, Askar Mukrân, Sabât Abî-Nûh and Salamiyya. (3) While some sources place Maymûn and his son as contemporaries of as-Sâdiq (d. 148 A.H.) others suggest that 'Abd-Allah b. Maymûn lived until 261 A.H., of course, these dates can hardly be reconciled. (4) After studying the Sunnite, the Twelver Shi'ite and the Ismâ'îli sources dealing with this matter, Bernard Lewis comes to the following

(1) Fihrist (N. Trans.) ; Farq (Bagh.) 282ff.

(2) It is suggested that this name is taken from the Bardesanism, Origin of Ismâ'îlism, 8.

(3) The last of these places might have been inhabited by 'Abd-Allah and not his father.

conclusion:

“Maimūn and his son were known and respected Shi'is of the entourage of Ja'far as-Sādiq. At some time Maimūn came to be associated with the extremist wing of Shi'a, led by Abū-l-Khattāb and Ismā'īl b. Ja'far, and himself played an important part in the elaboration of the doctrines of the sect and the organisation of its propaganda.

After the death of Abū-l-Khattāb, Maimūn took charge, and became the guardian and tutor of Muhammad b. Ismā'īl, who was brought up in the Batinī faith. Maimūn's own son, 'Abd-Allah, was similarly educated, and succeeded him in the role of chief dā'i of the Imam. The death of ‘Abd-Allah may be placed at the beginning of the third century A.H.”(1)

Concerning the third man, Hamdān Qarmat or Qarmatūya(2) one finds the same sort of confusing statements about his name, origin and other aspects of life and activities. (3) According to some sources his full name is "Hamdān b. al-Ash‘ath, of Quss Bahram, nicknamed Qarmat on account of his short body and legs". Others said he was the same Mubārak of al-Mubārakiyya "who was an expert in calligraphy of the type called 'Mugarmat' thanks to

(1) Origin of Ismā‘ilism, 66f.
(2) It is also read Qirmit, see Farq (Bagh.) 282; cf. Maqālat (Qumm.) 83, 86, 97f.
(3) Farq (Bagh.) 282, 294; cf. Origin of Ismā‘ilism, 56, 68, 77f.
which he was given the name Qarmatūya ...". The latter statement, as B. Lewis observes, seems to be incorrect because of its contradiction with more reliable evidence. (1) With regard to his origin, he was said to be of 'Quas Bahram' which suggests a Persian link; he was also said to be an Aramaean (Nabti) from Sawād of Irāq.

Hamdān became associated with 'Abd-Allah b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh and his chief propagandists. After the death of Ibn-Maymūn, he became a leading dā'i and from his hiding places he maintained correspondence with one of the sons of Ibn-Maymūn al-Qaddāh who resided at Tāliqān in Khurasān. (2)

It appears that Hamdān broke away from the Qaddāhīs and formed his own independent group known as the Qaramīta. His chief lieutenant was his brother-in-law 'Abdān, (3) who helped him to build an extremist revolutionary organisation which later took control of some parts of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate for some time. (4) However, the historical significance of the Charmethians' movements and their relation to the Qaddāhīs and the descendants of Ismā'īl fall beyond the scope of this thesis which investigates the Mahdistic ideas only up to 260 A.H.; and during this period those groups were merely underground movements.

At the end of this section dealing with Ismā'īlim founders,

(1) Origin of Ismā'īlim, 42; Lit. Hist. of Persia, i, 396f.
(2) Lit. Hist. of Persia, i, 396f.
(4) See 'Iban (Dhah.) ii, 82ff; 160-3, 362.
one should give a brief account of their basic messianic ideas which, due to the socio-political conditions of the age, attracted a considerable number of believers, throughout the 'Abbāsid caliphate, enough to establish governments in South East Arabia (the Qarāmita of Bahrain), then in N. Africa and Egypt (the Fātimids Caliphate). N. Africa and Egypt were ruled in the name of Mahdism for about three centuries from 296-7 A.H./909 A.D. until the rise of the Ayyūbis 567 A.H./1171 A.D.\(^{(1)}\)

(i) The first basic idea of the Ismā‘Ilīs was that man cannot reach the truth or the knowledge of God without teaching (ta‘līm); the teacher could only be a prophet or an Imam; men obtain knowledge through them or their agents. Because of this concentration on ta‘līm and rejection of dependency on reasoning the Ismā‘Ilīs were called ta‘līmiyya (indoctrinators).

(ii) Secondly, there was the significance of numbers; to a large extent of number 7 and, to a lesser degree, of number 12, which, they claimed, were written clearly in the universe and in the body of man.\(^{(2)}\) For this belief in the mystery of numbers the Ismā‘Ilīs were called the Seveners or the Sab‘iyya.

(iii) Thirdly came the successive manifestation of divine

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(2) For details of this belief see Milal (Shahr. W.), i, 191f; Farq (Bagh.) 286ff; cf. Lit. Hist. of Persia, i, 408; Origin of Ismā‘īlism, 31-54.
light or revelation which, according to them, incarnates from time to time in forms of prophecy or Imama. Thus, six great prophetic cycles have passed (those of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad) the seventh and last was Muhammad b. IsmāʾĪl who was regarded as the Lord of the time (sāhib az-Zamān) and the Mahdi. (1)

(iv) After this, there is the notion that each prophet of those seven is called 'the speaker' (nātiq) and succeeded by seven Imams; each one of them called 'silent' (ṣāmit). The first of the 'silent' is called 'foundation' (asās). The asās is always the intimate companion of 'the speaker' and the repository (mustawda') of his esoteric teaching, (at-ta'lim al-batin), which is the subject of the allegoric interpretation of the Qur'ān and the secret texts, which accordingly have a zāhir and a batin. For this the IsmāʾĪlis were called Bātiniyya. (2)

(v) Next, each one of the seven 'silents' has twelve 'proofs' (huja) who serve him as his chief dā'ī; they are distributed in the corners of the earth. (3)

(vi) The asās of the Prophet Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allah was 'Alī b. Abī-Ṭālib who was succeeded by six Imams (ṣāmit) of

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(3) Firaq (Nawb.) 62ff.
his descendants from Fāṭima's offspring. The sixth of those Fātimites Imams was Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl who, as we have seen, was the seventh and last true prophet (nāṭiq), but for security reasons he was 'silent'!!

(vii) His ass was 'Abd-Allah b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh who was supposed to be his 'silent' foundation, but because Ismāʿīl was also 'silent' 'Abd-Allah became 'speaker' nāṭiq. The doctrine of 'spiritual parenthood' enabled his sons to claim the agency (mustawda') of the Imamate which was supposed to be in the Fātimites (mustqarr).(1)

Those, one supposes, were the early ideas of the Ismāʿīlis; but after the third century of Hijra further developments were witnessed. These included the works of the disciples of Hamdan Qārmat, Abū-Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (d. 322 A.H.), Abū-Hanifa Nuʿmān (d. 363 A.H.) and the obscure group of philosophers called Ikhwān as-Safā'.(2)

Concerning the origin of the above-mentioned Ismāʿīli ideas, many scholars have tried to identify their sources. Some said that they are of Zoroastrian origin; some said that they are of Gnostic origin, and others said they are of Judaeo-Christian origin. For instance, scholars like ash-Shahrastānī maintained that the "old Bāṭinīs mixed their ideas with that of the philosophers and have written books according to their methods."(3)

(1) Origin of Ismāʿīlism, 72ff; Sīla, 200ff-213; arts. "Bāṭini" and "Seveners", E.I.(1) and "Ismāʿīliyy", E.I.(2)

(2) See art. "Ikhwān as-Safā'", E.I.(2) of. Ahmad Amīn, Māhdawīyya, 20ff, 33f.

(3) Milāl (Shahr.W.); I, 19ff.
The idea of ash-Shahrastānī is further supported by many modern scholars. They said that "in their prehistoric and scientific conceptions they were most influenced by Aristotle, as regards logic and natural science, by neo-Pythagoreans and neo-Platonists in their theories of Numbers and Emanations ...".

Another group of scholars believed that the Batinis were of Zoroastrian mind. This view is mainly of the Sunnite and Twelfers scholars summarised by al-Baghdādī in this way:

"Historians mentioned that those who invented the principle of al-Bātiniyya' religion were from the sons of dualists (Majūs) and were inclined toward their ancestors' religion. They could not profess their real beliefs ... therefore, they introduced doctrines which will finally lead the fools to believe in dualism ...

The proof for this is that the Batini doctrine which says that the First (reason) and the Second (soul) are the Managers of the World, is the same as the Zoroastrians belief which attributed the world to two creators. The only difference is that the Bātinis called them 'the First' and 'the Second' while the dualists ...

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(2) Lit. Hist. of Persia, 381. Although he was speaking about Ikhwān as-Safā' yet his statement expresses the whole Isma‘īlī ideas.
(3) Ibn-n-Nadīm, Fihrist (N) Miqrizī,
called them Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman. ... They took counsel from Magians, Mazdakites, heretical dualists and many followers of old philosophers, with whom they worked out a method through which they would be able to free themselves from the rule of Islam."

Al-Baghdadi also mentioned Abu-'Abd-Allah aradi who propagated among the Batinis the dualists expectation of a Mahdi or Saoshyant which was promised by Zoroaster; and would be fulfilled through the efforts of the Batinis.

The third opinion is that Isma’ilism has a Jewish origin. Unfortunately, this allegation was not based upon the comparison between their ideas and that of the Jews, but rather it was based upon the claim that Maymun al-Qaddah and his son 'Abd-Allah, the real founders of the faith, were originally Jews from the Family of Shala'la' who resided in Salamiyya in Syria. Muhammad b. Malik who, according to Bernard Lewis, was the first to make this claim, said that 'Abd-Allah b. Maymun was a Rabbi and was learned in philosophy. He attached himself to Isma'il b. Ja'far and the Shi'a to disrupt Islam by his heretical

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(1) Farq (Bagh.) 284f, 286f, 293f.
(2) Origin of Isma'ilism, 67. Quoting Ibn-Malik, Maqrizi and Abu-l-Fida'.
(3) Origin of Isma'ilism, 67. Lewis, however, regards this accusation as an act of hatred to the Isma'ilis which conforms with the general tendency in attributing a Jewish ancestry to those whom the orthodox dislike.
doctrines. "He was the true ancestor of the Fātimid Caliphs ... (who ruled Egypt and N. Africa for a long time)." Ibn-Malik added:

"The proof that they are of Jewish descent is their employment of Jews in their Vizierate and in governorships, ...this is well-known concerning them and all bear witness to it."(1)

It is felt that this argument was not enough to prove the Jewish origin of Ismāʿīlīsm; even if it is enough to prove the Jewish origin of its founders, yet the ideological similarities are very significant and must be established before such a claim.

It is certain, however, that some aspects of Ismāʿīlī doctrine had their equivalent in Judaism, or more precisely Judaeo-Christian literature, i.e., the conception of the coming Messianic age or Millenium, the belief in a Saviour and the mysterious belief in numbers and their use in calculating the time of the appearance of this Saviour.(2) It has been said that the Ismāʿīlī doctors have used the texts of the Old and New Testament more accurately, in their writing, than the orthodox scholars, an indication of their wide knowledge of the Scriptures which certainly influenced their thinking.

For instance, the Ismāʿīlī scholar Hamīd ad-Dīn (d. 408 A.H.) who, apparently, knew both Hebrew and Syrian, was said to have made extensive use of the Old and New Testament texts and applied

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(1) Origin of Ismāʿīlīsm, 68.
(2) This of course was known to the preceding extremists of Shiʿa, see above, 182, and cf. below, 347.
to them the Ismā'īli allegoric interpretations. This, in addition to an-Nawbakhtī's accusation that the Ismā'īlis borrowed the doctrine of Trinity from Christianity and applied it to their Ḥujja (father), Da'i (mother) and Yadd (son). (1)

In conclusion, one should say that the Ismā'īli sect was not under one particular religion only, but was more open to various external influences. The right term for its open acceptance of other influences is the one which was used by Bernard Lewis "interconfessionalism". "Appealing as it did to men of multiplicity of races and religion - Mazdakites, Manichaean, Mandaean, Sabians, Shi'ites, Sunnis, (2) Christians and Jews." (3)

This interconfessionalism as he observed was, perhaps, influenced by the contemporary Jewish Messianic movement of the 'Īsawīyya of Isfahān (2nd century of Hijra), which will be examined during the discussion on the concept of the Messiah in Judaism in the next chapter. The next section will be a convenient place to begin discussing the last important sect of Shi'a, namely the Mūsawīyya, which latterly was identified as the Imamiyya and the Twelfers (Ithnā-'Ashariyya).

(1) Firag (Nawb.), 63.

(2) I do not think that Bernard Lewis is right in claiming that Ismā'īlism appealed to the Sunnites because Ismā'īlism ruled Egypt and North Africa for about three centuries and shortly after the collapse of their rule, Ismā'īlism disappeared from these areas.

(3) Cf. Origin of Ismā'īlism.
2. The Mūsawiyya or the Pioneers of the Twelfers

The Mūsawiyya are the followers of Mūsa al-Kāzīm(1) the fourth son of Ja'far as-Sādiq. Like the Ismā'īliyya, the Mūsawiyya is a loose term applied to many groups who believed that the Imam after as-Sādiq is his son Mūsā and not Ismā'īl or any of his brothers. The Mūsawiyya have other names like the Rafidā, Imāmiyya, Waqifa, Qat‘iyya and Ithnā'ashariyya (Twelfers).(2)

They did not deny, what seemed to be an historical fact, that as-Sādiq first showed his desire to have Ismā'īl as the head of the Family, but they claimed that Ismā'īl, due to his indulgence in drinking wine and other vices, was deposed; his father explained this action by the badā‘ (doctrine) which means, in this case, that God has changed his plan concerning the Imamate of Ismā'īl.(3)

It has already been seen that the extremists who were disavowed by as-Sādiq for their extravagant claims preferred to stick to the Imamate of Ismā'īl, and when they were disturbed by his early death (or concealment) before his father (about 133 A.H.) they refused to accept either Mūsā or any one of his brothers as candidate for the Imamate. Instead, they adopted Ismā'īli’s son Muhammad as their charismatic Mahdi. They defended the appointment of Ismā'īl and his premature death as follows; Ismā'īl was to

(1) For his biography see Magātīl 499ff; Waffiyyat, ii, 173.
(2) These terms will be explained. Magālat (Ash.) 1, 15ff, 29f, 31, 64f, 84f, 157. Magālat (Qumm.) 77, 89ff, 93; Farq (Bagh.) 63ff. Fīraq (Nawb.) Cf. Formative Period, 158ff, 274.
(3) Fīraq (Nawb.) 64ff. Magālat (Qumm.) 78.
be the Imam but it occurred to God to change his plan, not because of the unworthiness of Ismā'īl, as his opponents claimed, but because of his early death. God's wisdom in his appointment of Ismā'īl was to maintain the Imamate among his sons. This is to keep the rule that Imamate cannot be, after the case of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, in two brothers.

The Müsawiyya, on the other hand, agreed with the latter rule and, as it has been noted, they explained the case of Ismā'īl and Musā with the badā'.

The men who were regarded as the founders of the Müsawiyya and at the same time the pioneers of the Twelfer Imamites were Hishām b. al-Hakām (d. about 190 A.H.), Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī, a contemporary of his former namesake, Abū-Ja'far al-Ahwal, nicknamed by his opponents Shayṭan at-Taq, 'Umr b. Yazīd Bayyā' al-Sābī, Jamīl b. Darrāj an-Nakha'ī (d. after 180 A.H.) and Abban b. Taghlib (d. 141 A.H.) and many others.

The first three were the outstanding scholars of the Müsawiyya. They entered into theological discussions with the Mu'tazilites, the Sunnites, the Ismā'īlites, the followers of the old philosophers, Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians. To them, several books were attributed; and the main theme was

(1) Mağālāt (Qumm.) 78, 211; Aql ash-Shī'a, 190.

(2) Intisār, 6, 40, 247. Mağālāt (Ash.) 1, 33, 44. Farrā (Bagh) 23, 63. Fihrist (Tūs) 355.

(3) Mağālāt (Ash.) 1, 34, 209. Farrā (Bagh.) 65ff; Fihrist (Tūs.) 356.

(4) Mağālāt (Ash.) 1, 37, 42, 51; Fihrist (Tūs.) 323. Intisār, 237.

(5) For these men see Mağālāt (Qumm.) 88, 225-234.
Imamate, (1) infallibility of the Imams, the attributes of God, anthropomorphism (tashbîh) and corporealism (taṣīṣīm). Because of their concentration on the question of Imamate and the infallibility of the Imam, the Mūsawiyya were called ashâb al-Imama or the Imamites; \( ^{(2) } \) a term which later was attached to the Qut'īyya and their Twelver products.

The above-mentioned scholars tried their best to purify Shi'ism from the heresies of the preceding extremists who were under the influence of the Gnostic ideas and Dualistic Persian religions. It might already be seen that by this time (148-199 A.H.) the influence of the mingled dualistic-Hellenistic ideas were felt and were clearly embodied in the phenomenon of the Ismā'īlism.\( ^{(3) } \)

Hence, the Mūsawiyya's interest in discussing the taṣīṣīm and the tashbîh was perhaps an attempt to reconcile the claim of the Khattâbiyya and their preceding extremists (who believed in God's incarnation) with the idea of those who believed in tanzīh by denying that God can be something like a 'substance'.\( ^{(4) } \) Thus, they modified the extreme idea of the transmigration of 'divine light' in the bodies of the Prophets and the Imams into the moderate idea of the inheritance of 'Muhammad's light' or

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(1) Fihrist (Tûs.) 323, 355, 356.
(2) Intisâr, 132, 134, 164, 172; Macâlât (Ash.) 31, 41f, 64. Cf. Formative Period, 274.
(3) Cf. above, 290-296.
(4) Cf. Shaybi, The Shi'ite Thought, 28; Sîla, 135, 139, 141; Formative Period, 187ff.
charisma among his offspring.

Numerous hadīths which explain this point were collected by the first Twelfer traditionist Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulīnī (d. 328 A.H.) who normally relates with Isnād (chain of transmitters) which goes back to the time of Hīshām b. al-Hakam and his friends. (1)

The significance of Müsawīyya, during the life of Müṣā 1-Kāzīm, has not yet been explained in the light of the political phenomena of the time (the Caliphate of ar-Rashīd), i.e., the rise and fall of the Persian family of the Barmakids, the imprisonment, several times, of Müṣā 1-Kāzīm and his death in prison (in 183 A.H.) and the hiding of Hīshām b. al-Hakam from the 'Abbāsids authority until his death in 190 or 199 A.H. (2)

Unfortunately, this thesis cannot be extended to examine all that, but one can conclude briefly that the long life of Müṣā 1-Kāzīm as the head of the 'Alīds after his father as-Ṣādiq (from 148-183 A.H.) might give his supporters a fresh hope that he might be able to put forward his claim for the office of the Caliph publicly, perhaps with the support of the Barmakids and other men like Hīshām b. al-Hakam. Behind this is the assumption that the party of Müṣā was quite strong, especially in the East because a few years later the Caliph al-Maʿmūn considered it necessary for the maintenance of his authority to restore another Persian family of Shiʿite sympathy to the Vizierate (3)

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(1) Kaḥīr, 115f. For the biography of Kulīnī see Fihrist (Tūs.) 326.
(2) Tārīkh, iii, 1876; Tārīkh (Yaʿq) iii, 145; Maqātil, 499ff.
(3) Al-Fadhīl b. Sahl and his brother al-Ḥasan, see Shaybī, Sīla, 219.
and to appoint 'Ali ar-Rida, the son of Musa I-Kazim, who became the 8th Imam on the death of his father, as his crown prince. (1)

Concerning the Messianic development of the Musawiyya after the death of Musa, one finds that some of his followers claimed that he was not dead but concealed and would return as the promised Mahdi; and because they stopped (wagufa) the chains of Imamate with him, they were called the Waqifiyya (stopers).

The majority of the Musawiyya, perhaps under the leadership of Hisham b. al-Hakam, rejected this view and confirmed decisively that the Imam Musa was dead; and that his son 'Ali ar-Rida had succeeded him, and because of this confirmation (qat') they were called Qat'iyya. (2)

The difference between the Waqifiyya and Qat'iyya is that the former were ready, at this time, to re-introduce the old Messianic belief which justifies the quietism or the acceptance of the de facto authority without admitting its legality; (3) while the latter were still hopeful to mobilize their forces to compel the 'Abbasids to hand over the power to the newly-designated Imam, ar-Rida, and his 'Alid family.

In fact, the Qat'iyya succeeded in their plan, not through armed struggle, but by winning the heart of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun who, as it has been seen, appointed ar-Rida his heir-apparent; and to show his complete satisfaction with his choice he offered him his daughter as a wife. Ar-Rida accepted both

(1) Shaybi, Sila, 219-226.
(2) Maqalat (Ash.) i, 17, 29; Farq (Bagh.) 64.
(3) Cf. Above, chapters I and II.
the appointment and the wife; but to the dismay of his followers
he died suddenly when he was in the company of al-Ka‘mūn on
his way back from Marvē to Baghdad in 203 A.H. (1)

After the death of ar-Rida (the eighth Imam) up to 260 A.H.
there was nothing new in the conception of Imamism, except that
the Imamate must be passed only among the descendants of Mūsā -1-
Kāzīm, and if there was no acceptable adult among them, small
children might succeed.

This was the case with almost all the successors of ar-Rida;
for when he died in 203 A.H. his son, Muḥammad al-Jawād at-Taqī,
was only seven years old and when he died at the age of 25, he
was succeeded by his six year old son ‘Alī al-Hādi. (2) The latter
was succeeded by his son al-Ḥasan al-‘Askārī (now the eleventh
Imam) who died in 260 A.H. (3) It was said that his frustrated

(1) Tarīkh (Ya‘qūb) iii, 2; Shi‘ite Religion, 161-169.
(2) The Imamiyya explained the succession of children to Imamate
through a comparison between them and the prophets John the
Baptist and Jesus the Messiah, who were given the wisdom of rev-
(3) The names of the eleven Imams are as follows:

(i) ‘Alī b. Abī-Ta‘lib
(ii) Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī
(iii) Al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī
(iv) ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (Zayn al-‘Ābidīn)
(v) Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (al-Bāqīr)
(vi) Ja‘far b. Muḥammad (as-Sādiq)
(vii) Mūsā b. Ja‘far (al-Kāzīm)
(viii) ‘Alī b. Mūsā (ar-Rida)
(ix) Muḥammad b. ‘Alī (al-Jawād)
(x) ‘Alī b. Muḥammad (al-Na‘īr)
(xi) Al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī (al-‘Askārī)

\[ \begin{align*}
(1) & \text{died 40 A.H./661 A.D.} \\
(2) & \text{49 A.H./669 A.D.} \\
(3) & \text{61 A.H./680 A.D.} \\
(4) & \text{95 A.H./714 A.D.} \\
(5) & \text{115 A.H./733 A.D.} \\
(6) & \text{148 A.H./765 A.D.} \\
(7) & \text{183 A.H./799 A.D.} \\
(8) & \text{202 A.H./818 A.D.} \\
(9) & \text{220 A.H./835 A.D.} \\
(10) & \text{254 A.H./868 A.D.} \\
(11) & \text{260 A.H./874 A.D.}
\end{align*} \]
followers were divided after his death into 14 groups; an
indication of their weakness and disappointment.

It is of little value to mention all the ideas of the minor
groups concerning who should be the Imam, but it might be
useful, in summing up the Mahdistic ideas of the Twelfers to
mention some of them. One group said that al-Hasan al-‘Askari
was not dead but concealed and would return one day as the promised
Mahdi, (it must be noted that such a claim was found after the
death of nearly all the preceding Imams). A second group said
that al-Hasan al-‘Askari had died and because he had no son and
no designated successor, the Imamate had been demolished. God
may leave the earth without hujja because of His wrath. (This
group expects no Mahdi.) A third group refuted this and maintained
that the hujja of God on earth must remain; and that the Imam
after al-Hasan is his brother Ja‘far.

The last and most significant group is the one who said that
al-Hasan al-‘Askari (the eleventh Imam) had a son called
Muhammad who was conceived and born in hiding, according to his
grandfathers’ prophecies. This Muhammad (whose age when his
father died, and indeed his existence itself, was much disputed) was believed to be the designated twelfth Imam with whom the chain
of the Imams was completed.

Henceforth, this group was called "the Twelfers" and stood
all the time as parallel to the remaining second big branch of

(1) For full account see Firaq (Nawb.).
(2) For the denial of his existence see Milal (Shahr.W.), i,
170-173. Farq (Bagh.) 64; Maqalat (Qumm.) 114f.
Shi'ism, the Isma'ilis. Before summarizing the theological points in which the Twelfers differed from the Isma'ilis and other Shi'ite groups, one must mention some points upon which they agreed.

(i) They all agreed that the earth must have a hujja (proof); this proof should be either a prophet or an Imam. Thus, if there were only two men on earth, one must be the proof.

(ii) As the Prophets are chosen by God himself, and no-one can elect them by rational consideration, the Imams also must be designated by God's divine order.

(iii) After the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Imam is his designated wasi 'Abī-Tālib and the wasiyya after the latter's death must be among his sons; the previous Imam appoints the next by divine command.

(iv) The Imamate may not fall to two brothers after the case of al-Hasan and al-Husayn. (1)

(v) The Imam is infallible (ma'sūm) in order to be able to guarantee the survival and purity of religious tradition(2) as well as the spiritual yearnings.

(vi) The identity of the Imam may be concealed for certain considerations.

(vii) And, lastly, the belief in the bāda' and the taqiyya. (3)

The points on which the Twelfers differed from the other

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(2) Art. "Ithnā 'Ashariyya", E.I. (2)

(3) For "bāda'" and "taqiyya" see E.I. (1); cf. above, 297.
groups are:

(i) The Prophet Muhammad had closed for ever the chain of prophets.

(ii) The wasiyya may not be in one of the sons of a man who died during the lifetime of his father (this would exclude the claims of the followers of Ismā'īl, who died before his father).

(iii) The Imams after the Prophet Muhammad are twelve and not seven as the Ismā'īlīs claimed.

(iv) The last and twelfth Imam was Muhammad b. al-Hasan who is still the expected Mahdi.

(v) For security reasons God had concealed him, when he was still a boy, from his enemies at the time of his father's death. (1)

(vi) His concealment which was termed ghayba was of two stages: the minor ghayba in which four consecutive Ambassadors claim to have approached him, the last of whom died in 329 A.H. (2) The major ghayba from 329 A.H./940-1 A.D. until the present day. During this major ghayba the Ulema of Shi'ā are the religious authority of the Twelfers and will remain until the re-appearance of the Mahdi who is called the master of the age or Ṣāhib az-Zaman.

(1) Kāfī, 333ff; Kamāl ad-Dīn, ii, 105ff.

(2) The four ambassadors are:

(a) 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd.

(b) Muhammad b. 'Uthmān b. Sa'īd, d. 304/916.

(c) Al-Husayn b. Rawḥ of the family of Nawbakht, d. 326/997.

(d) 'Alī b. Muhammad as-Samrī, d. 329/940-1. (See Sīla, 215.)
As for the origin of the Twelfers' doctrine, one notices that their chief theological architects tried to make use of all the old Shi'ite heritage, and in order to form a moderate sect they wished to exclude all the extremist ideas which make gods out of the Imams and prophets out of their agents. But despite the efforts of men like Hishām b. al-Hakam and Abū-Ja'far al-Ahwal, some extreme ideas are found in the later Twelfers' collections of hadīth, some examples of which will later be given. In addition, the extravagant claims of the extremists had never ceased to exist amongst the Imamiyya after the death of as-Sādiq. For example, al-Mukhamisa believed in the incarnation of God in the persons of the first five members of the Family, the 'Ayyā'iyya, the followers of 'Alyā' (sometimes pronounced 'Albā') and Bashshār ash-Sha'Irī (d. 180 A.H.) who also believed in the incarnation of God in 'Alī and the members of his Family, the Nusayrites, the followers of Muhammad b. Nusayr, who believed, likewise, in the incarnation and divinity of 'Alī b. Muhammad, the 10th Imam, and lastly the Hululiyya and Tanasukhiyya participated in the revolts of Zinj of Basra, led by an 'Alid pretender of Mahdism called Muhammad b. 'Isā (d. 255 A.H.).

(1) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 56ff, 59-61.
(2) According to later pronunciation this sect is called al-'Albā'iyya, cf. Maqālāt (Qumm.) 56, 190f; Milāl (Shahr.W.), i, 175.
(3) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 56, 191.
(4) Maqālāt (Qumm.) 100f, 246; Pirag (Nawb.) 78; Milāl (Shahr.W.) i, 188f.
(5) Mahdawiyya, 43-59.
They also participated in the revolts of ash-Shalmughānī (Ibn-Abī al-'Azāfir died in 322 A.H.), (1) who first claimed to be the agent of the Twelfth Imam and the expected Mahdi, Muhammad b. al-Hasan, and when he was disavowed by the Twelfer Shi‘ītes he claimed to be God incarnated. (2)

Studying the collections of hadīths of the Twelfers, especially that of al-Kulīnī, (3) one would agree with Dr. Kāmil Mustafa ash-Shaybī that the formation of their Imamite doctrines must have been a difficult and painful job, since different races and cultures had contributed to the phenomenon of Shi‘ism, and their ideas have been unconsciously further mixed or rather reconciled to produce a moderate sect. (4)

For instance, the Imamites made use of the Mukhtārites' ideas of Mahdism, bada’ and raj‘a. (5) They also borrowed from the followers of Abū-Ḥāshim the belief in the mystery of the number 12 and the obedience to the Imam (ad-dīn tā‘t rajul) which, most probably, inspired them to invent the doctrine of ‘isma or the infallibility of the Imams. (6) The Imamites also borrowed, from the extremists Bayān, al-Mughīra, Abū-Mansūr and the followers of ‘Abd-Allah b. Mu‘āwiya, the theory of the divine light but with some modification. (7) The dwelling of the divine

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(1) Shi‘īte Thought, 202f.
(2) Shaybī, Shi‘īte Thought, 202f.
(3) See Usūl al-Kāfī.
(4) Shi‘īte Thought, 57-61.
(5) Cf. above, 123, 155 ff.
(6) Above, 284 ff.
(7) Above, 153, 157 ff.
light in the bodies of the Imams became the indisputable belief of
the Twelfers through numerous hadiths attributed by al-Kulini
to several Imams. Thus al-Kulini reported Abu-Khälid al-Käbili,
a pupil of al-Saqir, as saying that he asked al-Baqir the meaning
of the Qur'anic verse which says:

"Believe in God and His Messenger, and in the
light which We have sent down ..." (1) (Qur'an 64:8)
The Imam replied: "I swear by God the light is the Imams." (2) Al-
Kulini attributed another hadith to as-Sadiq in which he confirmed
more frankly the dwelling of divine light in the bodies of the
Imams. This is shown in his interpretation of the Qur'anic
verse which says:

"God is the light of the heavens and the earth;
the likeness of his light as a niche wherein is
a lamp (the lamp is a glass, the glass as it
were a glittering star ... light upon light."
(Qur'an 24:35)
As-Sadiq was reported to have said that 'the niche' was Fätima,
the Prophet's daughter, 'the lamp' was her son al-Hasan, 'the
glass' was al-Husayn and 'light upon light' means Imam succeeds
Imam. (3)

As for the Twelfers' doctrines of the divine light, the
infallibility of the Imams, the expected Mahdi or Messiah, the

(1) Cf. the interpretation of this verse in the Sunnite
commentary of Tafsir (Tab.).
(2) Käfì.115f.
(3) Käfì.116f.
return of the dead (raj'a) before the final resurrection and the return of Jesus (to support the Mahdi against ad-Dajjal), one finds a clear degree of similarity between these doctrines and the beliefs of many Christians.\(^{(1)}\) After such comparison, Dr. Kāmil Mustafa ash-Shaybānī went as far as to suggest that "any idea identifying or linking Mahdism with Christian Messianism must have come to all Shi'ite sects through the Twelfers."\(^{(2)}\)

I disagree with Dr. ash-Shaybānī in this hasty judgement. It was previously explained that the Twelfers' belief in Mahdism, infallibility, raj'a and mystery of the number 12, had come to this sect from the preceding sects of Mukhtāriyya, Ḥashimiyya, etc., and in the previous chapters the origin of these groups' ideas was discussed and explained.\(^{(3)}\) Furthermore, the chronological order of these groups places them before the Twelfers who came into existence, formally, after the death of the eleventh Imam al-Ḥasan al-'Askārī in 260 A.H.

The later Imamite traditionists tried to find support for their doctrines in the Qur'ān, the Old and New Testaments. For instance, to defend the Imamate of small children, especially their expected Mahdi who disappeared when he was only five or seven, they quoted the examples of Jesus and John the Baptist who were given the wisdom and knowledge when they were only children.\(^{(4)}\)

\(^{(1)}\) Not all Christians believe in the infallibility and the second coming before the Hour.

\(^{(2)}\) Sila, 230f.

\(^{(3)}\) Cf. chapters II and III

\(^{(4)}\) Kāfī, (Us.) 242f.
The Twelfers also drew a comparison between the number of the disciples of Jesus (12) and the number of the wasis and Imams who succeeded the Prophet. (1) They further paralleled the relics of Muhammad which passed to his family with the Ark (Tabūt) of the Israelites. (2) Concerning the infallibility which they attached to the Imams, they did not compare it with that of the Popes. But clear similarity can be noticed despite the argument of D.M. Donaldson against such comparison. (3)

The next and last chapter will examine briefly the Judaeo-Christian Messianism and its similarity with the Mahdistic ideas of various Muslim sects.

(1) Kāfī, (Us.); ash-Shaykh as-Sadūq, Kamāl ad-Dīn, i, 169-171.
(2) Kāfī, (Us.) 145-147.
(3) Shī'ite Religion, 320-338; cf. Sīla, 141 and Shī'ite Thought, 28. The first and early historical material which refers to the infallibility of a Shī'ite is to be found in Tab. Tārikh (Q), vi, 28f. It states that the followers of al-Mukhtar believed in his fiṣma.
CHAPTER VII

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN MESSIANISM

1. Definition of the term Messiah
   (a) The primary usages of the term in the O.T.

   It has been seen above(1) that the term Mahdi has certain similarities, in meaning and application, with the term Messiah. A great number of similarities between the various Mahdistic notions and their equivalents in the Jewish and Christian traditions have been referred to in the previous chapters. But it still remains necessary to deal separately with the Jewish and Christian messianic notions, because the whole purpose of this thesis is to investigate the alleged borrowing of Mahdism from these beliefs. The alleged borrowing of Jewish and Christian Messianism from the Gnostic and Zoroastrian religions will not be dealt with separately but under the section which examines the post-exile Messianism.(2)

   Firstly, one must begin with an analogy or definition of the term Messiah in its primary sense and how it was used in the Old Testament. Secondly, one must investigate its development until it reached its highest sense just a short time before the beginning of the Common Era.(3) The second point will be dealt with in the next section.

(1) Pp. 22-32.
(2) Below, 319ff.
(3) This does not mean that the development of the term stopped after this time, cf. below, 324, 336f.
The term Messiah simply means "the anointed one". According to C.W. Emmet, it represents the Hebrew Meshìšāh and the Aram. Meshìšâ.\(^1\) It also represents the English word Christ - without the definite article - which is originally Greek and implies the same sense of anointing.\(^2\) Anointing with oil, or similar material, is an ancient religious custom known to many nations,\(^3\) and has a different significance for sacramental religions.

To the ancient Israelites, anointing with oil reached its highest sacramental significance when it denoted the symbolic transfer of Divine power to the anointed person, after which he would become God inspired. This is clear from the Old Testament statement that the spirit of Yahweh bestowed upon, or rested with, the anointed one, as in 1 Sam., 15:13, referring to David.

The anointing of the Israelite kings "represents the formal investiture with an office that was always regarded a sacred one."\(^4\) Thus the term 'anointed one' (Messiah) has become a synonym to holy, i.e., endowed with holy Essence which, as we have seen above, refers to the divine guidance or, in the Arabic term, huda.\(^5\) If the anointed one rejected the guidance by disobeying the Divine orders he would certainly lose the secret of the

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\(^{1}\) Art. "Messiah", E.R.E., viii, 571; and cf. J.E., viii, 505; Klausner, J., Messianic Idea in Israel, 7f.

\(^{2}\) E.R.E., viii, 571; Rosenthal, E.I.J., Studia Semitica, i, 8ff.


\(^{4}\) E.R.E., i, 556.

\(^{5}\) Pp. 30-34.
anointing as in the case of King Saul (1 Sam. 15:1-3, 10-25).

Naturally, the Israelite prophets who represent the Divine guidance are thought of as the anointed of Yahweh (Ps. 105:15); but it was not necessary for them to be anointed in a ceremony except in the solitary case of Elisha who was anointed by Elijah (1 Kin. 19:16). (2)

Similarly, the priests of the Israelites, who must be of the Levites family (the sons of Aaron), are called the anointed of Yahweh, i.e., Messiahs, since Moses and his followers were ordered to anoint, invest and consecrate them, (Exo. 28:41ff; 29:1-30). (3)

It is useful to repeat (4) that these usages of the Old Testament of the term Messiah in its primary meaning are very near to the usages of the term Mahdi in the Arabic literature, for the Caliphs, Amīrs and religious leaders. The common idea is that the anointed prophets, priests and kings, on one hand, and the divinely guided Caliphs, Amīrs and religious leaders on the other hand, were regarded as charismatic persons provided with Divine providence. (5) The difference is that the Divine guidance in the first case comes through the ritual act of anointing, while in the latter case it comes through direct submission of

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(1) This verse reads: "Do not touch My anointed ones ... Do not harm My prophets."

(2) E.R.E., i, 556.

(3) E.R.E., i, 556.

(4) Cf. Above, 3-9, 32.

the guided (person) to the order of the Guide (Allah). Although the technical or the special significance of anointed (Messiah) and Mahdi is still far from being recognised, unlike the case of the later usages which will be examined now.

(b) The technical usage of the term in the O.T.

It is a very complicated matter to try to find the answer to the question of how the term "anointed one" or Messiah reached its highest sense in which it denotes a special, and sometimes an eschatological person who would bring salvation to his people and to mankind in general. "The examination is complicated not merely by difficulties of interpretation (of the texts), but also by questions as to authenticity and date."(1)

While some scholars insist: "Nowhere in the O.T. does it occur in its later technical sense which was first found in Enoch and Psalms of Solomon", others maintain: "among all the sacred oracles of the Old Testament, those referring to the advent of Messiah and His Kingdom occupy the most prominent position, as they constitute the culminating points of Divine revelation."(2)

Those who held the latter opinion relied upon the promises of the O.T. made to Israel especially in the Pentateuch, Psalms and the Prophets. The most quoted verses are the following:

Gen., 3:14,20; 12:1-3; Deut., 18:15-18; Ps. 2; 15; 22; 40:1-9;

Isai., 9:1-6; 11:1-10; Jerem., 30:9; Ezek., 17:23. (1)

On the other hand, many scholars who support the former opinion, maintain that the O.T. passages which refer to these promises do not denote explicitly a personal Messiah and if they did, their authenticity is very much disputed.

"The objections of these scholars, however, rest principally on the hypothesis that the idea of the Messiah is inseparably bound up with the desire for universal dominion, whereas, in reality, this feature is not a characteristic of Messianic hope until a later stage of its development." (2)

It must be noted that the confusion between the terms 'Messianic hope' and 'hope for personal Messiah' can lead to a dangerous error. (3) An excellent definition for the two has been given by Professor Joseph Klausner, a modern Jewish writer. (4)

He said:

"The Messianic expectation is the prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which there will be a political freedom, moral perfection, and earthly bliss for the people Israel in its own land, and

(1) Cf. Wolfe, The Messiah; Ottley R.L., Religion of Israel, 202; Manson, William, Jesus the Messiah.

(2) J.E., viii, 506.

(3) For more elaboration see E.R.E., viii, 570.

(4) Prof. Klausner is a professor of Hebrew Literature in the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
also for the entire human race."(1)

Whereas the belief in a personal Messiah is:

"The prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which a strong redeemer, by his power and his spirit, will bring complete redemption, political and spiritual to the people Israel, and along with this, earthly bliss and moral perfection to the entire human race."(2)

After this differentiation it becomes clear that the early Messianic hope was that of a Davidic king who would inherit the wisdom and guidance of his preceding Charismatic Leaders - the heroism and prudence of David, the wisdom of Solomon, the knowledge and fear of God, characteristic of the prophets and the patriarchs.(3) His sole concern will be to establish justice among his people based upon God's laws and commandments (Isai. 9:7). "The fruit of His righteous government will be peace and order throughout the land. The lamb will not dread the wolf, nor the leopard harm the kid." (Isai. 11:6-9);(4) a picture which is also found in the Islamic Traditions.

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(2) Messianic Idea in Israel, 9.

(3) Cf. the Shi'ite conception which makes the Mahdi the heir of all the prophets' virtues, Kāfī (Us.) 142-145, 202; Kamāl ad-Dīn, i, 404.

(4) J.E., viii, 506.
To those who believed that these verses do not imply a personal Messiah but a Messianic age, the picture here is not entirely eschatological but a Messianic hope which can be achieved before the end of time. The peace with animals is only symbolic and cannot be real. (1)

It is agreed, however, that the Messianic hope in the restoration and permanence of the Davidic dynasty was pre-exilic, because it was based upon 2 Sam., 7. It is also found in Jeremiah 23:56 and Ezekiel 17:23. The attempt to depict the hope in a personal or eschatological Messiah as post-exilic does not imply the total denial of the existence of other Messianic hopes before that. This point will be discussed further in connection with the attempt of some scholars of comparative religions to represent the post-exilic Messianic notions as being developed under the influence of Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism. (2)

At the end of this section one notices certain similarities between the development of the term Messiah in Judaism and that of Mahdi in Islam. (3) Firstly, there is the parallel argument as to whether or not the idea of the Messiah and Mahdi had a sound base in the sacred books. (4) Secondly, the belief that a certain

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(1) Messianic Idea in Israel, 10ff. Some scholars suggest that these passages are of late origin, cf. J.E., viii, 506.
(2) Cf. Manson, William, Jesus the Messiah, 17ff, 174-190, and see below, 329ff.
(3) This was discussed above, 30-34.
(4) The Shi‘ites, as we have seen (above, 273ff, 287ff) tried to support the idea of the Mahdi through the Qur‘ānic exegesis.
charismatic leader would return to his throne, in person, after his death. The Israeliite case was that of King David whose return (raj'a) was expected as in Ezekiel 34:23; Jeremiah 30:9; Hosea 3:5. The Islamic case was that of the Caliph 'Ali, whose personal raj'a was expected as it was shown above. Thirdly, the substitution of the belief in a personal raj'a with the notion that a descendant of the one who was supposed to 'return' and would occupy his place in bringing peace and justice.

2. Messianism after the exile and the possible influence of Zoroastrianism

(a) Historical background

The Jewish tradition became established after the time of Moses the Messenger, who died in about the 13th century B.C. The Torah or Pentateuch, stemming from the work of Moses, became the system of morals, laws, beliefs and polity upon which the Israelites were asked to build their new life after their Exodus from Egypt. Moses, no doubt, laid the foundation for the religious development of Judaism, but with the condition that this development must be guided by the Divine revelation. Despite this:

"The conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews and their settlement in the land was, it is needless to say, a fact of crucial importance

(1) Cf. J.E., viii, 506f.
(2) Pp. 36-40, 107ff, 123ff.
(3) Most of the dates in this chapter are taken from the chronological table provided by the editors of Jerus. Bib.
in the development of their religion, which was profoundly modified ... by contact with culture and civilization of the Canaanites."(1)

Evidence for this is to be found in the fact that immediately after the Passover the Israelites apostasized when they worshipped the golden calf. According to the Jewish sources, Aaron, the companion and helper of Moses, was responsible for this apostasy (Exod. 32). This is in contrast to the Muslim conception which revered Aaron and made him a prophet and even wasi of Moses; the person responsible for the apostasy is another man called al-Sämirî.(2)

According to the Jewish sources, Moses was not succeeded by Aaron but by Joshua, who was appointed as heir apparent by Moses himself.(3) In the Book of Joshua, which follows the Pentateuch, the story of the Israelites' struggle to occupy the promised land under the leadership of Joshua is told. Their settlement was followed by a period in which the nation was ruled by men known as the Judges. The reign of the Judges continued for about two to four centuries.(4) Then came the attempt of the Israelites to establish a monarchy. The first monarch was Saul who was succeeded by David and his son Solomon. Throughout this period the kings were supposed to be, as we have seen,(5) the

(1) Ottley, R.L., Religion of Israel, 41.
(2) Qur'an, 20:85-95; for the concept of Aaron's wasiyya see above, 13ff; cf. Pederson, J., Israel, 192f.
(5) Above, 312-318.
charismatic leaders of the nation because they were the Messiahs of Yahweh. Some of the kings, as in the case of Saul, were condemned because they offended the law of Yahweh.

Under the reign of David, the Israelites experienced political stability which led the nation, especially under Solomon's rule, to prosperity and success. David and Solomon ruled for about 75 years. The former was to build the Temple of Jerusalem, but he died before achieving this wish. His son, Solomon, who inherited the throne, built the Temple in about 967 B.C. The last years of his rule, according to biblical information, witnessed the decline and infidelity of the nation (1) and this brought down the wrath of Yahweh. The consequence was His judgement that the kingdom would be divided, after the death of Solomon, between Rehoboam, his son, and Jeroboam, who was not even of Davidic origin (1 Kin., 11:12). Henceforth, the twelve Israelite tribes disintegrated into two kingdoms; the kingdom of Judah consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and the kingdom of Israel consisted of the other ten tribes. (2) During the two centuries which followed this division (931-721 B.C.) the influence of foreign religions increased in the kingdom of Israel and the prophets who opposed this influence were persecuted. The persecution reached its climax at the time of Ahab and his successor Ahaziah, against whom the prophet Elijah had revolted. Later Elijah disappeared in a whirlwind (about 852 B.C.) and his disappearance became a myth. With him the idea of concealment

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(1) Solomon himself was said to be responsible for this infidelity, cf. 1 Kin., 11. The image of Solomon according to Muslim belief is different, cf. Qur'ān, 2:102; 38:30.

(ghayba) and return (ra'ia) were well established. (1)

In about 701 B.C. the kingdom of Judah had fallen into the hands of the Assyrians; this was, as the Old Testament teaches, due to the wrath of Yahweh because they again "followed the practices of the nation that Yahweh had dispossessed for them" (2 Kin., 18:8). In this the people of Judah were not alone but copied "the practices that Israel had introduced" (2 Kin., 18:19). The Assyrians did not stay for long because of the repentance and prayers of the king and his subjects; but in 587 B.C. the wrath of Yahweh brought yet another foreign interference. (2)

Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, came with his whole army to besiege Jerusalem, and in the end the king of Judah, Jehoiachin, surrendered. The Babylonians took him along with his treasures, officers, and people of nobility to captivity in Babylon. (3) Nebuchadnezzar made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in succession to him and changed his name to Zedekiah. Sometime later, Zedekiah "rebelled against the king of Babylon" (2 Kin., 24:20). The result of this revolt was the return of Nebuchadnezzar, his siege of Jerusalem, its fall and the total destruction of the Temple and the city. This put an end to the kingdom of Judah and to the existence of its people, who were taken to exile in Babylon. (4)

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(1) Cf. the influence of these ideas upon the Shifa'ites, above, 107, 123.

(2) Rosenthal, Studia Semitica.

(3) It is said that the first captives were about eight thousands, cf. 2 Kin., 24:15ff.

(4) Pederson, J., Israel, 588ff.
The bitter reality of the exile stimulated the spiritual and political yearning among the captive Jews. The simple longing for the restoration of a strong Davidic king, which followed the division of Solomon's kingdom, and the fall of the ten tribes under the dominion of ungodly and non-Davidic rulers, had developed a great deal. In the pre-exilic expectation, referred to above, (1)

"Yahweh himself is the agent of deliverance and of judgement, He alone is saviour and redeemer ... the nation as a whole or the dynasty of its kings is the object of His favour."(2)

Whereas, after the exile the reliance on Yahweh was shaken and therefore people started to look for an intermediary for their salvation. It is possible that the Torah, which was lost before the exile, was rewritten under the influence of this new development (Ezra and Nehemiah, *Jerus. Bib.*)

(b) The heavenly man and the son of man

The first reference to 'a heavenly man' in Judaism is found, explicitly, in the *Book of Daniel* (7:12-14) where 'the son of man', who is described as coming from the cloud, is also mentioned for the first time. The next reference to a heavenly man or son of man is to be found in the Apocalyptic works, i.e., the *Ethiopic book of Enoch* and *IV Ezra*. (3) It seems, from the

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(2) *E.R.E.*, viii, 570.

various statements, that the son of man is the same heavenly man, and there is also a correlation with the metaphorical expression 'the son of God' applied to Israel in *Exod.*, 4:22.

Concerning the relation between the son of man and its equivalent on one hand, and the Messiah on the other, some Bible scholars think:

"the son of man and the Messiah had originally nothing to do with each other, but were first united in a single conception by the primitive Jewish-Christian church." (1)

Those who hold this opinion add:

"There is no individual Messiah in Daniel (where the heavenly man appears): the entire people Israel is the Messiah that will exercise everlasting dominion throughout the whole earth."

It is natural that many scholars, mainly Christians, would oppose this controversial view. They say that the relationship between these terms is well established in the Jewish Rabbinical literature as well as in the Christian Gospels. (2) William Manson, who represents this view, quoted a Midrash to support his point; he also quoted the Gospels in which Jesus was reported to have emphasized His confession that He was the son of man and at the same time hinted that He was the Messiah. In this way He indicated the acquaintance of the contemporary Jews with the

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(1) Manson, (quoting Von Gall), *Jesus the Messiah*, 100

(2) Manson, *Jesus the Messiah*, 100f.
usage of the term son of man to the expected Messiah.\(^1\) However, this matter will be dealt with separately later.

Before continuing to discuss the possible influence of the Zoroastrian concept of the heavenly man upon the Jewish-Christian concept of the Messiah - son of man, one must point to the essence of the Zoroastrian idea of salvation. The basic idea in this philosophy is that good and evil are in eternal conflict.\(^2\)

Ahura-Mazdah, represented by light, is the all wise God of good. He has an eternal enemy called Ahriman, represented by darkness, acting as god of evil. Each time that Ahura-Mazdah brought something good into existence, Ahriman called forth his evil creation to offset it.\(^3\)

According to the Zoroastrian myth, the first man Gaya-Maretan\(^4\) or Gayomart was the first heavenly believer who listened to the thought and teaching of Ahura-Mazdah and from whom Ahura-Mazdah brought forth the families of the earth. Gayomart was overcome by the evil spirits of Ahriman which caused him to be expelled.

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\(^1\) Manson, *Jesus the Messiah*, 8f, 100-120, 178ff. Cf. below, 345ff.

\(^2\) For a fuller account of Zoroastrianism see Zaehner, R.C., *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism*, (Lond. 1961) and his book *The teaching of Maiti*, (Lond. 1956); also cf. Jackson, A.V.W., *Zoroastrian Studies* and Manson, Miles Landon, *The Ethical Religion of Zoroaster*.

\(^3\) Jackson, *Zoroastrian Studies*.

\(^4\) Gaya Maretan according to William Manson means mortal life; cf. *Jesus the Messiah*, 179.
from the world of light (this to be compared with the story of Adam and the devil).

"According to the developed myth, the heavenly man was rescued from the powers of darkness after his death, and the soul of man, which is part of him, will be saved by rising in reunion with him."(1)

The salvation will take a long process after several world-periods or millenia in which the power of evil will dominate. At the end of history a saviour called Saoshayant (Messiah) from the offspring of Zoroaster will appear to set everything right; this saviour will be assisted by two more saviours.(2)

Parallel to this is the late Jewish and Christian concept of the heavenly son of man who is associated with the following Messianic notions, to be found in the Apocalyptic literature and in the Rabbinic writings: (i) the son of man is described as pre-existent and occupying a seat in Heaven beside the ancient of the Day "Lord" (Enoch 46:1-6);(3) (ii) He is chosen and hidden with God before the world was created (the Midrashim);(4) (iii) His birth was miraculous (Isai.,7:14; Matt.,1:23); (iv) His coming will be preceded by common pangs and travails (Dan.,9:24; 2 Esd.,14:16). (v) He will also be preceded by two

(1) Manson, Jesus the Messiah, 181.
(2) These two saviours can be compared with the forerunner of the Messiah, i.e., Elijah and Messiah ben Joseph, cf. below, 332.
(4) Klausner, 290.
forerunners—Elijah (Mal. 4:5, 6) and Messiah ben Joseph (Midrash). (1)
(vi) He will fight the power of evil represented by Armilus
(Antichrist) or Satan and Gog and Magog (Sibylline Oracles); (2)
(vii) His just rule will continue for four hundred years or,
according to another version, 40 years (book of Elijah). (3)

Comparing the above-mentioned and other Zoroastrian notions
with these Jewish-Christian developments of the Messianic idea,
many scholars of comparative religions have doubted the origin-
ality of these developments. For instance, H. Grassman (4) and
W. Bousset (5) maintained, as it will become clear during the
discussion, that these messianic ideas developed under the influence
of the ancient oriental myths. R. Reitzenstein (6) emphasized
the penetration of the Zoroastrian ideas "not by the channels
of normal orthodox Zoroastrianism but through a filter-bed, so
to speak, of Babylonian and Syrian Mysticism." The ideas of
Reitzenstein and those who support him were summarised better

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(1) Quoted from J.E., viii, 511.
(3) Cf. J.E., ii, 682.
(4) Der Ursprung der Israelitisch-Jüdischen Eschatologie (1905);
    Der Messias (1929); quoted by Manson, 17, 174.
(5) Die Religion des Judentums (3rd Ed. 1926); Hauptprobleme
de Gnosis (1907).
(6) Poimandres (1906); Die Götten Psyche (1917); Das Mandäische
    buch des Herrn der Grösse (1919); Das Iranische Erlösungs-
    Mysterium (1921). Die Hellen-istischen Mysterien-religionen,
    all quoted by Manson, 174.
by William Manson who, I must say, does not totally agree with them. Manson put it this way:

(i) "It is contended, and on good grounds, that the early Hebrew prophetic descriptions of the reign of the future king of righteousness have borrowed certain of their idealized features, such as the peace of nature, the marvellous fertility of the earth, and the end of wars from ancient(1) ethnic myths of an age or kings of paradise ..."

(ii) "It is universally agreed that Israel's apocalyptic outlook in the Persian and late Jewish periods shows an increasing influence of Zoroastrian religious ideas both on its form and content, as for example in its conception of present and future world-aeons, its dualism, its angelology and demonology, and its belief in a resurrection of the dead."(2)

(iii) "It is believed by some scholars, as we have already seen, that certain speculative or mystical developments of Zoroastrian religion, embodying one form or another of a heavenly man redemption-myth, have contributed to the late Jewish and early Christian apocalyptic concept of the son of man."(3)

At the end of this section, and before going on to discuss

(1) These elements also influence some Muslims' thinking, cf. above, 226.
(2) Manson, Jesus the Messiah, 17.
(3) Manson, Jesus the Messiah, 17.
the apocalyptic literature and eschatology, one must point to the fact that not all resemblance of ideas which exists between various religions can be described as borrowing; nor indeed, can it be regarded as the result of victory of one civilization over another. They may be the work of the divine inspiration of the same eternal truth, or the result of human needs put in one form. For instance, the alleged borrowing of the concepts of salvation, resurrection, angelology, and demonology from certain sources cannot be proved. This does not deny the fact that the human environment allows imitation, distortion and corruption.

(c) Development of Eschatology in the Prophets and Jewish Apocalypse

The term eschatology means 'the last things' which lie beyond the ordinary range of human knowledge, whether these things are totally unknown to human experience or merely events in human history which have not yet come to pass. (1) Some examples of this are the idea of the catastrophic end of the world, the idea of the millennium or happy return of the golden age, the ideas of resurrection and final judgement. These beliefs which are elements of eschatology are characteristic of the apocalyptic literature. The term apocalyptic (sometimes apocalypse) originally means revelation of hidden things given by God to one of His chosen servants or the written account of such revelation.

"In recent times the designation apocalyptic literature, or apocalypse, has commonly been

used to include all the various portions of Jewish and Christian Scriptures, whether canonical or apocryphal, in which eschatological predictions are given in forms of revelation.\(^1\)

After a careful survey of the material dealing in general with the prophets' books and the Jewish apocalyptic literature, one can say that the Messianic hope of the Israelites had passed through certain stages of development (similar to that of Mahdism in Islam).\(^4\)

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\(^1\) The following definition of the term Apocrypha explains that Apocalyptic is more general. "The term Apocrypha, a Greek word meaning hidden (things), was early used in different senses. It was applied to writings which were regarded as so important and precious that they must be hidden from the general public ... It came to be applied to writings which were hidden not because they were too good but because they were not good enough ... secondary or questionable or heretical. A third usage may trace to Jerome ... for him apocryphal books were those outside the Hebrew canon. The generally accepted modern usage is based on that of Jerome". New, Eng. Bib., the Apocrypha, p.xi.

\(^2\) Cf. art. "Apocalypse", J.E., i, 669.

\(^3\) In this quick survey I depend upon arts. "Apocalypse" and "Apocalyptic liter." The first written by Torrey, Charles C., and the second by Moses Buttenwieser, both in J.E., i, 669ff, 675ff.

\(^4\) Cf. above, 1ff, 9ff.
(i) The first stage is the hope of the early prophets in an earthly kingdom which supplants David's kingdom. This stage, it is clear, covered the period from the death of Solomon and the division of the kingdom until the fall of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon. There is no need to repeat what has already been said about the description of the Messianic hope during the time of the great prophets, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah. (1)

(ii) The second stage covered the period from the exile until the destruction of the second Temple of Jerusalem. During this period, which witnessed the Persian dominion, the fall of the Maccabees and latterly the total dominion of the Romans, the belief in a personal Messiah became more popular among the Jews, to the extent that there was a special prayer for the coming of the Messiah. (2) With the rise of this popular belief, new conceptions were introduced and the apocalyptic literature of the period, especially of the second and first centuries B.C., shows a considerable influence of Persian and Gnostic eschatology. An example of this is the division of the duration of the world into ten millennia or 10 world-weeks which is found in Enoch, 91-104 and parallel to the Zoroastrian world-age and the Ismā'īlī prophetic cycle. (3) According to

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(1) Cf. above, 315ff, 318-322.

(2) This prayer is found in both Babylonian and Palestinian literature, see J.E., viii, 509.

(3) For the Zoroastrian notion see Ethical Religion of Zoroaster, for Ismā'īlīs see above, 282ff.
information drawn from Enoch and other Jewish apocalyptic literature,

"The first 7 of these (weeks) are increasingly wicked; at the end of the 7th the 'elect of righteousness' receive revelations concerning the whole creation (93:3f). Now begins the kingdom and in the 8th week sinners are delivered into the hands of righteous for destruction. ... The righteous judgement is revealed to the whole world in the 9th week. Sin vanishes from earth, which is, however, written down for destruction. At the end of the 10th week the great judgement occurs."(1)

Another example of possible foreign influence in Judaism is the notion of confrontation between the power of righteousness and the power of evil, and the many manifestations of those rival powers. Thus, instead of only one Messiah (Messiah b. David), the Jews came to believe in another Messiah, i.e., Messiah b. Joseph.(2) Not only that, but other forerunners of the Messiah had been introduced, namely Elijah and Enoch whose return is expected (Mal. 4:6, IV Ezra, 6:18). The hostile powers


(2) Art. "Messiah", J. E., viii, 511f. The date of this belief is not known. Some suggest that it might have sprung in the time of Alexander the Great (d. 323 B.C.), cf. J. E., viii, 507, 512.
which will be confronted are: the anti-Messiah (Armilus or Dajjal), Gog and Magog and the four beasts in the vision of Daniel (7:1-28). At the end, the remainder of these hostile powers will be destroyed by the last Messiah, Messiah b. David, who will come from the sunrise; the dominion of Satan or evil spirits will disappear.

This picture, it might be noticed, is parallel to the Zoroastrian conception of the continuous battles between the armies of light and darkness which will end in the victory of light when "those that will deliver" or "Saoshanto" will appear. (One must notice that Saoshanto here is the plural of Saoshayant).

It has been suggested that the term Armilus, which is parallel to the Dajjal of Muslims and the Antichrist of the Christians, is a corrupt pronunciation of Ahriman (the hostile power of evil in Zoroastrianism). This corruption of pronunciation is understandable because Ahriman is also pronounced Arimainyus and Armalgus.

(iii) The third stage of development, which covers the period from the destruction of the second Temple until 260 A.H. was twofold. One was in the direction of pessimism and denial of any earthly kingdom. The other was of optimism

(1) E.R.E., viii, 579. In Muslim eschatology both the Mahdi and Dajjal will also come from the sunrise, cf. above, 260ff.

(2) Art. "Armilus", J.E., ii, 118-120. Other possibilities are also suggested.
and waiting for the appearance of the Saviour, Messiah. In fact the pessimistic view, which denies any personal Messiah, has been present since the time of Amora R. Hillel who said: "There shall be no Messiah for Israel, because they have already enjoyed him in the days of Hezekiah."(1)

This trend which completely abandoned any hope of the Messianic kingdom "is found in two of the sections of Apoc. Bar., written after the fall of Jerusalem ..."(2)

In the same way in which some Muslims wished for the end of the world after their first civil war, some Jews prophesied the approach of the final judgement after the destruction of their second Temple by the Romans. They believed that "the final judgement is soon to take place ... souls will be brought forth ... the earth give back their bodies in the form in which it received them ... then follows the judgement, at which books are opened. Afterwards the bodies of the righteous are transformed to glory and they receive the world which does not die ... the wicked suffer torment ..."(3)

It is interesting to note that this pessimistic view which emphasized the judgement in the heavenly kingdom supplanted the early notions which make reward and

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(1) Klausner, Messianic Idea in Israel, 9.
(3) E.R.E., v, 380.
punishment occur in the expected earthly Messianic kingdom, rather than after death.

The second aspect of development in this last stage was a continuation of the old hope in the restoration of the kingdom of David and all the preceding Messianic features are preserved. For instance, in the Apocalypse of Baruch (A.D. 50-70) the Messianic kingdom will be preceded by tribulations and convulsions of nature which do not affect Palestine.\(^1\) Messiah is then revealed ... He slays the leader of the hostile power (Armilus or Gog and Magog). Some other sources\(^2\) suggest that the annihilation of this hostile power will be miraculous, that is, the Messiah will slay Armilus by the breath of his mouth. (An exact picture was copied by Muslim Traditions for 'Isa and Dajjal). The reign of the Messiah will last until the end of the present world. The estimate varies between a millennium, 400 years or 40, but before the end, the earth will yield fruits 10,000 fold. There is no weariness, anxiety, disease or sin. At the end the Messiah will die or ascend to heaven and that will be followed by the final judgement.\(^3\) The similarity between these beliefs and some Muslim Traditions of the Messianic age is striking. It is worth mentioning that the belief in a

\(^{1}\) Cf. E.R.E., v, 380. This notion can be compared with the Muslim view that Mecca and Medina are protected against Dajjal.

\(^{2}\) J.E., ii, 119.

\(^{3}\) E.R.E., v, 380f.
personal Messiah had been established firmly in Judaism through the claims of various pseudo-Messiahs which will be examined in the following pages.

3. Jewish Pseudo-Messiahs with Special Reference to Abū-'Īsā al-İsfahānī (7th cent. A.D.)

(a) The claimants of Messianism from 1st cent. B.C. to the rise of Islam.

After the establishment of Messianism as the only way of salvation for the long suffering Jews, numerous believers, throughout Jewish history, had claimed to be the Promised One. In some cases those claimants were the victims of their followers' fantasy or of their own delusions. Others were impostors with great political ambitions. All of them, with only one exception, had as their programme the restoration of Israel to the promised land, the destruction of the hostile power of the Gentiles, the restoration of the kingdom of David and the bringing of the promised blessed Messianic age to earth. Some of the pretenders looked to miracles to assist them, others appealed to arms. In the end, most of them achieved very little in comparison to the proclaimed universal hope of redemption.

"In connection with their messianic role (says a modern Jewish writer), some enacted the part

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(1) The exception was Jesus Christ who gave a new conception to Messianism, cf. below, 348ff.


of religious reform, introducing innovation and even trying to subvert the existing Judaism ... Some, however, succeeded in attracting large numbers of followers, and created movements that lasted for considerable periods ... Many of these Messiahs and their followers lost their lives in the course of their activities, and they deluded the people with false hopes, created dissensions, gave rise to sects and even lost many to Judaism."(1)

These messianic claims had taken different forms, some had proclaimed themselves Messiah ben David, many pretended to be not the Messiah himself but his forerunner (Messiah ben Joseph or Elijah). Some sources also suggest that King Hezekiah (d. 695 B.C.), who was a contemporary of Isaiah, was believed to be the Messiah; but it seems from the statement of Rabbi Hillel (quoted above),(2) that this belief is of a later date. "An echo of this belief is still heard in the Talmudic saying 'the Holy one, blessed be He, wished to appoint Hezekiah as the Messiah and (the Assyrian king) Sennacherib as Gog and Magog."(3)

The next semi-pseudo-Messiah was believed to be Alexander the Great who, although an outsider, was hailed by contemporary

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(1) J.E., x, 251f.
(2) P. 334.
(3) Klausner, Messianic Idea in Israel, 56f, footnote 8.
Jews as divinely appointed deliverer who would bring the universal peace promised by the prophet Daniel. The belief in Alexander is supported by the late apocalyptic writers who mentioned that he imprisoned Gog and Magog behind the mountain of darkness.

From the time of Alexander until the fall of the Maccabees there was no record of any Messianic claims, but "from Josephus it appears that the first century before the destruction of the Temple a number of Messiahs arose promising relief from the Roman yoke and finding ready followers." Then, from the year 44 A.D. to the Temple destruction in 70 A.D., five pseudo-Messiahs appeared. Among them was Menahem ben Judah who was identified as the grandson of Hezekiah, the leader of the Zealots. Menahem was successful in collecting a large number of followers. He, thereafter, seized the city of Masada and part of Jerusalem from the Romans but before he achieved any further success, he was assassinated by a rival.

After the destruction of the Temple the appearance of Messiahs ceased for about sixty years; then came the next pretender, Bar Kokba (d. about 135 A.D.). This man was introduced as the Messiah by Rabbi Akiba who believed that in Bar Kokba the prophecy of "the star of Jacob" was fulfilled (Numb. 24:17).

(1) J.E., viii, 507f.
(2) Cf. also the Qur'an, 18:94.
(3) J.E., x, 251.
(4) For the movement of the Zealots see J.E., xii, 639-643.
(5) E.R.E., viii, 582.
(6) E.R.E., viii, 582.
This was followed by wide popular support for him to the extent that his army was estimated at more than 400,000. Although the movement was able to seize Jerusalem from the Romans for about three years, it ended in a disastrous defeat, "the number of dead was counted by hundreds of thousands."(1)

"The unsuccessful issue of the Bar Kokba war put an end for centuries to the Messianic movements; but Messianic hopes were nonetheless cherished. In accordance with a computation found in the Talmud, the Messiah was expected in 440 A.D. ... this ... may have raised up the Messiah who appeared about this time in Crete,(2) and who won over the Jewish population to his movement. He called himself Moses and promised to lead the people, like the ancient Moses, dryshod through the sea to Palestine ... When at his command many cast themselves into the sea, some finding death, others were being rescued. The pseudo-Messiah himself disappeared."(3)

From then until the rise of Islam there was no record of any pseudo-Messiahs, but after that there were three Jewish pretenders. The account of their movements will be given below.

(b) Abū-‘Isā al-Isfahānī and the contemporary movements

It has been stated above(4) that the rise of Islam revived the

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(1) E.R.E., viii, 582.
(2) For the island of Crete, see Modern Encyc., 301.
(3) J.E., x, 252.
(4) Pp. 96ff, 99ff.
study of eschatology among the Jews and Christians of that era. The great change in world history, which Islam brought about, stimulated them to have a fresh look at their old prophetic and apocalyptic books, such as the book of Ezekiel and the book of Daniel, which speculated about the future. For instance, the fall of the Persian and the Byzantine Empires in the East encouraged the rise of the Messianic hopes connected with the vision of the four beasts in Daniel.

Thus, about the first century of the Muslim era (7th-8th century A.D.) three pseudo-Messiahs emerged in three different parts of the newly established Islamic empire. The account of these pretenders' claims and the influence of their movements upon some Muslims' minds will be the subject of this section.

(i) His claims

First comes Abū-ʿĪsā al-Isfahānī, whose full name was Obadiah or Obed-Elohîm Isḥāq ben Yaʿqūb, from the Jews of the Persian province of Isfahān or Ispahān, which gave him the surname al-Isfahānī. This man lived in the time of 'Abd-al-Malik who ruled between 684 and 705 A.D./65-86 A.H., a time which witnessed the emergence of the Mahdistic movements of al-Mukhtār b. Abī-'Ubayd and the other extremist, Shiʿa.(1)

According to some sources, Abū-ʿĪsā asserted that the coming of the Messiah was to be preceded by five Messengers of whom he himself was the last - the Messiah's herald (rasul), summoner (dāʿī).

(1) Cf. above, Chapters III, 107ff, IV, 155ff and V, 194ff.
and prophet, whom the Lord sanctified. (1) But other sources (2) suggest that he claimed that he himself was the Messiah, who would deliver the Jews and bring them the expected Messianic kingdom. "Abū-‘Īsā's adherents laid particular stress upon the fact that in spite of his illiteracy, he wrote books and they claimed that this furnished the strongest evidence of his divine inspiration." (3) In this, they were perhaps impressed by the image of the Prophet Muhammad whose miracle was the revelation of the Qur'ān in such sweet language despite his illiteracy.

Abū-‘Īsā found many followers among the Jews of Persia, sufficient to build an army and wage war against the Caliph ‘Abd-al-Malik who, at the same time, was facing another threat from a Muslim pretender of Mahdism. Abū-‘Īsā and his army were met, however, by the Muslim armies which defeated them badly despite the alleged divine support. (4) When Abū-‘Īsā was missed, his followers claimed that he disappeared into a cave and his ultimate fate was never known. Hence, there are good grounds to suggest that this statement, made by his followers, indicates some sort of belief in his concealment (ghayba) which implies that they expected his raj'a. To support this hypothesis, one could quote the example of his disciple Yadghān; when the latter died some years later after making similar claims, his followers held that their Messiah was not dead but would return. (5)

(2) E.R.E., viii, 582; cf. J.E., vi, 646
(3) J.E., vi, 646
(4) J.E., vi, 646; E.R.E., viii, 582f.
(5) J.E., x, 252f.
If this were established, one would be led to think that this Jewish belief had some connection with the idea of the Kaysanite Shi'a who believed in the concealment and raj'a of Ibn-al-Hanafiyya. Unfortunately, there is not enough information to show whether there is any direct borrowing or influence of any sort; therefore it is obscure how the same ideas of concealment and raj'a were adopted by two contemporary movements, the one Jewish and the other Muslim.(1)

But it is not strange to find common ground between two rival movements in one aspect or another. For instance, I have just pointed to the illiteracy of Abū-'Isā. One can add to this the fact that he and his followers, the 'Isawites or 'Isawiyya, recognised, for diplomatic reasons, Jesus and Muhammad as God's Messengers and accordingly made many modifications in Rabbinical Judaism to suit the new compromises. (2) For example, against the Jewish three prayer sessions a day and the Muslim five sessions, Abū-'Isā instituted seven. Wine and animal food (meat etc.) were prohibited; and, perhaps as a result of Christian influence, divorce was not allowed. (3)

(ii) Abū-'Isā and the hadīth of the Daijāl

On the other hand, the influence of Abū-'Isā's movement upon Muslim eschatology is felt in the field of the mālāshīm

(1) Explanation for this might be found in phenomenon of Saba'iyya, above, 36ff.
(2) J.E., vi, 646.
(3) J.E., vi, 646
Traditions. Plainly speaking, Abū-'Īsā, to the Muslim Traditionists, was not only a pseudo-Messiah, but he represented the eschatological anti-Messiah or the Dajjāl himself. I do not think it has been noticed before that the hadīths which speak of the Dajjāl as coming from the East, and in particular from Khurasān or Isfahān, were nothing but an echo of the fear that this pseudo-Messiah of Isfahān might herald the end of the world and the appearance of the eschatological events linked with the Dajjāl. (1) Added to this is the fact that many hadīths which prophesy the coming battles between the Muslims and Jews were publicised. Although it is well established in the Sahīh Traditions that the Prophet Muhammad is the author of these prophecies about the Dajjāl, many hadīths were in fact added later.

The hadīths which refer to the number of the hostile army of the Dajjāl might well be suspected as invention. Some evidence must be given to support this assumption.

For instance, Tirmidhī and Ahmad b. Hanbal (2) related, with an isnād (3) going back to Abū-t-Tayyāh, al-Mughīra b. Subay', 'Amr b. Hurayth and the Caliph Abū-Bakr that the Prophet said:

"The Dajjāl will rise from the east from a place called Khurasān; he will be followed by people whose eyes are like (the mijān al-mutraqa)." (4)

(1) Sahīh (T.), ix, 81ff.
(2) Sahīh (T.), ix, 83. Musnad (Ah.Sh.) i, 812.
(3) Ahmad M. Shākir said this isnād is sound; but in Tahdīh, x, 260, it was said al-Mughīra was the only transmitter of this hadīth.
(4) Mijān is the plural of mijān which means shield.
In another version Tirmidhi related:

"The Dajjāl will rise from the east from a
place called Ispahān among seventy thousand
Jews ..."

This Tradition was criticised by Ibn-al-'Arabī al-Mālikī who
thought it to be invented even though it was related by an ḫaṣīb
of maṣṭūrūn. (1) The other hadīth which speaks of the rebuilding
of Jerusalem and the Temple and the destruction of Medina of
Yathrib is also of this kind. The following example is related
by Abū-Da‘ūd:

"The rebuilding of Jerusalem Temple (or bayt)
is the sign of Yathrib destruction and the
destruction of the latter is the approach of
the malhama (eschatological pangō) and after
this is the conquest of Constantinople and
with this is the rise of Dajjāl." (2)

It is clear that this cannot be a sound Tradition because
it contradicts other hadīths in more reliable sources, that is,
the hadīths in which the Prophet is reported to have promised
that Medina will be guarded by God's angels against any hostile
power, including the Dajjāl. (3)

At this point, however, I must leave the matter of Abū-‘Īsā's
influence on the Muslim eschatology to speak briefly about his

(1) Sahīh (T.) ix, 81f. Maṣṭūr is the Transmitter who is not
criticised by scholars.

(2) Sunan (D.) Trad. No. 4294.

(3) Sahīh (B.); Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.), xviii, 71f.
influence upon his contemporary Jews. Firstly, the name of Abū-'Isā survived because he gave birth to the first Jewish sect since the destruction of the second Temple. Unfortunately, very little is known about the 'Īsawiyya and their Messianic ideas. Added to this, most of our information about them is taken from the Muslim heresiographers like ash-Shahrastānī. (1) Secondly, it is undisputedly clear that Abū-'Isā's claims inspired one of his followers to put forward similar Messianic claims. This disciple is called Yadghān and nicknamed al-Rā'i (or the shepherd of the folk of his people). (2) In fact, Yadghān, who came from the Jews of Hamdan, declared himself to be a prophet but was regarded by his followers as the Messiah. He upheld the ascetic teaching of Abū-'Isā regarding animal food and wine, but he was also concerned with philosophical questions which were raised in his mind by the contemporary movement of the Muslim Qadarites. For instance, he opposed the belief in anthropomorphism (taṣīm) and taught the doctrine of free will; therefore he was regarded by some scholars as the Mu'tazilite of the Jews. (3) "He also held that the Torah had an allegorical meaning in addition to its literal one", (4) and this statement, of course, reminds us of the Muslim extremist ideas of the allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān which was adopted by Bayān b. Sim'ān, al-Mughīra and Abū Mansūr of the tribe of 'Ijl. Another striking fact, to which

(1) Milal (Shahr.W.), ii, 20f.
(2) J.E., x, 252. Cf. E.R.E., viii, 582.
(3) J.E., x, 253.
(4) J.E., x, 253.
reference has already been made, is that the followers of Yadghān claimed that their leader was not dead but concealed and would return as the Messiah. (1)

(iii) Yadghān of Hamdān and Serenus of Syria

Strangely enough, about the same time (the first half of the 8th century) another Jewish pseudo-Messiah emerged in Syria. This was a man called Serene or Serenus who put forward his Messianic claims between 720 and 723 A.D. (second half of 1st century of Hijra). Like his predecessors, he promised the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and the destruction of the Gentiles. His claims, as usual, attracted many followers and he attracted Jewish support as far afield as Spain "... many left their homes for the New Messiah ..." (2) Serenus also tried to reform Rabbinical Judaism with regard to law and worship. After the arrest of Serenus and his confession to the Caliph Yazīd II that he was only joking when he made his claims, the Caliph handed him to the Jewish religious authority for punishment. Nothing is known about his fate but after his scandalous confession his followers were received back into the fold upon giving up their heresy. (3)

In the period between Serenus and the year 260 A.H., with which this study is concerned, no other Messianic claims were heard of. But the Messianic expectation of the Jews has never ceased. This is clear from the neo-Hebraic apocalyptic, like

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(1) Milal (Shahr.W.), i, 21; J.E., x, 253; E.R.E., viii, 582.
(2) J.E., x, 253.
(3) J.E., x, 253.
the addition to the book of the Alphalats of R. Akiba. (1) In this work which deals with letters (hurūf), names, numbers and the combination of various letters in the Scriptures and their relation to eschatology, we find this prophecy (which seems to be a later addition):

"Eighteen hundred years after the destruction of the second Temple, the Kedarenes (2) will decrease in numbers ... at the end of 295 years, according to the calendar of the Gentiles (the Hegira is meant here), their kingdom will vanish from earth; ... at the end of 304 years according to their calendar, the son of David will come, God willing!!" (3)

At the end of this section one must point to the similarities between this esoteric (or Kabbalite) interpretation of the hurūf and numbers and that of the interpretation of the extremist Shi‘ites which we have seen above. (4) Worth mentioning is the parallel picture of the Dajjal in the Muslim Traditions and neo-Hebraic Apocalypticism.

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(2) From Kedar, the sons of Ismael.
(3) J.E., i, 681.
4. Messianism and Jesus

(a) Jesus' Messianic confessions in the New Testament

It is clear from the above account of the Jewish concept of Messianism that the Jews of Jesus' time were anticipating the appearance of the Messiah, this expectation manifesting itself in the movement of John the Baptist and the appearance of several pseudo-Messiahs. Jesus' contemporaries were longing for a strong political leader or an earthly Saviour, who would be supported by Divine Will, would restore the people of Israel and satisfy their materialistic needs as well as their spiritual yearnings. According to a modern Jewish writer, they expect that, with the coming Messiah:

"there will be great material prosperity in the world: the earth will bring forth an abundance of grain and fruit, which man will be able to enjoy without excessive toil. As to the Jewish people, not only will they freely dwell in the land but there will also be 'an ingathering of exiles' whereby all Jews scattered to the four corners of the earth will be returned to Palestine. All nations will acknowledge the God of Israel ... Thus, the King Messiah ... will be the king of all nations ..."

When Jesus came to preach his message, his main theme was to

(1) Klausner, Joseph.

emphasize that "the Kingdom of God is at hand". (Matt. 5:17; Mark, 1:15). The Jews were tempted to listen to his claims when they considered all the apocalyptic meanings of this kingdom. They were even more tempted when he applied to himself the title Son of Man which, about this time, came to be identified with the Messiah.(1)

But their disappointment was tremendous when they discovered that he interpreted these terms in a different way. The Son of Man to them would be a glorious king "on him was conferred sovereignty, glory and kingship, and men of all peoples, nations and languages became his servants." (Dan. 7:14); but to Jesus the Son of Man "must suffer many things and be rejected by elders and chief priests and scribes, and (even) be slain to rise again after three days." (Mark, 8:31; 9:12,31; 10:33,45; 14:41).

According to the evangelists, even his close disciples, with their Jewish background, could hardly understand the new conceptions of Jesus' Messianic kingdom.(2) This is clear from their repeated question: "Has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom of Israel?" It must be said that according to the writer of the Acts of the Apostles these questions were even repeated after the incidents of the crucifixion and the resurrection. (Acts, 1:6-7). Until then, it is clear, the disciples identified the Messianic Kingdom with the political restoration of the Kingdom of David,(3) but:

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(1) Cf. Above, 323ff.
(2) E.R.E., vii, 512ff.
(3) Jesus, Bib. (N.T.), 200, note g.
"For Jesus the Kingdom of God, which means His active, direct rule of human life, on earth as in heaven, is to be established by acts of God; which Jesus does not describe in current apocalyptic terms."(1)

The new conception of Jesus's Messianism, as it is understood from the New Testament, is that he did not come for the restoration of the political heritage of the Jews, nor did he come to deal with their material problems, but he came for their spiritual redemption. His message, as it is preached by the Gospels, is peace, love and compassion, not only for the Jews, but for the whole human race.

At this point some difficult questions might arise; for instance, did Jesus really apply to himself all the titles of Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, and Suffering Servant, or did his disciples attach these terms to their Lord after his death? Secondly, if he did, was it a current idea to associate the Messiah with the Suffering Servant who would be slain by crucifixion. In other words, were his contemporaries familiar with the idea of a crucified Messiah, and if that was not so, how was Jesus able to incorporate in a single conception the meaning of these terms to produce a notion of a suffering Messiah.(2)

To answer these questions one must refer to the complexity of the ancient documentary evidence found in the Gospels of

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(1) E.R.E., vii, 512. For further argument cf. below, 353ff.
(2) Otto, Rudolf, The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man, (London, 1918) deals with such questions.
Matthew, Mark and Luke. Professor William Manson points to the
fact that this material, (1)

"represents at best an exiguous survival from
one large body of tradition ... its survival was
determined in large part by its adaptation to the
practical necessities and interests of the first
Christian generation. The material has thus
become deeply inwoven with the thoughts, the life,
the point of view of the Christian church."

According to the writer of "introduction to the Synoptic
Gospels"(2) in Jerusalem Bible, Matthew, the first to write a
Gospel, wrote in the Hebrew (Aramaic) tongue, but the present
Greek Gospel attributed to him is not identified with this book
which is said to be lost. (3) The dependency of Mark upon
Matthew was supposed for a long time but modern Bible scholars,
in fact, suggest the reverse. (4) This is because an internal
examination indicates that the earliest Gospel was that of Mark,

"which Matthew and Luke used as a source book ... 
Matthew and Luke did not simply re-write Mark;
they had their own special material and both used
sayings source (oral or written) which was unknown
to Mark(5) and which is usually referred to as Q.

(1) Jesus the Messiah, 1.

(2) Synoptic means "seen with one eye".


(5) Other opinion is that Mark, too, was familiar with Q sources.
from Quelle, the German word for source. 

This complexity of the documentary evidence led modern Western scholars to think of three different theories to explain the relation between the teaching of Jesus in the New Testament (in particular his application of the terms Son of Man, Son of God and the Servant of the Lord to the Messiah) and the apocalyptic hopes of Judaism with which these terms are connected.

According to one theory: "the apocalyptic element in Jesus' teaching is accidental, a mere husk that may be stripped away". The study of the apocalyptic literature and the New Testament proves that many of the eschatological ideas in the Gospels were parts of inherited traditions, but: "the principle here is that whatever belongs to Judaism is negligible, the essence of Christ's teaching is what remains." The second theory maintains that "the apocalyptic element is all-essential, the kernel which gives life to everything else." To those who held this view, "apocalyptic is not an accident, but essential substances of Jesus' teaching." That is because Jesus cannot be abstracted from his own society in which apocalyptic expectations flourished. Thus, he believed that all the Messianic expectation of the Jews would be fulfilled in him. The exponents of this theory adopted the view

(2) Manson, W., Christ's View of the Kingdom of God, (London, 1918), 44.
(3) Manson, W., Christ's View, 45.
(4) Manson, W., Christ's View, 44.
that Jesus applied the apocalyptic terms (mentioned above) but with considerable modifications of their significance to suit his new notions.

The third theory holds that "the apocalyptic element is not genuine in Jesus' teaching, but was imported into the Gospels by the earliest disciples." (1) J. Wellhausen, who supports this theory, maintains (according to Manson) (2) that Jesus' mind, "reflecting as in a mirror the eternal ethical relation of God and man, rose clean above the passionate fears and expectation of his time. His person was only brought into union with eschatology after His death on the basis of Daniel 7:13, in which the church saw him prefigured." (3)

Considering these various theories, which try to explain Jesus' relation to contemporary messianic expectations, one should bear in mind that each one of them contains a certain amount of truth but at the same time they vary in the degree of error. This variation is due to the fact that the meaning of "the apocalyptic element", i.e., the messianic expectations and eschatology is undefined. Consequently, the alleged acceptance or rejection of the "apocalyptic element" by Jesus is a generalised statement. (4)

(1) Manson, W., Christ's View, 44.
(3) Manson, W., Christ's View, (London, 1918), 55.
To be on the safe side one must accept the fact that Jesus was in harmony with the original and revealed teaching of the prophets. His message, in His own words, is "not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. 3:15). Accordingly, the theory which states that he refused all "the apocalyptic element", which appeared later in the teaching ascribed to him, is an exaggeration. Similarly, it would not be accurate to say that he accepted all "the apocalyptic elements" because most of the apocalyptic writers imported into Judaism numerous alien beliefs and ideas which ought to be excluded from revealed truth.

(b) Jesus and the Christian concept of Messianism as taught by St. Paul

Christianity, as it was taught by St. Paul and the evangelists, is a religion based upon Messianism, the heavenly origin of Jesus (the Messiah) and his exaltation as the only Saviour of the world. Thus, the term Christ, although literally meaning "the anointed one", has a very different meaning in its Christian connotation. As has been seen, we do not find in the term Messiah, in its Jewish sense, the transcendental meaning found in Christ. But, for Christians, the term Christ gathered into itself the idea associated with wisdom, logos, incarnation and (the doctrine of) reconciliation attributed to Jesus. This was later embodied in

(1) Cf. the Islamic concept in the Qur'an, 3:49-52.
(4) Cf. above, 312ff, 315f.
the following Christian confession of faith which might be compared with the Shahāda of the Muslims, and is:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."\(^{(1)}\)

This lengthy quotation is necessary because it gives the basic Creed of nearly all the Christian churches until recently concerning the person and work of Christ. If there is any difference it will be rather of detail or minor significance.\(^{(2)}\)

At this point it is convenient to ask how the idea of the crucified Messiah came to be the creed acceptable to the first Jewish Christians? To answer this question, from a Christian point of view, one would rely on the writings of the evangelists and St. Paul, which describes the conversion of the first disciples

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\(^{(1)}\) Quoted from Sherratt, B.W. and Hawkin, D.J., Gods and Men, 36.

\(^{(2)}\) For instance, 'the virgin birth' is rejected by some Christian scholars.
and then how they carried on the teaching of Jesus. But before
going into details one should mention two different points of
view. First, that of Dr. Wilhelm Bousset who, according to
Prof. William Manson, (1) maintained that the motive which impelled
the followers of Jesus to search for an explanation of his person
and function was the incomparably powerful personality of Jesus.
Their trust in him remained strong despite his public shame,
torment, insult and crucifixion:

"When their first instinctive hopes that their
leader would prove the national Messiah perished
through his death, they found a substitute and
compensation in the transcendent Son of Man
conception of contemporary apocalyptic thought.
They cast the ready-to-hand royal mantle of the
Son of Man around the person of their master,
set the highest of crowns upon his head, and
confessed themselves disciples of one who through
suffering and death had entered into glory."(2)

Second, and similar to this, is the viewpoint of Professor
Joseph Klausner who, in his analysis of the Jewish and Christian
Messianism said that,

"because of the fact that the Messiah who had
already come was crucified as an ordinary rebel
after being scourged and humiliated, and thus
was not successful in the political sense,

(1) Prof. Manson quoted Bousset's book *Kyrios Christos.*
(2) Manson, W., *Jesus the Messiah,* 5.
having failed to redeem his people Israel; because of the lowly political status of the Jews at the end of the period of the second Temple and after the Destruction; and because of the fear that the Romans would persecute believers in a political Messiah - for these reasons there perforce came about a development of ideas which, after centuries of controversy, became crystallized in Christianity. "(1)

Klausner summarised these developments as follows:

(i) The message of the Messiah is not political but spiritual.

(ii) The political oppression is a special problem of the Jews, but spiritual evil is world-wide, hence, Jesus came to redeem the whole world.

(iii) Although Jesus preached repentance and good work for "the coming spiritual kingdom of God", he was treated like an ordinary rebel. God allowed His Chosen One to be crucified because this was His will and the will of the Messiah to atone for the eternal sin of man; and despite the fact that the Messiah had nothing to do with Adam's sin, he sacrificed his life for the sake of humanity.

(iv) The will of the Messiah is the will of God and hence he is related to God in a special way; therefore, the Messiah is not mortal like other men. Because of this he rose from the dead in a miraculous resurrection and ascended to heaven. (2)

(v) The relation between Jesus and God is fatherhood; God said

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(1) The Messianic Idea in Israel, 526.

(2) The Messianic Idea in Israel, 526-527.
to him, "Thou art My son" and Jesus spoke of God as "My father Who is in heaven". These terms, which were to the Jews figurative expressions, were seen by the Gentiles as actual genetic relationship. This was helped by the Gentiles' belief that great men of heroism were fathered by gods. After St. Paul's teaching they applied this belief to Jesus. Added to this is the concept of the heavenly man and the logos which were also incorporated into the doctrine of God-Messiah.

(vi) Despite Jesus' sacrifice, evil, sin and Satan still prevail in the world, therefore, a second coming of Christ is expected in which all these things will disappear. Thus, the doctrine of Parousia, or return, was introduced and with it the Messianic kingdom which will be revealed.

(vii) Meanwhile, in 'this world' man may seek the mediation of Jesus Christ and also seek the help of his Paraclete, the Holy Ghost. (1)

Concerning the pure Christian viewpoint on this subject (how the idea of the crucified Messiah came to be accepted by the first Jewish Christians) there is more than one explanation. This is due to the fact that despite the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, he "was reticent and ambiguous on the subject of his person and claim." (2) This is clear from St. Mark, 8:27-30, where Jesus

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(1) Messianic Idea in Israel, 527ff.

"put his question to his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?'.

They gave different answers, an indication that his messianic claims were not defined.

Added to this is the fact that when St. Peter disclosed his belief that Jesus was the Christ, in front of the disciples and Jesus, "He gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him" (Mark, 8:30); and even as late as the time of Jesus' trial there was no agreement among his accusers as the precise charge on which he might be arraigned, (Mark, 14:55-60). It is understood from Mark 8:31-33 that when Jesus taught the disciples, for the first time, that the Messiah, the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected and be put to death, Peter was very unhappy about this confession. "Then taking him aside, Peter started to remonstrate with him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter" and even called him Satan! The only conclusion from this hot argument between Peter and Jesus is that Peter was persuading his Lord to change what seemed to be a pessimistic or defeatist attitude. But Jesus insisted that the way Peter thought was not God's way but man's. (Mark, 8:33).

In spite of this, there seems to be no argument against Jesus' use of the terms Son of Man and Servant of the Lord for himself; this is because these terms are repeated so often in the Old Testament and in all the Gospels. Indeed, similar to this

(1) Some said he is John the Baptist, some said Elijah and others said one of the prophets.

(2) Jesus the Messiah, 96.

(3) Jesus, Bib. (N.T.), 56.
is the use of the term Son of God in its Jewish or figurative sense whereas the later adoption of the term (Son of God) by the Catholic Christian Church was disputed. (1)

The Old Testament basis for the use of these terms (in the New Testament) is found in the following verses of Psalms, Isaiah and Daniel: (2)

(i) "Let me proclaim Yahweh's decree; he has told me 'you are my son' today I have become your father. Ask and I will give you the nation for your heritage." (Ps. 2:7-8).

(ii) "My servant will prosper, he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights ... He seemed no longer human." (Isai., 52:13-15). Also, "a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering ... and yet ours were the suffering he bore, our sorrows he carried ... for our faults he was struck down in death. They gave him a grave with the wicked and tomb with the rich, though he had done no wrong." (Isai., 53:3-10).

(iii) "And I saw, coming out of the clouds of heaven, one like a Son of Man. He came to the one of great age and was led into his presence. On him was conferred the sovereignty, glory and kingship ..." (Dan. 7:13-14).

We have seen above (3) the different theories which explain

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(1) See the arguments of the Arians and Ebionites in Danielou, Jean, H.E.C.D., i, 55ff., 121-141. Also cf. The Gospel according to St. Barnabas.

(2) Cf. Manson, W., Jesus the Messiah, 99.

(3) Above, 352.
Jesus' relation to contemporary "apocalyptic elements". Furthermore, there is the idea that, about the time of Jesus, the apocalyptic messianic hopes, especially that of the Servant of the Lord and the Son of Man, were formed into a single conception of a suffering Messiah. And if this formation was not known to the public, it was known to the esoteric circles. But still against this idea is St. Mark's report that the idea of the death and resurrection of the Son of Man was not familiar to the disciples (Mark 9:10). Added to this is the suggestion of St. Paul that the doctrine of a Messiah crucified was, to the Jew, a scandal and an incredibility. (1 Cor. 1:23). (1)

The validity of this argument is partly accepted by W. Douglas MacKenzie, although his thesis was different. It was that Jesus had changed the old popular form of Messianism. MacKenzie said:

"so deeply were the old ideas engrained, so strange and superhuman was the new conception of the divine kingship and its fundamental principle, that not even the death and resurrection of their accepted Messiah could at once reveal the new moral and spiritual universe to the mind of his disciples. It requires the successive events described in the Acts and the appearing of Paul to interpret the Messiahship of Jesus to those disciples as He fulfilled it."(2)

(1) Manson, W., Jesus the Messiah, 11.
It is assumed from this statement that St. Paul alone was the one who understood the real significance of Jesus' teaching; (1) for he was the first to point to the O.T. passages concerning the Servant (Ps. 22 and Isa. 53) in which it was indicated that redemption and glorification were to be found in suffering; and to Paul this was achieved by the blood of Jesus, (1 Peter 2:21; 3:18; 2 Tim. 2:12). (2)

(c) The second coming of Christ (Parousia or raj'a)

It is universally accepted that the belief in Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven was vitally important for the establishment and continuation of the Christian Church. (3) Without this faith Jesus would have passed into history as an ordinary rebel or, at best, as a revolutionary prophet, like many former prophets whose lives were taken by the forces of evil. But the emergence of the belief that he had risen from the dead, (4) three days after the crucifixion, changed the whole matter. The belief in his resurrection and ascension into heaven originated in the Gospels and in the other writings of the New Testament. For instance, Chapter 16 of St. Mark's Gospel demonstrates this idea.

(2) E.R.E., viii, 580.
(4) The form of return or raj'a in the Muslim Shi'ite concept is to reject altogether the death of the charismatic person.
Soon after, this belief developed further when the first Christians came to understand the second coming as a period in which Jesus Christ will descend from heaven (where he sits at the right hand of the Father) to judge the world for a certain time, (Millennium) during which the dead will be raised and the spirits of the saints will be returned to bodies. It is not easy to trace how these ideas came to "represent a common basic belief, and not connected with any one particular group."(1) But, as W. Douglas MacKenzie writes,

"It is easy to exaggerate the religious and ethical effect of the eager waiting (of the disciples) for the return of Christ, the coming of man from heaven ... Having seen him after the death, declared as Messiah ... they yet still waited for his appearing (Ph, 3:20); he was manifested and yet to be manifested (1 Jn. 1:1ff; 3:1-6)."(2)

Henceforth, the second coming of Jesus found expression in the Greek term parousia which in its secular sense means "visit of an emperor or other distinguished person". (3) The early Christians used this term, which also indicates 'approach', 'presence' and 'coming', because the advent of Christ, the real king, was to them close at hand. The term 'second coming' is also rendered by raj'ā in Arabic as we have already seen. (4)

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(1) Danielou, Jean, H.E.C.D., 379.
(2) E.R.E., vii, 525.
(3) Manley, G.T., The Return of Jesus Christ, 16.
(4) Above, 123.
reference to the advent of Jesus Christ, the word is used, according to G.T. Manley, seven times by Paul (1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thes. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thes. 2:1, 8), twice by James (Jas. 5:7, 8), three times by Peter (2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4, 12) and once by John (1 Jn. 2:28). It is also found four times in Matthew’s account of the Olivet discourse (Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39). (1)

But the most obvious reference to Jesus’ second coming is found in Mark 13:24-27, which reads:

"But in those days, after the time of distress the sun will be darkened, the moon will lose its brightness, the stars will come calling from heaven and the power in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in the cloud with great power and glory; (2) then too he will send the angels to gather his chosen from the four winds, from the end of the world to the end of heaven." (cf. Matt. 24:29-31).

The disciples were sure that “these things” would happen before their passing away; that is because they, according to Mark 9:1, heard Jesus say: "I tell you solemnly, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power." Henceforth, until the dominion of the

(1) The Return of Jesus Christ, 16.

(2) Cf. Danielou, H.B.C.D., 7; and see the Shi‘ite concept of the Saba‘iyya that 'Alî b. Abî-Talîb is in the cloud of heaven; see above, 36ff.
Hellenists, the Kingdom of God, which would be revealed with the Son of Man, was seen as an earthly kingdom with all its apocalyptic features. The promises made to Israel in the Old Testament and elaborated in the apocalyptic literature were taken literally and it was hoped that they would be fulfilled in a happy Millennium to come soon. The features of this millennium are depicted in the early writings, namely the Book of Revelation, (1) Ascension of Isaiah and other material attributed to Papias, a disciple of St. John, and Irenaeus who, on their part, attributed it to the Elders. (2)

Some sources (3) mention that Papias heard from unwritten traditions of the Elders that there will be a certain period of a thousand years (Millennium) after the resurrection of the dead when the Kingdom of Christ must be set up in 'a material' order on 'this earth'. (4) Irenaeus, who relied on Papias in developing the picture, said:

"(The blessing of Isaac) refers unquestionably to the time of the (Messianic) Kingdom when the righteous shall bear rule upon their rising from the dead; when also Creation having been renovated and set free, shall bring forth an

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(1) The Book of Revelation is attributed to St. John and was said to have been written before his Gospel, see Manley, G.T., The Return of Jesus, 51ff.
(2) For more information see Danielou, H.E.C.D., 313, 377-404.
(3) Danielou, H.E.C.D., 381.
(4) The later notion is that earth and heaven will be changed.
abundance of all kinds of food from the dew of heaven, and from the fertility of the earth. The Elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him that the Lord used to teach in regard to these times, saying: the days will come in which vines shall grow each having ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs etc., and every grape when pressed will give five and twenty measures of wine ..."(1)

The writer, who confirmed that the earth will produce its fruit without any need of man's labour, also added the Messianic picture of Isaiah(2) in which animals will live in peace and harmony. It is not necessary to draw attention to the fact that this concept of Millennium, which is also found in the Revelation of John, passed into Muslim eschatology as it was depicted in the chapter on Malāḥim and Fītan to be found in the collections of hadīth and in particular that of Muslim b. al-Hajjāj.(3)

Jean Danielou refers to the fact that the above materialistic picture of the coming Kingdom of God and the Millennium, developed among the first Christian communities of Asia and seems to have been current in a fairly wide circle.(4) This is understood from the later argument between St. Jerome (A.D. 340-420) and

(1) It is doubted whether Jesus held this view. H.E.C.D., 381f.
(2) Cf. above, 31f.
(3) Sahīh (N. Naw. Inter.).
(4) H.E.C.D., 383.
St. Origen (A.D. 185-254) with the Ebionites\(^{(1)}\) and the primitive orthodox Christians. Jerome, according to our sources, said: "the Jews and the Ebionites, the heir of the Jewish error understand all the delights of the thousand years in a literal sense."\(^{(2)}\)

Of course, the attitude of St. Jerome, in refuting the ancient Jewish concept of a secular Messianic Kingdom, represents the Hellenistic development in which the kingdom appears in spiritual guise.

This spiritual development was inevitable, because, as some modern Western scholars point out,

"the great and the decisive crisis in the oldest period of early Christianity came when (materialistic) expectation of the advent of the Kingdom of God and its messianic bearer was not realised. The great crisis of the early church resulted from the fact that \textit{parousia} had not come to pass, that the return of Christ announced for the immediate future had been delayed ..."

"historical experience thus forced the community to drop this thought pattern of eschatological expectation for the near future. Instead, it had to re-interpret the message of Jesus ... in the

\(^{(1)}\) The Ebionite or "the poor" is a group of Jews who believed in Jesus but saw in him only the greatest of the prophets. In this they are compared with the Muslims, \textit{H.E.C.D.}, 15ff.

\(^{(2)}\) \textit{H.E.C.D.}, 379."
light of mysticism and Hellenistic metaphysic ...(1)

Other sources(2) suggest that St. Paul, who was universally accepted as the first to bring this mystical development to Christianity, had made use of the Gnostic and Messianic ideas of the East, namely, that of the heavenly man as it had developed in the apocalyptic literature from Zoroastrianism and its branches. It has been suggested that St. Paul did not copy this concept but modified it until it was seen in a different light. Similarities and differences between St. Paul's teaching and the Iranian Myths have been summarised by Professor W. Manson as follows:

(a) The Christ of St. Paul pre-exists creation, but 'in the form of God' (Phil. ii, 6) or the Son of God (Col. 1:13-17) not as man or in the form of man.

(b) He has a cosmological relation to the world and to man, but this he has as the instrument or organ of creation (1 Cor. 8:6), not as the ontological source of being.

(c) He is already the triumphant Redeemer ... but he does not possess this rank from before the foundation of the world. He has attained it only in the last days, in what St. Paul calls "the end of ages". (1 Cor. 10:11).

(d) He is the man from heaven, not, however, because he pre-existed as man, but because he assumed our nature in his incarnation and retains it in his heavenly life.

(1) Benz, Prof. Ernst, Evolution, 20f.

(2) Otto, Rudolf, The Kingdom of God; R. Reitzenstein quoted by Manson, W., Jesus the Messiah, 186ff.
(e) We are united to him in the life of salvation but by a 'new creation' of his producing (II Cor. 5:17), not by the possession of a divine principle or nature in ourselves which Christ simply awakens and recalls to its sources. "(1"

With the emergence of the teachings of St. Paul, the old expectations gradually moved into the background; "the old system was abandoned because the various elements of early expectation became more unconvincing ..." (2) By the time of St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) the Millennium was considered, in some quarters, not as the kingdom of the future at the end of time, but rather the already existing institution of the church. To Augustine, "any nation which has entered the sphere of the Christian church in the past, present or future is already saved from the power of Satan." (3)

But the story of Satan, who is regarded as the real Antichrist, was not over despite this belief. The argument, therefore, did not reach its conclusion because the historical circumstances convinced some believers both before and after Augustine that the Antichrist was, and still is, at work. Therefore, a time must come when Jesus Christ will give him the final blow.

(d) The Antichrist

The idea of the Antichrist can be traced back to post-exilic

(1) Manson, W., Jesus the Messiah, 186.
(2) Benz, Prof. Ernst, Evolution, 22.
(3) Evolution, 27.
Judaism particularly to the book of Daniel (7:8, 19-25; 8:9-12; 11:21-45). In these passages the King of the North, who was identified with the Anti-Messiah, Armilus and Beliar, is depicted as a God-opposing tyrant who will appear at the end of time as a mighty king with great armies. He will destroy the opposing kingdoms, and many nations will follow him; he will persecute the saints and all righteous people; he will rule for 3½ years; he will alter the worship in the Temple of Jerusalem and introduce idolatry; but he will come to his end and be destroyed with the appearance of the Son of Man.

It is assumed that this Jewish idea of the Anti-Messiah had its roots in Iranian mythology, namely the Zoroastrian concept of the final battle at the end of time, between Ahura-Mazdah (the King of light) and Ahriman (the king of darkness) and which will end in the victory of light. Defending this assumption, Rudolf Otto wrote in his book, *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man*, a chapter in which he tried to show the similarities between the two ideas. His theory, however, cannot be totally accepted because the main aspect which makes the Jewish-Christian and Iranian ideas resemble one another is their common belief in the juxtaposition of Satan and God. This idea is an ancient one in Judaism, being found in the story of Adam and the Devil in the book of *Genesis*, composed long before the existence of

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(2) Cf. above, 342ff, and also the book of Revelation, 4-16.
(3) E.R.E., 1, 578-581.
Zoroaster and Zoroastrianism. (1) This does not mean that Zoroastrian myths did not influence the post-exilic eschatology of Judaism as in its details.

Christianity took over from Judaism most of the concepts of the Antichrist. In the Revelation of St. John, the letters of St. Paul and the early Christian apocalyptic writings, the Antichrist is represented as a false (Jewish) Messiah. This false Messiah will play the role of Satan's agent, a notion which is very clear in the second letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians. In verses 2:4-12 the Antichrist is depicted as a rebel who, through his agency to Satan, will perform miracles to deceive many people but the Lord Christ "will kill him with the breath of his mouth and will annihilate him with his glorious appearance at his coming." (This to be compared with the Islamic notion which will be dealt with later when the hadiths of Jesus' descent are examined.) (2) It has been widely accepted among the early Christians that this deceiver or Beliar would come from the Jews because they had not accepted the true Messiah, Jesus; (3) instead they waited for another. The early Christian ideas on this

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(1) Zoroaster was believed to have lived in the 7th cent. B.C., or even later than that.

(2) These concepts are exactly the same in Muslim eschatology, cf. below, 387ff.

(3) It will be mentioned that the Arabic term Dajjāl is a literal translation of deceiver or Beliar. Like the Christians, the Muslims believe that the Dajjāl will be a Jew, cf. below, 387ff.
matter have been summarised from the early Christian sources by W. Bousset thus:

"The Antichrist is to come from the tribe of Dan (cf. Rev. 7:5 ...). He shall appear in Jerusalem as a mighty ruler, subdue three rulers, assemble armies of the world around him, perform signs and wonders, and demand divine worship. Elijah and Enoch, who both appear as witness against him, shall be subdued and slain, the Jews shall believe in him and he shall rebuild the Temple. He shall persecute those among the Jews who refuse him their faith, these, however, shall be saved by miraculous interference of God (the angel), he will put his seal upon his faithful so that only he who bears this seal shall be free to buy and sell (cf. Rev. 13:16f.) Finally, the famine of the last time shall overtake him ... then at the last he shall be subdued and destroyed by Christ."(1)

It is worth mentioning that many of these ideas found their way into the Islamic Traditions. For instance, in the hadith of the Dajjāl we find the following concepts: the appearance of the Dajjāl (or Antichrist) from Jerusalem, (2) his performance of miracles and wonders, his demand to be worshipped, his support by the Jews, (3) the persecution of his opponents, the seal, his

(2) Cf. below, 387ff.
(3) Cf. above, 342f and below, 387ff.
slaying of the righteous man (al-Khadîr who is identified with Elijah) and finally his destruction by the Messiah. This will be elaborated further in the next section. (1)

5. Christ and the Antichrist in Muslim eschatology

(a) The Qur'ānic concept of Jesus, his message and end

(i) The virgin birth

Before going into detail, one must first point to the uniformity of belief in all Muslim schools and sects concerning the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, his human nature, his identification as one of the great prophets (Ulū-al-'Azm min ar-Rusul), (2) his spiritual message which is to complete in harmony the Laws of the Torah, his being saved from crucifixion and his role as the herald of the Prophet Muhammad. This uniformity is due to the straightforward statement in the Qur'ān referring to this matter. On the other hand it is also of importance to mention that there is great dispute, especially among the circle of modern Muslim scholars, regarding Jesus' ascension, his continued existence in heaven, and his return (raj'ā or parousia) to this world just before the end of time to kill the Antichrist (Dajjāl) and to rule the world according to the Islamic Law (Sharī'a of Muhammad). The cause of this dispute is the tashābuh (3) of the Qur'ānic verses

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(1) Cf. below, 387ff.

(2) "Those who are possessed of constancy". They are identified with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, cf. Qur'ān 46:35. Cf. Tafsīr (Tab.), Qurtubī and Zamakh.

(3) Tashābuh is ambiguity which makes the text understood in more than one way, cf. above, 117ff.
which speak about Jesus’ crucifixion and tawaffi, (1) and the paradoxical interpretations which relied on hadīths.

The matter in the hadīths is quite different because most of these hadīths which deal with Jesus and Dajjāl confirm, as we shall see, the ascension of Jesus into heaven, his continued existence and his descent at the end of time, etc.

In summing up the Qur’ānic teaching concerning Jesus, Professor Geoffrey Parrinder, a modern Western scholar, writes: (2)

"The Qur’ān gives a greater number of honourable titles to Jesus than to any other figure of the past. He is a 'sign', a 'mercy', a 'witness' and an 'example'. He is called by his proper name Jesus, by the title Messiah (Christ) and the Son of Mercy, and by the names Messenger of God, Prophet, Servant, Word and Spirit of God. The Qur’ān gives two accounts of the annunciation and birth of Jesus, and refers to his teachings and healings, and his death and exaltation. Three chapters or sūras of the Qur’ān are named after references to Jesus (3, 5 and 19); (3) he is mentioned in fifteen sūras and ninety-three verses. Jesus is always spoken of in the Qur’ān with

(1) Wafāt or tawaffi means death, but it has other connotation, cf. below, 392f.
(2) Jesus in the Qur’ān, 16, also quoted by Sherratt and Hawkin, Gods and Men, 96.
(3) These are "House of 'Imrān", "Mary", and the "Table".
reverence, there is no breath of criticism, for he is the Christ of God."(1)

Furthermore, the fullest account in the Qur'ān covering these matters is to be found in the Sūra 3 (verses 41-64) entitled "the House of 'Imrān", and in Sūra 19 (verses 15-35) entitled "Mary". Briefly, the account of these passages relates how God selected Mary, purified her and chose her above all the women of her time. The angel Jibrīl was sent to give her the good tidings of a son, a Word(2) whose name was to be 'Īsā (Jesus) the Messiah and who shall be high honoured. Mary was frightened and astonished: how could a son be born without sexual intercourse, and what would people say about her and her son if that happened? The angel assured her that this was the will of God who created Adam from dust(3) and his will is in his Word "be" (kun). To comfort her, the angel asked Mary to refer her accusers to the infant who miraculously "shall speak to them in the cradle" to prove her innocence. On God's order she conceived and, then, delivered the baby in the conventional manner. Later the child spoke in his cradle saying: "I am indeed a Servant of God: He hath given me

(1) For details see 'Abd-al-Baqī's Concordance of the Qur'ān, words 'Īsā, Maryam and Masīh.

(2) "The Word" here had nothing to do with the Christian conception of the term; the Muslim understood from it that Jesus was created with the word "be" or kun, and therefore he was called "Word".

(3) The Islamic concept of Adam's creation is parallel to that of Genesis.
the book (the Injīl) and made me a prophet. And He hath made me blessed wherever I be".\(^{(1)}\) This, briefly, is the account of Jesus' virgin birth, and we shall see below what the Qur'ānic concept of his person and message is.

(ii) The person and message of Jesus

Although Jesus was described as "Word" (3:45), Spirit (4:171) 'Sign' and 'Mercy' (19:21; 23:50), these terms had no other significance than the literal one. There is, certainly, no indication of his divinity; on the contrary, the Qur'ān argued bitterly with those who believed in Jesus' incarnation. The Christians are blamed because they confused his miraculous birth, as proof to those Jews who refused to believe in God's ability to resurrect the dead for the last judgement, with his being a divine person, not only a prophet and a human Messiah. In Sūra 5 we read:

"The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger; Messengers before him passed away; his mother was a just (truthful) woman, they both ate food; behold, how We make clear the signs to them (the believers in Trinity) then behold, how they perverted are!!" (19:75).

This quotation leads one to speak about the Qur'ānic concepts of Jesus' Messianism, because it is obvious that this text and other similar ones accept Jesus' Messianism. Despite this, very little can be gathered from the texts of the Qur'ān concerning the concept of this Messianism.\(^{(2)}\) The interpreters of the Qur'ān

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\(^{(2)}\) Cf. art. "Īsā", E.I.\(^{(a)}\), 173-175.
relied on the hadiths for a fuller explanation of Jesus' Messianism, and as a result of this, it is better to deal with their commentaries under the coming section on hadith. In conclusion, it is certain that the Qur'an is free of any eschatological elements regarding the Messianism which we have seen in the Jewish-Christian apocalyptics. Added to this is the explanation of many scholars that 'Isa the Messiah was so called because he used to cure the sick by his mas'h (anointing but not with any liquid), i.e., by a touch of his hands; and this, of course, made the meaning of the Messiah very different, simple and isolated from the ancient meaning of mas'h which had deeper sense.

Concerning Jesus' message, the doctrine of reconciliation attributed to him by the Christians is dropped from the Islamic notions. He is not the Son of God who came to redeem the original sin of Adam, but only rasûl (messenger), nabi (prophet) and 'Abd (servant). The heart of his message is to fulfil the teaching of the former prophets, to be achieved by emphasizing the oneness of God, by announcing the approach of the last judgement (God's Kingdom), by preaching the book (the Injîl) which contains

(1) Below, 386ff.
(2) Cf. above, 313ff and 315ff.
(3) The Muslims belief is that Jesus had received a revealed book called the Injîl and parallel to the Torah of Moses and the Qur'an of Muhammad. They believed that some of his teaching passed to existing Gospels but a great deal was lost and distorted. Cf. Shalabî, Ahmad, al-Masîhiyya, 25ff, 151ff.
bayyinat (proofs), rahma (mercy) and hikma (wisdom). His message, which is directed only to the Israelites and supported by miracles, is to reform the strict laws of the Torah regarding food and similar matters. The Qur'an also confirms that Jesus has given the good tidings of his successor, the comforter or paraclete, who is identified not with the Holy Ghost as Christians believe, but with Ahmad, another name for Muhammad. (1) This is, in short, the Qur'anic teaching regarding the person and message of Jesus.

(iii) The Crucifixion

Concerning the crucifixion, the Qur'an emphasizes that Jesus was not the crucified person but was saved miraculously by putting his likeness upon another person and this other person was crucified in his place. (2) In this respect Sūra 4:15 says:

"Yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them."

It is very interesting to note that this same Qur'anic belief concerning the crucifixion had emerged in the early Christian community. For instance, the Basilidans (3) believed that someone else was substituted for Jesus. The Docetae held that his crucifixion was only apparent, not real, and the Gospel


(2) The commentaries identified this person with Judas the Iscariot, cf. Baydawī, ii, 128. Tafsīr (Tab.) ix, 367-374.

(3) For the origin and ideas of this group see Danielou, J., H.E.C.D., 8, 70, 73, 75, 79, 212.
of St. Barnabas also supported the theory of substitution on the Cross. (1) At this point it might be relevant to ask if Jesus was not killed upon the cross, what, then, happened to him. Answering this question will bring us to the controversy of the Ascension and the descent.

(iv) The Ascension and the Descent

The most controversial verses of the Qur'an are those which deal with the raf' of Jesus and his wafāt or tawaffū. These verses, which are found in Sūras 3:55; 4:158 and 5:117, are quoted by some scholars as proof of Jesus' ascension to heaven after his escape from his persecutors and as proof of his descent at the end of time to fill the world with justice just as it had been filled with injustice. Ironically, the same verses are used by some other scholars as evidence for the death of Jesus and the end of his message. The problem arose from the ambiguity of the terms tawaffū, raf' and their derivatives. Before discussing the different viewpoints regarding the meaning of these two terms, it is useful to give the text in which they are found.

First tawaffū and raf' (3:55):

"When God said, 'Jesus, I will take thee to Me (mutawaffū-kā) and will raise thee to Me (rāfi'u-ka ilayya), and I will purify thee of those who believed not ...

Secondly, *raf'a* (4:158):

"... and for their saying 'We slew the Messiah, Jesus Son of Mary, the Messenger of God' - yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them. Those who are at variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise; and they slew him not a certainty - no indeed; God raised him up to him (raf'a-hu Allah ilavhi).

Thirdly, *tawaffa* (5:117):

"... And when God said 'O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say unto men, "take me and my mother as gods, apart from God?"' He said, 'To Thee be glory! It is not mine to say what I have no right to. If I indeed said it, Thou knowest it, knowing what is within my soul, and I know not what is within thy soul; Thou knowest the things unseen. I only said to them what Thou didst command me: serve God, my Lord and your Lord, and I was a witness over them while I remained among them, but when Thou didst take me to Thyself (tawaffa-nI) Thou wast Thyself the watcher over them ..."(1)

The literal meaning of the Arabic verb *tawaffa* is to 'complete' or 'pay fully someone his right or due'; it also signifies 'fulfil'

and 'be faithful'. The verb tawaffā and its derivatives, attributed to God, as in the above verses, are normally used to indicate the taking of souls by God. (1) The common understanding would be to take souls at death, but it could also mean taking them at sleep. (2)

As for the term rafā' and its derivatives, they have a limited meaning; that is 'to raise', 'to ascend' or 'to lift up'. Concerning its usage in the above mentioned verses, the dispute is not about the raising, lifting up or ascension of Jesus himself, but whether this was done while he was alive and with his earthly body or only with his spirit after his death.

Tabarî, the classical commentator of the Qur'ān, has summarised the different ideas concerning the tawaffā and rafā' of Jesus when he commented on Sūra 3:55. He mentions (3) four viewpoints as follows: first, the idea of those who believed that tawaffā does not mean death but 'taking and seizing from earth which is the same as rafā'; this is the opinion of Ibn-Zayd and his supporters, and perhaps goes back to Ka'b al-Ahbar. The latter maintained that God had sent Jesus as a summoner and herald preaching God's unity; God cannot cause him to die before this is achieved; when Jesus saw the hostility against him and the small number of those who followed him, he complained to God and God told him, "I will take thee to Me and will raise thee to Me". Ka'b added that God said: "Indeed, the one who is raised is not

(1) Cf. Lane, E.W., Arabic-English Lexicon, i/8, 3057.
(2) Qur'ān, 39:42.
(3) Tafsīr (Tab.Sh.) vi, 457.
dead for I will send thee, at the end of time, to kill the one-eyed Dajjāl and you will live after that 24 years; then I will cause thee to die as all living". Ka'b yet added: "this is a witness for the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad in which he said: 'How a nation can be destroyed whereas I am its first (leader) and Jesus the last."(1) Ibn-Zayd supported this by quoting the verse(2) which mentions that God said Jesus will speak to people when he is kahl (middle-aged). Ibn-Zayd concluded that Jesus was raised when he was still a youth (of 33); therefore, he is not dead and will have a second coming in which he will live to be kahl in order to speak again. Tabarī seemed to have accepted this view because it confirms the Traditions which speak about the second coming of Jesus and will be discussed later.

Secondly, the view of those who believed that tawaffū means ordinary death; and that Jesus had died sometime after the incident of the crucifixion. Tabarī attributed this to Muthanna, 'Abd-Allah b. Sālih, Mu'awiya b. Sālih, 'Alī and Ibn-‘Abbās.(3) Sources other than Tabarī(4) explain the rat' by raising his

(1) Taṣāfir (Tab. Sh.) vi, 457. The editor Shākir said that this hadīth is also related by Sayūtī in his ad-Durr al-Manthūr, ii, 36. The latter attributed it to Tabarī, Shākir added that the transmission of Ka'b is like nothing because he was suspected to lie.

(2) Süra, 3:46.

(3) Taṣāfir (Tab. Sh.) vi, 457.

(4) Plenty of these sources are quoted by Shalābī, Dr. Ahmad, al-Mašhīyva, 33ff.
position among the prophets and angels; in a manner similar to that of the prophet Idrīs (Enoch), in which God said: "We raised him up to a high place" (Qur. 19:57), and of the Prophet Muhammad (96:4). They added that the ascension was neither with the body nor to a specific place in heaven, because there is no mention of heaven in the verse. \(^{(1)}\) As will be seen, this verse is adopted by the majority of modern Muslim interpreters of the Qur'ān, like Muhammad ʿAbdu, Rashīd Rida, Mahmūd Shaltūt and Sayyid Qutb. \(^{(2)}\)

Thirdly, there is the opinion of those who held that the tawaffî means ordinary death and that Jesus had died for a short while, but not on the Cross, after that he was brought to life again and raised up to heaven. This, according to Tabarī, is the opinion of Wahb b. Munabbih, formerly a Christian, and Muhammad b. Isḥāq who related hadīth on Wahb’s authority. Ibn-Isḥāq noticed that this has been the viewpoint of the Christians. \(^{(3)}\)

The fourth and last opinion is that of those who said that the verse should have been read: "I will raise thee to Me and then I will take your soul to Me" (at the end of time after the second coming); but the Qur'ānic style does not allow the verse to be understood in that way: min al-muqaddam al-ladhi maʾnā-hu-t-tāʾkhīr. Tabarī does not mention any names in connection with this opinion.

\(^{(1)}\) Shalabi, Dr. Ahmad, al-Masāḥīhyya quoting Rashīd Rida, Manār, xxviii/8.
\(^{(2)}\) Cf. ʿAbdu and Rida, Al-Manār, xxviii/8; Qutb, Zilāl, ii, 362; Shaltūt, Fatāwī, 59-65; for summary of their ideas see Shalabi, Prof. Ahmad, al-Masāḥīhyya, 35ff.
\(^{(3)}\) Tafsīr (Tab. Sh.) vi, 457. He might refer to some contemporary Christians, this is not the view of the orthodox Christianity.
with this view; (1) and it is not known whether there is anyone who still supports it. These are, in brief, the different viewpoints about tawaffi and raf as stated by Tabari. Other sources merely repeat what has been said by Tabari. (2)

Before going on to look at what the Traditionists can offer in explaining the problem of the ascension and the descent, I should like to draw attention to two verses, normally quoted as evidence for the second coming. It should also be noted that these two verses are taken from the mutashabih (ambiguous parts) of the Qur'an. (3) The first one (in Sura 4:159) says:

"There is not one of the People of the Book but will assuredly believe in him before his death, and on the Resurrection Day he will be a witness against them."

The meaning, according to those who believe in Jesus' ascension and his continued existence in heaven, is that "not one of the People of the Book but will believe in the true Jesus before the death of Jesus". They conclude that many people of the Book have not believed until now; therefore, he must be alive to summon them to the right belief before his death at the end of time. The other opinion is that of those who hold that Jesus had already died. The meaning of the verse accordingly is that "not one of

(1) Tafsir (Tab. Sh.) vi, 457.
(2) Cf. Baydawi, ii, 21f; Razi, ii, 339; Zamakh, i, 588; Qurtubi, iv, 99, vi, 11.
(3) Cf. Qur'an, 3:7 and Tafsir (Tab. Sh.) which explain the meaning of mutashabih.
the People of the Book but will believe before his (own) death in Jesus". (1) These two viewpoints are mentioned by Tabari (2) who seems to have accepted the first one; and by Zamakhsharī, (3) who seems to have accepted the other. Zamakhsharī adds that the reading (qirā'a) of the Companion Ubayy b. Ka'b supports the latter opinion. The Companion read: *illa la-yu minunna-bi-hī gabla mawti-him*. That is, they will assuredly believe in him before their death. (4)

The second verse to which attention must be drawn is in Sūra 43:61. It was very difficult for the translators of the Qur'ān to translate it because the different qirā'as give different meanings. (5) One version is: "He (Jesus) shall be a sign ('alam) for (the coming of) the Last Hour, doubt not concerning it". The second version: "He (Jesus) is knowledge ('ilm) of the Hour ...". The third and fourth versions: "It (the Qur'ān) shall be a sign ('alam) or knowledge ('ilm) for the Hour ...". It is clear that those who believe in the second coming of Jesus identify the pronoun inna-hu with Jesus saying that his return is a sign or knowledge of the approach of the Hour. The others, who do not believe in his return, identify the pronoun inna-hu with the Qur'ān saying that the revelation of the Qur'ān is a sign or the

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(1) Cf. the translations of Arberry, A.J., and 'Alī, A. Yūsuf.
(2) Tafsīr (Tab. Sh.) ix, 379-387.
(3) Zamakh., i, 588.
(4) Zamakh., i, 587ff.
knowledge of the approach of the Hour. They added that even if
the pronoun refers to Jesus, the sign or the knowledge is not
his return but his miraculous birth and his wonderful life. (1)

(b) Jesus, the Mahdi and the Dajjāl as represented in the hadīth

After discussing the Qur'ānic verses which were taken by some
scholars as proof for the ascension and descent of Jesus, one
would expect to find similar Qur'ānic references to the belief in
the Dajjāl (the Antichrist). For the Dajjāl is always connected
with the second coming of Jesus the Messiah. But surprisingly,
there is not a single reference to a Dajjāl in the Qur'ān. (2)
The belief had its roots in the numerous hadīths attributed to
the Prophet Muhammad. It is assumed that these hadīths had
developed in a similar way to that of the hadīths of the Mahdi.

Although some of these hadīths are described by some modern
Muslim scholars as contradictory, confusing and paradoxical, (3)
many of them were regarded by the majority of the Muslim, since
the time of al-Bukhari and Muslim b.al-Hajjāj, (4) as sound and
highly regarded. They were related by all the collectors of the
hadīth, including al-Bukhari and Muslim themselves. They also
found their way into all the commentaries of the Qur'ān. (5)

Apparently, the general theme of these hadīths speaks of

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(1) Tafsīr (Tab.Sh.).
(2) Cf. 'Abd-al-Baqī, Concordance to the Qur'ān.
(3) Rīda, Rashīd, the Manār, xxvii/8, 364.
(4) The second half of the 3rd century of Hijra.
(5) Tafsīr (Tab.Sh.); Qurtubī; Zamakh.; Rāzī, and Baydāwī.
the eschatological tribulation, entitled Malāhīm and Fītān, which indicates the approach of the Last Time and heralds the final blessing of the Messianic age. A survey of all the material on this subject is not possible now; therefore, only some examples will be given with some analysis of the different viewpoints concerning Jesus, the Dajjāl and the Mahdi.

(1) The Dajjāl and his defeat by Jesus

The belief in the Dajjāl occupies an important part in Muslim eschatology. The word Dajjāl, which means Deceiver or Beliar, is believed to be of foreign origin. This is because the existence of the Arabic verb dājāla in Arabic is doubted.\(^1\)

It seems to have been borrowed from the Syrian in which it occurs as a description for the Antichrist, "Nushiha daggāla", who is also described as a false prophet "nebiya daggāla".\(^2\)

A great deal of early material going back to the time of the Companions of the Prophet shows how the belief in the Dajjāl was firmly established among them. They used to teach the ḥadīth of the Dajjāl to small children, and they themselves used to ask the "People of the Book" about the story of the Dajjāl.\(^3\)

A ḥadīth transmitted by Abū Da'ūd and Tirmidhī shows that the Prophet was concerned with the matter of the Dajjāl; he, according to this report, used to say to his Companions: "There has been

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\(^1\) It is not found in the Qur'ān or the pre-Islamic poetry.
\(^2\) B.I.(s) 67, referring to the Gospel of Matthew, xxiv:24.
\(^3\) Cf. above, 101.
no prophet after Noah who has not warned his people about the Dajjāl and I warn you of him."(1) According to another report by Muslim B. al-Hajjāj, the Prophet was once suspicious that his contemporary Ibn-Sā'īd (or Ibn-Sayyād) who was of Jewish origin, might be the Dajjāl. But other and later hadiths in which the Prophet described the Dajjāl as monstrous and one-eyed dismissed the story of Ibn-Sā'īd.(2)

The description of the Dajjāl in those hadiths agrees with late Judaeo-Christian apocalyptic to which reference has already been made.(3) The following extract from a hadith related by the Companion Nawwās b. Sam‘ān and transmitted by Muslim and Tirmidhī(4) will give a good idea of the rest of the material. Nawwās mentioned that the Prophet said: "the Dajjāl will come forth from a place between Syria and Iraq(5) and there will be mischief right and left ..." God's messenger was asked: "how long would he remain." He replied: "forty days, one like a year, one like a month, one like a week and the rest of his days like yours." He was asked: "how quickly would he travel through the world". He replied: "like rain driven along by wind". He

(1) Sahīh (Bukh.), Sahīh (M); in translating this hadith and the following, I quote, but with some modification, Robson, James, Eng. trara. of Mishkāt al-Masāḥīh, iii, 1142.
(2) Sahīh (M.), xviii, 46, 55.
(3) Above, 372ff.
(4) Sahīh (M.) xviii, 63; Sahīh (M.) ix, 91-96, cf. Mishkāt, iii, 1145.
(5) In another version, which contradicts this, the Dajjāl will appear from Khurasān, cf. above, 342ff.
continued to say that the Dajjāl will summon people and some will believe in him; he will then give the command first to the skies and they will give rain, then to the earth, which will produce crops. The Dajjāl will then summon a man in the prime of youth (identified by some as al-Khadir, i.e., Enoch), strike him with a sword and cut him in two, after which he calls him and the youth will come forward laughing with his face shining but at that very moment, God will send the Messiah, son of Mary, who will descend at the white minaret in the east of Damascus wearing two garments dyed with saffron, and he will place his hands on the wings of two angels. Every infidel who feels the odour of his breath will die, and his breath will reach as far as he can see. He will then see the Dajjāl till he catches up with him at the gate of Ludd and kills him. People whom God has protected from the Dajjāl will then come to Jesus who will wipe (yamṣahu) their faces and tell them of ranks they will have in paradise; while this is happening, God will release Gog and Magog "and they will swarm down from every slope". They will say: "we have killed those who are on earth; come and let us kill those who are in heaven." Jesus and his Companion who will protect themselves on the mount of Tūr will beseech God who will send to Gog and Magog insects in their necks and in the morning they will have perished as if they were one person. God's prophet Jesus and his Companion will then beseech God who will

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(1) Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.) xviii, 71f.
(2) Sunan (D), iv, 166; cf. Sahīh (M.) xviii, 63; Sahīh (T.)
(3) Qur'ān, 21:96.
send birds with necks like those Bactrian camels and they will carry their putrefaction and stench where God wills. God will then send very heavy rain. The earth will then be told to bring forth its fruits and restore its blessing, and on that day a company of people will eat a pomegranate and seek shelter in its skin. The hadīth continued to count the Messianic blessings which will be bestowed on earth. (1)

(ii) The Mahdi and his relation to Jesus

As one can observe, the roles assigned to Jesus and to the Mahdi on one hand, and to the Dajjāl and the Sufyānī on the other, are confusingly alike. It has been seen in Chapters V and VI that many hadīths (2) assigned to the Mahdi the role of filling the earth with justice and demolishing oppression and tyranny. Hadīths also assigned to the Sufyānī the role of the anti-Mahdi (Antichrist or Dajjāl). (3)

Consulting the different collections of Sahīh, one finds stated there that Jesus will descend from heaven during the time of a Muslim Imam who was identified by some scholars as the Mahdi. (4) It is also mentioned in the hadīths that Jesus' mission will be to subdue the tyranny of the Dajjāl and the well-known enemies of Gog and Magog after which he will fill the earth with justice, etc. We have then, two Mahdīs and two Antichrists, not

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(1) Sahīh (M.) xviii, 63; Sunan (D) iv, 166; Mishkāt, iii, 1145ff.
(2) Above, 194ff.
(3) Above, 244ff.
to mention the Qahtānī whose similar function was explained above. (1) The confusion, which is as yet unexplained, is that if the Mahdi was to fill the earth with justice, etc., how was one then to understand the appearance, during his rule, of the Dajjāl and the other hostile forces which would need another Mahdi to vanquish them. Another question also has to be answered, that is, what the function of the Mahdi would be after the descent of Jesus. Would his role be at an end with his being the Imam of the first prayer which Jesus would attend with the Muslims, (2) or would he share power with him? (3) There seems to be no answer to this problem in the hadīths themselves.

No doubt the hadīths about Jesus and the Dajjāl are regarded as being more reliable; most of them were certainly earlier than those of the Mahdi and the Sufyānī. For this reason we find the Sunnite theologians giving more weight to belief in Jesus' return and his battle with the Dajjāl than to the belief in the Mahdi or Sufyānī. (4) On the other hand, the Shi'ite theologians based their eschatological hopes upon the coming of the Mahdi. Therefore, one would hardly expect to find in the Shi'ite sources (5) as full an account of the appearance of Jesus and Dajjāl as that which is found in the Sunnite sources. For instance, the famous Shi'ite scholar, Ibn-Bābawayhi al-Qummi, (6) mentioned the signs

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(1) Pp. 252f.
(2) Sahīh (M.).
(3) As in the case of the Qahtānī, above, 252f.
(4) Above, 244f.
(5) Kulaynī, Ḥāfī (Us.); Ibn-Bābawayhi al-Qummi, Kamāl ad-Dīn.
(6) Kamāl ad-Dīn, ii, 364f.
of the Hour without reference to the appearance of Jesus and the Dajjāl; instead he concentrated upon the Mahdi and Sufyānī.\(^{(1)}\)

On the other hand, for a Sunnite Traditionist, it is impossible to count these signs of the Hour without mentioning Jesus or the Dajjāl.

It is, perhaps, for political reasons that some Traditionists tried to deny to the Shi‘ites their champion of salvation, the Mahdi. It was seen above\(^{(2)}\) how some sources related the hadīth which says: "there is no Mahdi but Jesus the son of Mary". Even those Sunnites who accepted the belief in the coming Mahdi understood that his role would be minor compared to that played by Jesus. This will be elaborated further by quoting some texts in the next section.

(iii) The descent of Jesus in the hadīths

There is no doubt that the basis in the hadīth for the descent of Jesus is well established. If there were any dispute on this question it is not over the interpretation of an ambiguous text, as in the case of the verses of tawāṣfī and raf‘, but over the authenticity of the material itself. This section will expose some examples of numerous hadīths which were taken by many as clear evidence of the descent of Jesus. The ideas of those who do not accept these hadīths because they are only shādīth āhād\(^{(3)}\) or because of their weakness over contradiction

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(1) Kamāl ad-Dīn, ii, 364f.
(2) P. 210.
(3) Those which were transmitted by a small number of Traditionists, not enough for tawātur.
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all religions so that Islam might be the universal religion. Also, the commander of the Muslims (who was identified by some scholars with the Mahdi) would hand all his power to Jesus, including that of leading the congregation in prayer. Jesus would, then, ask the commander to lead the worship and he would join the congregation as a gesture of honour to Muhammad's nation.\(^1\)

According to many hadiths, to be found in all collections of Sahih, Jesus will descend at a crucial time of tribulation when the Muslims are preparing to fight the Dajjal. His descent will be a great rescue for them for he will miraculously kill that tyrant. The unbelievers who support the Dajjal will also meet their fate by the breath of Jesus' mouth which represents the spiritual power.\(^2\) Having achieved all this, yet another tribulation would occur. The nation of Gog and Magog will be released,\(^3\) Jesus and the Muslim will not be able to fight them but only through their prayers they will perish. After this the way will be prepared for the blessing of the Messianic age in which nature will be changed:

"The poison of every poisonous creature will be removed so that a little boy may play with the snake, and it will not harm him, and a little girl put a lion to flight and it will not harm her. The wolf will be among the herd like their dog and the earth shall be

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\(^1\) Cf. Sahih (T.) ix, 88, Ibn-al-'Arabi'a comment.

\(^2\) Cf. above, 335.

\(^3\) Cf. the Qur'an, 18:93f.
full of believers (Muslims) as the vessel
is full of water. The religion (Dīn) shall
be one, and there shall be no worship but
that of Allah. War shall cease and peace
shall dominate ... The earth shall bring
forth its vegetation as in the days of
Adam."(1)

There is no doubt that this Messianic picture is the same
as Chapter Eleven of the book of Isaiah,(2) with some colouring.
These striking resemblances between Muslim and Jewish-Christian
eschatology might be the cause of some modern Muslim scholars
describing the hadīth of Jesus' descent in Muslim sources as
development under the influence of these Jewish and Christian
Messianic concepts.

Not only do modern Muslim scholars doubt the authenticity
of these hadīths of the descent, but some early theologians had
also expressed their suspicions. Imam an-Nawawi, in his commentary on Sahīh of Muslim,(3) mentions that some of the Mu'tazilites
and the Jahmites and those who agreed with them, claimed that
these hadīths are contradicting the Qur'ān, which emphasizes that
the Prophet Muhammad is the seal of prophecy, (Qur'ān, 33:40);
and they also contradict the other hadīths in which Muhammad says:
"there is no prophet after me".(4) The Mu'tazilites and the

(1) Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.) xiii, 63.
(2) Cf. above, 31f.
(3) Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.) xviii, 75f.
(4) Sahīh (M. Naw. Inter.) xviii, 75f.
Jahmites, according to Nawawi, also claimed that there was a consensus (ijmā') among the Muslims that Muhammad was the last prophet, they think that the advent of Jesus is against these evidences of "the sealed prophecy". Nawawi answered this by saying that Jesus will not come to abrogate the Sharī'a of Muhammad but to implement it. (1)

Modern Muslim scholars, such as Muhammad Abdu, Rashīd Rida, Mustafa 'Abd-ar-Raziq and Mahmūd Shaltūt (2) reject these hadiths of the descent for the same reasons introduced by the Mu'tazilites and the Jahmites and they add that although some of these hadiths are found in the Sahīh, they are ahadīth ahād, which are not binding in the matter of faith ('aqīda). Rashīd Rida, who presents this viewpoint, maintains that the hadiths which speak about Jesus' descent, although numerous, are in disagreement, confusion and contradiction. He adds that they were mixed with the hadiths of eschatology, the Dajjāl, the Kahdī and Malāḥim, which can also be found in the eschatology of other nations. Rashīd Rida explains that the advent of Christ is believed by most Christians; thus, according to him, they have tried since the appearance of Islam until now to publicize it among the Muslims. One of those who tried to mix it with the interpretation of the Qurʿān was Wahb b. Munabbih, who stands second to Ka'b al-Ahbār, from whom superstitions have come disfiguring the tafsīr of the Qurʿān. (3)

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(1) Sahīh (N. Naw. Inter.) xiii, 75f.
(3) Rida, al-Manār, xxviii/9, 756.
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