

The Origins of the Shi'as

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Shi'ism is not a new religion. It begins with the beginning of Islam. The embodiment of the code of religion, that is, the seal of the Prophets (s.a.w.) planted the tree of Shi'ism together with Islam; with his own hands, he watered it and looked after it. The plant grew up to be a green tree which began blooming in the life-time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). But it had not yet born fruit, when the light of prophethood was put out.

We are not alone in advancing this claim. Even the eminent scholars from among Sunnis agree with us. For instance, 'Allamah Siyuti in his famous commentary "ad-Durru 'l-Manthur" says in connection with God's words "Hum khayru 'l-bariyah" (they are the best of created beings) (Surah: The Clear Proof: Ayat 7):

"Ibn 'Asakir quotes Jabir ibn Abdillah as saying: "We were present in the company of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) when 'Ali (a.s.) came towards us. Seeing 'Ali (a.s.) the Prophet (s.a.w.) said: "I swear by God the Almighty, who is the Master of my life, that he ('Ali (a.s.)) and his Shi'ahs shall be successful on the day of judgement."

Ibn 'Adi reports from ibn 'Abbas that when the verse "Inna 'l-ladhina amanu wa 'amilu 's-salihat" (Verily these are those who believed and did good deeds) was revealed, the Holy Prophet (s.a.) said to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.): "It refers to you and your Shi'as; God will be pleased with them and they with Him on the Day of Judgement."

Ibn Mardwa'ih quotes Hadhrat 'Ali (a.s.) himself as saying: "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to me: "Oh 'Ali. Did you not hear what God said: 'Inna 'l-ladhina amanu wa 'amilu 's-salihat ula'ika hum khayru 'l-bariyah.' Verily it means you and your Shi'as. The promise between your people and me shall be fulfilled at the fountain of Kawthar; there, when all the nations shall be present to account for their actions, your people will be called forward, your faces, hands and feet shining with light'." These three hadith are to be found in as-Suyuti's "ad-Durr al-manthur".

Ibn Hajar has also reported some of these traditions in his as-Sawa'iq) from Darqutni. He quotes Umm Salamah as saying: "Oh 'Ali. You and your shi'as shall attain Paradise." Ibn Athir writes in connection with the word "qumh" that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to Hadhrat 'Ali (a.s.): "When people come into the presence of God, your Shi'as will be there content with God and He with them, and your enemies shall be subjected to God's wrath and their hands shall be tied to their necks." The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) demonstrated this by putting his hands behind his neck, and said: "See, they shall be tied up in this way."

Probably this tradition has been reported by Ibn Hajar also in his *as-Sawa'iq* and other 'ulema' have also reported it in different ways, showing that it is among the well-known hadith. In az-Zamakhshari's *"Rabi' al-Abrar"* the following statement of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) has been recorded: "Oh 'Ali. On the Day of Judgement the skirt of God's mercy will be in my hand and my skirt will be in your hand and your skirt will be held by your descendants and the Shi'as of your descendants will be hanging on to their skirt. Then you will see where we will be taken (i.e. Paradise)."

For further satisfaction, it will be useful to study Ahmad ibn Hanbal's *"al-Musnad"* and an-Nasa'i's *"Khasai's"* etc., which contain a number of such traditions. These traditions show that the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.) spoke a number of times about the Shi'as of 'Ali (a.s.) and pointed out that on the Day of Judgement they, in particular, shall be safe and successful, God being pleased with them and they with Him.

Everyone who believes that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) was the embodiment of truthfulness and that the verse which begins *"ma yantiqu 'an il-hawa ..."* (He does not speak of himself unless 'wahy' is revealed to him) refers to the Prophet himself, realise that these hadith must be true. Those people however who understand the above hadith as referring to all the companions of the prophet, have failed to recognise their real inner meaning.

We find that during the days of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) a group of outstanding companions was attached to Hadhrat 'Ali (a.s.). Not only did every man in this group acknowledge the Holy Imam (a.s.) to be his spiritual leader, the real transmitter of the Holy Prophet's teachings, but they also acknowledged him as the true interpreter and commentator of the orders and secrets of the Prophet (s.a.w.). It is this group which is popularly known as the Shi'a. Even the lexicographers support this truth. If you refer to the famous dictionaries *"an-Nihayah"* and *"Lisan ul-'Arab"*, you will find the meaning of *"shi'a"* as "one who loves and follows 'Ali (a.s.) and his descendants."

If however we are to understand that *"shi'a"* means any person who loves 'Ali (a.s.) or is not his enemy, then the use of this word would be inappropriate, because only loving, or at least, not being an enemy of him, does not mean that a person is a Shi'a; if however, he has the characteristic of persistent following and obedience then the word Shi'a would apply; this is crystal clear to those who have an understanding of Arabic and a notion of the relationship between word, meaning and context.

In view of these realities, it is unlikely that any sensible man, after studying the appropriate traditions, could draw the conclusion that the word *shi'a* means the Muslims in general, but will understand that it refers to a particular class which has a special attachment to 'Ali (a.s.).

Hopefully, after this explanation, no fair-minded man will try to conclude that the above quoted traditions do not prove the existence of a group who, because of their special relation with the master of the pious, 'Ali (a.s.) were superior to all the Muslims of that time, and who all expressed their love for him.

Personally, I do not agree with the assumption that the Caliphs, who could not accept this fact, consciously violated the words of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.). It is possible many of them did not hear his edicts, or that those who heard them were unable to follow his directions. Moreover, if the statements of the Prophet (s.a.w.) in which he announced the rank and high position of Amiru 'l-Mu'minin (a.s.) and the Ahlu 'l-bayt (a.s.) are studied with an open mind, it will be seen that these reports do not only show merits of a general nature, but also contain clear indications of how to recognise the status and capability of the Leader of Shi'ism, and of how to contribute to the establishment and justness of that school of thought. The following traditions may be cited as examples.

"Ali (a.s.) bears the same relationship to me as Harun (Aaron) had to Musa (Moses)".
"Oh 'Ali, only those with faith (iman) are your friends, and only the hypocrites (munafiqin) are your enemies."

"Oh people of my ummah. I leave behind two things worthy of great esteem -the Book of God and my progeny, my Ahlu 'l-bayt." "Accordingly to the tradition of at-Tayr, the prophet made the following prayer: "Oh God. Send to me your most beloved slave", and immediately 'Ali entered his presence.

"Tomorrow I will give this standard to the man who loves God and His Prophet (s.a.w.) and who God and His Prophet (s.a.w.) also love." "Ali is with the Truth and the Truth is with 'Ali." These traditions are mostly taken from "Sahih al-Bukhari" and "Sahih al-Muslim", and there are thousands of such authentic reports. This small booklet cannot accommodate details of them. Those who are fond of research work can study the famous book "Abiqat al-Anwar" by 'Allama Sayyid Hamid Husayn, which is the times as voluminous as "Sahih al-Bukhari" and is a masterpiece of research in the field of hadiths.

When the light of prophethood was extinguished, a group of the "sahaba" started to act to prevent the Caliphate from passing to 'Ali.

The cause of this opposition might have been the young age of the holy Imam, or the feeling among the Quraysh that the prophethood and the imamate should not be combined in the house of Banu Hashim; there might have been other causes, we do not have the space to discuss them here.

Both the Sunni and the Shi'a sects agree however that, when allegiance was being taken from

the Muslims, 'Ali (a.s.) did not accept the authority of Abu Bakr, and, according to the learned al-Bukhari ("Sahih", see the chapter on the victory at Khybar), he did not pay allegiance until six months had passed. Some of the eminent companions, like az-Zubayr, 'Ammar and Miqdad and others, also refused to pay homage to Abu Bakr. The fact is that 'Ali (a.s.) had no craving for political power, nor desire to rule, other than in his capacity as Imam.

The talk that he had with ibn 'Abbas at Dhiqar clearly proves which way the son of Abu Talib (a.s.) was going. Amiru 'l-Mu'minin (a.s.) had only one purpose in view, and it was that "religion" might remain safe, "right" might prevail and "wrong" might be exterminated. Imbued with these high feelings, 'Ali (a.s.) resorted to protest only.

He did not adopt any plans to overthrow the caliphs. Rather, in order to lead and guide the people to the right path he always cooperated with the government; his wise suggestions enabled Islam to flourish and meant that religious commands were made known to all. If 'Ali (a.s.) had not adopted this course of action, not only would Islamic unity have been shattered, but the people also would have been lost in the labyrinth of ignorance.

The Shi'as too continued to follow their leader; the spirit of the time demanded that differences should be ignored. For this very reason, they did not try to establish themselves as a sect during the regime of the first caliphs. Of course 'Ali's friends silently observed the modus operandi of every ruler and the changing conditions till at last the nation itself selected 'Ali (a.s.) took the seat of the caliphate, Mu'awiyah revolted and sent out a large number of forces to Siffin.

A group of the "sahaba" (companions) remained from the very beginning with 'Ali (a.s.). The rest of the companions also sided with the Holy Imam. Eighty prominent companions, like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Khuzaymah Dhu 'sh-Shahadatayn and Abu Ayub al-Ansari, nearly all of whom were either Badri (from the battle of Badr) or 'Aqb (Bay'atu 'l-Aqbi -the pledge of 'Aqbi), joined 'Ali's party. Most of them sacrificed their lives for the Holy Imam (a.s.).

The fighting continued however, and Mu'awiyah's intrigues also increased. When Hadhrat 'Ali (a.s.) was martyred, the ruler of Damascus gave a sigh of relief. Islam disappeared from Mu'awiyah's royal courts and he began to revive all the tyrannical traditions of the past kings. 'Ali's (a.s.) pious way of life, devout manners and exalted character contrasted sharply with Mu'awiyah's corrupt morals and his dealings with 'Amr b. al-'As, with the Governorship of Egypt, Yazid and his despotic caliphate, and Ziyad ibn Abih and his activity against Islam. Mu'awiyah's notorious over-indulgence and passion for revelry clearly demonstrated the depraved condition of his mind and of the court surrounding him. We have thus before us the

simple way of living taught by Islam, and on the other side the pomp and vanity of the son of Abu Sufyan. Mu'awiyah's kingly aspirations were fulfilled with the hard-earned money of the Muslims.

The dining cloth of the Amawi palace was always laid with the daintiest of foods. The vizier, Abu Sa'id al-Mansur ibn al-Husayn al-Abi (died 422 A.H.) recorded an event in his work "Nathr ad-Dur". He writes: "Ahnaf ibn Qays used to say that one day when he went to Mu'awiyah, the latter put before him such a large variety of food that it was difficult to count the different dishes.

He was bewildered when Mu'awiyah extended towards him one of the dishes when he did not recognise. He asked what it was. The answer was ... the stomach of duch failed with sheep's brain, fried in pistachio oil and sprinkled with spices." Ahnaf said that on hearing this he began to weep. Mu'awiyah said: "Why do you weep?" He replied: "At this time 'Ali (a.s.) has come to my mind.

One day I was sitting with the Holy Imam (a.s.); the time for breaking the fast approached. The Imam (a.s.) ordered me to stay. Meanwhile a sealed bag was brought. I asked: "O Imam, what does it contain?" The Ima (a.s.) said: "Powered barely". I said: "Was there any fear of theft, O Amiru 'l-Mu'minin, or is it because of financial stringency that it has been sealed?"

"It is for none of these reasons," he said, "the reason for this care is only the thought that my sons al-Hasan (a.s.) and al-Husayn (a.s.) might mix this powered barely with butter or olive oil." Again I asked: "Is butter or olive oil unlawful?" The Holy Imam said; "It is not unlawful, but for the true Imams it is necessary that they remain attached to the ranks of the poor, so that indigence and want may not make the poverty-stricken rebellious." Mu'awiyah said: "Ahnaf, you have reminded me of a person whose supreme merits are difficult to be denied." in az-

Zamakhshari's "Rabi' al-Abrar", and in other compilations, many such events are related. Mu'awiyah's bad nature was inextricably linked with these unlawful actions; he had an inner desire to reach the height of wickedness. So he broke all the promises that he had made to Imam al-Hasan (a.s.) and in the end had the Prophet's grandson poisoned. As a result of this state of affairs and these events, the Muslims began to look at Syria's politics with scorn and contempt; the true believers realised that Mu'awiyah was only a man of this world, and he himself acknowledged this truth.

In az-Zamakhshari's "Rabi' al-Abrar", the following statement is narrated from the ruler of Syria: "Abu Bakr wanted to keep aloof from the world and the world kept aloof from him. 'Umar tested the world and the world tested him. As to 'Uthman, he took hold of the world and the world also madly pursued him; and I at every step tried with my heart and soul to make it a bed

of roses. The result was that I became of the world and the world became mine." Gradually, the people's opinion was changing; the close companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.) were letting the ordinary Muslims know about the superior merits, virtues and character of 'Ali (a.s.) and his descendants, which they had seen with their own eyes. Who cannot be moved when he recalls the sight of the Prophet of God (s.a.w.) lifting his loving grandson onto his back and saying: "What do you think of your mount, it is not the best mount; and as for you, you are the best riders." And do not these words, full of the purity of revelation, "al-Hasan and al-Husayn (a.s.) are the leaders of the youth of Paradise", demand to be known by all. Truth has a right to spread, and those who have a sense of truth in them are desirous of spreading it. The result of this desire for truth was that the common Muslims began inclining towards Shi'ism and opportunities were created for the advancement of this sect.

The greatest cause of the advancement of Shi'ism, however, was that bloody event which revolutionized the Islamic world. This painful event of 61 A.H. which is known as the tragedy of Karbala' was the most momentous of its kind. The effects of the martyrdom of al-Husayn (a.s.) were felt by all, even those living in the most distant regions of the Muslim territory. Companions like Zayd ibn Arqam, Jabir ibn 'Abdillah al-Ansari, Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sa'idi and Anas ibn Malik survived Karbala'. The pain they felt had no bounds, and, remembering their duty towards, and love for, the Prophet and his progeny, they intensified their efforts to make known the superior merits of Ahlu 'l-bayt (a.s.).

The Umayyad tyrants pursued them and these remaining sahaba were finally also victims of the sword and poison. But the cry of the oppressed is not made in vain. These events were not such that the nation of the Muslims were unaware of them. Indeed, they keenly observed them, with the result that a great many groups of people began to declare their love for 'Ali (a.s.) and his descendants; the numerical strength of the Shi'as increased dramatically.

With the same rapidity with which the tyranny of Banu Umayyah was increasing, the love for Ahlu 'l-bayt was also increasing in the hearts of the common people. The descendants of the Umayyids tortured and tyrannized to the extreme, but every action has its reaction. It is related that Shu'abi said to his son: "Oh my son, the world cannot harm the values which religion has brought, but those things which were made and adorned by the world can all be destroyed by religion. Just reflect upon 'Ali (a.s.) and his affairs. Did the ascendants of the Umayyids ever relinquish their oppression? They concealed the merits of Ahlu 'l-bayt.

They tried to hide the realities of the situation and never left off singing the praises of their ancestors. But all their plans were reversed: the Umayyids were humbled to dust and the name

of Al Muhammad grew brighter and brighter". Though Shu'abi was known as an enemy of 'Ali (a.s.), these words of truth came from his tongue and have been preserved in history. Az-Zamakhshari in his "Rabi' al-Abrar" reports this statement of Shu'abi: "Our condition was very perplexing -if we loved 'Ali (a.s.) there was fear of murder, and if we became enemies of him, our ruin was certain."

The troubles and worries for the Ahlu 'l-bayt did not cease when the Sufyani throne came under the control of the Marwanid ruler 'Abdu 'l-Malik. 'Abdu 'l-Malik was a monster of a man by whose order Hajjaj razed the Holy House of the Ka'ba to the ground and mercilessly put the residents of that sacred place to the sword; having killed 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr in the Mosque of al-Haram, he desecrated the holy place and finally killed his cousin Sa'id ibn Ashdaq, who had been his former ally.

We must ask ourselves whether the perpetrator such heinous crimes be called a Muslim. What should we think of his being called "Khalifatu 'l-Muslimin" (the Caliph of the Muslims)? In truth, the entire government of the Marwanids was run on the same lines, and, with the exception of 'Umar ibn 'Abdu 'l-'Aziz, every ruler showed the same outrageous tendencies. Thereafter followed the rule of the rule of the 'Abbasids. During their period the height of tyranny far exceeded that of the Marwanids. A poet of that time said: "We would have preferred to suffer the Marwanids oppression forever. May the justice and equity of the 'Abbasids go to hell."

How mercilessly the blood of the descendants of the Prophet (s.a.w.) was spilled, what strange ways were adopted to annihilate them! The literature of that time presents us with a picture of life at that time. The poets have, in different ways, described the tyrannical acts of these people. How true indeed is the picture drawn by a poet of al-Mutawakkil's age who says: "God be my witness that, if the descendants of the Umayyids have so cruelly martyred the grandson of the Prophet (s.a.w.), these 'Abbasids, who call themselves the descendants of the Prophet's uncle, in no way lag behind the Umayyid family in oppression and tyranny. Just see, these tyrants have even demolished the grave of al-Imam al-Husayn. The Banu 'Abbas are repentant, however, for they feel regret over one thing, that they did not take part in spilling the spotless blood of al-Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) along with Banu Umayyah; they have tried to make amends by pulling down the grave of the Imam (a.s.)." These are just a few examples of the character of Banu Umayyah and the Marwanid and 'Abbasid kings.

Now, on the other hand, if you reflect upon the life of 'Ali (a.s.) and his descendants, you will come to know why Shi'ism spread and how it spread; moreover the truth will be revealed as to

whether Shi'ism was the innovation of the Iranians, or the ingenuity of the Sabeans, or whether it was the simple and straight way of Islam as shown by Muhammad (s.a.w.). After the martyrdom of Sayyid ash-Shuhadah (the Leader of the Martyrs) Imam al-Husayn (a.s.), Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) became the head of the 'Alawi family. After the tragedy of Karbala', the Holy Imam lived a secluded life, mostly spent either in worship of God or in giving moral teachings and spiritual guidance to the people. Highly pious and devout persons like Hasan al-Basri, Tawus al-Yamani, ibn Sirin and Amr ibn al-'Ubayd were products of this very school.

The Muslims received great instruction and knowledge from the Sayyid as-Sajjad (a.s.) at a time when the common people had been driven far off the paths of reality. Imam Zayn ul-'Abidin (a.s.) was succeeded by Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.) who was also a shining example of the same noble character. His legacy was handed down to Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.).

The age of Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.) was comparatively more favourable to the Shi'as because the Umayyid and 'Abbasid powers had been exhausted; open tyranny and oppression became rare. Accordingly the previously suppressed truths and hidden realities rose like the sun and diffused like the light. Those who had been living in 'taqiyyah', hiding their beliefs on account of fear and danger to their lives, also disclosed their identity.

The atmosphere was well-disposed to the expansion of Shi'ism. The Holy Imam (a.s.) spent day and night preaching; his sermons explained the teachings of Muhammad and Al Muhammad (s.a.w.). The teachings of the truth were now within the reach of every common man; larger and larger groups of people began to accept the 'Ja'fari religion. This age was called the golden age for the propagation of Shi'ism, because before this the Muslims could not openly profess Shi'ism, nor even find out about its teachings.

This academy of learning was like a flowing river where people in quest of knowledge came to quench their thirst and later quenched the thirst of others. According to Abu 'l-Hasan al-Washsha': "I personally saw a crowd of four thousand 'Ulama' (scholars) in the Mosque of Kufah and heard all of them saying: 'This tradition was related to us by Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.).'"

Banu Umayyah and Banu 'Abbas went on love for power, their stormy violence, extreme worldliness and unlimited indulgence in luxuries, contrasted sharply with the love for knowledge of the descendants of 'Ali (a.s.), their devotion to God, their truthfulness and their abstention from corrupt politics, and it was this obvious contrast which showed people the truth of Shi'ism and led to the rapid expansion of this sect.

It goes without saying that many people's spiritual lives are ruined by their attachment to the

world. Nevertheless they too have a natural feeling for the different branches of learning and the validity of religious matters. The period about which we are talking was not only close to the period of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), but also the mind of the common Muslims were imbued with the conviction that the Islamic way of life was endowed with countless blessings. The Quranic teachings gave them rights which conquered the Caesars of Rome and the

Emperors of Iran;

it was in the name of Islam alone that they were the rulers of the east and the west; they also knew that there was sufficient liberality within the laws of this religion to enable all to accept it without hardship. If the modus operandi is lawful, it does not restrain anybody from gaining worldly wealth. This religion is, in fact, pure mercy.

These inner feelings were the hidden motives which made the masses incline towards a religious way of life.

There always exist men who know that they should mould their social life according to the light of religious commandments. There are always men who desire that their entire culture be completely Islamic. But where could they gain the necessary learning from? Could they get it from the despots, who claimed to be "khulafa'u l-muslimin" (Caliphs of the Muslims) but did not live accordingly?

Of course, the desire for knowledge was fulfilled by the descendants of Muhammad (s.a.w.) who were the treasure houses of the Quran and the repositories of knowledge, and a vivid impression of their superiority was stamped on the minds of the common people; gradually the Muslims began to believe that it was these persons who were the true heirs to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), and that the right of the Imamate must be theirs alone.

The Shi'as grew so firm that they were ready to undergo anything to protect their faith. Most of the Shi'as proved to be immeasurably brave, valiant and inspired with the spirit of sacrifice; Hajar ibn 'Adi al-Kindi, 'Amr ibn Himq al-Khuza'i, Rushayd al-Hajari and 'Abdullah ibn Afif al-Azdi to name but a few, were stalwart Shi'as who, on various occasions, confronted the antagonists; they triumphed despite the fact that the opposite group was always materially more powerful.

The moral strength of these people showed the weakness of the apparently strong armies of the enemy; their sacrifices, on the one hand, shook the governments of the oppressors to their foundations, and, on the other, awakened the intellect of the elite and changed the way of thinking of the masses.

We must ask why these chivalrous men played with death in this way. Did they expect any worldly gain from the descendants of Muhammad (s.a.w.)? Were they afraid of loss of life and

property? History has answered both these questions in the negative; the sons of 'Ali (a.s.), it is true, were bereft of material means, but they had no interest in this world. What had they to give? They gave Islam to those thirsty for the truth; the luminous hearts of these fighters were filled with strong faith and perfect sincerity and it was these very sentiments which drove them to do battle against tyranny and corruption.

If one considers the literary men of the first and second century of the hijrah, we will find that, in spite of the atmosphere of fear and despair, the poets of the time expressed their aversion towards the kings of their age and their misdeeds and praised the Ahlu 'l-bayt of Muhammad al-Mustafa (s.a.w.).

Numerous men of letters have testified against the ruling Caliphs and in favour of the true Imams (a.s.) in their works. Farazdaq, Kumayt, Sayyid al-Humayri, Du'bil, Diku 'l-Jin, Abu Tamam al-Balarri and Abu Faras al-Hamdani are full of praise for the holy progeny. The

following couplet of Abu Faras clearly shows how the poets of that age felt at that time. "Religion has been shattered to pieces. Truth has become the victims of oppression and the share of the descendants of the Prophet of God has been usurped."

Du'bil says: "I have been courting death for forty years, but no one has yet accepted to be the killer." Du'bil railed at Harun ar-Rashid, al-Ma'mun and al-Mu'tasim, and yet composed a great many famous panegyrics in praise of Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.), Imam Musa al-Kazim (a.s.) and Imam ar-Ridha (a.s.) in the most colorful verse.

We must ask whether the Shi'as endangered their lives in vain? Did they give up their ease and comfort without any rhyme or reason? When we examine the causes and motives for their sacrifices, we find that it was only the truthfulness of the descendants of the Prophet (s.a.w.) which made them despise the sky-high golden palaces and attracted their attention towards the miracle of the Quran.

We could pursue this discussion further but the aim of this introduction was merely to outline the origin and rise of Shi'ism. We hope nothing has been left ambiguous despite the brevity of this account. We can only emphasize that Shi'ism was started by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) himself, and its spread and propagation is a historical fact. We may observe the series of causes and motives, connected in a regular sequence, which gave rise to the separation of Shi'a Islam from the Islam of the rest of the community