

Truth, of the crystal-pure waters of His Revelation . . . ."<sup>85</sup>

The title of "Gate to the Twelfth Imām" was only employed in the very early period of his mission. Other titles such as the "Gate of God," "Remembrance of God,"<sup>86</sup> and "The Point of the Bayān,"<sup>87</sup> however, are used more frequently throughout his works.

Although the Bāb originally claimed to be the "Gate to the Twelfth Imām," later, in his most important work, the Persian Bayān, he claimed to be the Twelfth Imām, the Qā'im, himself.<sup>88</sup> In his Dalā'il al-Sab'<sup>89</sup> he explains the reason for this change:

Consider the manifold favours vouchsafed by the Promised One, and the effusions of His bounty which have pervaded the concourse of the followers of Islām to enable them to attain unto salvation. Indeed observe how He Who representeth the origin of creation, He Who is the Exponent of the verse, "I, in very truth, am God", identified Himself as the Gate (Bāb) for the advent of the promised Qā'im, a descendant of Muḥammad, and in His first Book enjoined the observance of the laws of the Qur'ān, so that the people might not be seized with perturbation by reason of a new Book and a new Revelation and might regard His Faith as similar to their own, perchance they would not turn away from the Truth and ignore the thing for which they had been called into being.<sup>90</sup>

Although the titles are different, the essence of his message was that he was a new messenger with a new Revealed Book and a new order for a new day: his main concern was not the perpetuation or revival of Islam, but the birth of a new order.

The Bābī movement was a forward-looking religious ideology which sprang out of Shaykhī soil. Since Shaykhī

writings had prepared the ground for such a declaration, many of the early believers in the Bāb were, like his first disciples the Letters of the Living, Shaykhīs.

The earliest Shaykhīs who accepted the Bāb were those who had rejected Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān and Mīrzā Muḥammad Shaffī' as leaders of the school on the grounds that they were not qualified to occupy such a position or because there was no indication in the writings of Sayyid Kāẓim regarding the successorship. They argued that, since the appearance of the Qā'im was at hand, Sayyid Kāẓim had not appointed anyone as his successor; rather, he had encouraged his students to seek for the Qā'im. If the Shaykhīs were supposed to have a leader after Sayyid Kāẓim, he would have been wise enough to appoint one. This attitude was well supported in the writings of Sayyid Kāẓim himself.

The Shaykhīs who believed in the Bāb saw in him the fulfillment of Shaykh Aḥmad's and Siyyid Kāẓim's predictions and, thus, there remained no reason for them to reject him. This group of Shaykhīs, who formed the nucleus of the Bābīs, were among the most learned students of Sayyid Kāẓim. Among the early adherents of the Bāb were such distinguished personalities as Qurrat al-'Ain, Mullā Ḥusayn Boshro'ī, Shaykh Muḥammad Taqī Hashtrodī, and Mullā 'Alī Baraghānī.

The Bābīs traveled tirelessly throughout the country, meeting with religious authorities in various cities, in mosques, in madrasas, and in private gatherings, where they talked about the Bāb and his new movement. They also wrote

books and treatises to demonstrate that the advent of the Bāb was in accordance with the Qur'ān, the Islamic Traditions, and particularly with Shaykhī predictions. Their energetic efforts to publicize the claims of the Bāb attracted thousands of Persians to his movement.

The early Bābīs who actively participated in proclaiming the Bāb's mission came from all levels of Iranian society: merchants, peasants, landowners, government employees, and the learned class. The number of Bābīs from each group and their role, in relation to the others, in spreading the new faith requires further study. It is clear, however, that the leadership of the Bābīs in their social organization and efforts to propagate their faith was in the hands of the newly converted 'ulamā, particularly the Shaykhī 'ulamā.

Just as the basic reason for accepting the Bāb's claim was religious, Shī'ī attacks against the Bābīs were also motivated by religion, for the appearance of the Bāb did not fulfill the exoteric aspect of the prophecies recorded in the Shī'ī texts. The Shī'a were expecting the Qā'im to return from the cold-chamber of Sāmarrā, where he went for occultation, but now they were confronted instead with a young man from Shīrāz who claimed to be the Qā'im. Indeed, none of the exoteric signs predicted for the advent of the Qā'im materialized in the appearance of Sayyid 'Alī Muḥammad, the Bāb.

In addition, in his Persian Bayān, the Bāb came out

against certain common Muslim practices either enjoined in the Qur'ān or the Traditions, or based upon them. For example, he prohibited congregational prayer except in the case of prayers for the dead.<sup>91</sup> He also changed Islamic regulations on marriage, divorce, fasting, and inheritance.<sup>92</sup> Most important, he denied the validity of the Quranic law against usury, maintaining that interest on money may be taken.<sup>93</sup> These teachings of the Bāb, completely different than those of the Qur'ān, were too much for the ordinary Shī'ī believers to accept. In addition, the Shī'ī religious and secular authorities regarded them as an obvious threat to their position and mobilized their resources to destroy the Bāb and his followers.

While a number of Shaykhīs converted to the Bāb and actively proclaimed his mission, the Shaykhīs of Kermān and Tabrīz rose against the Bābīs. In fact, these two groups of Shaykhīs, who had been ideologically in conflict with one another, joined in opposition to the Bāb. The nature of their opposition, however, differed: while the Shaykhīs of Kermān expressed their opposition mainly on an intellectual level in books and treatises directed against the Bāb and his ideology, the Shaykhīs of Tabrīz actively cooperated with state authorities in the persecution of the Bāb himself and his followers. Both groups of Shaykhīs rejected the Bāb's claim to be a new prophet with a new book of laws and regulations<sup>94</sup> and responded with hostility to his claim that he had received a direct revelation from God and that

his word was the revealed word of God.<sup>95</sup>

The most important Shaykhī to raise objections against the Bāb was his great antagonist, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān. He devoted at least four books entirely to this task, writing three of them within five years of the Bāb's advent.<sup>96</sup> He also attacked the Bāb in several other works. All these works are basic sources for understanding the intellectual opposition to the Bāb and his ideology.

A comprehensive and convenient synopsis of the charges leveled against the Bāb is Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān's Risāla dar Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb, which he wrote at the request of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār. In this book, written in 1283/1866, about two decades later than his other works in refutation of the Bāb, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān accuses the Bāb of several heresies. In summary, Ḥājī Karīm Khān charges that,

1. The Bāb claimed to be the deputy of the Hidden Imām; later he claimed to be the Hidden Imām himself. Still later he claimed to be a prophet with his own religion. Finally, he claimed to be God.
2. The Bāb frequently claimed to have received a revelation as the Prophet Muḥammad did.
3. The Bāb claimed that he was superior to the Prophet and that his book was superior to the Qur'ān.
4. The Bāb claimed to have a new Qur'ān. He introduced innovations; he forbade what the Qur'ān considered lawful and permitted what it considered unlawful. He instituted laws which contradicted Quranic laws.

5. The Bāb considered himself as the only legitimate person, in whom everyone should believe. He ordered people to Holy War (jihād); he permitted the blood of his enemies to be shed; he requested that the Muslims who did not believe in him be executed.
6. The Bāb stated that the Day of Resurrection had come and that the Return had passed. By this statement he meant that they had occurred with his appearance. (This was the most blatant statement of abrogation of the creed of his society and was an immediate line of demarcation between his followers and the SHĪ'Ī community.)
7. The Bāb claimed that meeting with him was like meeting with God.
8. The Bāb said that the realm of isthmus (barzakh) is the period before the appearance of a new prophet of God. Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān also states in his book that the Bāb wrote a letter to him in his own handwriting and sent it to him by courier.<sup>97</sup> In the letter, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān says, the Bāb solicited his support and requested him to ask the mu'adhdhins to include his name in the adhān.<sup>98</sup> When the courier came, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān continues, he argued with him, giving him reasons for being unable to accept the Bāb's request. Then, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān says, he sent him back disappointed and miserable.<sup>99</sup>

At the end of his book, Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān states

that according to the Bāb's writings the Shaykhīs are enemies of the Bābīs, and that the Bāb has warned his followers not to make friends among the Shaykhīs or to read Shaykhī writings. Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān asserts that it should be clear that there is no similarity between the Bābīs and the Shaykhīs. The Shaykhīs, he says, have always hated the Bābīs and have written books to refute them. The Shaykhīs have always been loyal to the government, to Muslims, and to the household of the Prophet.<sup>100</sup> The last statement of Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān implies, of course, disloyalty on the part of the Bābīs.

The opposition of the Shaykhīs of Kermān to the Bāb and his followers did not remain on an intellectual level. It is reported that Mullā Kāẓim b. Yūsuf, one of Muḥammad Karīm Khān's learned followers, became a follower of the Bāb and, in a mosque where Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān and other Shaykhīs were present, expressed his belief in the validity of the Bāb's claim to be the Qā'im. Upon this expression, which was followed by words of praise for the Bāb and his movement, Ḥājj Ghulām 'Alī Khān, the brother of Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān, seized Mullā Kāẓim and beat him so severely that he died a few days later.<sup>101</sup>

The opposition of the Shaykhīs of Tabrīz to the Bāb reflected their strong ties with the political authorities of the province in that period. In contrast to the opposition of the Shaykhīs of Kermān, which was mostly intellectual, their opposition took the form of torturing

the Bāb and his followers and finally of issuing a religious decree for the Bāb's death. When the Bāb was brought from his prison in Chehrīq to Tabrīz for trial, the 'ulamā in charge of the interrogation were Shaykhī leaders: Ḥājj Mullā Maḥmūd Tabrīzī, known as Niẓām al-'Ulamā (d. 1273/1856), Mullā Muḥammad Mamaqānī (d. 1269/1852), and Mīrzā 'Alī Aṣghar Shaykh al-Islām (d. 1278/1861).<sup>102</sup>

Niẓām al-'Ulamā was the head of the court and the teacher of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. He wrote about the trial, and his account was used by Riqā Qolī Khān Hidāyat in his Rawḍat al-Ṣafā as well as by I'timād al-Saltāna in his al-Mutanabi'In.<sup>103</sup>

Mullā Muḥammad Mamaqānī was a leading Shaykhī authority in Tabrīz and one of those who claimed to be the successor of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī. His sons later became the leaders of opposition to the Bābīs. Under the pen name of Nayyir,<sup>104</sup> one of his sons, Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī (d. 1312/1894), wrote a book against the Bābīs entitled Ṣaḥīfat al-Abrār. Written in 1290/1873 and published in 1319/1901,<sup>105</sup> it contains the proceedings of the interrogation of the Bāb.<sup>106</sup>

Mīrzā 'Alī Aṣghar Shaykh al-Islām, another participant in the interrogation, was a Shaykhī leader in Ādharbāyjan. It was he who took the Bāb to his home after the trial and administered a beating to him. Mīrzā 'Alī Aṣghar died in 1278/1861 at the age of ninety-six, but enmity against the Bāb remained in his family and found an expression in a polemic against the Bāb written by his son, Mīrzā Abū

al-Qāsim, entitled Qal' al-Bāb.<sup>107</sup>

The Shaykhīs were the first group in Persian society to react to the claims of the Bāb. Some of them became his most important supporters, disseminated his teachings around the country, wrote works to prove that he was indeed the expected one, and tirelessly invited people to join the Bābī movement. They believed that the spirit of the Qur'ān and the essence of Islam had been revealed again in the writings of the Bāb and that the predictions concerning the appearance of the Qā'im had been fulfilled allegorically. For these Shaykhīs, Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāzim were divinely guided figures who had paved the way for the Bāb and enabled them to recognize the one for whom they had been waiting.

In contrast, another group of Shaykhīs rose against the Bāb, led the opposition to him, and did their best to prevent the Bābī movement from spreading. They saw in the Bāb's teachings new laws and regulations which were in many cases different from, or even contrary to, the teachings of the Qur'ān. They maintained that none of the predictions regarding the Qā'im had been fulfilled literally in the coming of the Bāb. Therefore, in their eyes the Bāb was false and an enemy of Islam who had risen to establish an order different from the Quranic order. This, in their opinion, was an obvious "infidelity" (kufur), for they maintained that the Qur'ān and Islam were to last for eternity.

NOTES

1. Hājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī, Hidāyat al-Tālibīn (Kermān: Sa'ādāt, 1380/1960), p. 71.
2. Abū al-Qāsim Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist-i Kutub-i Mashāyikh-i 'Izām, 3d ed., (Kermān: Sa'ādāt, n.d.), p. 116.
3. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Mūsawī al-Iṣbahānī, Rawḍāt al-Jannāt fī Aḥwāl al-'Ulamā wa al-Sādāt, 8 vols. (Tehrān: Ismā'īliyyān, 1390/1970), vol. 1, p. 225.
4. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, p. 115.
5. Ibid.
6. Muḥammad 'Alī Mu'allim Ḥabībābādī, Makārim al-Āthār (Iṣfahān: Muḥammadī, 1377/1957), vol. 1, p. 217.
7. Muḥammad Tonekābonī, Qiṣas al-'Ulamā (Tehrān: 'Ilmīya Islāmīya, n.d.), pp. 43-44.
8. Sayyid Kāzim Rashtī, in his Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyirīn, gives a full report on the nature of the dispute. See page 46 ff.
9. Tonekābonī, Qiṣas al-'Ulamā, p. 100. Astarābādī's book, entitled Ḥayāt al-Arwāḥ, was written in 1240/1824. Mīrzā Ḥasan b. 'Alī Gauhar Qarācha Dāghī, an outstanding student of the Shaykhī school, wrote Sharḥ-i Kitāb-i Ḥayāt al-Arwāḥ in 1252/1836 to reject Astarābādī's views.
10. Ibid., p. 44.
11. Ibid., p. 55.
12. For example, the treatise written for Shaykh Muḥammad b. Shaykh Ḥusayn Baḥrānī contains 80 questions. See Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, p. 342.
13. Sayyid Kāzim, Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyirīn, p. 144.
14. Ibid., pp. 146-168.
15. A. L. M. Nicolas, Essai Sur Le Chéikhisme (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1904), pp. 32-36.
16. Mu'allim Ḥabībābādī, Makārim al-Āthār, pp. 213-217.
17. Muḥammad 'Alī Mudarris, Rayḥānat al-Adab (Tehrān: Khayyām), 3d ed., vol. 2, pp. 308-309.

18. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, pp. 288-359.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 286.
20. Mūsawī is quoted in Mudarris, Rayḥānat al-Adab, vol. 2, p. 309.
21. According to Āqā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī (al-Dharīʿa ilā Ṭaṣānīf al-Shīʿa, 26 vols., [Ṭehrān: Majlis, 1375/1956], vol. 20, p. 55), the complete title of the work is al-Majmūʿ al-Rāʿiq min Azhār al-Ḥadāʿiq. It contains prayers and Traditions on the authority of the Prophet and the imāms and several treatises by different authors on subjects such as religious beliefs, theology, and fiqh. The work was compiled by Sayyid Hibat Allāh b. Abī Muḥammad al-Ḥasan al-Mūsawī in 703/1303.
22. Mashāriq Anwār al-Yaqīn fī Ḥaqāʿiq (kashf) Asrār Amīr al-Muʾminīn, a major work of al-Bursī, written in 773/1371. See al-Dharīʿa, vol. 21, p. 34.
23. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Dalīl al-Mutahayyirīn, p. 146.
24. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Sharḥ al-Khuṭba al-Tutunjīya (Tabrīz: lithography, 1270/1853), p. 7.
25. ʿAbd al-Bāqī b. Sulaymān b. Aḥmad Afandī al-Mūṣilī was born in 1204/1789 in Mūṣil but spent most of his life in Baghdād. He was a distinguished poet and the author of several books on poetry and biography. He died in 1278/1861 in Baghdād. See Muʿallim Ḥabībābādī, Makārim al-Āthār, pp. 172-173.
26. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Dalīl al-Mutahayyirīn, p. 147.
27. A lithograph of this work was published in Tabrīz in 1272/1855.
28. Muʿallim Ḥabībābādī, Makārim al-Āthār, pp. 217-220.
29. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, p. 122. Qurrat al-ʿAin, the great Persian poetess and the famous student of Sayyid Kāẓim, in one of her treatises has called him "al-Qatīl" (the killed one). See Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Zuhūr al-Ḥaqq (Ṭehrān: n.p., n.d.), vol. 3, p. 502.
30. Muʿallim Ḥabībābādī, in Makārim al-Āthār, p. 220, gives the phrase غاب بدر الهدى, and Mudarris in Rayḥānat al-Adab, vol. 2, p. 309, gives the phrase غاب نور. The numerical values of both phrases are equal to 1259, the year Sayyid Kāẓim died.

31. Muḥammad maʿṣūm Shīrāzī, known as Maʿṣūm ʿAlī Shāh and Nāyib al-Ṣadr, Ṭarāʿiq al-Ḥaqāʿiq, ed. Muḥammad Jaʿfar Maḥjūb (Ṭehrān: Bārānī, 1346sh), vol. 3, p. 338.
32. Sayyid Kāẓim's will was dictated to Mīrzā Muḥīṭ (Kermānī), his close student and companion. A copy of the will, in manuscript form, is included (ms. no. 4) in the Shaykhī Manuscript Collection in the Near Eastern Collection, Special Collection Department, in the Research Library at the University of California, Los Angeles. The copy, which runs to 15 pages of 14 lines per page, is undated and does not bear the name of the scribe. It will hereafter be referred to as Will.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
34. The Day of Gathering (yaum al-jamʿ) is referred to in the Qurʾān in the following verse: "And that you may give warning on the day of gathering together wherein is no doubt. . . ." (42:7).
35. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Will, p. 4.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*, These phrases are derived from the following Quranic references: 2:256; 3:102; 31:22.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
41. Qurrat al-ʿAin states that the Bāb (al-Dhikr al-Akbar) stayed at ʿAtabāt for eleven months--eight months in Karbalā and three months in other cities. While he was in Karbalā he would attend the circle once every two or three days but he would not attend the entire session; he would either come in at the beginning or in the middle or at the end of the session. (Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Zuhūr al-Ḥaqq, p. 529.
42. The question is not the precise definitions and exclusive limits of each term (qua concept) but the fluid overlap and deliberate use of the "gray area" terminology.
43. The Bāb states that those who, through the preparation of Sayyid Kāẓim, believed in him were all the most pious scholars to whose piety and knowledge Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāẓim had testified. (Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Zuhūr al-Ḥaqq, p. 286).

44. For the biography of Hāj̄j Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī see the Fihrist, pp. 57-73 and Ni‘mat Allāh al-Raḍawī al-Sharīf, Tadhkirat al-Awliyā (Bombay: 1313/1895), pp. 2-95.
45. Muḥammad Himmat, Tārīkh-i Mufaṣṣal-i Kermān (Kermān: Himmat, 1350sh), pp. 252-256.
46. Ni‘mat Allāh al-Raḍawī al-Sharīf, Tadhkirat al-Awliyā, p. 15.
47. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, p. 64. Hāj̄j Muḥammad Karīm Khān wrote a short autobiography in Arabic. This work was translated into Persian by Abū al-Qāsim Ibrāhīmī and is included in his biography in the Fihrist, pp. 61-73.
48. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, p. 64. Hāj̄j Muḥammad Karīm Khān attended Sayyid Kāzīm's circle for a total of about three years.
49. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, pp. 66-67.
50. Muḥammad Himmat, Tārīkh-i Mufaṣṣal-i Kermān, p. 256.
51. For the biography of the Shaykhī leaders of Kermān see the first volume of the Fihrist.
52. Mehdī Bāmdād, Tārīkh-i Rijāl-i Irān (Tehrān: Zawwār, 1351sh), vol. 6, p. 209.
53. Ibid., p. 210. Bāmdād explains that in Shī‘a the term nāṭiqī indicates that there must always be a nāṭiq, i.e., a leader or imām in the community and that the other members must be silent.
54. Ibid., p. 211.
55. Al-Dharī‘a (vol. 4, p. 171), and the Rayḥānat al-Adab (vol. 3, p. 273) state that the author of the Tiryāq-i Fārūq is Muḥammad Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Shahrestānī. On the second page of the book, the author gives his name as ‘Abd al-Ṣamad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Māzandarānī. The Tiryāq-i Fārūq was written in 1301/1883 and published in lithography in Mashhad in 1308/1890.
56. Āqā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī, al-Dharī‘a, vol. 8, p. 113.
57. Bāmdād, Tārīkh-i Rijāl, vol. 6, p. 211. According to Kayvān, however, the uprising during which Mīrzā Muḥammad Bāqir was killed took place in 1314/1896 not in 1315/1897. See ‘Abbās ‘Alī Kayvān, Hāj̄j Nāma (Tehrān: Bosfor, 1308sh), p. 128.

58. Ibid., p. 132.
59. Nuṣrat Allāh Faṭḥī, Zendeqī Nāma-i Shahīd-i Nīknām Thiḡat al-Islām Tabrīzī (Tehrān: Bonyād-i Nikokārī-i Nūriyānī, 1352sh), p. 17.
60. See ibid., chapters 41 and 42.
61. Ibid., p. 22.
62. Ibid., p. 24.
63. Ibid., pp. 45-78. Faṭḥī also published a collection of Thiḡat al-Islām's treatises, letters, cables, and articles, entitled Majmū‘a-i Āthār-i Qalamī-i Shādravān Thiḡat al-Islām-i Shahīd-i Tabrīzī (Tehrān: Anjoman-i Āthār-i Millī, 1354sh).
64. Aḥmad Kasravī, Tārīkh-i Mashrūṭa-i Irān (Tehrān: Amīr Kabīr, 1349sh), p. 133.
65. Faṭḥī, Zendeqī Nāma-i Shahīd, pp. 40-41.
66. Ibid., p. 41.
67. Ibid.
68. Bāmdād, Tārīkh-i Rijāl, vol. 6, p. 41.
69. Shoghi Effendi, trans. and ed., The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā’ī Revelation (Wilmette: Bahā’ī Publishing Trust, 1974), p. 72.
70. This is according to Qurrat al-‘Ain. See n. 41.
71. Shoghi Effendi, Dawn-Breakers, p. 44.
72. Several extracts of these addresses are published in the following work: Sayyid ‘Alī Muḥammad the Bāb, Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, trans. Habib Taherzadeh (Haifa: Bahā’ī World Center, 1976), pp. 11-37.
73. George N. Curzon, Persia and the Persian Question (London: Green and Longmans, 1892), vol. 1, p. 501.
74. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1953 ed., s.v. "Bāb," by C. Huart. For the history of this title and its employment see also, "Note D. The meaning of the Title 'Bāb'" in A Traveller's Narrative, written by ‘Abdu’l-Bahā to illustrate the episode of the Bāb, trans. and ed. with introduction and explanatory notes by Edward

Browne (London: Cambridge University Press, 1891), pp. 226-234.

75. In SHĪ'Ī history the period between the years 260/872-329/939 is the period of the Lesser Occultation. During these sixty-nine years the Imām communicated with his people through four gates: Abū 'Umar 'Uthmān b. Sa'id; Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān, son of the above; Ḥusayn b. Rūh; and Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad Sīmarī.
76. Shaykh Aḥmad Aḥsā'ī, Sharḥ al-Ziyāra, p. 11.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid., p. 13.
79. Ibid., p. 15.
80. Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Ḥuḥūr al-Ḥaqq, p. 512.
81. Ibid., p. 502.
82. Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, p. 51.
83. Browne, Traveller's Narrative, p. 227.
84. Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, p. 44.
85. Ibid., p. 50.
86. Ibid., p. 46.
87. Ibid., p. 80.
88. The Bāb in his Persian Bayān writes, As thou hast heard, at the manifestation of the Nuḳṭa-i-Furḳān [i.e., Muḥammad, who was in his time the "Point of Revelation"] all those who were believers in the Gospel were expecting the promised Aḥmad, and thou hast heard what befell that Sun of Truth during the twenty-three years of his mission, so that he said, "No prophet hath been afflicted as I have been afflicted." Yet all were entreating and craving his appearance, and in the words of Jesus, working for him. Praise be to God that in that day thou wast not! But thou wast in the manifestation of the Nuḳṭa-i-Beyān [i.e., the Bāb, the "Point of Revelation"] when all believers in the Apostle of God were expecting the appearance of the promised Mahdī;

for this tradition is from the Apostle of God, and all, simple and gentle, are agreed therein. Now there is no doubt that the substance of Faith was confined to the Shi'ites, and that the sect of Islām is this same outward sect whereof the adherents call themselves Shi'ites; while men avowedly call Fārs the "Abode of Knowledge": Yet, although the Tree of Truth arose, not one of the people recognized it [even] after perceiving it. The degree of their remoteness is evident, for this sufficeth unto their abasement; yet night and day they exclaim "speed! speed!"

And also,

Consider with due attention, for the matter is very strait, even while it is more spacious than the heavens and the earth and what is between them. For instance, if all those who were expecting [the fulfillment] of the saying of Jesus had been assured of the manifestation of Aḥmad [i.e. Muḥammad], not one would have turned aside from the saying of Jesus. So likewise in the manifestation of the Nuḳṭa-i-Beyān [i.e., the Bāb] if all should be assured that this is that same Mahdī [whose coming was] promised, whom the Apostle of God foretold, not one of the believers in the Ḳur'ān would have turned aside from the saying of the Apostle of God. So likewise in the manifestation of Him whom God shall manifest behold the same thing, for should all be assured that he is that same "He whom God shall manifest" whom the Nuḳṭa-i-Beyān foretold, not one would turn aside.

(Browne, Traveller's Narrative, pp. 293-295. The two passages above are Browne's translation.)

89. Dalā'il al-Sab', one of the Bāb's major works, was written for Mullā 'Abd al-Khāliq Yazdī while the Bāb was in prison at Māko. In it the author gives seven reasons for his claim's validity.
90. Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, p. 119.
91. Sayyid 'Alī Muḥammad Bāb, Persian Bayān (lithography: n.d.), pp. 324-326.
92. Ibid., pp. 200-210; pp. 218-219; pp. 306-309; pp. 274-278.
93. Ibid., p. 181.
94. Ibid., pp. 29-30.



95. The Bāb writes, "Say, O people of the world! Do ye dispute with Me about God by virtue of the names which ye and your fathers have adopted for Him at the promptings of the Evil One? God hath indeed sent down this Book unto Me with truth that ye may be enabled to recognize the true names of God, inasmuch as ye have strayed in error far from the Truth. Verily We have taken a covenant from every created thing upon its coming into being concerning the Remembrance of God, and there shall be none to avert the binding command of God for the purification of mankind, as ordained in the Book which is written by the hand of the Bāb."  
(Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, p. 65).
96. The main polemical works of Ḥājī Muḥammad Karīm Khān are as follows: (1) Izhāq al-Bāṭil dar Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb, written in 1261/1845 and published in Kermān in 1351/1932; (2) Tīr-i Shihāb dar Radd-i Bāb-i Khusrān Ma'āb, written at the request of Muḥammad Sharīf Kermānī in 1262/1846. This work is a part of Majma' al-Rasā'il, no. 1, published in Kermān in 1386/1966; (3) Shihāb-i Thāqib, written in 1265/1848 and published in Kermān in 1353/1934; (4) Risāla-i Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb, written at the request of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, in 1283/1866. This work was published in 1384/1964 in Kermān and its translation into Arabic also appeared in the same year. About his attempts to refute the Bāb, Ḥājī Karīm Khān writes, "For a long time from the pulpit (minbar) and in my classes, I showed everyone that this man (the Bāb) was wrong. I wrote many books and sent them to all parts of Iran, Ādharbāyjān, Khorāsān, Arabia, India, and so on, and with the help of God, I prevented a great number of people from falling victim to this plight." (Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb [Kermān: Sa'ādat, 1384], p. 24. This edition of Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb along with Risāla-i Tazyyil dar Radd-i Hāshim-i Shāmī was published in one volume.)
97. Ḥājī Karīm Khān Kermānī, Risāla-i Radd-i Bāb-i Murtāb, pp. 27-28, 58.
98. Ibid., p. 27. The Adhān is the "call to prayer" by which a crier (mu'adhdhin) summons the believers to the public prayer.
99. Ibid., pp. 28-58.
100. Ibid., pp. 45-47.
101. Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Zuhūr al-Ḥaqq, pp. 399-400.
102. For a full account of the interrogation of the Bāb see, "Examination of the Bāb at Tabriz" in Shoghī Effendi,

- Dawn-Breakers, pp. 309-323; and "The First Examination of the Bāb at Tabriz" in Browne, Traveller's Narrative, pp. 277-290.
103. Bāmdād, Tārīkh-i Rijāl, vol. 4, pp. 59-60.
104. Ibid., vol. 3, pp. 289-290.
105. Āqā Bozorg al-Ṭehrānī, al-Dharī'a, vol. 15, p. 15.
106. Riyāḍ Ṭāhir, Fihrist Taṣānīf al-'Allāma al-Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā'ī (Karbālā: al-Hā'iriya, n.d.), p. 5.
107. Bāmdād, Tārīkh-i Rijāl, vol. 2, p. 452.

## CHAPTER VI

### Shaykhī Teachings that Paved the Way for The Bāb

The Shaykhī school provided the background for the Bābī movement and its doctrines prepared the way for those of the Bāb. The social and intellectual relationship between the Shaykhī school and the Bābī movement is beyond dispute: the earliest and most learned followers of the Bāb were Shaykhī students,<sup>1</sup> and the Bāb himself, while a resident in Karbalā, attended the circle of Sayyid Kāẓim. Moreover, his works reveal a thorough understanding of Shaykhī literature, ideas, and terminology.

The Bāb and Bābī historians in their writings represent Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāẓim as forerunners of the Bāb,<sup>2</sup> divinely inspired persons who prophesied the appearance of the Bāb and prepared their students for the recognition of the expected Qā'im.<sup>3</sup>

While no one can doubt that the Shaykhī ideas created an intellectual atmosphere conducive to the acceptance of the Bāb, it is necessary to examine the nature of the Shaykhī predisposition which ultimately resulted in the conversion of certain Shaykhīs into Bābīs. For the sake of historical perspective it is important to remember that Shaykhī patterns of belief were not the only cause of conversion. The charismatic personality of the Bāb, as well as social, political, and cultural factors, played vital

roles in it. This chapter will focus on the theological and intellectual considerations that led a great number of Shaykhīs to the Bābī movement. These factors are important not only for understanding the Shaykhī-Bābī relationship, but especially for revealing the strong links between Islam and the Bābī faith, the strongest of which is the Shaykhī school.

In his various works, Shaykh Ahmad devoted much attention to the concept of the imamate, a subject on which he received numerous questions from his students. These dialogues indicate that this subject was the focal point of discussion and investigation in his circle. Such discussions of the imamate naturally led to the consideration of related issues: (1) the finality of the Prophet, (2) the Day of Judgment, and (3) predictions regarding the appearance of the Qā'im, which was expected to occur imminently.<sup>4</sup>

According to traditional Muslim belief, the Prophet Muḥammad is the last prophet; there will be none after him, and prophecy is sealed by his mission. The basis for this doctrine is found in the following verse of the Qur'ān: "Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the seal of the Prophets; and Allah is Cognizant of all things" (33:40). Although the Shaykhīs do not entirely reject the concept of the finality of the Prophet Muḥammad, it appears that their understanding of this question led to a new approach toward the concept of

finality.

According to the Shaykhī theory, a prophetic cycle began with Adam and continued to the Prophet Muḥammad. During this Adamic cycle, six major prophets appeared: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad. While most Muslims believe that Muḥammad was the last Prophet, Shaykh Aḥmad maintains that he was the last Prophet only within this cycle. The Shaykh expresses his idea by making use of the cabalistic system: he explains that the letter wāw ( و ), when pronounced, consists of a consonant " , " an " ! " (alif) and another " , ." The first " , ," which has a numerical value of six according to the abjad system,<sup>5</sup> stands for the six prophets in the Adamic cycle. The " ! " (alif), which stands between the two wāws, represents the Qā'im (literally, the word Qā'im means "standing"), and the second " , " represents the prophet who will follow the Qā'im and will be a new manifestation of God, identified as the Second Christ or the Return of Ḥusayn. The Qā'im, thus, stands between the six previous prophets and the one who will succeed him, like the " ! " (alif) which stands between the two wāws.<sup>6</sup>

Shaykh Aḥmad's view of Muḥammad as the final only within the Adamic cycle implies a continuing divine revelation through a succession of prophets in a series of cycles; while each cycle has a beginning and an end, the cyclic process itself is progressive and continuous. This concept of continuity, as opposed to the traditional theory

of finality, is expressed most clearly in the sections of the Shaykhī works devoted to the concept of absolute correspondence between the realm of creation (takwīn) and the realm of religion (tashrīʿ).<sup>7</sup> According to this concept, the pattern of creation as a whole corresponds to the pattern of religion. The Shaykh offers an example of such correspondence in the development of an embryo, which must pass through various stages in the womb of its mother before it is born into this world. The Qur'ān (23:13-14) tells us that the embryo develops through six stages, namely: (1) life-germ (nuṭfa), (2) clot ('alaqa), (3) a morsel of flesh (muḍgha), (4) bones ('iḏām), (5) flesh (lahm), and (6) another creation (khalqan ākhar), during which stage the spirit enters the body. Just as the embryo develops through various stages, human spiritual progress is a developmental process, each stage of which corresponds to the appearance of a prophet whose divine revelation advances the spiritual condition of mankind. According to the Shaykhī view, the six stages of embryonic development corresponds to the six prophets who appeared in the Adamic cycle: the stage of the life-germ corresponds to Adam; the stage of the clot, to Noah; the stage of the morsel of flesh, to Abraham; the stage of the bones, to Moses; the stage of the flesh, to Jesus; and the stage of another creation, to Muḥammad.<sup>8</sup>

Following the analogy further, as the first five stages of embryonic development are prerequisite to the

entrance of the spirit into the body, the first five religions are perceived as performing a preparatory function for the religion of the Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>9</sup>

The last stage of the development of an embryo is final only in respect to its life in the womb, for the now completely developed embryo will be born into another world. Likewise, although the sixth stage of the Adamic cycle, i.e., the Prophet Muḥammad, is the last stage of its cycle, it is, at the same time, the beginning of a new phase in the spiritual development of mankind and marks the inception of a new cycle.

The Shaykhī concept of continuity as opposed to finality is also supported by a more general correspondence that Shaykh Aḥmad maintains exists between the realm of creation (takwīn) and the realm of religion (tashrīʿ). The Qurʾān says that creation took place in six days: "And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days" (11:7). Each one of these days, according to Shaykh Aḥmad, corresponds to a stage of embryonic development as well as to a stage in the formation of the universe.<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 2

1	Sunday <u>yaum al-aḥad</u>	life-germ <u>yaum al-nuṭfa</u>	The First Intellect <u>yaum al-ʿaql al-awwal</u>	Existence in the Universe <u>yaum al-wujūd fi al-ʿālam</u>
2	Monday <u>yaum al-ithnayn</u>	clot <u>yaum al-ʿalaqa</u>	The Universal Soul <u>yaum al-nafs al-kulliyya</u>	Quiddity <u>yaum al-māhiyya</u>

3	Tuesday <u>yaum al-thulathā</u>	morsel of flesh <u>yaum al-muḍgha</u>	The Universal Nature <u>yaum al-ṭabīʿa al-kulliyya</u>	Spring <u>yaum faṣl al-rabiʿ</u>
4	Wednesday <u>yaum al-arbiʿā</u>	bones <u>yaum al-ʿiẓām</u>	The Universal Matter <u>yaum al-mādda al-kulliyya</u>	Summer <u>yaum faṣl al-ṣayf</u>
5	Thursday <u>yaum al-khamīs</u>	flesh <u>lahm</u>	Subtle <u>yaum al-mithāl</u>	Fall <u>yaum faṣl al-kharif</u>
6	Friday <u>yaum al-jumʿa</u>	Another Creation <u>yaum yanshāu Khalqan Akhar</u>	Body <u>yaum al-jism</u>	Winter <u>yaum faṣl al-shitā</u>

Although this schema may appear to suggest finality, continuity may easily be inferred from it, for the final stage of a cycle can also be seen as the beginning of a new cycle.

That the Prophet Muḥammad completed the Adamic cycle and began a new cycle is clearly expressed by Sayyid Kāẓim in his explanation of the two Arcs which he believes exist in the spiritual life of mankind: (1) the Arc of Ascent (Ṣuʿūd) and (2) the Arc of Descent (nuzūl).<sup>11</sup> The Arc of Ascent begins with Adam and ends with the Prophet Muḥammad, who is also the opener (fātiḥ) of the Arc of Descent. According to this idea, Muḥammad occupies the highest level of the Arc of Ascent and, thus, is the most exalted one: Muḥammad was the Prophet with whom prophecy ended; he was the best Prophet among the prophets; and his religion abrogated all the previous religions. However, he was also

the opener of the Arc of Descent, in which other prophets will come.

Any implication of finality in these explanations appears to refer to the perfection of the Prophet Muḥammad and his religion, in relation to other prophets and religions; that is, the process of the revelation of God's religion, which commenced with Adam, reached its most perfect form in the prophethood of Muḥammad and the revelation of the Qur'ān. But this does not necessarily imply that Muḥammad would be the last prophet ever to appear. Thus, the Shaykhīs' reinterpretation of the traditional Muslim concept of the finality of the Prophet may well have prepared many Shaykhīs to accept the Bāb as the founder of a new religion.

A second factor in creating intellectual readiness for accepting the Bāb was the Shaykhī view that the day of the appearance of the Qā'im would be the Day of Judgment. Unlike the Shī'a, who believe that the advent of the Qā'im will simply be one among the numerous events which will take place on the Day of Judgment, the Shaykhīs hold that the appearance of the Qā'im is the Day of Judgment.<sup>12</sup> Thus, to say that Islam will last until the Day of Judgment is true in the sense that Islam will last until the Qā'im appears.

The Shaykhī identification of the Day of Judgment with the coming of the Qā'im placed a great significance on this event. Belief in the Day of Judgment is one of the conditions for being a Muslim, and preparation for this day

is the goal of every believer. Since it is the day on which all shall be punished or rewarded according to their deeds, and shall be consigned to hell or to paradise, it is difficult to conceive of any event more crucial in the religious life of a Muslim. When the Day of Judgment was interpreted to be the day of the advent of the Qā'im, as the Shaykhīs maintained, the attention of the adherents of the Shaykhī school was focused on the expectation of his coming, instead of on the traditional Day of Judgment.

Although the emphasis that Shaykh Ahmad placed on the station of the imāms, along with his approach toward the concepts of the finality of the Prophet and the Day of Judgment, provided the background for the expectation of the Qā'im, his prophecies particularly directed the Shaykhīs' attention to the recognition of the Bāb. In fact, Shaykh Ahmad's most important achievement in preparing his students for the advent of the Qā'im was his prophecies, which were elaborated in the works of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī. In this regard, Sayyid Kāẓim's Will is particularly important.<sup>13</sup> Although in his Will Sayyid Kāẓim uses the term Walī (Protector), not Qā'im, his description of the Walī is the same as his description of the Qā'im in other works. In his Will Sayyid Kāẓim does not go into detail to prophesy the name of the Walī or the exact date of his coming, but he clearly states that for every period ('agr) there is a Walī and the appearance of the Walī will never cease. The day of the advent of the Walī, in Sayyid Kāẓim's terminology,

will be the Day of Gathering together (yaum al-jam'),<sup>14</sup> another name for the Day of Judgment. The day of the advent will witness great changes and upheavals. The one who will appear is the Sign of God (Āyat Allāh), who will come with proofs. He will arise among people as did the Prophet Muḥammad. These statements indicate that Sayyid Kāẓim did not believe that the Twelfth Imām would return from occultation as the Qā'im; rather, he believed that the Qā'im was living among people and would appear as the Prophet Muḥammad did.

In his Will, Sayyid Kāẓim, after advising his students to be steadfast, pious, unified, and detached from material life, quotes a Quranic verse which reads, "It alters the mortal. Over it are nineteen angels" (74:29-30). Although Sayyid Kāẓim does not explicitly state his purpose in quoting the verse, it has been interpreted as an allusion to the Bāb and his first eighteen followers, The Letters of the Living (Ḥurūf-i Hayy), who formed the first unit (wāḥid-i Awwal) of the Bābīs.

Before examining the Shaykhī prophecies in more detail, it is necessary to consider the conception of the advent of the Mahdī and the Second Christ in Islam in general, and in the Twelver Shī'a literature in particular.<sup>15</sup>

There is no mention of a Mahdī in the Qur'ān, nor is there any mention in the earliest Traditions. Later Traditions say that the Mahdī will appear before the world comes to its end and will inaugurate a new era of prosperity

and salvation, functioning as a ruler, renewing all things, and establishing peace and justice on earth. The advent of the Mahdī is to be preceded or accompanied by various signs.

In Islam, the term Mahdī is a title for a Divinely Guided One, equivalent to the messiah, the deliverer. While for the Sunnis the Mahdī does not refer to any specific person, the Twelver Shī'a identify him with the Twelfth Imām, who went into occultation in 260/872.<sup>16</sup> For them, therefore, the return of the Twelfth Imām is identical with the advent of the Mahdī. Shī'ī literature contains literally hundreds of Traditions on the authority of the Shī'ī Imāms, concerning different aspects of the Mahdī's private and social life, character, and function. However, these Traditions are inconsistent regarding his name, his descent, the year of ~~his~~ appearance, and his physical and spiritual qualifications. For example, we find him given such varied titles as "The Qā'im"<sup>17</sup> (The one who rises), "Baqiyat Allāh"<sup>18</sup> (The Remnant of God), "Ṣāḥib al-Zamān"<sup>19</sup> (The Lord of the Age), and "al-Muntaẓar"<sup>20</sup> (The Expected One).

Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1111/1700), compiler of the Bihār al-Anwār, the lengthiest and most comprehensive collection of Shī'ī Traditions, has denoted the thirteenth volume of this work to Traditions on the Mahdī. These Traditions almost unanimously affirm that the world will not end until a man from the family of the Prophet, in the line of 'Alī and Fāṭima, appears. He will rule according to the

example of the Prophet. The Qā'im will come at a time of great troubles when the world is approaching its end. There will be an increasing number of hard-hearted evildoers. The Qā'im will make efforts to establish justice and equity and repel tyranny and oppression. He will cause the strong and the weak to be as equals; he will bring salvation to earth. Through his efforts, Islam will spread throughout the world.

The Traditions declare that the Qā'im is the one through whom God will manifest His faith. He is the one whom God "will make victorious over the whole world until from every place the call to prayer will be heard, and all religion will be to Allah."<sup>21</sup> The Qā'im is described as the champion of the faith, who will strengthen God's religion. He is the means by which God proves His existence to His creation. Without the Qā'im the world cannot function. Such a leader is needed, whether manifest and well known or hidden and obscure.

The Qā'im will fulfill God's promises. He is to be sent by God to prepare the way for the Return of Christ. The Twelver Shī'a believe in the Mahdī and his return as an essential element of their faith. In the Shī'ī Traditions, a great number of Quranic verses are interpreted as references to the Qā'im.<sup>22</sup>

The Shaykhī prophecies are mostly based on the Shī'ī Traditions. Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāẓim, however, added to the prophecies of the Traditions by elaborating them. Shaykhī prophecies are the most abstruse parts of the

Shaykhī works, employing figurative concepts, the abjad system, and anagrams. Very rarely can a straightforward prophecy be found. The complexity and the equivocal nature of the prophecies suggest that only people familiar with Shaykhī terminology and doctrines could understand them; other people would be able to do so only through oral explanations. The complexity is due to the social and religious climate of the time, which did not allow the Shaykhī leaders to openly provide information in plain language about the Qā'im. It is reported that once Sayyid Kāẓim was asked by one of his students, "'Why is it, that you neither reveal His [i.e., the Qā'im's] name nor identify His Person?' To this Siyyid replied by pointing with his finger to his own throat, implying that were he to divulge His name, they both would be put to death instantly."<sup>23</sup>

Shaykhī prophecies are so numerous, so repetitious, and so widespread throughout the Shaykhī works that it seems hopeless to try to put all of them into a system or present them in a form that encompasses all the details. The prophecies speak about two distinct persons who would appear one after another: the Qā'im and the Return of Ḥusayn. The prophecies concerning the Qā'im's name, characteristics, date of his advent, and the circumstances under which he will appear are by far more numerous than the prophecies concerning the Return of Ḥusayn.

As in Shī'ī Traditions, the Qā'im is also referred to by other titles, such as Ṣāhib al-Zamān (The Lord of the

Age), Hujjat Allāh (Proof of God), Baqīyat Allāh (The Remnant of God), Dhikr (The Remembrance), and, more commonly, Mahdī (The Divinely Guided One).

Shaykhī prophecies on the Qā'im are of two kinds: prophecies which closely repeat the popular expectations of the Shī'a concerning the coming of the Qā'im and prophecies which are not literally in accordance with popular expectations. In the prophecies of the first kind, the Twelfth Imām is alive and present in the world, but invisible. He is the son of Ḥasan al-'Askarī (d. 260/872), the Eleventh Imām, from the family of the Prophet. The Qā'im, therefore, is identified as the Twelfth Imām. The advent of the Qā'im will be accompanied by the Return of the imāms as well as their enemies. In the year of the arrival of the Qā'im, the following events will occur: there will be a serious famine, heavy rain will fall from the twentieth day of the month of Jumādā to the beginning of Rajab. The Dajjāl, or Antichrist--the False Messiah, who performs miracles and pretends that he is God--will appear in Iṣfahān in the month of Rajab, and the Sufyānī, 'Uthmān b. 'Utba, will appear in Ramla in Wādī Yābis. In the same month of Rajab, the body of 'Alī will be manifested in the disk of the sun and it will be possible for everyone to recognize him. There will be an eclipse of the moon at the end of the month of Ramaḡān. There will also be an eclipse of the sun on the fifth (or the middle) of Ramaḡān. It will be in the early morning of the twenty-third (of Ramaḡān) that Gabriel will

announce that 'Alī and his followers (Shī'at 'Alī) were on the right path, and at the end of the day Iblis will announce the rightfulness of the martyr 'Uthmān and his followers.<sup>24</sup>

On the twenty-fifth of Dhī al-Ḥijja, Nafs al-Zakīya Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan<sup>25</sup> will be killed between the Rukn and the Maḡām.<sup>26</sup> Friday, the tenth of Muḥarram, will be the day of the advent of the Greater Light of God (nūr Allāh al-Akbar), the Lord of the Age (Sāhib al-Zamān), the Qā'im, who will go to the Masjid al-Ḥaram<sup>27</sup> and kill the preacher, and then will enter the Ka'ba. At night he will call upon his followers and 313 of them, from the east and the west, will be assembled around him, and the first believer in the Qā'im will be Gabriel.<sup>28</sup>

The Qā'im will remain at Mecca until ten thousand people have gathered around him. At this time the Sufyānī<sup>29</sup> will send his armies to Kufa, Medina, and also to Mecca. This last army will be swallowed up by the earth, but two of its members will survive to convey the news to the Qā'im and to the Sufyānī. The Qā'im will send troops around the world, will kill the Dajjāl and the Sufyānī, and will fill the earth with justice and righteousness, whereas before it had been filled with oppression and cruelty. He will make his residence at Kufa.<sup>30</sup>

The Qā'im will reign for seven years, but each of these years is equal to ten years of our time. Therefore, he will rule for seventy of our years.<sup>31</sup>



The second kind of Shaykhī predictions, which are peculiar to the Shaykhī works, but again are based on Traditions, prophesy the name, the date, and the characteristics of the Qā'im and the Second Ḥusayn. Only the most obvious prophecies in the Shaykhī works will be discussed here.

Shaykh Aḥmad, in one of his letters, foretold the year of the appearance of the Qā'im in mysterious language which employs the cabalistic system. According to this prophecy, the year 1260/1844 was the year in which the Qā'im would appear.<sup>32</sup> This prophecy is supported by Sayyid Kāẓim's statement that the Qā'im will appear in the thirteenth century.<sup>33</sup> Sayyid Kāẓim's prophecy, however, is elaborated in his Risāla for Mullā Ḥusayn 'Alī,<sup>34</sup> where he says that the voice of God will be heard after a thousand years. Since according to the common Shī'ī belief, the Twelfth Imām was God's voice among men until the year 260/872 when he went into occultation, the thousand-year period would end in 1260/1844, when the voice of God would be heard again.

Regarding the name of the Qā'im, Sayyid Kāẓim, at the beginning of his Sharḥ al-Qaṣīda,<sup>35</sup> indicates that the numerical value of his name is equal to twice the numerical value of the letter "K- ك" when it is pronounced. The pronunciation of this letter is "Kāf- كاف", which consists of three letters: "K-a-f/ك-ا-ف." The numerical value of the pronounced "Kāf- كاف" is 101 (K=20, a=1, f=80), and its double is 202, which is equal to the numerical value of the

name of the Bāb, 'Alī Muḥammad "علي محمد": (ع=70, ل=30, ي=10, م=40, ح=8, م=40, ر=4).

The Bāb, in a letter to one of his followers, Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far b. Muḥammad Kermānī, indicates the fulfillment of this prophecy by his appearance.<sup>36</sup> Qurrat al-'Ain also states in one of her treatises that Sayyid Kāẓim's prediction about the name of the Qā'im is fulfilled in the Bāb.<sup>37</sup>

Nabīl, the author of one of the earliest histories of the Bābī movement, relates that in the same year the Bāb was born (that is, 1235/1819), Shaykh Aḥmad suffered the loss of his son, Shaykh 'Alī. Shaykh Aḥmad explained to his students, who mourned his loss, that he had offered his son as a sacrifice for 'Alī, whose appearance they were awaiting.<sup>38</sup> This, Nabīl says, indicates that the name of the Qā'im was to be 'Alī.

The Shaykhī works contain numerous indications regarding the characteristics of the Qā'im. To disciples who questioned him about this subject, Sayyid Kāẓim replied that he would be from a noble lineage, a descendant of Fāṭima of the family of Hāshim. He would be young and possess knowledge which is not derived from schools but is given to him by God. He would be of medium height, and free from bodily defects. He would not smoke. He would be illustrious and an extreme devotee.<sup>39</sup>

In their works, on numerous occasions Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāẓim predicted the signs, virtues, and character-

istics of the Second Christ or Imām Ḥusayn. Like the Shaykhī predictions on the Qā'im, these are of two kinds: predictions that almost repeat the popular expectations of the Shī'a and predictions that are peculiar to the Shaykhīs and are not found in Shī'ī works.

In the first kind, Shaykhī sources specify that in the fifty-ninth year of the Qā'im's reign, Ḥusayn will appear. He will be accompanied by the seventy-two martyrs of Karbalā. After a seventy-year reign, the Qā'im will be killed, and Ḥusayn will give him burial.<sup>40</sup> Then Ḥusayn will take over the Qā'im's responsibilities and will kill Shimr, Yazīd,<sup>41</sup> and other enemies who will have returned. Finally, Ḥusayn will defeat all the enemies and will reign for fifty thousand years.<sup>42</sup>

Of the second kind of predictions, Shaykh Ahmad, in a letter to Sayyid Kāẓim,<sup>43</sup> states, "For every prophecy is a term, and you will come to know, and most certainly you will come to know about it After a Time (Ba'da Ḥīn)."<sup>44</sup> In this statement, the Arabic word, "Ḥīn حين", according to the Abjad system, is equal to 68: (ح =8, ی =10, ن =50).

"After a time" (ba'da ḥīn) means 69, i.e., ḥīn is 68 and after the ḥīn is 69. The Shaykhī view of the term "after a time" (ba'da ḥīn) is based upon Imām Ṣādiq's interpretation of the Quranic verse: "And most certainly you will come to know about it after a time (ba'da ḥīnin)." (38:88) Imām Ṣādiq says that the Quranic term "ba'da ḥīn" refers to the year in which the Qā'im will appear.<sup>45</sup>

It was in the year 69 (1269/1852) that Bahā'u'llāh, while in the prison of Siyāh Chāl in Tehrān, claimed to have received his revelation. Although the term Qā'im was understood by the Bābīs to refer to the Bāb and not to Bahā'u'llāh, Imām Ṣādiq says that the Qā'im will appear in the year 69. It seems, therefore, that the term Qā'im in this Tradition has been used by the Shaykhīs who became Bābīs as a general term referring to the "one who will rise," which could be a reference to Bahā'u'llāh as well as to the Bāb.

The Bāb, in a letter to Muḥammad Shāh Qājār, mentions the words "after Ḥīn" (ba'da ḥīn) as a reference to the person who will arise in the year 1269/1852, i.e., the Second Christ (later understood by many Bābīs to be Bahā'u'llāh). In his letter the Bāb says, "Praise be unto Him Who at this very moment perceiveth in this remote prison the goal of My desire. He is the One Who beareth witness unto Me at all times and beholdeth Me ere the inception of 'after Ḥīn.'"<sup>46</sup>

Cryptic language in the introductory pages of Sayyid Kāẓim's major book, Sharḥ al-Qaṣīda,<sup>47</sup> was understood later by the Bābīs as a reference to the name of Bahā'u'llāh.

It is important to remember that those Shaykhīs who believed that the Bāb was the Qā'im were still expecting the advent of the Second Christ or the Return of Ḥusayn in the year 69 (1269) as Shaykhī works had predicted. A good example of such an expectation is found in a short treatise

written by Mullā Muḥammad 'Alī Baraghānī,<sup>48</sup> the brother of the famous Mullā Muḥammad Taqī, known as Shahīd-i Thālith, who issued the takfīr against Shaykh Aḥmad. This expectation was based primarily on the Shaykhī prophecies which the Bāb reaffirmed in his letter to Muḥammad Shāh as well as on numerous other occasions in his writings, particularly in his major work the Persian Bayān.<sup>49</sup> In these instances, the Bāb refers to the year 9 after the commencement of his ministry, that is, 1269/1852, as the year in which the Second Christ would appear.<sup>50</sup> The year 9 in the Bāb's writings corresponds with the "ba'da hīn" in Shaykh Aḥmad's works; both refer to 1269/1852, the year in which Bahā'u'llāh received his first revelation in the prison of the Siyāh Chāl.

The Shaykhī doctrines, particularly those concerning the concept of finality and the Day of Judgment, along with Shaykh Aḥmad's and Sayyid Kāẓim's predictions regarding the Qā'im, created among adherents of the school a predisposition for the recognition of the Bāb. But these were not the only factors that led some of the Shaykhīs to believe in the Bāb. Those Shaykhīs who became Bābīs were not only intellectually ready to accept him, but they saw in the Bāb and in his writings the continuation of the revolutionary spirit which had been initiated in the Shaykhī school. And they could also put it into practice, for the Bābī movement not only released them from obedience to the religious authorities and their dogma, it urged them to express

fearlessly the principles of the new movement.

While the Shaykhī school strongly opposed the views and practices of the Shī'ī 'ulamā, it was still sympathetic and loyal to the popular beliefs of the Shī'a. The Bābī movement, however, was more aggressive and far-reaching in its social impact although less Shī'ī-oriented than the Shaykhī school. As time went on, the Bābī movement developed into an independent religion with its own books and principles.

Although the hopes of the Shaykhīs for a restoration and revitalization of Shī'a were not completely fulfilled, the doctrines of the Shaykhī school paved the way and prepared some of its adherents to find the fulfillment of their hopes in the Bābī movement--a movement which was to be more comprehensive, more reformist, and more future-oriented than that of the Shaykhīs.

NOTES

1. For the names of some of the Shaykhī scholars who became Bābīs see Mehdī Bāmdād, Tārikh-i Rijāl-i Iran (Tehrān: Zawwār, 1351sh), vol. 2, ---. 471-472.
2. Nabīl Zarandī, one of the earliest historians of the Bābī movement, devoted the first two chapters of his history to the biographies of Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī and Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, showing how through their teachings Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāẓim prepared their students for the acceptance of the Bāb. Nabīl opens his first chapter thus: "At a time when the shining reality of the Faith of Muḥammad had been obscured by the ignorance, the fanaticism, and perversity of the contending sects into which it had fallen, there appeared above the horizon of the East that luminous Star of Divine guidance, Shaykh Ahmad-i-Aḥsā'ī. . . . Aglow with zeal and conscious of the sublimity of his calling, he vehemently appealed not only to Shī'ah Islam but to all the followers of Muḥammad throughout the East, to awaken from the slumber of negligence and to prepare the way for Him who must needs be made manifest in the fulness of time, whose light alone could dissipate the mists of prejudice and ignorance which had enveloped that Faith." Shoghi Effendi, trans. and ed., The Dawn-Breakers: Nabīl's Narrative of the Early Days of the Bahā'ī Revelation (Wilmette: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1974), pp. 1-2. For the Bāb and the Bābīs, Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāẓim resembled John the Baptist, who prophesied the coming of Jesus.
3. Bausani writes, "Before his [Sayyid Kāẓim's] death (1259/1843) he had sent disciples to all parts of Persia in search of the awaited Mahdī, the Ṣāhib al-Zamān, who, according to his prophecies, would not be long before manifesting himself." (Encyclopaedia of Islam, new ed., s.v. "Bāb").
4. The writings of Shaykh Ahmad and Sayyid Kāẓim on the Qā'im are too numerous to list in full. For a list of the main passages, sections, and chapters dealing with this subject and related issues see Appendix A.
5. The abjad system is a title for an arithmetical arrangement in which each letter of the alphabet has a numerical value from one to one thousand. For a list of the letters with their equivalent numerical values see Appendix B.
6. Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī, Jawāmi' al-Kilam, vol. 1, part 2,

- p. 103. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī elaborates the idea in his Sharḥ al-Khuṭba al-Tutunjiya, p. 180.
7. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Uṣūl-i 'Aqā'id, p. 157.
8. Ibid., p. 157.
9. Ibid.
10. Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī, Jawāmi' al-Kilam, vol. 1, part 2, p. 153.
11. Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, Uṣūl-i 'Aqā'id, p. 158.
12. This is based on the Traditions on the authority of the Shī'ī Imāms. Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī quotes several of them in his Bihār al-Anwār (Tehrān: al-Maktabat al-Islāmīya, 1384/1964), vol. 13, part 51, pp. 44-64.
13. See chapter 5, n. 32.
14. The Qur'ān reads, "And that you may give warning of the day of gathering together wherein is no doubt. . . ." (42:7).
15. For the conception of the Mahdī see "The Expected Deliverer" in John Alden Williams, ed., Themes of Islamic Civilization (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 191-251. The excerpts of the primary sources in translation are given in those pages.
16. According to Shī'ī sources, the Twelfth Imām, Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī al-'Askarī, went into occultation in 260/872. For sixty-nine years, until 329/939, a period referred to as the Lesser Occultation, he communicated with his believers through the Four Gates. In 329/939, with the death of the Fourth Gate, the period known as the Greater Occultation began. During this period, which will last as long as God wills, the Imām has no temporal communication with his followers. One day, however, God will grant him permission to manifest himself again.
17. Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 13, part 51, p. 30. Volume 13 of Bihār al-Anwār in al-Maktabat al-Islāmīya edition appeared in three parts: 51, 52, and 53.
18. Ibid., p. 36.
19. Ibid., p. 43.
20. Ibid., p. 30.

21. Williams, Themes of Islamic Civilization, p. 207.
22. Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 13, part 51, pp. 44-64.
23. Shoghi Effendi, Dawn-Breakers, pp. 27-28.
24. Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī, Ḥayāt al-Nafs, trans. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī (Tabriz: Dār al-Ṭubā'at al-Riḍā'ī, 1377/1957), p. 90.
25. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, known as Nafs al-Zakīya, originally from Medina, was one of the companions of Imām Ṣādiq. He claimed to be an Imām and was killed in 145/762.
26. The Rukn is the corner on the cubic-shaped Ka'ba in which the Black Stone is located. The Maḡām is a separate structure, Maḡām Ibrāhīm, to the north of the Ka'ba.
27. The Sacred Mosque (Masjid al-Ḥarām) is in Mecca and contains the Ka'ba.
28. Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī, Ḥayāt al-Nafs, p. 91.
29. The Sufyānī, according to the Shī'ī sources, is an ugly man from the descendants of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya who will arise to fight with the Mahdī. See Encyclopaedia of Islam, first ed., by D. B. Macdonald, s.v. "al-Mahdī".
30. Shaykh Ahmad Aḥsā'ī, Ḥayāt al-Nafs, p. 92.
31. Ibid.
32. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khāvarī, Rahīq-i Makhtūm (Tehrān: Mu'assisa-i Millī-i Maṭbū'āt-i Amrī, 1973), vol. 1, pp. 679-680.
33. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, Sharḥ al-Qaṣīda, p. 298.
34. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, Collection of Treatises, p. 272 (see chapter 4, n. 20).
35. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, Sharḥ al-Qaṣīda, p. 2.
36. Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Ḥuhūr al-Ḥaqq (Tehrān: n.d.), vol. 3, p. 402.
37. Ibid., p. 509.
38. Shoghi Effendi, Dawn-Breakers, p. 14.
39. Ibid., pp. 25, 38.

40. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī., Usūl-i 'Aqā'id, p. 207.
41. Shīr b. Dhi al-Jawshan was the head of Yazīd's army, which fought with Ḥusayn b. 'Alī. Shīr carried the head of Ḥusayn to Yazīd in Damascus. He was killed fighting the army of Mukhtār b. Abū 'Ubaydah Thaqāfī. Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān was the second Caliph of the Umayyad Dynasty, who sent his army to fight with Ḥusayn b. 'Alī. He died in 64/683 at the age of 38.
42. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, Usūl-i 'Aqā'id, p. 208.
43. Ibrāhīmī, Fihrist, pp. 120-122.
44. Ibid., p. 122.
45. Majlisī, Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 13, part 51, p. 62.
46. Selections from the Writings of the Bāb, p. 19.
47. Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, Sharḥ al-Qaṣīda, p. 2.
48. Mīrzā Asad Allāh Fāḍil Māzandarānī, Ḥuhūr al-Ḥaqq, pp. 309-310.
49. The Bāb's prophesies of Bahā'u'llāh are very often made under the title "Him Whom God Shall Manifest." See "Note V. Texts from the Persian Beyan Illustrating the Bāb's view of His Relation to 'Him Whom God Shall Manifest'" in Browne, Traveller's Narrative, pp. 347-349.
50. The Bāb writes, "Today the Bayān is in the stage of seed; at the beginning of the manifestation of Him Whom God Shall make manifest its ultimate perfection will become apparent." "Ere nine will have elapsed from the inception of this Cause the realities of the created things will not be made manifest. All that thou hast as yet seen is but the stage from the moist-germ until We clothed it with flesh. Be patient until thou beholdest a new creation. Say: Blessed, therefore, be God, the Most Excellent of Makers!" Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By [Wilmette: Bahā'ī Publishing Trust, 1970], p. 98).

The Relationship of Shaykhī Doctrines  
to the Religious Thought of the Bāb

Shaykh Ahmad won a wide following among various groups in Persian society, a popularity which can be attributed to several factors. Shaykh Ahmad traveled widely and enjoyed the respect of the Shāh and some members of the royal family. He spoke repeatedly of his spiritual communion, in his dreams, with the SHĪ'Ī imāms; this spiritual communion, traditionally a sign of holiness and inspired knowledge in the SHĪ'Ī society, added to his charismatic character and, consequently, brought him respect and popularity, particularly among the masses. Shaykh Ahmad's knowledge in all branches of Islamic sciences, his indisputable piety, and his love and extraordinary respect for the SHĪ'Ī imāms brought him great popularity among the religious Persians. Unlike the fundamentalist religious writers, his discussions of religious matters had a rationalistic flavor, which attracted religious people as well as intellectuals seeking such an approach toward religious problems. Shaykh Ahmad's opposition to the dominant religious and philosophical authorities provided an opportunity for those who did not have learning and gave them the encouragement to express their opposition. They found Shaykh Ahmad an outspoken, learned leader who was capable of combatting dogmas and authority of those leading figures.

While many Persians were attracted to Shaykh Ahmad, several leading authorities rose against him,<sup>1</sup> and, naturally, most Persians remained indifferent. The causes of religious leaders' opposition to Shaykh Ahmad were diverse but not difficult to surmise. Many of his opponents did not thoroughly understand his ideology; thus, their opposition was based on misinterpretation of Shaykh Ahmad's teachings. Those who opposed him did not do so merely because of his doctrine, but because of the popularity and power he had won among the masses and the ruling class, which aroused the jealousy of the 'ulamā. Opposition also derived from the 'ulamā's general attitude toward anyone who denied the traditional dogmas. It was obvious to them that some of Shaykh Ahmad's teachings diverged from those of the SHĪ'ā, and this was sufficient reason for the 'ulamā to charge him with introducing innovations into religion.

The opposition of the 'ulamā found expression in a number of polemical works written to refute Shaykh Ahmad and his ideology.<sup>2</sup> These works are also important sources for the intellectual history of nineteenth century Iran. A mirror of the psychological and religious reaction of the 'ulamā toward Shaykh Ahmad, they also reveal how the 'ulamā attempted to protect the Sharī'ā from innovations.

The most famous opponents of Shaykh Ahmad during his lifetime were the eminent Uṣūlī 'ulamā of Ātabāt and Iran, including Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Astarābādī,<sup>3</sup> Mullā Āqā Darbandī, Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn Najaffī,<sup>4</sup> and Sayyid Ibrāhīm

Qazvīnī. A leading figure in the intellectual opposition to Shaykh Aḥmad, and to the Shaykhīs in general, was 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Māzandarānī,<sup>5</sup> who was born in 1255/1839 in Kermānshāh. His mother was the daughter of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Muḥammad 'Alī Kermānshāhī, a well-known Uṣūlī scholar.<sup>6</sup> A typical opponent of the Shaykhīs, Ḥusaynī is important because he not only criticized the views of Shaykh Aḥmad, but also those of Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī and Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kermānī.

To protect the Sharī'a, he wrote three polemical works refuting Shaykhī ideology. The first was al-Marāṣid 'alā Sharḥ al-Fawā'id, which was written to refute the Sharḥ al-Fawā'id of Shaykh Aḥmad. The second was the Tanbīh al-Anām, written in 1293/1876 to refute Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān's best known work, the Irshād al-'Awām.<sup>7</sup> In the Tanbih, Ḥusaynī levels one hundred charges against Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khan's views as expressed in his Irshād.<sup>8</sup> The third work of Ḥusaynī which deserves attention is the Tiryāq-i Fārūq, written in 1301/1883. The Tiryāq is a convenient synopsis of the most important charges that Shī'ī scholars have leveled against the Shaykhīs. Unlike the other two polemical books by Ḥusaynī, which were written to criticize specific Shaykhī works, the Tiryāq attacks the entire Shaykhī ideology, and, since it was written after them, it is more comprehensive.

In his book, Ḥusaynī criticizes the most important works of Shaykh Aḥmad, Sayyid Kāẓim, and Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm

Khān. His main sources are the Sharḥ al-Ziyāra and the Sharḥ al-Fawā'id of Shaykh Aḥmad, Sharḥ al-Khuṭba al-Ṭutunjiya of Sayyid Kāẓim, and the Irshād al-'Awām of Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān.

To demonstrate the innovations of the Shaykhīs, Ḥusaynī frequently refers to the works of several leading Shī'ī authorities such as Muffīd, Ṣadūq, 'Allāma-i Ḥilliī, and Majlisī. Ḥusaynī contends that the original Shī'ī ideology is expressed in the works of these scholars, and that the Shaykhī doctrines which contradict this ideology are innovations.

In the Tiryāq, Ḥusaynī enumerates forty-three ideological differences between the Shaykhīs and the Shī'a. The differences can be summarized under three main headings: the imāms, ontology, and eschatology.

Regarding the imāms, Ḥusaynī states that the Shaykhīs differ from the Shī'a by maintaining that:

1. The imāms are the Four Causes: the actional cause ('illat-i fā'ilī), the material cause ('illat-i māddī), the formal cause ('illat-i ṣūrī), and the final cause ('illat-i Ghā'ī)<sup>9</sup>
2. The imāms' knowledge is inspired (ḥuḍūrī) knowledge, derived from the presence of God<sup>10</sup>
3. The imāms are lords, and the people are their slaves<sup>11</sup>
4. The imāms' physical bodies do not crumble to dust<sup>12</sup>

Ḥusaynī's conclusions with regard to the Shaykhīs' view of the imāms is that the Shaykhīs have exaggerated the

position of the imāms, and, therefore, they are infidels just like the Mufawwiḍa and the Ghālīya.<sup>13</sup>

Regarding ontology, Ḥusaynī states that the Shaykhīs differ from the Shī'ā by maintaining that:

1. God's knowledge is essential and it is identical with His essence<sup>14</sup>
2. Existence is created, limitless, and new<sup>15</sup>
3. Existence is eternal in time, but created in its substance<sup>16</sup> and
4. Angels are not temporal, but they are spiritual beings<sup>17</sup>

Regarding eschatology, Ḥusaynī states that the Shaykhīs differ from the Shī'ā by maintaining that:

1. Subtle bodies, not physical bodies, will be resurrected<sup>18</sup>
2. Paradise is the love of the imāms<sup>19</sup>
3. Paradise and hell do not have identity by themselves but are the result of man's own conduct<sup>20</sup>
4. The Ascension of the Prophet was not with his physical body, but rather with his spirit. By his Ascension, the Prophet reached the highest level of his knowledge but never reached God<sup>21</sup>
5. The rank of the Qā'im is the fifth, after Muḥammad, 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn, and not the twelfth<sup>22</sup>
6. The Twelfth Imām will return in his subtle, not his physical body<sup>23</sup>
7. The six days of creation stand for (1) intellect, (2) soul, (3) nature, (4) matter, (5) subtle, and (6)

body;<sup>24</sup> the concept that the world was created in six days is not literally correct

Ḥusaynī accuses the Shaykhīs of misinterpreting several verses of the Qur'ān. He mentions cases such as the Shaykhī belief that Mount Sinai is a symbol for the heart of a believer,<sup>25</sup> and that the "manifestation of the light upon the Mountain"<sup>26</sup> stands for the manifestation of the light of Moses' essence upon his heart. The Shaykhīs, Ḥusaynī states, believe that the "Barrier of Dhulqarnayn"<sup>27</sup> stands for "dissimulation" (taqīya),<sup>28</sup> and that Gog and Magog in the Qur'ān<sup>29</sup> have an allegorical meaning and refer to the enemies of Shī'ā.<sup>30</sup> In another case, Ḥusaynī states that by "Children of Israel" (banī Isrā'īl),<sup>31</sup> the Shaykhīs mean the Prophet and his children, because, according to the Shaykhīs, Isrā'īl literally means the Slave of God ('Abd Allāh) and 'Abd Allāh was the name of the Prophet's father.<sup>32</sup>

At the end of his book Ḥusaynī accuses Shaykh Aḥmad of having claimed to receive Revelation (wahy) from God and also of knowing the occult sciences.<sup>33</sup>

The opposition of Shī'ī 'ulamā to the Shaykhīs did not, however, remain on an intellectual level. In several cities serious clashes occurred between the Shī'ā and the Shaykhīs during which members of both parties were killed and property was destroyed. One such clash occurred when Ḥājj Mīrzā Aḥmad Khoeī of Tabrīz,<sup>34</sup> a leading mujtahid of Ādharbāyjān, issued a takfīr against the Shaykhīs of that city. A massive uprising against the Shaykhīs followed, in



which many were killed.<sup>35</sup>

In another clash, in 1314/1896, the Uṣūlīs of Hamadān attacked and burned Shaykhī houses and killed Mīrzā Muḥammad Bāqir Hamadānī, the leader of the Shaykhīs of Hamadān, as well as a certain Mīrzā Muḥammad, a distinguished Shaykhī of that city.<sup>36</sup>

The serious intellectual opposition of the Uṣūlī 'ulamā and their attacks against the Shaykhīs prevented the Shaykhīs from gaining a following or even considerable recognition in Persian society.

As time went on, most of the Shaykhīs lost their group identity and became reassimilated into Shī'a. But those Shaykhīs who remained loyal to the leadership of the Shaykhīs of Kermān continued to function as a group.

While Shaykh Aḥmad's ideology survived only to a limited extent among his own followers, it had its greatest impact upon the religious life of the Persians through the Bābī movement. However, the Bābī ideology cannot, by any means, be considered an extension of the Shaykhī school, because of several radical differences between the two. Shaykh Aḥmad never claimed to be a prophet, as the Bāb did;<sup>37</sup> Shaykh Aḥmad never claimed to have received Revelation or a revealed book from God, as the Bāb did;<sup>38</sup> Shaykh Aḥmad never claimed to have brought a Qur'ān, as the Bāb did.<sup>39</sup>

Nevertheless, Shaykhī thought had a great impact upon Bābī ideology: there is no doubt that Bābī doctrines have

closer ties to Shaykhī thought than to any other branch of Islamic belief.<sup>40</sup>

It is impossible at this stage to fully discuss the depth and scope of Shaykhī influence upon Bābī doctrines, partly because most of the Bāb's main works are still in manuscript form and partly because social and religious circumstances have hindered the study of them.

On the basis of better-known, published Bābī sources, however, it is possible to examine some of the basic areas in which Shaykhī thought had an impact upon Bābī ideology.

Of all the Islamic sects, the Shī'a are best known for their allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān. This feature of Shī'ī thought developed even further in the Shaykhī approach toward the Qur'ān, which Shaykh Aḥmad interpreted allegorically rather than literally, in order to reconcile revelation with reason. This allegorical approach toward the Qur'ān reached its full development in the writings of the Bāb.

Another major area was the Shaykhī attitude toward the imāms. As discussed earlier, Shaykh Aḥmad, in all of his works, emphasized the vital role of the imāms in the religious life of the believers and, in fact, often mentioned his personal contact with them. In contrast with the general view of the Shī'a, who believed that during the occultation period,<sup>41</sup> the 'ulamā were to be the intermediaries between the believers and the imām, which made them the center of attention in Shī'ī society, Shaykh Aḥmad