

(.The Period of Imam as-Sajjad (A.S

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The period of Imam as-Sajjad ('a) can be divided into two stages: The first stage covers the events after the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn ('a), the destabilization of the Umayyad rule and finally the end of rule of the Sufyanis (descendants of Abu Sufyan) and the succession to power of the Marwanis (descendants of Marwan ibn al-Hakam), the internal struggle among the Umayyads and their entanglement with the uprisings and revolts up to the stabilization of the rule of the Marwanis. The second stage covers the time of governorship of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf and the defeat of 'Abd Allah ibn Zubayr in Mecca up to the commencement of the 'Abbasid movement, which is also related to the initial period of the Imamate {imamah} of Imam al-Baqir ('a

After the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn ('a), the Umayyads were, on the one hand, entangled with the uprisings of the people of Iraq and Hijaz, and experiencing internal struggle on the other. The government of Yazid did not last long. Yazid died in 64 AH after three years of rule. After Yazid, his son Mu'awiyah II came to power. He ruled for not more than 40 years when he stepped down from the office of the caliphate and died soon after. With his death the internal squabble among the Umayyads began. Mas'udi describes the event after the death of Mu'awiyah II which indicates the intense greed and rivalry among the Umayyads over the leadership, as thus: Mu'awiyah {II} died at the age of 22 and was buried in Damascus. With the burning ambition of becoming the next caliph, Walid ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Sufyan came to the front to lead the prayer for the corpse of Mu'awiyah {II}, but even before finishing the prayer he received a fatal blow and was killed. Then, 'Uthman ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi Sufyan led the prayer for him, but he was also not approved by them to assume the office of the caliphate. So, he was forced to go to Mecca and join Ibn Zubayr.

Three years had not yet passed when the rule of the Sufyanis came to an end. Many of the people throughout the Muslim lands including a number of the Umayyad chiefs and governors such as D.ahaq ibn Qays and Nu'man ibn Bashir had inclined toward Ibn Zubayr. It was at this time when Ibn Zubayr drove the resident Umayyads out from Medina including Marwan. The Umayyads proceeded toward Sham and since there was no caliph in Damascus, the Umayyads elected Marwan for the caliphate, followed by Khalid ibn Yazid and after him 'Amru ibn Sa'id as his successor. After sometime, Marwan removed Khalid ibn Yazid and appointed

his son 'Abd al-Malik as his successor. For this reason, Khalid's mother who was married to Marwan poisoned Marwan killing him. 'Abd al-Malik also removed 'Amru ibn Sa'id on his way and appointed his son instead as his heir apparent.

Meanwhile, the Umayyads were gripped by revolts and uprisings. These upheavals can be divided into two distinct types: One type was the uprisings without Shi'ah underpinning. The Hirrah uprising and the revolt of Ibn Zubayr belonged to this type. The essence of Ibn Zubayr's revolt is obvious because the leader of the revolt, 'Abd Allah ibn Zubayr was a staunch enemy of the progeny of the Prophet (S).

He nursed this grudge in his heart owing to the defeat he and others, including his father, suffered in the Battle of Jamal (Camel) and the ensuing events. His brother Mus'ab, however, had Shi'ah inclination and married the daughter of Imam al-Husayn ('a), Sakinah. As such, his campaign gained momentum in Iraq and the Shi'ah of Iraq joined with him in the resistance against the Umayyads. After Mukhtar Ibrahim al-Ashtar was in his company and was killed beside him.

The Hirrah uprising had also no Shi'ah underpinning and Imam as-Sajjad ('a) had no hand in it. When Muslim ibn 'Uqbah was asking the allegiance of the people in Medina, compelling them to pay allegiance, like slaves, to the Umayyad caliph (Yazid), he accorded him due respect to Imam as-Sajjad ('a) and did not complain against the Imam ('a) (for not expressing allegiance).

The other uprisings had Shi'ah underpinning.

The Shi'ah Uprisings

The uprising of the tawwabun {the repentant ones} and that of Mukhtar were Shi'ah uprisings. The base of these two uprisings was Iraq, Kufah in particular, and the constituent forces were Shi'ah of the Commander of the Faithful ('a). In the army of Mukhtar, non-Arab Shi'ah could also be amply noticed.

There is no doubt about the essence of the uprising of the tawwabun. This uprising was based upon correct motives and yearning for martyrdom, and it had no objective other than avenging the blood of Imam al-Husayn ('a) and wiping off their sin for not assisting the Imam ('a) by being killed in the way of fighting against his murderers.

After leaving Kufah, the tawwabun proceeded toward Karbala', rushing toward the grave of Imam Husayn ('a) for ziyarah and at the beginning of their movement, they thus said: O God! We did not assist the son of the Prophet (S). Forgive our past sins and accept our repentance {tawbah}. Shower mercy {rahmah} upon the soul of Husayn ('a) and his righteous and martyred votaries. We bear witness that we believe in the things for which Husayn ('a) was killed. O God!

If You would not forgive our sins and reckon us under the scale of mercy and clemency, we will
be doomed to perdition and wretchedness.

After the arrival of Muslim ibn 'Aqil in Kufah Mukhtar was collaborating with him. But because of this collaboration, he was apprehended and imprisoned by 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad. After the event of 'Ashura' he was freed through the mediation and petition of 'Abd Allah ibn 'Umar, his
brother-in-law (his sister's husband).

He arrived in Kufah in 64 AH and after the tawwabun movement, he started his movement and by using the slogan, "Ya litharat al-Husayn" {O helpers of Husayn!} he was able to gather the Shi'ah, the non-Arabs in particular, around him. With these forces, he succeeded in punishing the murderers of Imam al-Husayn ('a) for what they had done, such that in one day he was able to kill 280 of these criminals and destroy the houses of those who escaped such as that of Muhammad ibn Ash'ath, and on the contrary, he mended Hujr ibn 'Addi's house, a loyal
supporter of 'Ali ('a), which was destroyed by Mu'awiyah.

Contradictory views have been expressed about Mukhtar. Some have regarded him as a true Shi'ah while others have said that he was a liar. Ibn Dawud thus says about Mukhtar in his book on rijal: Mukhtar is son of Abu 'Abid ath-Thaqafi. Some Shi'ah 'ulama' have accused him of Kaysaniyyah and in this regard, they have cited Imam as-Sajjad's ('a) refusal of his gift. But this cannot be a reason for rejecting him because Imam al-Baqir ('a) thus said about him: "Do not speak ill of Mukhtar because he killed our murderers, did not allow our spilled blood to be disregarded, gave our daughters in marriage, and at the time of difficulty he distributed
properties among us.

When Abu'l-Hakam, son of Mukhtar, came to Imam al-Baqir ('a), the Imam ('a) showed him a great deal of respect. Abu'l-Hakam asked about his father, saying: "The people are talking about my father, but your view, whatever it is, is the criterion." At that moment the Imam ('a) praised Mukhtar and prayed for God to have mercy on him, saying: "Glory be to Allah! My father
said that the affection of my mother was from the property that Mukhtar sent to my father." And the Imam ('a) said many times: "May God have mercy upon your father! He did not allow for our right to be trampled. He killed our murderers and did not permit our blood to be
disregarded."

Imam as-Sadiq ('a) also said: "In our family there was a woman who did not comb and apply
henna to her hair until Mukhtar sent the heads of the murderers of al-Husayn ('a)."

It has been narrated that when Mukhtar sent the head of the accursed 'Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad
to Imam as-Sajjad ('a), the Imam ('a) prostrated and made benevolent prayer for Mukhtar. Meanwhile, the reports that have been transmitted to reproach Mukhtar are fabrications of the

enemies.

With regard to the charge of Kaysaniyyah against Mukhtar and his alleged role in the creation of the Kaysaniyyah sect, while defending Mukhtar and rejecting this accusation against him, Ayatullah al-Khu'i thus writes: Some Sunni 'ulama' associate Mukhtar with the Kaysaniyyah sect and this is definitely a false statement because Muhammad al-Hanafiyyah never claimed

Imamate {imamah} for himself for Mukhtar to call on the people to recognize his Imamate. Mukhtar was killed prior to Muhammad al-Hanafiyyah's demise and the Kaysaniyyah sect came into being after Muhammad al-Hanafiyyah's death. But as to the fact that they regard Mukhtar as "Kaysan" (it is not because he was following the Kaysaniyyah sect), granting that this label is appropriate for him, its origin is traceable to the same questionable report from the Commander of the Faithful ('a) who is alleged to have said: "O Kays! O Kays!" Thus, he was called, "Kaysan".

Stabilization of the Rule of Marwan's Descendants (Period of Strangulation)

As mentioned earlier, the second phase of Imam as-Sajjad's ('a) period was the stabilization of the rule of the Marwanis (descendants of Marwan ibn al-Hakam). After the killing of 'Abd Allah ibn Zubayr in 73 AH, the clan of Marwan stabilized its own rule, and on this path, they took advantage of the existence of notorious headsmen such as Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. Hajjaj would not spare from committing any crime in the way of eliminating an enemy. He even targeted the Ka'bah destroying it by a shower of catapulted fire stones. He would kill the opponents of the Umayyads, Shi'ah or non-Shi'ah, wherever he would find them. The uprising of Ibn Ash'ath against him in 80 AH gained nothing, and Hajjaj's despotism engulfed the whole of Hijaz and Iraq until 95 AH.

Imam as-Sajjad lived during that period, conveying the Islamic and Shi'ah knowledge and teachings through supplications. During that period, the Shi'ah were either fugitives, languishing in prison, killed at the hands of Hajjaj, or exercising extreme dissimulation {taqiyyah} by hiding their true faith. As such, the people had no courage to approach Imam as-Sajjad ('a) and his close supporters were very few.

The late Majlisi thus narrates: "Hajjaj ibn Yusuf killed Sa'id ibn Jubayr because of his contacts with Imam as-Sajjad ('a)." Of course, during that time, on account of the pressures exerted against the Shi'ah, they migrated to the various parts of the Muslim lands and became the agents of the spread of Shi'ism. During the same period, some Shi'ah in Kufah migrated to territories surrounding Qum, stayed there and contributed to the spread of Shi'ism in that place. The initial period of Imam al-Baqir's ('a) Imamate also coincided with the persistent

dominance of the Umayyad rule. During at time, Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik, an authoritative and despotic caliph, summoned Imam al-Baqir ('a) along with his son, Imam as-Sadiq ('a), to Sham.

He did not neglect to annoy and vex them. During his reign, Zayd ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn staged an uprising and was martyred. Although the restraints and pressures exerted on the Shi'ah were somehow mitigated during the caliphate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the period of caliphate was, nevertheless, short. After two odd years of rule, he passed away in a suspicious manner. Of course the Umayyads were not able to extinguish the light of truth through pressure and restriction, and failed to erase the virtues and excellence of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ('a) from the people's memory, and that was the will of God. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid thus says in this regard: If God, the Exalted, had not endowed leadership to this man ('Ali), even a single hadith concerning his virtues and excellences would not have been narrated because the Marwanis were so harsh in relation to the narrators of his virtues.

Summary

Imam as-Sajjad's ('a) period can be divided into two stages. The first stage covered the instability of the Umayyad rule, the downfall of the Sufyanis (descendants of Abu Sufyan) and the ascendance to power of the Marwanis (descendants of Marwan ibn al-Hakam). The second stage covered the stabilization of the rule of the Marwanis.

During the first stage, the Umayyads were grappling with the Shi'ah and non-Shi'ah uprisings in Hijaz and Iraq.

The second stage began with the murder of 'Abd Allah ibn Zubayr in 73 AH in which the Umayyads made use of the existence of notorious headsmen such as Hajjaj ibn Yusuf in a bid .to stabilize their grip