THE FORMATION OF CLASSICAL IMĀMĪ EXEGESIS
Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rāwḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān of
Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī (d. in or after 552/1157)

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto

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THE FORMATION OF CLASSICAL IMĀMĪ EXEGESIS

Rawḍ al-Jinān wa-Rawḥ al-Janān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān of
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Abstract

My dissertation charts the development of classical Imāmī exegesis from its origins up to the emergence of the earliest surviving Persian tafsīr of the Imāmī Shi‘ī Islam entitled Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān. The study shows that Imāmī exegesis was essentially a Kūfan phenomenon for the first two Islamic centuries and exegetical authority was vested in the Shi‘ī Imams. This early phase was replete with original esoteric tendencies. This center gradually moved to Qumm in the 3rd/9th century when a dispute arose over the acceptance of esoteric exegesis as the normative Imami interpretive approach. Eventually, intellectual esoterism was overcome and the earliest surviving Imāmī commentaries were compiled. However, at the beginning of the 5th/11th century a paradigm shift from intellectual esoterism to rational exoterism in Imāmī exegesis occurred. This paradigm shift began with al-Maṣābih of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī (d. 418/1028) and fully developed later in al-Ṭībyān of al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067).

My dissertation also attempts to situate Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī in the history of the Islamic tafsīr literature. In his great commentary which was originally written in twenty volumes, Abū al-Futūḥ combined both exoteric and esoteric interpretive approaches. For the exoteric approach his main source was the Imami commentary of al-Ṭībyān, although, for
esoteric material he used the most important medieval Sunni commentary *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Tha’labī (d. 427/1035). At least fifty five percent of *Rawḍ al-jinān* is a translation of *al-Kashf* which was written during the transition of power from the Samanids to the Seljuqs in Nishapur. In addition to early Imami *ḥadīths*, Abū al-Futūḥ also employed pro-Shīʿī traditions of *al-Kashf* in order to defend his Imami identity in Rayy during the rule of Sunnī Seljuqs which had replaced the Shīʿī Buyids in 447/1055.

Finally, a close reading of Abū al-Futūḥ’s hermeneutical approach to the Qurʾān shows that although he was a strong adherent of the new Imāmī theological-jurisprudential-exegetical school of Baghdād, in his preaching style he employed more of the pro-Shīʿī traditions quoted from *al-Kashf*. He also inclined toward mysticism and for the first time he incorporated Sufi statements into Imami exegesis.
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to God who is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward. After him I have to thank many individuals whose help has been essential in writing this dissertation. I am grateful to my advisor professor Walid Saleh, who is kind friend and calm soul. He read my dissertation and provided me with the appropriate advice to find my voice. I would like to thank my dissertation committee members: professor Maria Subtelny, professor Shafique Virani, professor Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, and professor Sajjad Rizvi. I am indebted especially to professor Subtelny for her support, sympathy, and meticulous comments. I also wish to thank the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto which has a great graduate administrator Anna Sousa who loved all students like her children.

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Appendix 1: List of Terms
Note on Conventions and Abbreviations

Transliteration, Dating, and Translation

The transliteration of Arabic and Persian words is that of *International Journal of Middle East studies* (*IJMES*). Arabic and Persian names and terms have been transliterated, except where the word is well known in English (e.g. ‘Sufi’). Moreover, place names that are Arabic or Persian in origin have diacritical points, except in some instances that there are standard Anglicized versions (e.g. Cairo).

The genealogical sequence is abbreviated with ‘b.’ for ibn (son) and ‘bt.’ for bint (daughter). The word imam is capitalized when referring to proper titles or to the Imams of the various Shīʿī traditions.

Double dates (AH/AD) are used throughout for dates pertaining to Islamic history since *hijra* dates are easier for the specialists to work with and Christian dates more palatable to the general reader. Since the dates given in the primary sources are all in *hijra* dates, it should be borne in mind that it is the *hijra* year which is accurate, and the Christian equivalent should, strictly speaking, be the span of two years in which the Muslim year falls, for example, 434/1042-43. This makes reading awkward, so here only one Christian year is given as the equivalent of each *hijra* year, that one being the Christian year which the greater part of the *hijra* year falls. Dates marked with the abbreviation ‘Sh.’ in the bibliographical materials correspond to the modern solar *hijrī* calendar used in Iran.

All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

Abbreviations

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<td><em>DMBI</em></td>
<td>Dāʿirat al-ʿarif-i buzurg-i Islāmī</td>
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<td><em>EI¹</em></td>
<td>Encyclopaedia of Islam (First Edition). Leiden: Brill, 1913-36</td>
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$EI^3$ Encyclopaedia of Islam (Third Edition). Leiden: Brill, 2007-

$EIr$ Encyclopaedia Iranica. London and Boston, 1982-

$EIS$ Encyclopaedia Islamica

$EQ$ Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān, ed., Jane Dammen McAuliffe. Leiden: Brill, 2001-6

$EWI$ Encyclopaedia of the world of Islam (in Persian). Tehran: Encyclopaedia Islamica Foundation, 1996-
Introduction

A comprehensive history of *tafsīr* has not been published yet and Ignaz Goldziher’s *Die richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung* is still the only overview of *tafsīr* in general.\(^1\) From 1920, when Goldziher published his book, until today a great number of commentaries have been published which were unavailable to Goldziher. From these commentaries, about fifteen Shīʿī commentaries belong to the first six Islamic centuries. Although some Iranian authors attempted to write a brief history of all extant Shīʿī commentaries,\(^2\) a detailed survey of Shīʿī *tafsīr* works does not exist in Western languages. The only monograph dedicated to an Imami commentary has been written recently by Bruce Fudge who studied *Majmaʿ al-bayān*.\(^3\) This commentary was one of the two important Imāmī commentaries which were composed in the first half of the 6th/12th century: *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (Confluence of Elucidation in the Exegesis of the Qurʾān) of al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1153) in Arabic and *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawah al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (The Gardens of the Paradises and the Rest of the Hearts in the Exegesis of the Qurʾān) of Abū al-Futūḥ Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Khuzāʿī Rāzī (d. in or after 552/1157) in Persian. These two Imami commentaries, which were survived, have been so influential that they are still popular among erudite Imāmī Shīʿa as after about nine centuries. Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s fame rests upon his Qurʾān commentary, which he completed in or before 547/1152. There are a few academic studies, which have mentioned Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī and his commentary *Rawḍ al-jinān*.\(^4\) My dissertation is the first work in a Western language to study the development of the classical Imāmī *tafsīr* tradition and to examine Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī and his encyclopedic commentary in depth. It is based on a very wide range of modern Iranian scholarship, as well as Western works.

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2. For example, see ʿAqīqī Bakhshāyishī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Mufassirān-i Shīʿa*; Ayāzī, *sayr-i taṭawwur-i tafāsīr-i Shīʿa*; al-Mufassirān: Ḥayātuhum wa Manhajuhum.


The dissertation is divided into an introduction, six chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter offers a comprehensive overview on Imāmī Shīʿī exegesis up to the beginning of ‘Minor Occultation’ in 260/874. Collected data shows that the early Shīʿī exegesis was essentially a Kūfan phenomenon for the first two Islamic centuries. This phase of proto-Imāmī exegesis is divided into two sub-phases: 1- The 2nd/8th century Kūfa where earliest notebooks of proto-Imāmī exegetical traditions were collected. It was in the first half of this century that proto-Imāmī self-identity based on the systematic interpretation of Qur’ānic verses was shaped by Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. 2- During the first half of the 3rd/9th century when Imāmī exegesis center was transferred from Kūfa to Qumm, however, a few notebooks of Imami exegetical tradition were composed in Baghdād, Başra, and Ahwāz.

The second chapter focuses on the development of Imāmī Shīʿī exegesis during the Minor Occultation (260-329/874-940) and after that up to the emergence of Rawd al-jinān in the first half of the 6th/12th century. During the Minor occultation, early Shīʿī exegetical traditions were scattered in the personal notebooks of ḥadīth and tafsīr that were incorporated into large works of the first large commentaries that survived until today. I argue that by this time all the main concepts of Imami Shīʿī were constructed and consolidated upon those exegetical traditions, which was accepted by both Imami traditionalists and theologians because of their reliable chain of transmission. At the end of the 4th/10th century, a paradigm Shift happened in Twelver Shīʿī exegesis led by al-Wazīr al-Maghibī (d. 418/1028) and as a result the first comprehensive Imāmī commentary entitled al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān of al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) appeared. Since al-Tibyān was used by Abū al-Futūḥ, the sources of al-Ṭūsī in al-Tibyān are discussed. Al-Ṭūsī excluded most of the early Imami exegetical traditions from his commentary which were included partially again by Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī and al-Ṭabrisī in the first half of the 6th/12th century.

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī was one of the most important Qur’ān exegetes of the medieval Islamic world who died in or after 552/1157 and before 559/1164 in Rayy. All of his life took place during the Great Seljuq period in Rayy and he must have been influenced by the conditions of his time and place. Therefore, the third chapter deals with the religio-political history of Rayy during the Great Seljuq period. After a very brief history of pre-Seljuq Rayy with emphasis on the Būyids, all Seljuq sultans and the conditions of Imami Shīʿī community during their reigns are studied. Since Abū al-Futūḥ was most likely born during the reign of Malik-Shāh and died at the end or a
few years after the reign of Sanjar b. Malik-Shāh, most of this chapter is devoted to study the religio-political conditions of the Shīʿas during the period of Malik-Shāh and his three sons: Berk-Yāruq, Muḥammad (Tapar), and Sanjar. Before concluding this chapter, I have attempted to show the role of Ṭālibid Naqībs of Rayy who prepared the grounds for the emergence of Rawḍ al-Jinān.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the biography of Abū al-Futūḥ, which provides information about his early life, education, teachers, students, and the works composed by him. Abū al-Futūḥ acquired his education from few Imami scholars in Rayy and there is no evidence that he travelled to gain religious knowledge. Early sources also identify only a few of his students. In most cases information regarding what they studied under Abū al-Futūḥ is not available. However, they reported that his command over exegesis was superb. Although Abū al-Futūḥ did not produce many books, his commentary is a large work in twenty volumes. After discussing his works in this chapter, the connection between Abū al-Futūḥ and Islamic mysticism will also be examined. Since he is the first Imami scholar who incorporated ahl ishārat’s exegesis into Imami discourse, the interaction between mystical hermeneutics and Imami doctrines is observed for the first time.

The fifth chapter is an attempt to identify Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s leanings towards early Uṣūlī or Akhbārī’s traditions. First, in this chapter the impact of the Imami theology-jurisprudence-legal school of Baghdadi of the first half of the 5th/11th century on the Imami school of Rayy during the second half of the 5th/11th and first half of the 6th/12th century is studied. For this purpose, four generations of Imāmī scholars of Rayy from 436/1044 to 552/1157 are investigated. Abū l-Futūḥ, who belongs to the fourth generation, is influenced by both Qummī Akhbārī and Baghdadi Uṣūlī in his exegesis. In general, the theological and jurisprudential tendencies of Imāmī scholars during the Seljuq period is examined. The result of this examination demonstrates the characteristics of Uṣūlī Imāmiyya in this period. My main source to study these characteristics is the book Naqḍ of ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī, written around 560/1164. Finally, the principles and characteristics of Uṣūlī Imāmī commentaries are reviewed in three Imami commentaries of this period.

The last chapter deals with Rawḍ al-jinān and Abū al-Futūḥ’s hermeneutical approach. In this chapter the language, aim, structure, method and sources used by Abū al-Futūḥ to compose his
commentary are studied. *Rawḍ al-jinān* is the first comprehensive work of Imāmī exegesis in Persian which has survived in its totality. The answer to the question that why Abū al-Futūḥ wrote a Shīʿī commentary after *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī and why he composed it in Persian will be addressed in this chapter. In his commentary, Abū al-Futūḥ takes up one group of verses at a time which are related semantically. He first gives an interlinear translation of that set of verses. After that he provides a detailed commentary on each verse discussing variant readings, occasion of revelation, grammar and syntax, lexicology, and *ḥadīth*. He used both Sunni and Shīʿī *aḥādīth* and for the first time incorporated Sufi traditions into Imami exegetical discourse. Sometimes he used interpretation of the Qurʾān by means of the Qurʾān (*tafsīr al-Qurʾān bi-al-Qurʾān*).

Another tool that he employed to uncover the meaning of the verse or simply to emphasize the message of the verse is Arabic and Persian poetry. Abū al-Futūḥ used Arabic and Persian poems more than any other exegete before him to interpret or emphasize the text of the Qurʾān. Although, Abū al-Futūḥ does not mention his sources directly, his commentary is mainly based upon *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Thaʿlabī. Since at least fifty five percent of *Rawḍ al-jinān* is almost a word-for-word translation of *al-Kashf*, in this chapter the issue of plagiarism in medieval Arabo-Persian literary will be discussed. Moreover, Abū al-Futūḥ’s view on the canonical text of the Qurʾān and its variant readings is explored. After that the theoretical aspects of the hermeneutics articulated in his introduction to *Rawḍ al-jinān* is analyzed. This theoretical hermeneutical approach is compared with his actual practice of interpretation throughout his work. The anthological nature of *Rawḍ al-jinān* is shown to be similar to *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī. However, Abū al-Futūḥ’s frequent citation of Arabic and Persian poetry, lexical discussion, and theological issues makes his commentary similar to *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī.

Narrating Imami fictive interpretations and manipulating the early mystical exegesis will also be discussed in this chapter.
Chapter 1
An Overview on Imāmī Exegesis: From 11/633 up to 260/874

This chapter and the next attempt to chronologically examine the development of Imāmī exegesis and study how later Imāmī exegetes employed earlier commentaries. In this chapter, the purpose is to present a historiography and development of early Imāmī proto-exegesis, which is the Imām’s interpretive approach to the Qurʾān, not as a technique to understand the text, but as an approach to explicate the meaning to those who asked about it. Exegesis as was conceived after the early period would be irrelevant during the presence of the Imāms since the Imāms were the very nexus and purveyor of the meaning of the Qurʾān. The Imāms had unmediated access to the meaning of the Qurʾān, and their sole purpose was to transmit it to their followers.

From the beginning of Shīʿī Islam in the 1st/7th century up until the death of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī in or after 552/1157, Shīʿī exegesis passes through five sequential phases: 1. the first phase is pre-Occlusion during the lifetime of the Imāms (11-260/633-874). In this early period, Imāmī exegetical traditions were collected in short tafsīrs or recorded in early proto-Imāmī hadith books. 2. The second phase is during ‘Minor Occlusion’ from 260/874 to 329/940 which is of historical significance because it coincided with two events. In this phase, Twelver Shīʿī tradition started to turn towards Muʿtazilī tradition. Moreover, some Imāmī traditionalists started to incorporate small books into larger collections of hadith and exegesis. As a result, the first major works of Imāmī commentaries emerged during this period. Imāmī exegesis during these first two phases is the ‘formative period’ which is marked by esoteric exegesis, not influenced by Muʿtazilī tradition. 3. The third phase is early Būyid period (ca. 320-380/932-990) which

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5 In Imami doctrine, this underlies the difference between a prophet, who is responsible to propagate the Divine message, and the Imam who is available as a resource for the believers.

6 See Bar-Asher, “The Authority.”

7 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:61 no. 9; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 196 no. 10.

8 According to the Imami traditions, the twelfth and last imam entered into ‘Minor Occlusion’ in 260/874, followed by a Major Occlusion in 329/940.

9 These early hadith books are known as juz’, muskha, aṣl, saḥīfa, or kitāb (See Modarressi, Tradition, xiv); Kohlberg, “Al-uṣūl al-arba’umi’a.”
coincides with two major events: first the beginning of ‘Major Occultation’ in 329/940 and discommunication with the Imām. Second the beginning of political participation of Imāmīs in the first Shi‘a dynasty, the Būyids. This phase is the time of transition from esoteric to exoteric exegesis and gradual acceptance of the Imāmī scholars’ authority (other than the Imām) to interpret the Qur‘ān.

4. The fourth phase is the late Būyid period (ca. 380-447/990-1055) which coincided with the domination of Mu‘tasīlī rationalism among Imāmīs and the decline and fall of Būyids. During this late Būyid period, the Imāmī school of thought in Baghdad witnessed a paradigm shift in Twelver Shi‘ī exegesis instigated by al-Wazīr al-Maghribī which was completed by al-Ṭūsī. In this period, Imāmī scholars employed a comprehensive rational inclusive traditional exegesis, which was informed by the science of linguistics, to replace the early selective esoteric exegesis.

5. The fifth phase combines the approaches of traditionalism and rationalism which takes place in Rayy and Khurāsān during the Great Seljuq Period (434-552/1042-1157). The best representative of this approach is Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī which merged both approaches. Abū al-Futūḥ reintroduced a great number of early Imāmī exegetical traditions while using a Sunni tradition-based commentary. He translated and incorporated many early Imāmī traditions into Imāmī exegetical discourse. Another example of this approach is Majma‘ al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qur‘ān of al-Ṭabrisī written in Khurāsān. The significance of the fifth phase has not received due attention in Qur‘ānic scholarship. For this reason, scholars such as Bar-Asher, Gleave, and Rippin tried to fit Rawḍ al-jinān into the fourth phase; however, there are differences between Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ and Majma‘ al-bayān of al-Ṭabrisī, on the one hand, and al-Maṣābīḥ of al-Maghribī and al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī, on the other. This chapter attempts to study the first phase of Imāmī exegesis to explore questions of the emergence of proto-Imāmī self-identity based in the systematic interpretation of Qur‘ānic verses by the Imāms.

10 It seems that a number of early exegetes who wrote Qur‘ānic exegesis after Sibawayh (d. ca. 180/796) were linguists in its modern sense. For more information see Versteegh, Arabic Grammar.

11 Majma‘ al-bayān was studied by Bruce Fudge in his monograph Qur‘ānic hermeneutics: al-Ṭabrisī and the craft of commentary.

1 Phases of Imāmī Exegesis

1.1 First phase of Imāmī Exegesis: From the beginning to Minor Occultation (11-260/633-874)

Interpretive disagreement between Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the first three caliphs before him is reported in early Shīʿī and Sunni sources. It is reported that “One day ʿUmar met ʿAlī and asked him: are you the one who recited [Q 68:6], ‘which of you is the mad one [for power],’ to oppose me and my friend?” ʿAlī did not answer his question and instead said, “Shall I not tell you a verse which was revealed about Banū Umayya?” He then recited, [Q 47:22] ‘Would you then if you are given authority cause corruption on the earth and cut off your ties of kinship?’ ʿUmar replied: you lied; Banū Umayya are more tied to kinship than you [Banū Hāshim] and you established hostility to Banū Taym, Banū ‘Adī, and Banū Umayya.” Among these three clans of the Quraysh in Mecca, Banū Umayya was the rival of Banū Hāshim from the pre-Islamic period. It is said that ‘Alī’s citation of Qurʾānic verses, especially in religio-political controversies, exceeded their use by the three other caliphs.

Traditions transmitted from ʿAlī which are compiled in early sources such as Nahj al-balāgha of al-Sharīf al-Radī (d. 406/1016) shows both the esoteric and exoteric dimensions of the Qurʾān in early Shīʿī history. It is reported that ‘Alī criticized some Companions who employed their opinion (raʿy) in interpreting the Qurʾān. He remarked that the religion of Islam is not incomplete and the Prophet did not fall short of conveying it. He then cited a section of the verse

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13 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:238 no. 325; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:308. In a similar tradition, ‘Alī recited [Q 17:60] “and the Accursed Tree in the Qurʾān” as a reference to Banū Umayya (see al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:297 no. 94). Banū Taym was the clan of Abū Bakr, Banū ‘Adī was the clan of ʿUmar and Banū Umayya was the clan of ʿUthmān.


15 According to Ibn ʿAṭiyya al-Andalusī (d. 541/1146) the number of exegetical traditions narrated from ʿAlī which are survived in early Sunni sources are more than the other three caliphs combined (Ibn ʿAṭiyya al-Andalusī, al-Muḥarrar al-wajīz, 1:13). For different types of exegetical traditions related from ʿAlī which are survived in early Sunni sources see Khākpūr, “Gūnih-hā.”

16 Shah-Kazemi, Justice, 22; for authenticity of Nahj al-balāgha see Ghassemi Zavieh, Authenticity; Ansari, “Nahj al-balāgha”; Modarressi, Tradition, 14.
"We have not neglected anything in the Book" and pointed to two layers of the Qur’ān that “Certainly the outward of the Qur’ān (ẓāhir) is elegant and its inner (bāṭin) is deep (in meaning).” Both exoteric and esoteric approaches were original and acknowledged in early Shīʿī thought. It was accepted by the early Shīʿas that the Qur’ān has two dimensions: an outer dimension (ẓāhir) and an inner dimension (bāṭin). Exoteric exegetical traditions interpret the outer (ẓāhir) or literal meaning of the Qur’ānic verses and are intended to be shared with all Muslims. Esoteric exegetical traditions interpret the inner (bāṭin) meaning of scripture and intended to be shared with and understood by only a small number or inner circle of the Imāms’ companions who gave particular allegiance to them as divinely elected guides. Early Imāmī “esoteric” commentaries are not mystical, but “esoteric” in the sense that they are not dispensed for a general audience.

The effect of these two types of Qur’ānic knowledge, public as opposed to secret, is seen in ʿAlī’s disciples such as Maytham (or Mītham) b. Yahyā al-Tammār (d. 60/680) and ʿAbd...
Allāh b. ʿAbbās (d. ca. 68/687) who learned Qurʾānic exegesis from him. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās who is commonly credited with a formative role in the nascent exegetical tradition,22 reportedly said, “Whatever I have learnt about the interpretation of the Qurʾān comes from ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib.”23 Gilliot argued that Ibn ʿAbbās did not have his own complete Qurʾānic commentary,24 however, later scholars such as Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380/990) attributed a tafsīr to him.25 It is likely that ʿAlī taught Ibn ʿAbbās the Qurʾānic exegesis at one level and taught Maytham in another level. Ibn ʿAbbās learned the exoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān from ʿAlī and Maytham learned the esoteric interpretation (taʾwīl) of the Qurʾān from him. In this regard, al-Kashshī (d. ca. 340/951) narrated from Maytham’s son Ḥamza that when Maytham met ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās during his lesser pilgrimage (ʿumrah) to Mecca, he said to ʿAbbās: “O son of ʿAbbās! Ask me whatever you want from the interpretation (tafsīr) of the Qurʾān. I read the literal revelation (tanzīl) of the Qurʾān with the leader of the believers [ʿAlī] and he taught me the spiritual interpretation (taʾwīl) of it.”26 In a great number of early Imāmī traditions, these two layers of Qurʾānic interpretation are mentioned. The esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān (taʾwīl) is one of the early Imāmī doctrines which was misused by Imāmī Shīʿī ghulāt which will be discussed later.

Ostensibly Imām ʿAlī had a plan to interpret the Qurʾān for his disciples systematically. However, this plan was postponed until the time of Imām al-Bāqir because of political turmoil during ʿAlī’s caliphate. It is reported that Imām ʿAlī categorized all verses of the Qurʾān into three groups. In this regard, it is transmitted by Aṣbagh b. Nubāta27 that ʿAlī said, “The Qurʾān

24 See Gilliot, “ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbbās.”
26 al-Kashshī, Rījāl, 81 no. 136.
27 On him see Modarressi, Tradition, 59-73; Van Ess, Theology, 1:337; Yusofī Ishkevari and Gholami, “al-Aṣbagh b. Nubāta.” A number of reports about the virtues of ʿAlī in the Qurʾān are transmitted by Aṣbagh b. Nubāta in early Imami sources (Modarressi, Tradition, 62). Moreover, a number of reports from Aṣbagh b. Nubāta on sayings of ʿAlī on the Qurʾān are survived in early Sunnī and Shīʿī works (Modarressi, Tradition, 68-69). Ibn Qutayba has mentioned al-Aṣbagh b. Nubāta in his list of early Shīʾas who were not Rāfiḍīs (Ibn Qutaybah, al-Maʿārif, 624).
was sent [consisting of] three parts: one part concerning us [the Prophet’s Family and their Shīʿas] and our enemies; one part divine laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl); and one part duties/commandments (farāʿiḍ) and laws/regulations (aḥkām).\textsuperscript{28} This categorization which later became the radix of the systematic interpretation of Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq will be explained in detail later.

1.1.1 2\textsuperscript{nd}/8\textsuperscript{th} century: Kūfa

The last quarter of the 1\textsuperscript{st}/7\textsuperscript{th} century was in some ways the high point of Umayyad power, and the relative political stability provided an appropriate environment for teaching and recording exegesis.\textsuperscript{29} In this period, a number of Followers (tābiʿūn) who were directly or indirectly considered to be disciples of Ibn ʿAbbās became very famous exegetes.\textsuperscript{30} As Sinai noted, these scholars who were active mostly in the last decades of the 1\textsuperscript{st}/7\textsuperscript{th} and the early decades of the 2\textsuperscript{nd}/8\textsuperscript{th} century were the earliest exegetes who pursued a systematic interest in Qurʾānic exegesis and were credited with a substantial number of exegetical traditions.\textsuperscript{31} Regarding the style of their exegesis, Gilliot remarks that exegetes of this period were storytellers or popular preachers (qāṣṣ, pl. quṣṣāṣ).\textsuperscript{32} It seems that in this early period the process of recording tafsīr and the mechanisms of passing it on were informal.\textsuperscript{33} The last decades of the 1\textsuperscript{st}/7\textsuperscript{th} and the early decades of the 2\textsuperscript{nd}/8\textsuperscript{th} century coincided with the socio-religious activity of the fourth and the fifth Imāms.

\textsuperscript{28} al-Kulaynī, \textit{al-Kāfī}, 2:627 no. 2; al-ʿAyyāshī, \textit{Tafsīr}, 1:9 no. 3. Also see Furāt al-Kūfī, \textit{Tafsīr}, 45-46 no.1.

\textsuperscript{29} Hawting, \textit{The First Dynasty}, 58.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibn Bistām (d. ca. 425/1034) listed ten scholars as the most prominent exegetes after Ibn ʿAbbās: 1- Saʿīd b. Jubayr (Kūfān, d. 95/713); 2- ʿIkrima b. ʿAbdallāh (Medinese, d. 105-107/723-725); 3- Abū Śāliḥ Bādhām; 4- Mujāhid b. Jabr (Meccan, d. 103-104/721-722); 5- Abū al-ʿĀliya Rufayʿ b. Miharān al-Riyāḥī (Baṣrān, d. ca. 93/711); 6- al-Ḍahḥāk b. Muzāḥim (Kūfān, d. 106/724); 7- ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalḥa al-Hāshimi ( d. 120/737); 8- Abū Mijlaz Lāḥiq b. Humayd al-Sadūsī (Baṣrān, d. 106/724); 9- al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaṣrī (Baṣrān, d. 110/728); 10- Qatāda b. Dīʿāma al-Sadūsī (Baṣrān, d. 117/735) (see Ibn Bistām, Mabānī, 196-197. Also see Gilliot, “A Schoolmaster,” 313).

\textsuperscript{31} Sinai, “The Qurʾanic Commentary,” 122.

\textsuperscript{32} Gilliot, “A Schoolmaster,” 312-313.

\textsuperscript{33} Bauer, “A Note,” 108.
The fourth Shīʿī Imām ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (d. ca. 95/714) as well as Umayyad caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (d. 86/705) were in contact with these early exegetes. In this period, the attribution to God’s Word was very important for the legitimacy Umayyad rulers. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān and his military commander al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf played a significant role in standardizing the Qurʾānic text that we possess today. Al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf sent a copy of the Qurʾān to Medina and arranged readings of the copy on Thursdays and Fridays. In Medina Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (d. ca. 95/714) used to recite the Qurʾān with a beautiful voice which attracted people and occasionally interpreted verses of the Qurʾān to refer to their rights as the family of the Prophet. For example, al-Ḥakam b. ʿUtayba (d. 114/732 or 115/733), who was a Kūfan scholar, met Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn in Medina. Imām said to him, “O Ḥakam, do you know the verse that suggests ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib knew his murderer, and knew the important things that were happening to people?” Ḥakam became happy that he will learn a verse that by it he will know important things. Ḥakam answered, “No by God. Which verse is it? O Son of the Prophet! Could you tell me?” Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn said, “By God that is the verse [Q 22:52] ‘we did not send before you a messenger or a prophet or a muḥaddath (wa mā arsalnā min qablika min rasūlīn wa lā nabīn wa lā muḥaddathīn)’” Imām recited the verse with the additional word muḥaddath and then commented, “ʿAlī was a muḥaddath.” The notion of taḥdīth is defined as

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37 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:616 no. 11.

38 As shown by Sharon, the popular opinion during the 1st/7th century identified the family of the Prophet with the Hāshimids in general and more specifically with the household of ʿAlī (See Sharon, ‘The Umayyads as ahl al-bayt’, 151-152; Amir-Moezzi, “Reflections,” 42).


40 It seems that al-Ḥakam b. ʿUtayba was a proto-Sunni scholar with Shīʿī tendencies in Kūfa. An early Kūfan Sunni scholar such as Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889) considered him a non-radical Shīʿa (Ibn Qutaybah, al-Maʿārif, 624), however, a Kūfan Shīʿī scholar such as ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. Faḍḍāl (d. after 270/884) mentioned al-Ḥakam b. ʿUtayba as a Sunni jurist (al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 210 no. 370).

41 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:270 no. 2; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 319-320 no. 3. Interestingly, the same reading is reported by Ibn ʿAbbās; however, his recitation (and probably his codex) was not admitted into the ʿUthmānīc codex.
the capacity to be spoken to by angels. It was discussed in early Imāmi traditions and is significant because it is an oral communication with the Divine through angels. *Taḥḍīth* can maintain the Imāmī interpretation of the Qurʾān alive. The Imāms defined their occasional communication with God through the voice of angels as *taḥḍīth* in contrast to *nubuwwa* (prophethood) and *risāla* (messangerhood). This distinction between *muḥaddath* and a prophet or messenger can be traced back to a variant reading attributed to ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭabbās (d. 68/687).

It was during the Imamate of Imām al-Bāqir that the idea of *taḥḍīth* was spread among Shīʿas. Apparently, Zurāra b. Aʿyan and his brother Ḥumrān b. Aʿyan were among the first Imāmī scholars who narrated the idea of *taḥḍīth* from Imām al-Bāqir. The first time that Ḥumrān b. Aʿyan heard Imām al-Bāqir say ʿAlī was a *muḥaddath* he was so surprised that he returned to his associates and said, “I have brought you very strange news. They asked, what is it?” Ḥumrān then said, “I heard Abū Jaʿfar al-Bāqir say that ʿAlī was a *muḥaddath*. They then said, but you have done nothing. Why did you not ask him who it was who used to speak to him?” Ḥumrān said, “I went back to Imām al-Bāqir and said to him, I went to my associates and told them about what you had told me and they said, you have done nothing Why did you not ask him who it was who used to speak to him? The Imām said to me, the angel spoke to him. I then asked, [Do you mean] he was a prophet? Ḥumrān then said, he moved his hand to reject it and added, “He was like Dhū al-Qarnayn, the associate of Solomon, and the associate of Moses. Have you not heard

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42 *Taḥḍīth* in early Shīʿī literature is the similar to what happened to Maryam in the verse [Q 3:42-45]. According to these verses since Maryam was chosen by God, she was capable of being spoken to by angels even though she was not a prophet. *Taḥḍīth* is also similar to the rabbinic motif of the *bath Qōl* (Hebrew: בּת קול, literally voice of Heaven) In Judaism. *Bath Qōl*, in Talmudic literature, is an echo of a word uttered in heaven which replaced prophecy as a means of heavenly communication with human beings. (Neusner and Avery-Peck, *The Routledge Dictionary of Judaism*, 14).

43 It is reported that Ibn ʿAbbās used to recite [Q 22:52] as ‘We did not send before you a messenger or a prophet or a muḥaddath (wa mā arsalnā min qablika min rasūlīn wa lā nabiyīn wa lā muḥaddathīn)’ (al-Qurṭubī, al-Ǧāmiʿ, 13:79-80; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr*, 8:2500 no. 13996; See also Kohlberg, “The Term ‘Muḥaddath’,” 41). Ibn ʿAbbās’ recitation (and probably his codex) was not admitted into the ‘Uthmānic codex.

that he (the Prophet) said, ‘Among you there is one like him’?" The Imāms connected the interpretation of the verse in question to the verses [Q 19:51, 54]. It is reported that Zurāra asked Imām al-Bāqir about the verse [Q 19:51, 54] ‘he was a messenger [and] a prophet’ in which Moses and Ishmael are identified as both a messenger (rasūl) and a prophet (nabī). Moses was a prophet to both the Israelites and Pharaoh’s people. As a prophet he only received divine news and warned people. As a messenger, Moses saw the angel of revelation in an awakening/material reality to receive divine messages/scripture (the Torah) and to bring to the people a new Divine Law. Zurāra asked the Imām, “What is a messenger and what is a prophet?” The Imām answered, “A prophet is one who sees angels in his dreams and hears his voice but does not see the angel when he is awake. The messenger is one who hears the voice and sees angels in his dreams, and also sees angels when he is awake.” Therefore, a messenger is one to whom the angel comes openly in a lower degree of reality and speaks to him to give him the divine message. Zurāra asked the Imām, “What is the position of the Imām?” The Imām replied, “He hears the voice but does not see angel neither in his dreams nor while awake.’ Then he recited the following verse [Q 22:52] ‘We did not send before you a messenger or a prophet [or a muḥaddath]’ The Imām recited this verse with the word muḥaddath and established the Qur’ānic foundation of this belief among the Shīʿas. Since the Imāms are granted divine knowledge and insight, they can work as witnesses over God’s creatures in this world and hereafter.

Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn attempted to distinguish between the family of the Prophet and the Ummayds using Qur’ānic interpretation. After the Martyrdom of the third Shīʿī Imām al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī (d. 10 Muḥarram 61/10 October 680), the Qur’ānic exegesis was politicized more than ever because Umayyads had to justify their actions theologically and politically. As Abdul-Raof noted aptly, by misinterpreting of two notions of free will (ikhtiyār) and predestination

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45 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:271 no. 5; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿīr, 321 no. 3; al-Mufīd, al-Ikhtīṣāṣ, 286.

46 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:176 no. 1; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿīr, 368 no. 2; 370 no. 8; al-Mufīd, al-Ikhtīṣāṣ, 328.

47 Regarding the significance of this period in early Imāmi history, it is recorded that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “If people had followed ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn and abandoned ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, they would have been rightly guided.” (al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:154 no. 80).
(qadar), Umayyads attempted to justify their political misfortunes. At the same time both Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn and ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān were in contact with early exegetes such as Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714) who was originally a Kūfan scholar.

Early Imāmī exegesis was essentially a Kūfan phenomenon for the first two Islamic centuries. Although five Shīʿī Imāms (from the second Imām al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī to the sixth Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq) were born and lived in Medina, they communicated with their Kūfan Shīʿas as through intermediaries such as merchants, travelers, and pilgrims. The Imāms were available to their followers in person or through correspondence to answer their exegetical questions. As Modarressi notes, Medina was never a centre for Shīʿas and it is reported that “during the late Umayyad period, only four Shīʿītes lived in Mecca and fewer than twenty in Mecca and Medina combined.” Therefore, almost all proto-Imāmī scholars of the 1st/7th and 2nd/8th century who wrote a tafsīr were Kūfan.

Abū Muḥammad Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714) was one of the first Shīʿas who likely wrote one of the earliest tafsīrs. Saʿīd was of an Ethiopian origin and a Kūfan client of Banū Wālibah. He was a disciple and transmitter of the fourth Imām ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. It is reported that he wrote his booklet of tafsīr upon the request of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (d. 86/705). Saʿīd b. Jubayr was commended by Imām al-Ṣādiq who stated, “Saʿīd b. Jubayr followed ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn.” The Imām then added, “Al-Ḥajjāj killed him only for this reason.” Al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (d. 95/714) was the Umayyad governor of Iraq (from 75/694 to 95/714) who suppressed the widespread socio-political unrest after the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn.

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51 al-Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*, 114 no. 1132.
b. ʿAlī.⁵⁴ It is reported that when Ḥajjāj’s army arrested Saʿīd and made him enter the palace of al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf, he said to Saʿīd mockingly, “Are you ‘Shaqī b. Kusayr’?”⁵⁵ Saʿīd said, “My mother knew my name better who called me Saʿīd b. Jubayr.” Al-Ḥajjāj asked him, “What do you say regarding Abū Bakr and ʿUmar? Are they in heaven or in the fire?” Saʿīd b. Jubayr answered, “If I enter Paradise and I look at its inhabitants I will know who is there and if I enter the fire and see its inhabitants I will know who is in it.” Al-Ḥajjāj asked, “What do you say concerning the [first three] caliphs?” Saʿīd said, “I am not in charge of them.” Al-Ḥajjāj asked, “Which of them do you love more?” Saʿīd answered, “The one who is more satisfied with my Creator.” Al-Ḥajjāj asked, “Which one is more satisfied with the Creator?” Saʿīd responded, “God who knows all secrets and private conversations only knows it.” Al-Ḥajjāj said, “Do you refuse to accept what I say?” Saʿīd said, “I do not like to deny you.”⁵⁶ Al-Ḥajjāj regarded Ibn Jubayr’s tendency to Shīʿī Imāms as a political affront that must be punished by death. Therefore, he executed Ibn Jubayr in 94/713 in the city of Wāsīṭ, southern Iraq.⁵⁷

1.1.1.1 First half of the 2nd/8th century: Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq’s disciples

The systematic articulation of Imāmī Shīʾī doctrine based on the Qurʿān and its exegesis can be traced back to the teachings attributed to Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir (d. 114/732–118/736) and later his son and successor Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765) in Medina. Through the Qurʿān and its exegesis, they expressed central Shīʾī doctrines (especially the Imamate) along with its application in religious, theological, juridical and ethical domains.⁵⁸ They defined a distinctive religious and social identity for their companions through the Qurʿān and its exegesis. Recently Haider showed that the Imāmī Shīʾī identity as a separate community with a distinctly Shīʾī law


⁵⁵ ‘Shaqī’ (from the root sh-q-w/y) means wretched which is opposite to ‘Saʿīd’ (from the root s-ʿ-d) which means happy. Jubayr is from the root j-b-r which means ‘to set broken things, to restore’ which is opposite to Kusayr which is from the root k-s-r to mean ‘to break something.’

⁵⁶ al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 119 no. 190.

⁵⁷ al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, 6:487-491.

⁵⁸ See Lalani, Early, 127.
and doctrine crystallized in the early 2nd/8th century in the age of Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq in Kūfa.\(^{59}\) It is reported that before Imām al-Bāqir, the Shīʿa did not have a structured belief and ritual system and they often referred to non-Shīʿī scholars for their religious questions.\(^{60}\)

Through Imām al-Bāqir’s systematic teachings,\(^{61}\) the Shīʿī school of thought began to systematically create a discourse to articulate its tenets and aspirations.\(^{62}\)

In the Imāmī community of the 2nd/8th century, the esoteric interpretation of Shīʿī Imāms replaced or complemented prevalent exoteric interpretation of early exegetes. For example, the Prophet and Imāms as sources of spiritual guidance for human beings replaced stars and astronomical signs. In an exoteric interpretation of the verse [Q 16:16] ‘and [by] landmarks, and by the star they are guided’\(^{63}\) it is reported that the Prophet said “the star is the polestar (al-jady) because it is the star that does not disappear and the qibla is established upon it, and the people of the land and sea (all people) use it for guidance.”\(^{64}\) For Muslims, natural sources of guidance for finding the direction of prayer (qiblah) existed from the early days and this exoteric interpretation was prevalent among early Sunni exegetes.\(^{65}\) However, in early Imāmī exegesis,

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61 The Imams wanted their followers to listen to their teachings and obey their instructions. Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “Listening and obeying are the gates to goodness. One who listens and is obedient [to our instructions] no argument is against him. One who listens but disobeys will have no argument in his favor. The [true] Imam of the Muslims, on the Day they meet God, his argument will be complete. Then Imam al-Ṣādiq cited [Q 17:71]” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:189-190 no. 17; al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, 2:304 no. 122). In interpreting [Q 2:165] “among people there are some who take up equals apart from God, loving them like loving God” it is reported by Jābir that Imam al-Bāqir said, “by God, they are the friends of so and so [and so]. They have taken them as their imams (leaders without divine authority) instead of the Imams (leaders with divine authority) who are appointed for people by God.” After that Imam recited [Q 2:165-166] and added, “O Jābir! they are the unjust imams and their followers.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:374 no. 11; al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, 1:72 no. 142. See also al-Mufīd, *al-Ikhtiṣāṣ*, 334).

62 See Modarressi, * Tradition*, 41. As Modarressi noted this systematic teaching led to Shīʿī Islam’s official creation (see Modarressi, * Tradition*, 40).

63 Landmarks in this verse translates ʿalāmāt which were astronomical signs for Arabs which could provide directional guidance (See Cook, “Why Incline to the Left in Prayer?,” 104).


65 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 14:64. al-Ṭabarī narrated, “O people, God have made signs for you by day on your ways in your travels and the stars by night to guide you in your roads.”
animate subjects were employed to interpret inanimate objects in the Qurʾān. The esoteric Ḥūḍūrī traditions blow God’s breath into Qurʾānic words to manifest a deeper meaning of the text. It is reported from Imāms al-Bāqir, al-Ṣādiq and al-Riḍā that in this verse “the Prophet is the star and the Imāms are the landmarks.” This kind of esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾānic verses became prevalent among Shīʿas from the first half of the 2nd/8th century.

During the time of the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq the first proto-Ḥūḍūrī commentaries emerged. This section attempts to locate and identify these commentaries of proto-Ḥūḍūrī Shīʿas written during the lifetime of the Imāms (11-260/633-874). For this purpose, the names of early proto-Ḥūḍūrī exegetes (in order of their date of death and place of activity) and the name of their commentaries which are preserved in the earliest extant Shīʿī and Sunnī biographical and bibliographical literature are collected (see fig. 1).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Died</th>
<th>Commentary</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Abī Shu`ba al-Ḥalabī</td>
<td>Kūfa</td>
<td>148/765 (in or before)</td>
<td>Kitāb al-tafsīr</td>
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</table>


67 The earliest extant Shīʿī biographical sources comprises the Kitāb al-Rijāl of al-Kashshāfī (fl. early 4th/10th century), the Kitāb al-Rijāl of Ibn al-Ghaḍārī (fl. early 5th/11th century), the Kitāb al-Rijāl of al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058), and the Kitāb al-Rijāl of al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067). The earliest extant Sunnī and Shīʿī bibliographical sources are al-Fihrīṣt of Ibn al-Nadīm (d. c. 380/990) and Fihrīṣt kutub al-Shīʿa wa-ṣāḥib wa-ṣāḥīḥ wa-ṣawādīḥ wa-asma` al-muṣannafīn wa-ṣāḥīḥ al-ṣāḥīḥ of al-Ṭūsī respectively. I did not mention Kitāb al-Rijāl by Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī (d. 274/887 or 280/894) because the authenticity of this book is disputed (See Modarressi, Tradition, xvii). Ibn al-Nadīm completed his bibliographic work al-Fihrīṣt in 377/987. I also used Modarressi’s book for the first two centuries. For the Shīʿī kalām literature until the end of the 3rd/9th century, see van Ess 1991–7: v. 66–103. My reference for Shīʿī mutakallimūn and their writings from the 3rd/9th century onwards is MṬM.
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<td>Thābit b. Dīnār al-Thumālī</td>
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<td>Wuhayb b. Ḥafṣ al-Jurayrī</td>
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<td>’Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ</td>
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<td>Nishābūr</td>
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<td>54. Hūsain b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad Abū al-Futūḥ Ṣādī</td>
<td>Rayy</td>
<td>552/1157 (ca.)</td>
<td>Rawḍ al-Jīnān wa-Rawḥ al-Janān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān</td>
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<td>55. Alḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Isfārāʾīnī</td>
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<td>Kitāb al-maṣābīḥ fī dhikr mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī ahl al-bayt</td>
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<td>56. Thābit al-Ṭabarī</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Tafsīr al-Qurʾān</td>
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<td>57. [Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī]</td>
<td>Kūfah</td>
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<td>58. [Imām ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sajjād]</td>
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<td>95/714</td>
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<td>60. [Imām Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Sādiq]</td>
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<td>148/765</td>
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<td>63. [Imām Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Jawād]</td>
<td>Medina</td>
<td>220/835</td>
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</table>

**Table 1. Early Imāmī exegetes and their commentaries**

This database is used to draw a graph of these commentators’ network (of teacher/student or Imām/compiler of a commentary) to discover the chain of Imāmī commentators who were affiliated with the same school of Imāmī exegesis (e.g. esoteric, non-esoteric, or legal) (see fig. 2). By collecting the Imām’s exegetical corpus extant in early Imāmī commentaries and collections of ḥadīth, it is attempted to discover each exegete’s style and exegetical tendency. Each early Shiʿī exegete may use his theological preference and tendency to select his sources to transmit a specific type of exegetical tradition.
Figure 1. ʿImāmī commentators (11-552/663-1157)
The proto-Imāmī commentaries were anthologies of exegetical ḥadīths about particular verses which were collected by a number of the Imāms’ disciples.68 These personal notebooks of early proto-Shīʿī scholars were compilations of quotations from the Imāms to elucidate some lexical or conceptual expressions in the Qurʿān, most likely without any addition on the part of the compiler who attributed his name to the work.69 Concerning these early Shīʿī exegetical compendiums, al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1153) states “Our companions (aṣḥābunā, i.e., the early Imāmīs), may God be pleased with them, wrote only compendiums (mukhtaṣarāt) in which they passed on traditions which had reached them in this [genre]. They were not concerned about explaining the meanings and unveiling the secrets [of the verses].”70 Although none of these early Imāmī commentaries has survived, we know that most of these compendiums were titled Kitāb al-tafsīr or Tafsīr al-Qurʾān. The titles of some of these early Shīʿī commentaries are preserved in the earliest extant Shīʿī and Sunnī biographical and bibliographical literature. In addition to their titles, excerpts of those early commentaries have come down to us in the later Imāmī commentaries such as Tafsīr al-Ayyāshī or collections of traditions such as al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī.

Imām al-Bāqir assumed that his authority to interpret the Qurʿān was accepted. Therefore, at the beginning he started to transmit Prophetic exegetical traditions without any chain of narrations and even sometimes directly from God. Therefore, it is reported that the people of Medina said, “We have not seen anyone as bold as he is.” When the Imām heard what they say he began to narrate to them from the Messenger of God. The people of Medina began to say, we have not seen a greater liar than him because he speaks on behalf of one whom he has never seen. When the Imām heard what they say he began to narrate to them from Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī (d. ca. 78/697)71 because Imām al-Bāqir commonly used to visit Jābir out of respect for his being a

68 Bar-Asher, Scripture, 73; Amir-Moezzi, Le Coran, 103.

69 Amir-Moezzi, “The Tafsīr,” 120. The only exception that I have seen is Tafsīr gharīb al-Qurʾān of Abū Saʿīd Abān b. Taghlib (d. 141/758). According to al-Ṭūsī, Abān had mentioned his evidence (shawāhid) from poetry to explain Qurʾānic words. (al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 45 no. 61)

70 al-Ṭabrisī, Majma’, 1:75.

71 For more information on Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh see Ibn Saʿd, Ṭabaqāt, 4:382–92, and al-Mizzī, Tahdhib, 4:443–54.
prominent companion of the Prophet. This strategy worked and people accepted what Imām al-Bāqir narrated from Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh from the Prophet. In addition to that, Imām al-Bāqir and his son Imām al-Ṣādiq used to emphasize that, “My hadīth is the hadīth of my father. The hadīth of my father is the hadīth of my grandfather. The hadīth of my grandfather is the hadīth of al-Ḥusayn. The hadīth of al-Ḥusayn is the hadīth of al-Ḥasan. The hadīth of al-Ḥasan is the hadīth of the commander of the believers [ʿAlī]. The hadīth of the commander of the believers [ʿAlī] is the hadīth of the messenger of God. The hadīth of the messenger of God is the words of God.” In this way Imām al-Bāqir spread his teachings under the authority of his father and Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh in order to be accepted by the public.

Imām al-Bāqir was also planning to expand his systematic teachings after his death. When he was dying, he urged his son Imām Jaʿfar al-Sādiq to take care of his companions. Imām al-Sādiq promised, “By God, I will leave them only when every one of them, even in Egypt, does not need to ask anyone his religious questions.” Because of the late Umayyad and early Abbasid restrictions on Shīʿas in Medina, this system of belief moved to Kūfa from its inception in the mid 2nd/8th century where the Shīʿas were developing their independent religious and social identities. Some of the Kūfan Shīʿas, collected and edited the teachings of Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq during the first half of 2nd/8th century.

The earliest proto-Imāmī commentary mentioned in sources is Tafsīr al-Qurʾān (or Tafsīr al-Bāqir) which is traditionally attributed to the Imām al-Bāqir. Ibn al-Nadīm begins his section “On the title of the books written about the interpretation of the Qurʾān” with the Tafsīr of Imām

72 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:470 no. 2; al-Kashshī, Rījāl, 41 no. 88; al-Mufīd, al-Ikhtīṣās, 62. Also see Ibn Bābawayh, al-Amālī, 353 no. 9; Ḥib al-sharāyiʿ, 233 no. 1; al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, 2:158-159.


75 As Modarressi noted, during the late Umayyad period, fewer than twenty Shīʿas lived in Mecca and Medina combined. In this period, Kūfa was the main city where the Shīʿa population was concentrated. See Modarressi, Tradition, 39 footnote 1.

76 See Haider, The Origins of the Shīʿa.
al-Bāqir. Since this commentary is the first on Ibn al-Nadīm’s list, Frolov inferred that Ibn al-Nadīm wanted to show the leading role of Shī’a Imāms and scholars in the early stages of the development of *tafsīr* in the school of Kūfā. This commentary was probably a collection of exegetical traditions that Imām Bāqir’s disciple Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir quoted from him. It is recorded that Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir al-Hamdānī al-Khārifī (d. ca. mid-2nd/8th century) the eponym of the Zaydi-Jārūdī, al-Jārūdiyya, wrote *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*. Abū al-Jārūd was a blind Kūfan exegete and a disciple and transmitter of the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. His commentary has not survived; however, excerpts are transmitted in later Shīʿī ḥadīth collections such as *al-Kāfī* or commentaries of Furāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī, ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, and al-‘Ayyāshī. Imām al-Bāqir and his exegetical traditions were so prevalent in the 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries, so much so that even al-Ṭabarī quotes them in his *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān*. *Tafsīr al-Bāqir* was known among early Imāmī scholars. In his book *Naqḍ*, ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī mentions “*Tafsīr Muḥammad Bāqir*” as one of the earliest Imāmī

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80 al-Najāshī, *Rijāl*, 170 no. 448; al-Ṭūsī, *Fihrīst*, 203 no. 303; Modarressi, *Tradition*, 122-123. The Jārūdīs argued that the Prophet clearly appointed Ḥalf as his successor. Therefore, those Companions who rejected ‘Alī’s claims were apostates. The Jārūdīs also restricted legitimate legal authority to the descendants of Imām ‘Alī and Fāṭima. Moreover, they did not elevate Abū Bakr and ‘Umar above ‘Alī (see Haider, “Batriyya”).
81 On him Abū al-Jārūd see Van Ess, *Theology*, 1:292-295; Modarressi, *Tradition*, 121-125 no. 13. He was originally from Khurāsān who joined Shī’a as in Kūfā later in his life.
84 Lalani, *Early*, 41.
commentaries. Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664/1266) had a copy of at least the first five parts of this commentary, which he described and quoted in his work Saʿd al-suʿūd.

Since Kūfa was the most important Shīʿī center during the first two Islamic centuries, it is reported that other Kūfan exegetes were also in contact with Imām al-Bāqir. For example, Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suddī al-Qurashī (d. 127/745) was a late Follower (tābiʿī) who reportedly met Imāms al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī (d. 49/669) and al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī and became a transmitter of the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. He was a Kūfan preacher, and exegete who attempted to define some ambiguous Qurʾānic terms such as Kalāla in [Q 4:12, 176]. Al-Suddī’s exegetical expertise was contested by Sunni scholars allegedly because of his political leaning towards Shīʿī Islam. It is reported that he was known as al-shattām (the frequent vilifier) because of his vilification of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. An example of al-Suddī’s pro-Shīʿī interpretation is that he considered the verse [Q 5:55] to be a reference to ʿAlī. Another Kūfan exegete who was an associate of Imām al-Bāqir was ‘Aṭiyya al-ʿAwfī.

85 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 228.
86 Ibn Ṭāwūs, Saʿd al-suʿūd, 121-123; Kohlberg, A Medieval, 339.
87 al-Dhahabī, Siyar, 5:265.
88 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 124 no. 1247, 160 no. 1801.
92 al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 6:186; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Tafsīr, 4:1162 no. 6548; al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 4:80. In al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Abī Ḥātim’s commentaries it is related from al-Suddī that this verse is concerning all believers in general, however, ʿAlī [b. Abī Ṭālib] is one of them. It seems that they (or later transmitters) are attempting to do not interpret it as a specific reference to ʿAlī. The term Rāfiḍa (or Rāfiḍa) is an ancient derogatory term for radical Shīʿa from Sunni point of view which literally means ‘rejector.’ Its equivalent for radical Sunnīs is nāṣibī (or nāṣiba) from Shīʿī point of view which means ‘one who declares hatred to the Shīʿī Imams.’ On the term Rāfiḍa see Kohlberg, “The term ‘Rāfiḍa’.”
ʿAṭiyya b. Saʿd b. Junāda al-ʿAwfī al-Kūfī (d. 111/729 or 127/745) was a Kūfan transmitter of Imām al-Bāqir⁹³ who also wrote a commentary.⁹⁴ He was a disciple of ʿAbd Allāh b. Abbās (d. 68/687) and a transmitter of his Tafsīr.⁹⁵ ʿAṭiyya’s moderate tendency toward the Shīʿī Imāms caused Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889) to mention his name in the list of early Shīʿ as who were not Rāḍīfī.⁹⁶ Some of pro-Shīʿī exegetical traditions of ʿAṭiyya al-ʿAwfī are survived in later Shīʿī and Sunni commentaries. For example, al-ʿAyyāshī and al-Mawṣilī (d. 307/919) have quoted from ʿAṭiyya al-ʿAwfī stating that “When the messenger of God conquered Khaybar, and God gave him Fadak as booty (fayʾ) and sent down to him the verse [Q 17:26] ‘and give to the relatives his right’ the Prophet told Fāṭima: O Fāṭima! Fadak is yours.”⁹⁷ ʿAṭiyya’s commentary was collected and reconstructed by ʿAbd al-Razzāq Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥirz al-Dīn in three volumes entitled Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Kārim in 1431/2010.⁹⁸ Study of ʿAṭiyya’s commentary demonstrates that he has transmitted almost all pro-ʿAlīd exegetical traditions through a single line of transmission of the companion Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (d. Medina, 64/684 or 74/693). For example, in another pro-ʿAlīd tradition concerning the controversial verse [Q 33:33], “ʿAṭiyya asked Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī: Who are ahl al-bayt whom God has removed impurity from and purified completely? Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī counted by his hand five people: the messenger of

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⁹³ al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 140 no. 1497.
⁹⁴ Sezgin, Geschichte, 1:30.
⁹⁵ al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 1:76.
⁹⁶ Ibn Qutaybah, al-Maʿārif, 624. In Ibn Qutayba’s list, more than two-thirds of the scholars are Kūfans. Apparently, all these Kūfan Shīʿ as in Ibn Qutayba’s list preferred ʿAlī to ʿUthmān (Ibn Ḥanbal, Kitāb al-ʿIlal, 2:535). Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) remarks that all Kūfans had preferred ʿAlī to ʿUthmān except two: Ṭalḥa ibn Muṣarrif (d. 112/730) and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Idrīs (d. 192/807).
⁹⁷ Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:287; Al-Mawṣilī, Musnad, 2:334 no. 1075. When the verse [Q 17:26] “Give unto the kinsman his right” (For a similar verse, see 30:38; see also 2:83, 177, 215; 4:36; 8:41; 24:22) was revealed, the Prophet called his daughter Fāṭima and gifted the oasis Fadak to her (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:543 no. 5; al-Muṣĩd, al-Muqnīa, 288-289; al-Ṭūsī, Tahdhīb, 4:148 no. 414. Also see al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:287 no. 49; Furūt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 239 no. 322, 323; 322 no. 437, 437; 323 no. 439, 440. On Fadak also see Vaglieri, “Fadak.”). But later this garden was viewed by Abū Bakr as property that belonged to the Muslim polity and not to Fāṭimah. In contrast, most Sunni commentators see this verse as one of several injunctions to observe the rights of kin found throughout the Qurʾān. It is reported in Shīʿī and Sunni commentaries that Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn understands kinsman here to refer specifically to the kin of the Prophet Muhammad, meaning that they should be given their specially allotted share of bounties and spoils, since they were forbidden from receiving other forms of charity. (al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 6:95)
⁹⁸ See al-ʿAwwī, Tafsīr.
God, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn. After that Abū Saʿīd added: this verse was sent down in Umm Salama’s home.”

In addition to the aforementioned exegetes who transmitted exegetical traditions from the Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn and Imām al-Bāqir, the following disciples of Imām al-Bāqir wrote commentaries which are mentioned in extant early Imāmī bio-bibliographical works: Jābir b. Yazīd b. al-Ḥārith al-Juʿfī (d. 128/746 or 132/750), Abān b. Taghlib al-Bakrī al-Jurayrī (d. 141/758), Thābit b. Dīnār al-Thumālī (d. 148/765 or 150/767) (See fig. 3).

Exegetical traditions which are survived from these three early Imāmī exegetes indicate that the esoteric approach was prevalent in early Imāmī exegesis which will be discussed later.

**Figure 2.** Imami commentators who were disciples of [Imām Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Bāqir]

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99 al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu jam al-awsat*, 2:229 no. 1826; Al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, 334. In Furāt Al-Kūfī’s commentary, Abū Saʿīd asks Umm Salama regarding this verse and she answers that this verse was sent down in my home regarding seven persons and she adds Jabraʾīl and Mīkāʾīl to those five people.

100 Since Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir al-Hamdānī al-Khārīfī (d. ca. mid-2nd/8th century) parted ways with the followers of Imam al-Bāqir and joined Zayd b. ʿAlī’s revolt, his *tafsīr al-Qurān* is not considered part of proto-Imami commentaries. For further information see Madelung, “Abu’l-Jārūd Hamdānī.”
Imām al-Bāqir not only interpreted the Qurʾān systematically, but reportedly challenged the authority of his contemporary early Qurʾān exegetes. For example, Qatāda b. Diʿāma al-Sadūsī (d. 117/735) was one of those exegetes who met Imām al-Bāqir in Medina and was questioned by him.\footnote{See Pellat, “Ḳatāda b. Diʿāma”}

Qatāda was a Baṣran philologist, jurist, Qurʾān exegete and the most prominent pupil of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), the founder of the Baṣra School of exegesis. It is reported that Imām al-Bāqir asked Qatāda “are you the jurist of people of Baṣra?” Qatāda responded, “People believe this.” The Imām continued, “It has been reported to me that you interpret the Qurʾān.” Qatāda said, “Yes.” The Imām then asked him, “Do you interpret with knowledge or with ignorance?” Qatāda answered, “No! With knowledge.” Since Qatāda had claimed to have knowledge of Qurʾānic exegesis, the Imām challenged him and at the end of their conversation, the Imām said to Qatāda, “Only those whom the Qurʾān was addressed to (man khūṭiba bih’), know it.”\footnote{al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:311-312 no. 485.}

In this same vein, Imām al-Bāqir used to challenge his rivals’ authority to interpret the Qurʾān.

During the period of Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq, the Shīʿī view that the authority to interpret the Qurʾān after the Prophet is exclusively delegated by him to ʿAlī and his descendants, was consolidated.\footnote{See Bar-Asher, “The Authority,” 161-162. In contrast, the Sunni view was that the authority to interpret the Qurʾān was delegated by the Prophet to his Companions (ṣaḥāba) and the Followers (tābiʿīn). After them, the religious scholars (ʿulamāʾ) were authorized to interpret the Qurʾān.} During the lifetime of the Imāms, they were the authorities to understand the Qurʾān; however, in their absence the Qurʾān is the criteria of authenticity of a hadīth which is silent.\footnote{Amir-Moezzi, “Remarques,” 7.}

In this regard, Imām al-Ṣādiq reports that in his sermon in Minā during the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet said: “O people! Whatever came to you from me and agrees with the Book of God, [know that] I said it, and whatever came to you contradicts the Book of God, [know that] I did not say it.”\footnote{al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:69 no. 5; al-Barqū, al-Maḥāsin, 221 no. 130; 221 no. 131; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:8 no. 1; Ibn Bābawayh, Maʿānī al-akhbār, 390 no. 30. See al-Ḥimyarī, Qurb al-insād, 92 no. 305.}

Imām al-Ṣādiq also said “Every hadīth which does not
agree with the Qurʾān is only well-decorated speech (zukhruf)\(^\text{106}\) and “whatever agrees with the Book of God accept it, and whatever contradicts the Book of God reject it.”\(^\text{107}\) Although the book of God is the main criterion and necessary to find the truth, in early Shīʿī traditions it was not sufficient without its divine exegete. The Qurʾān is a text which is subject to different interpretations and cannot be understood without the Prophet and Imāms exegetical ḥadīth.\(^\text{108}\)

The Imāms’ authority to interpret the Qurʾān was part of a complete divine authority in religion delegated by God to the Prophet which he delegated to ‘Alī. In what has survived of Aṣl of Ḥumayd al-Ḥannāṭ,\(^\text{109}\) he narrated from Abū Ishāq Thaʿlabā b. Maymūn al-Naḥwī\(^\text{110}\) that Imām al-Ṣādiq said “God disciplined (addaba) His Prophet before His own love (ʿalā maḥabbatih) and said ‘truly you are of a great character’ then He delegated (fawwaḍa) [authority] to him and said ‘Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it; and whatever he forbids you from it refrain’” Then Imām related this injunction to the verse [Q 4:80] “whoever obeys the Messenger, obeys God” and he continues “truly the Prophet of God delegated [authority] to ʿAlī.”\(^\text{111}\) God delegated to His prophet the affairs of people to test their obedience.\(^\text{112}\)

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\(^{106}\) al-Kulaynī, al-Ḵāfī, 1:69 no. 3 and 4; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:9 no. 4; al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:220-221 no. 128.

\(^{107}\) al-Kulaynī, al-Ḵāfī, 1:69 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:8 no. 2; 2:115 no. 150; al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:226 no. 150; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Amālī, 367 no. 16.

\(^{108}\) On the doctrine that the Qurʾān cannot be understood without Ḥadīth, see Goldziher, Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung, 55–57; Birkeland, Old Muslim Opposition Against Interpretation of the Koran, passim; Nwyia, Exégèse coranique et langage mystique, 60–74. Rippin, “The Present Status of Tafsīr Studies,” 226–28.

\(^{109}\) Modarressi, Tradition, 210 no. 48. Abū al-Faḍl ʿĀsim b. Ḥumayd al-Ḥannāṭ was a Kūfan transmitter from and a disciple of Imam al-Ṣādiq and his disciples.

\(^{110}\) Modarressi, Tradition, 380 no. 203. Abū Ishāq Thaʿlabā b. Maymūn was a prominent jurist, grammarian, and lexicographer in the Shīʿī community of Kūfa. He transmitted ḥadīth from Imam al-Ṣādiq and his disciples.

\(^{111}\) al-Kulaynī, al-Ḵāfī, 1:265 no. 1; Aṣl ʿĀsim b. Ḥumayd, 171-172 no. 70; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:259 no. 203; al-Sayyārī, Kitāb al-qirāʾ āt, 54 no. 204; al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:162 no. 111; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ār, 384 no. 4 and 5; 1:385 no. 7.

\(^{112}\) al-Kulaynī, al-Ḵāfī, 1:266 no. 3; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ār, 379 no. 7; 380 no. 10; Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Ḵāfī, 1:267 no. 5; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ār, 378 no. 2. This tafwīḍ (delegation) was different from delegation of divine powers to the Imāms in early Shīʿī doctrine. ʿAbbāsid-era ghulāt regarded the Imāms as holding a portion of God’s power to create the, all that is in it, and all acts. (McDermott, Theology, 114).
In the same vein, the Imāms used to forbid others from interpreting the Qurʾān without divine knowledge. By citing two verses of the Qurʾān, [Q 7:169] ‘Has the covenant of the Book not been made with them to say not of God except the truth?’ and [Q 10:39] ‘but they denied what they could not comprehend in [their] knowledge and whose interpretation has not yet come to them’, Imām al-Šādiq warned his Shīʿ as not to speak about a verse until they have [divine] knowledge and not reject whatever they do not have knowledge of.\(^\text{113}\) In this regard Imām al-Šādiq said, “my father said: Whoever uses his independent opinion to interpret some verses by other verses (\textit{darb al-Qurʾān}) becomes an unbeliever.”\(^\text{114}\) It seems that intertextuality and employing synonyms were not endorsed for Shīʿas to interpret the Qurʾān in early Imāmī interpretive approaches unless they confirmed it with the Imām. His father Imām al-Bāqir said, “Do express what you do know, and if you do not know, profess that ‘God knows better.’ When a person abstracts a verse [from its context], the person falls [in an abyss] deeper than the distance between the Heavens and the Earth.”\(^\text{115}\) In the first sentence of the verse [Q 7:169] which is about the Jews, it is said that ‘the covenant of the Book is taken from them so that they do no speak of God except the truth.’ The Imām appropriated this verse for Muslims and expanded its application to the Qurʾān so that they have to speak truthfully about its exegesis. In the second verse [Q 10:39] which concerns disbelievers, the Qurʾān states “they deny what they cannot comprehend whose \textit{taʾwīl} has not yet come to them.”

During the 2\textsuperscript{nd}/8\textsuperscript{th} century exegetes were not only traditionalists (\textit{muḥaddithūn}) but also theologians (\textit{mutakallimūn}) with the same approach of merely explaining the Imāms’ exegetical teachings. As Ansari and Schmidtke have aptly noted, in the first phase (\textit{ʿaṣr ḥudūr}) Shīʿī theologians were in basic agreement with traditionalists doctrinally. Traditionalists and theologians did not oppose each other in their fundamental doctrines because the Shīʿī theologians were at the same time companions of the Imāms as well as their faithful transmitters. Their doctrine was based on the teachings of the Imāms, whom they considered as the divine


source of knowledge. However, this does not mean that they agreed on all theological issues. For example, some of the prominent Imāmī scholars of the second century such as Zurāra b. Aʿyan (d. 148/765 or 149/766), Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Nuʿmān ‘Ṣāḥib al-Ṭāq’ (d. ca. mid 2nd/8th), Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. ca.179/795) and Ḥishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī (d. after 183/799) had four different theological opinions concerning the attributes of God. Despite the differences, these early Imāmī scholars did not interpret the Qurʾān according to their opinion. Their commentaries on the Qurʾān were only collections of the Imāms’ traditions. The reason that early Imāmī scholars did not employ their independent opinion to interpret the Qurʾān was that they considered the Qurʾān as ‘the mute Book’ (al-kitāb al-ṣāmit), and the Imām as the ‘speaking Qurʾān’ (al-qurʾān al-nāṭiq) who have exclusive divine authority to interpret God’s words and can reveal the intention of God.

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120 Frequent disputes is seen in primary sources between Hishām b. al-Ḥakam and Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq or other Shīʿī theologians of his time on doctrinal matters. (See Bayhom-Daou, ‘Hishām’; Madelung, ‘Early’)
121 Mūsawī Khalkhālī, “Mutakallimān.” According to early Imāmī exegetical traditions, the Imams introduced themselves as manifestations of the most beautiful names of God. God is completely unknowable by our ways of perception and He cannot be described by limitations. He is greater than being described through the attributes (Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:100 no. 2) The Names and Attributes of God can be comprehended by creatures in general and human beings in particular. This is the domain of theophanic theology because, the names and attributes of God are His manifestation (Amir-Moezzi, *The Spirituality*, 298). In this regard, Muʿāwiya b. Ṭāhir b. Ṭāhir b. ʿAmr b. Ṭāhir b. Ammār al-Duhmī (d. 175/791) reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq in interpreting [Q 7:180] ‘to God belong the most beautiful names, so call Him by them’ said, “By God, we [the Imams] are the most beautiful names of God. God does not accept any deed of His servants except by knowledge (maʿrifa) of us.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:143-144 no. 6. Also see al-ʿAyyāshī, *Taṣfīr*, 2:42 no. 119).
122 See Ayoub, “The Speaking Qurʾān.” In early Imami exegetical traditions, there is also a distinction between the ‘speaking Imam’ (al-imām al-nāṭiq) and the ‘silent Imam’ (al-imām al-ṣāmit). In interpreting ‘an abandoned well and lofty palace’ [Q 22:45] the Imam al-Kāẓim told his brother ‘Alī b. Jaʿfar that, “‘the abandoned well’ refers to the silent Imam and ‘the lofty palace’ refers to the speaking Imam.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:427 no. 75; al-ʿUrayḍī, *Masāʾil ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar*, 317 no. 796; al-Saffār al-Qummī, *Baṣāʾir*, 505 no. 4; Ibn Bābawayh, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 2:417 no. 10; Maʿānī al-akhbār, 111 no. 1 and 2).
As presented earlier, collected data shows that the early Shīʿī exegesis was essentially a Kūfan phenomenon for the first two Islamic centuries. Both esoteric and exoteric approaches could be discerned in early Kūfan Imāmī disciples of Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq and their survived exegetical traditions in the late Umayyad period in Kūfa. Since the esoteric teachings of the Imāms were not appropriate for everyone, they should be concealed. This concealment constitutes the essence of the doctrine of *taqiyya* (dissimulation). Taqiyyah, which is referred to in [Q 3:28] and [Q 16:106], was considered an important virtue in Shīʿī piety especially during the life time of the Imāms (up to mid 3rd/9th). Taqiyyah was prescribed in Shīʿī Islam to save lives of those Shīʿas who were compelled to do what was not lawful for them. Imāms did not write a prescription to all Shīʿas for all cases and said, “taqiyyah is for [the time when there is] lack of choice and the one involved in it knows best how to apply it.” The Imāms promised that those Shīʿas who practice taqiyya will have a double reward. In interpreting [Q 28:54] ‘They will be given reward twice for their having been patient’ Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “for their having been patient for practicing taqiyyah.” Then the Imām recited the next phrase ‘and they repel bad [deeds] with good [deeds]’ and continued, “good [deeds] means taqiyyah and bad [deeds] means to spread around (*idhāʿa*).” Spreading around the esoteric teachings of the Imām was a serious crime in Imāmī community which was considered equivalent to purposefully killing the Imāms.

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124 *Taqiyyah* continued throughout the history of Shīʿī Islam and is still considered legitimate when circumstances necessitate it. For more information on *Taqiyyah* see Kohlberg, “Some Imāmī-Shīʿī Views on Taqiyya” and his article “Taqiyya in Shīʿī Theology and Religion.”
Idhā’a was to spread around traditions of the Imāms, a practice which would endanger the transmitter or the Imām. In this regard, Imām al-Ṣādiq compared the Imāms with the prophets mentioned in [Q 2:61] ‘That was because they disbelieved in God’s signs and killed the prophets without right. That was because they disobeyed and committed transgression.’ Imām al-Ṣādiq swore to God that those people who are addressed in this verse “did not murder their prophets with their hands or swords but it was their [false] spreading of the prophets’ esoteric teachings which caused the prophets to be captured and murdered.” Through this kind of interpretation the Imāms encouraged their disciples to write their traditions and preserve their teachings. This strategy successfully concealed the teachings of the Imāms from wider public view and allowed their compilers to survive.

Idhā’a has a close relationship with the early Imāmī doctrine of badāʾ. Badāʾ means the manifestation of God’s ordinance based on the change of circumstances. This tenet was spread by the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq among the early Imāmīs. Most of the Shi’ī exegetical traditions that speak about the concept of badāʾ are situated in the discussion of the verse [Q 13:39] ‘God erases whatever He wills and brings into being [whatever He wills], and with Him is the Mother of the Book.’ Regarding this verse Imām al-Ṣādiq asked rhetorically, “Could a Divine decree be erased before even coming into being? [suggesting it cannot] And could any Divine decree come into being unless it did not exist before” An example of badāʾ where Imām al-Bāqir cited this verse concerns setting up time limits for prosperity in the Shi’ī community and coming into power of apparently, Imām al-Ṣādiq. Imām al-Bāqir said to Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī, “O Thābit! God had set a time for this amr (divine cause) [around] the year


133. See Ayoub, “Divine Preordination”; Madelung, “Badāʾ.”

134. al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:146-147 no. 2; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:215 no. 60; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 333 no. 4; al-Ṭūsī, Kitāb al-ghaybah, 430 no. 421.
seventy, but when al-Ḥusayn was killed God’s anger intensified on the people on earth. Consequently, He delayed it until [around] one hundred forty. We talked to you about it and you spread it and disclosed the secret. God thereafter has not set any time limit that we know of.” The Imām then recited [Q 13:39].

It seems that in the year one hundred forty it was ordained that Imām al-Ṣādiq would come to power; however, it was delayed. The issue of apparently inaccurate predictions of the Imāms was solved by interpretation of [Q 3:36]. Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “God revealed to ʿImrān saying, ‘I will grant you a perfect and blessed son who can heel the blind and the lepers and bring the dead back to life by My permission and I make him a messenger to the Israelites.’ ʿImrān then said it all to his wife Ḥanna, mother of Mary. When she conceived the baby Mary, she thought it would be a baby boy. When she gave birth to Mary she said, my Lord, I have given birth to a girl and boys are not like girls. A girl can not be a messenger. God said, ‘God knows to whom you have given birth.’ When God granted Jesus to Mary, he was the boy about whom ‘Imrān was given the good news that he was promised.” After that the Imām added, “When we say something about a man from us and that thing is found in his sons or grandsons then you must not deny it [i.e. the truth of what was said].” In this way, the Imāms wanted to remark that God’s hands are not tied as the Jews believed [Q 5:64] and He does whatever He wills.

According to early Imāmī traditions, the comprehensive knowledge of zāhir and bāṭin of the Qur’ān is only granted to the Prophet and Imāms. Since knowledge is power, this spiritual

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135 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:368 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:218 no. 69; al-Ṭūsī, Kitāb al-ghaybah, 428 no. 417.

136 In this regard, it is reported by Jābir that someone asked Imam al-Bāqir about the Qāʾim (the one who would rise up, the standing imam). He put his hand [on the shoulder of] Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Sadiq and said, by God, he is the Qāʾim of the family of Muḥammad.” In al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī at the end of this tradition it is reported that “Anbasa b. Bījād said, When Abī Jaʿfar [al-Bāqir] passed away, I went to see Abū ʿAbd Allāh [al-Sadiq] and told him of that. The Imam said, Jābir told the truth.” He then said, “You perhaps think that every succeeding Imam after a preceding Imam is not al-Qāʾim.”


138 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:535 no. 2; al-Ḥimyarī, Qurb al-īsnād, 351 no. 1260 without chain of narration.

139 In his letter to Muʿāwiya before Ṣiffīn, ʿAlī describes himself as “a servant of God who believed in literal revelation (tanzīl) and knew spiritual interpretation (taʾwīl) [of the Qurʾān] and had knowledge of religion while you (Muʿāwiya) were an enemy of the messenger of God.” (al-Minqārī, Waqʿat Ṣiffīn, 150). Waqʿat Ṣiffīn of Naṣr b.
superiority in the divine dominion is similar to the earthly sovereignty that God gave to Solomon and told him [Q 38:39] “This is Our Gift; so grant or withhold without reckoning.” The Imāms said this verse is also concerning their exclusive knowledge “if we want, we will grant it to others and if want we withhold it.”

Spiritual interpretation (taʾwil) of the scripture is similar to interpretation of narratives (taʾwil al-aḥādīth) or interpretation of visions/dreams (taʾwil al-ruʿyā/al-aḥlām) in early Imāmī tradition.

The Knowledge of taʾwil, of a text or an event, corresponds to objective reality and is a divine ability to discern the true nature of it. It is the exclusive and preserved function of the Prophet and Imāms. This distinction between tanzīl and taʾwil and the Shiʿī Imāms’ exclusive knowledge of both was established as one of the foundations of Shiʿī exegetical view during the time of the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. Although the Imāms learnt the knowledge of zāhir and bāṭin of the Qurʾān from the Prophet, it does not mean that they teach their spiritual interpretation (taʾwil) to everyone. Those Imami scholars who were disciples of Imām Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq and wrote tafsīrs are mentioned in fig. 4 below.

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Muzāḥim b. Minqarī (d. 212/827) is the earliest extant account of the Battle of Ṣiffīn. Dakake notes that this book has survived material that seems quite early in origin (Dakake, “Writing,” 193).

140 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:210-211 no. 3; al-Qummī, Taḥṣīr, 2:68; al-ʿAyyūshī, Taḥṣīr, 1:12 no. 11; al-Šaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 42 no. 24 and 25.

141 For taʾwil al-aḥādīth see Q 12:6, 21, 37, 44, 45, 100 and 101; Q 18:78 and 82.

142 Bar-Asher, “The Authority,” 151-152.
Figure 3. Commentators who transmitted from [Imām Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq]

Only some of the disciple of the Imāms were considered to be able to narrate the esoteric meaning of the Qur’ānic verses. For example, Dharīḥ b. Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Muḥāribī, a Kūfan disciple of Imām al-Ṣādiq,143 was considered capable to carry it. It is reported that “ʿAbd Allāh b. Sinān144 said: I came to Abū ʿAbd Allāh [al-Ṣādiq] and told him, May I be your ransom! What is the the meaning of [Q 22:29] 'thumma l-yaqḍū tafathahum' (let them carry out their needed acts of cleansing their bodies)? Imām said: cutting the mustache and clipping the nails and so on.” ʿAbd Allāh b. Sinān continues “I said: May I be your ransom! Dharīḥ al-Muḥāribī reported to me that you said ‘l-yaqḍū tafathahum’ means reunion (liqāʾ) with the Imām and ‘wa-l-yūfū nudhūrahum’ (fulfill their vows) means those acts of worship [that you mentioned]. Imām said: Dharīḥ told the truth and you told the truth. Truly the Qur’ān has an

144 On ʿAbd Allāh b. Sinān see Modarressi, Tradition, 157-161 no. 15.
inner meaning (bāṭin) and outer meaning (ẓāhir) and who can carry what Dharīḥ carried?"145

Since Dharīḥ b. Muḥammad al-Muḥāribī was a sincere Shīʿa of the Imām al-Ṣādiq with esoteric tendency, Imām taught him some esoteric exegesis.146 The Imāms did not share the esoteric interpretation or taʾwīl of the scripture as well as of narratives or dreams with those who did not accept their spiritual authority.147

Esotericism and mysticism were integral parts of early Shīʿī corpus of ḥadīth in general and their exegetical traditions in particular. The esoteric and mystical aspects of early Shīʿī Islam have been studied by Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, Hassan Ansari, Maria Dakake and Ehud

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145  al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 4:549 no. 4; Ibn Bābawayh, Man lā yaḥḍuruh, 2:485-486 no. 3036; Maʿānī al-akhbār, 340 no. 10.

146  al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 193 no. 340; 373 no. 699.

147  For example, Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) was a jurist and theologian favored by the early ʿAbbāsīds but not by his contemporary Shīʿī Imāms al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq because he was not committed to their cause and did not believe in their divine position (Yanagihashi, “Abū Ḥanīfa”). For this reason, Imām al-Ṣādiq did not share with Abū Ḥanīfa either taʾwil of the scripture or taʾwil of dreams. Muhammad b. Muslim al-Thaqafī (d. 150/767), a famous disciple of Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (see al-Najāshī, Rijāl al-Najāshī, 323-324 no. 882; on him also see Van Ess, Theology, 1:387; Modarressi, Tradition, 1:387; 344-345 no. 154) reported that “I went to see Abū ʿAbd Allāh [Imām al-Ṣādiq] and Abū Ḥanīfa was with him. I said to the Imām: May I be your ransom! I had a wonderful dream. He said to me ‘O Ibn Muslim let us know it.’ He pointed with his hand to Abū Ḥanīfa and said, ‘Truly a scholar who knows its interpretation is sitting here.’” Muhammad b. Muslim said, “I told them that I saw that I entered my home and my wife came up to see me. She broke a lot of walnuts and scattered them on me. I was surprised by this dream.” Abū Ḥanīfa said: “[its taʾwil is that] you are a man who will quarrel and argue with ignoble persons on the inheritance of your family. But after hardship you will get what you deserve of that inheritance God willing. Imām al-Ṣādiq said ‘O Abū Ḥanīfa By God you hit the target.’” Muhammad b. Muslim said “Abū Ḥanīfa left us. I told the Imām: May I be your ransom! I had a wonderful dream. He said to me ‘O Ibn Muslim let us know it.’” He pointed with his hand to Abū Ḥanīfa and said, ‘Truly a scholar who knows its interpretation is sitting here.’” Muhammad b. Muslim said, “I told them that I saw that I entered my home and my wife came up to see me. She broke a lot of walnuts and scattered them on me. I was surprised by this dream.” Abū Ḥanīfa said: “[its taʾwil is that] you are a man who will quarrel and argue with ignoble persons on the inheritance of your family. But after hardship you will get what you deserve of that inheritance God willing. Imām al-Ṣādiq said ‘O Abū Ḥanīfa By God you hit the target.’” Muhammad b. Muslim said “Abū Ḥanīfa left us. I told the Imām: May I be your ransom! You said: you hit the target and you swore although he was wrong?” Imām said, “Yes I swore that he hit the wrong [point]” Muhammad b. Muslim said, “I asked the Imām what is my dream’s interpretation?” The Imām said “O Ibn Muslim you will be married to a woman temporarily and your wife will know it and she will tear up your new garment on you. Truly the peel is the cover of the core!” Muhammad b. Muslim said “I swear by God it was not between his interpretation and the happening of the dream only on the morning of Friday. When it was the morning of Friday, I was sitting in the door, a maidservant passed by me. I was surprised by her so I ordered my servant to invite her to my home. I married her temporarily. My wife felt I am with the maidservant at home. She came home and found us. The maidservant set out to escape without delay and I stayed. My wife tore up my new clothes that I used to wear on holidays.” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:292 no. 447). This is an example of early Shīʿī as practicing temporary marriage. In early Imāmi exegetical traditions, the verse [Q 4:24] ‘And those women whom you enjoy thereby, give unto them their bridewealth, as an obligation’ is a reference to temporary marriage (mutʿah). Temporary marriage is considered by Sunnis to have been forbidden by the Prophet at the end of his life or by the second Caliph, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Shīʿī as argue that no verse in the Qurʾān abrogates it and that the Prophet never forbade it (See Heffening, “Mutʿa”). Another early proto-Imami scholar who was interested in temporary marriage was Abān b. Taghlib who asked Imam al-Ṣādiq about the details of Mutʿa (See Modarressi, Tradition, 108).
In their approach to early Shīʿī ḥadīth, esoterism is not inserted into this corpus by transgressive Shīʿīs (ghulāt pl. of ghālī) as Hossein Modarressi and Tamima Bayhom-Daou claimed. The first group of scholars mentioned above corresponds to early Imāmī traditionalists of Kūfa and later Qumm who believed in the mystical nature of Shīʿī spirituality and the second group represents the later Imāmī theologians who accused early traditionalists of being transgressive Shīʿīs or transmitters of transgressive elements. Early Shīʿī spirituality and esoterism were intertwined.

Jābir b. Yazīd al-Juʿfī (d. 128/746 or 132/750) and Abān b. Taghlib both were Imām al-Bāqīr’s disciples and both wrote tafsīr, and collected accounts of the Battle of Ṣiffīn in Kitāb Ṣiffīn. It seems that they were interested in two different exegetical approaches. Jābir b. Yazīd al-Juʿfī was a disciple of Imām al-Baqīr and Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq. In his list of transgressive (ghālīya) Rāfiḍa, Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889) mentions Jābir al-Juʿfī as one of radical Shīʿas. Al-Dhahabī notes that one of the characteristics of transgressive Shīʿas in the early period is that they criticized ῾Uthmān, al-Zubayr, ῾Ṭalḥa, Muʿāwiya, and those people who fought ῾Alī, and they also cursed them openly. In his study of early Shīʿī school of thought, Takim notes that in Imāmī literature there is an ambivalent attitude towards Jābir b Yazīd al-Juʿfī. Some consider him a well-known ghālī (and a Nusāyrī saint) and some a reliable transmitter of traditions. Shīʿī biographers even defend him against the Sunnī accusation of insanity by explaining that his


149 Modarressi, Crisis, 19–51; Bayhom-Daou, Shaykh Mufid, 32.

150 Esotericism is a process which should be experienced and esoteric exegesis may not be accessible for every follower as a certain requisite level of spiritual capacity, knowledge, and experience would be required. Apparently, the Shīʿī Imams communicated the inner elements of the exegesis to their disciples depending on their acceptance or capacity to lay out a process for them to get to a higher stage of spirituality.

151 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 11 no. 7; 129 no. 332.

152 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 129 no. 1316, 176 no. 2092.

153 Ibn Qutaybah, al-Maʿārif, 624.

154 al-Dhahabī, Mizān, 1:5.
behavior was the result of his practice of *taqiyyah* in order to prevent his arrest by the Umayyad authorities.\textsuperscript{155}

Jābir wrote his commentary *Kitāb al-tafsīr*\textsuperscript{156} which later became a well known work in the field which other Shi‘ī commentators quoted. Al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī received this commentary through three different chains of transmission.\textsuperscript{157} Regarding his exegetical preference, Jābir reports “I asked Abū Ja‘far Imām al-Bāqir an exegetical question and he answered. After a while, I asked him the same exegetical question for the second time and he gave me a different answer. I told him: ‘you gave me a different answer to the same exegetical question before! Imām replied: O Jābir! The Qurʾān has an inner [meaning] (*baṭn*) and that inner [meaning] has another inner [meaning]. The Qurʾān has an outer [meaning] (*ẓahr*) and that outer [meaning] has another outer [meaning]. Nothing is farther from the men’s intellect than the interpretation of the Qurʾān, for the beginning of the verse is about one thing, while the end of the verse is about another thing. It is a continuous statement which has different aspects.”\textsuperscript{158} The Imāms used to remind their disciples that the Qurʾān has different layers of interpretation. If a verse is revealed in a specific context, its meaning is not necessarily restricted to that context, rather it could be applied to other contexts. By accepting this principle, if the Imām applies a verse in a certain context, then later he interprets it in another context rendering a different meaning, followers are not allowed to deny either meanings.

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\textsuperscript{158} al-Barqī, *al-Maḥāsin*, 2: 300 no. 5.; al-’Ayyāshī, *Tafsīr*, 1:11, 12, 17. In this regard, it is reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq told his disciple ‘Umar b. Yazīd al-Thaqafī (On him see Modarressi, *Tradition*, 388 no. 211) “Do not be one of those who say that it (a verse) is [revealed] only in one thing.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:156 no. 28). Therefore, it is not surprising that in spite of the content of the sura *al-Naba*’ which supports the claim that the Great Tiding (*al-naba*’ *al-ʿāẓīm*) in [Q 78:2] is a reference to the Qurʾān or the Resurrection (See al-Ṭabarī, *Jaḥiʿ al-bayān*, 30:2-3; Nasr, *The Study Qurʾān*, 1463). In early Imāmī exegetical traditions the Great Tiding is a reference to ‘Alī. The majority of the Quraysh question one another regarding the virtue and *walāya* of ‘Alī. Therefore, ‘Alī said, “God does not have a sign bigger than me, and God does not have a tiding greater than me.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:207 no. 3; Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, 533-534 no. 685 and 686; al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, 2:401; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, *Baṣāʾir*, 76-77 no. 3. Aslo see al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:418 no. 314 in which the Great Tiding is interpreted by Imam al-Ṣādiq as *al-walāya*).
In his *Aṣl*, Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Shurayḥ al-Ḥaḍramī transmitted several exegetical traditions from Jābir al-Juʿfī through the transmitter Ḥumayd b. Shuʿayb al-Sabīʿī. Most of these traditions are esoteric interpretations of verses concerning the concept of the *imāma* or *walāya* (sanctified authority that God has bestowed upon the Prophet and upon ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and the subsequent Imāms, which is consistent with the literal meaning of *walāya*, i.e., adjacency and following). In interpreting [Q 28:50] ‘and who is most astray than one who follows his own base desire without guidance from God? ’ Imām al-Bāqir said, “This verse refers to the one who takes his opinion as his religion without an Imām from the Imāms of guidance.” The Imām said “The Imāms are the truthful (ṣādiqīn)” mentioned in [Q 9:119] and God instructs the true believers to be among those who accept Imāms’ obedience as true (muṣaddiqīn).

Some of Jābir’s esoteric exegetical traditions are concerning the cosmology of the Shīʿīs when God made a pledge to the progeny of Adam in the world of shadows (ʿālam al-aẓilla). In interpreting [Q 72:16] ‘and that if they stand upright on the path, surely We [would] give them abundant water to drink’ Imām al-Bāqir said, “If they stood upright on the *walāya* at the beginning, under the shadows, when God took pledge [of Adam] and his progeny” Then ‘We give them abundant water to drink’ means “We gave their shadows a sweet palatable water to drink;” ‘that We may test them therein’ “means that ʿAlī and I tested their disbelief in his *walāya* therein” ‘whoever turns away’ means whoever flows within him the polytheism of Iblīs; ‘from the remembrance of his Lord’ means ʿAlī is the remembrance in the belly (baṭn) of the Qurʾān and our Lord is the Lord of everything; and ‘He will make him enter an ascending punishment’

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160 On him see Modarressi, *Tradition and Survival*, 274 no. 93.


means a punishment above the severe punishment.”

Modarressi notes that late Umayyad Kūfān Shīʿas overemphasized the caliphate right of ʿAlī and his descendants especially ʿHusayn. They were also hostile towards the caliphs before ʿAlī specially ʿUthmān, and awaiting a turn in the tide of events in favor of the House of the Prophet. Therefore, esoterism was becoming a major approach among them.

Another Kūfān disciple of at least three Imāms Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn, al-Bāqir, and al-Ṣādiq who was interested in Qurʾānic exegesis was Abū Ḥamza Thābit b. Abī Ṣafiyya Dīnār al-Thumālī (d. 148/765-767).

He was a traditionist, exegete and jurist who wrote a tradition-based commentary entitled Tafsīr al-Qurʾān. This Tafsīr was a well-known commentary in the Early and Medieval Islamic centuries used by Shīʿī and Sunni exegetes such as al-ʿAyyāshī, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Ṭabarī’s exegetical traditions, it could be inferred that Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī was a transmitter of earlier Shīʿī exegetes such as Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714) and Ismāʿīl al-Suddī (d. 127/745).

In his commentary al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān, al-Thaʿlabī also mentions his chain of transmitters to Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī’s tafsīr. Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī’s tafsīr, was reconstructed by ʿAbd al-Razzāq Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ḥirz al-Dīn in a volume entitled Tafsīr al-

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165 Modarressi, Tradition, 88.

166 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 115 no. 296; al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 110 no. 1083, 129 no. 1307, 174 no. 2047. and Al-Najāshī states that he met the seventh Imam al-Kāẓim. However, al-Ṭūsī remarks that “It is not agreed that he was alive during the Imamate of Abū al-Hasan [al-Kāẓim].” (al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 333 no. 4959).

167 Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 36; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 115 no. 296; Sezgin, Geschichte, 1:636; Modarressi, Tradition, 377 no. 201.

168 For example, see al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:68 no. 125; 1:82 no. 191; 1:100 no. 285; 1:178 no. 65; 1:211 no. 172; 1:262 no. 214; 1:285 no. 306, 307; 1:309 no. 78; 1:360 no. 23; 1:367 no. 51; 1:369 no. 57; 1:373 no. 78; 2:19 no. 48; 2:20 no. 54; 2:31 no. 87; 2:48 no. 16, 17; 2:49 no. 20; 2:116 no. 155; 2:120 no. 10; 2:126 no. 34; 2:146 no. 46; 2:152 no. 44; 2:161 no. 74; 2:167 no.5; 181 no. 41; 2:185 no. 51; 217 no. 66; 218 no. 73; 257 no. 5; 276 no. 1; 280 no. 19; 296 no. 88; 319 no. 178; 340 no. 75; 350 no. 81; al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 3:233; 27:79; al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, .


Abū Ḥamza’s friend in Kūfa, Abān b. Taghlib is the only Imāmī exception in composing a commentary during the first half of the 2nd/8th century.

Abū Sa’īd Abān b. Taghlīb is the only Imāmī exception in composing a commentary during the first half of the 2nd/8th century. According to al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892), one of Abān’s teachers in Kūfa was ‘Aṭīyya al-Awī who is already mentioned as an early Imāmī exegete. Abān wrote Tafsīr gharīb al-Qurʾān (or Kitāb al-gharīb fī al-Qurʾān) which was one of the earliest works of its genre. Al-Ṭūsī notes that in this work, Abān used quotations (shawāhid) of Arabic poetry [apparently heard from Arabs himself] as textual evidence to explain the uncommon words of the Qurʾān. The significance of this work is that it shows the authority to interpret the Qurʾān in Abān b. Taghlib’s time was not exclusive to Imāms. Abān b. Taghlib was the transmitter of some early exegetical traditions concerning the status of Imāms which are interestingly survived in Sunni commentaries such as al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī and Shawāhid al-tanzīl of Al-Ḥaskānī. For example, regarding [Q 3:103], it is related from Abān that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “We are the rope of God (ḥabl Allāh) when God said, ‘And all together hold firmly to the rope of God, and do not be divided.’” Although this tradition was available in early Shī‘ī exegesis, there is no indication of it in al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī. However, the same

172 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 109 no. 1066; 126 no. 1265; 164 no. 1871.
173 al-Balādhurī, Jumal min kitāb Ansāb al-ashrāf, 10:59; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 10.
174 Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 11; Sezgin, Geschichte, 1:24. al-Ṭūṣī gives the title Kitāb al-gharīb fī al-Qurʾān; It seems that it is the same book that Ibn al-Nadīm has mentioned as Kitāb maʿānī al-Qurʾān (Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 276) and described it as laṭīf (we can assume, by implication, that it means a small book not a voluminous work); Also See Modarressi, Tradition, 112-113; Van Ess, TG, 1:334.
175 al-Ṭūṣī, Fihrist, 45 no. 61. Modarressi has listed some quotations from Abān b. Taghlib on the meaning of various Qurʾānic words that may belong to Abān’s gharīb al-Qurʾān. (See Modarressi, Tradition, 112).
177 Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 91.
tradition reemerged in Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ and Majmaʿ al-bayān of al-Ṭabriṣī in the first half of 6th/12th century.\(^{178}\)

Abān also had his particular reading of the Qurʾān which was well known in the 2nd/8th century among the Readers (qurrāʾ) of the Qurʾān. This reading was possibly recorded in Abān’s kitāb al-qirāʿāt.\(^{179}\) As Nasser remarks, Abān b. Taghlib and Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767) were the earliest compilers of variant Qurʾānic readings who had books on Qirāʾāt. However, they were not concerned with a particular number of Qurʾānic Readings to be collected and canonized.\(^{180}\) Abū al-Futūḥ cited both Abān’s gharīb al-Qurʾān and his book on Qirāʾāt in Rawḍ al-jinān through al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī.\(^{181}\) Modarresi asserted that Abān b. Taghlib was the representative of a moderate, non-transgressive trend of Kūfan Shīʿī thought who was not influenced by the esoteric ideas identified with Sabaʿī/Kaysānī Shīʿī Islam.\(^{182}\) One of the characteristics of Abān as a normative Imāmī scholar was that he did not curse the first three caliphs openly.\(^{183}\) Abān’s definition of a Shīʿa demonstrates his normative historical understanding of early Shīʿī identity. It is reported that he said, “Shīʿas are those people who take

\(^{178}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:464; Al-Ṭabriṣī, Majmaʿ, 2:805.

\(^{179}\) al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 11 no. 7; Al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 46 no. 61. In his Kitāb al-fihrist, Ibn al-Nadīm refers to this book as Kitāb al-qirāʿāt (Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 1:276).

\(^{180}\) Nasser, The transmission, 37.


\(^{182}\) Modarressi, Tradition, 110.

\(^{183}\) In interpreting [Q 9:74] Abān b. Taghlib narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq that “when the messenger of God appointed ʿAlī [as his successor] on the day of Ghadīr Khumm and announced: ‘whoever I am his master, ʿAlī is his master’ two men of Quraysh brought their head close to each other and said: By God we never hand over to him [ʿAlī] what he said. The Prophet was informed and asked them about what they said. They denied and swore by God that they did not say anything. Gabriel came down to the messenger of God with the verse [Q 9:74] ‘They swear by God that they did not say it, but indeed they said the word of disbelief, and disbelieved after having submitted [to God].’” Imam al-Ṣādiq then added, “They turned away [from the truth] and did not repent.” (Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:100 no. 91; al-Khurāsānī, Kitāb Salām ibn Abī ʿAmra, 333 no. 7). Dāhibāʾī notes that some of the traditions ascribed to later Imāmī commentaries such as Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī appear genuine as they reflect the early opposition to the caliphate of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar without insulting or cursing them or even mentioning their name.
the words of ʿAlī when people differ in their quotations from the Messenger of God, and they when people disagree with each other about ʿAlī, they take the the words of Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad.”

This moderate approach weakened during the second half of the 2nd/8th and the first half of the 3rd/9th centuries in Kūfa.

A generation after Jābir, Abū Ḥamza, and Abān, a group of Kūfan Shīʿī scholars with clear esoteric tendencies wrote a commentary in the 2nd/8th century. Some of them transmitted Jābir’s esoteric exegetical traditions in their tafsīrs. Interestingly, all of them were accused of being weak or corrupted in transmission by later Baghdadi scholars such as al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī. One of the transmitter of Jābir’s esoteric exegetical traditions was Mufaḍḍal b. ʿUmar al-Juʿfī (d. before 179/795). It is reported that he said, “I asked Abū Ḥabīb Allāh [Imām al-Ṣādiq] about Jābir’s commentary. He said: do not Share it with lowly [people] (ṣifla) because they will divulge it [to non Shīʿas].”

Although Mufaḍḍal is accused of being the leader of the Mufawwiḍa school of Shīʿa exaggeration, this account shows clearly that in early Shīʿī school of thought, there is a tendency to distinguish between lowly (ṣifla) and high (ʿilya) people. Mufaḍḍal wants to announce that prominent Shīʿa such as him and Jābir are able to conceal religious truths that should not be shared with lowly people. As Bar-Asher notes, this distinction between lowly people and prominent scholars could stem from two factors: first the notion of the group’s supremacy (religious exclusivity) and second the feeling of having access to a higher level of truth and reality. Another transmitter of Jābir’s commentary is Munakhkhal b. Jamīl

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184 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 12 no. 7.
185 al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 192.
186 Modarressi, Tradition, 333; On Mufaḍḍal also see Halm, Die Islamische, 214–7; Madelung, Khaṭṭābiyya.
187 This is similar to the distinction between the chosen ones (khāṣṣa) and the common people (ʿāmma) in Ismāʿīlī doctrine.
al-Asadī (d. ca. 202/816) who wrote his own commentary *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. This commentary is related from Munakhkhal by his pupil Muḥammad b. Sinān al-Zāhirī (d. 220/835).  

A group of Kūfan Shīʿī commentators of the mid 2nd/8th transmitted normative Imāmī exegetical traditions. For example, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Abī Shuʿba al-Ḥalabī (d. in or before 148/765), was a prominent Kūfan Imāmī jurist who wrote *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. The family of Āl Abī Shuʿba was a well known family in the Shīʿī community of Kūfa. Muḥammad al-Ḥalabī was a disciple of and transmitter from Imāms Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq. The extant exegetical traditions from Muḥammad al-Ḥalabī most likely belonged to his *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. In these traditions there is no sign of transgressive esoteric exegesis. It is a moderate interpretation that even non-Shīʿī Muslims who love the family of the Prophet may consider it reasonable. For example, concerning [Q 14:24] ‘A good word is as a good tree its root is firm, and its branches are in heaven’, al-Ḥalabī quotes from Imām al-Ṣādiq that “The Prophet and the Imāms are the firm root and the branch is their walāya for those who enter it.” Even this reference to the Prophet or Imāms in interpretation of this verse is absent in *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī. Instead al-Ṭūsī has quoted the tradition narrated by al-Ṭabarī which the prophet said: “this good tree is the palm tree.” The topic of Imamate in interpretation of this verse comes back to Imāmī exegetical discourse in *Rawḍ al-Jinān* of Abū al-Futūḥ and *Majmaʿ al-bayān* of al-

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190 MTF, 2:513 no. 641.


192 al-Najāshī, *Rijāl*, 230 no. 612. His family were known as al-Ḥalabī because they used to go to Aleppo for business.

193 al-Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*, 145 no. 1593; 290 no. 4225.


Therefore, it is not the case that Akhabāris of Ṣafawid period brought back Imāmī exegetical traditions to their commentaries which will be discussed in details later.

1.1.1.1.1 Sources of early Imāmī exegetical traditions

None of the early Imāmī kitāb al-tafsīrs from the 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries are survived. However, a great number of Imāmī exegetical traditions attributed to Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq, survived in the early Imāmī exegetical works composed at the end of the 3rd/9th and the beginning of the 4th/10th centuries. The earliest extant Imāmī Qurʾān commentaries include Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī ascribed to Imām Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. 260/874), Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī of Furāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī (d. ca. 3rd/9th century), Kitāb al-qirāʾāt (or al-Tanzīl wa al-tahrīf) of al-Sayyārī (d. 3rd/9th century), Tafsīr al-Qummī of ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. ca. 307/919), and Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī of Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī (d. early 4th/10th century). Each of these commentaries have some defects that make it inappropriate to label them true representations of early Imāmī exegesis. Although the Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī (in the version transmitted by Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Astarābādī) resembles early Imāmī commentaries composed near the end of 3rd/9th century, its author is unknown. Moreover, scholars such Gleave assert that the exegetical traditions attributed to the Imām in Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī or Tafsīr attributed to Imām al-Ṣādiq could not be authentic because they often reflect later developments in theology and mysticism. Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī is also a collection of only 379 exegetical traditions which include commentary on sūra al-Fātiha and sūra al-Baqara up to the end of verse 282. Furāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī is an unknown author who is not mentioned in early Imāmī biographical works. In addition to the problem of an unknown author, almost all the exegetical traditions of


198 I did not mention Tafsīr al-Hibarī of al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥakam al-Hibarī (d. 286/899) because it represents early Zaydī exegesis (See Amir-Moezzi, “The Tafsīr of al-Hibarī”). I also did not mention Tafsīr al-Nuʿmānī of Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Jaʿfar al-Nuʿmānī (d. c. 360/971) because it is not a commentary, rather it is a treatise constituting a sort of introduction to the Qurʾān (See Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 64-66).

199 Gleave, “Early Shiʿi hermeneutics,” 142


201 Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 29.
his commentary are muʿanʾan.\textsuperscript{202} Kitāb al-qirāʿāt (or al-Tanzīl wa al-tahrīf) of al-Sayyārī (d. 3\textsuperscript{rd}/9\textsuperscript{th} century) is not considered a commentary as its title implies; rather it is a book of Qur'ānic variant readings attributed to the Shiʿī Imāms.\textsuperscript{203} The style and content of the extant Tafsīr commonly ascribed to ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī demonstrates that it is not the original commentary of that scholar; however, it seems that it is still a late 4\textsuperscript{th}/10\textsuperscript{th} century work.\textsuperscript{204} Since Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī was a well-known Imāmī scholar in Khurāsān,\textsuperscript{205} his commentary could be a genuine representative of mainstream Imāmī Shiʿī exegesis at the beginning of the 4\textsuperscript{th}/10\textsuperscript{th} century. Unfortunately this commentary has reached us incomplete and all of the chains of narrations of its traditions are deleted by its scribe as he mentioned in his short preface to the commentary.\textsuperscript{206} These two problems, have diminished the extant Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī’s authenticity for early Imāmī exegetical studies. Despite the problems of being incomplete or unreliable, the corpus of early Imāmī exegetical traditions are not restricted to the above mentioned early commentaries.

At the same time as the composition of the aforementioned early Imāmī exegetical works, the first large collections of Imāmī ḥadīths, such as al-Maḥāsin of al-Barqī (d. 274/887–888 or 280/893–894) and al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī (d. 328/939 or 329/940), were being composed by Qummī scholars.\textsuperscript{208} Since the main sources for all these large collections of ḥadīth were early

\textsuperscript{202} In a muʿanʾan isnād, established transmission methods are not known to have occurred, or have not been observed, between the transmitters of one or more links (See Juynboll, “Muʿanʾan.”)

\textsuperscript{203} See Amir-Moezzi and Kohlberg, “Révélation et falsification”; Kohlberg and Amir-Moezzi, Revelation and Falsification.

\textsuperscript{204} Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 35; Modarressi, Tradition, Preface xvii.

\textsuperscript{205} al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 440 no. 6282; See Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 57.

\textsuperscript{206} The extant Tafsīr of al-ʿAyyāshī includes only an exegesis of the first eighteen sūras of the Qurʾān from al-Fāṭīḥa to the end of al-Kahf (See Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 60).

\textsuperscript{207} al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:2.

\textsuperscript{208} For further information on al-Maḥāsin of al-Barqī see Vilozny, “Pre-Būyid Ḥadīth Literature: The Case of al-Barqī from Qumm (d. 274/888 or 280/894) in Twelve Sections.” For more information on al-Kulaynī and his book al-Kāfī see Amir-Moezzi and Ansari, “Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī (m. 328 ou 329/939–40 ou 940–41) et son Kitāb al-kāfī: Une introduction.” Another important work of the same period is Baṣāʿir al-darajāt of al-Ṣaffār al-
Imāmī kitābs or aṣls, a great number of exegetical traditions in these books are in common. Al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī is the first large Imāmī collection of ḥadīth which is completely available. Al-Kāfī has other advantages: the attribution of al-Kāfī to its author is historically reliable, it has a well-known author, and almost all of its traditions are musnad (i.e. they are based on a chain of transmitters going back to the Prophet or Imāms). For these reasons, in this section I limit my evidence to the exegetical ḥadīth attributed to the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq in the book al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī. Moreover, every tradition cited in this section is also transmitted in at least one other early Imāmī exegetical work or ṭadīth collection. My basic assumption is that these exegetical traditions were in circulation prior to the compilation of al-Kāfī in the first quarter of the 4th/10th century. All these exegetical traditions had an oral or written life before their inclusion in al-Kāfī. Al-Kulaynī only collected, classified, and arranged these traditions in different chapters of al-Kāfī. From all exegetical traditions in al-Kāfī only those traditions whose chain of narration is sound according to al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī are cited. Thus, every exegetical tradition cited in this section is from an oral or written transmitter in an early notebook which was considered authentic by 5th/11th century Baghdadi scholars. In addition to the chain of narrations, the content of each exegetical tradition employed in this section is not incompatible with the literal meaning (ẓawāhir) of the Qur’ān. The citation of these traditions by early Qummi traditionalists and the acknowledgment of the trustworthiness of each person in their chain of transmission by Baghdadi theologists shows the authenticity of these exegetical traditions among both early Imāmī traditionalist and rationalist schools of the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries. Therefore, there is no evidence of interpolation or other tampering by transmitters of these exegetical ḥadīths. The method used in this section to assess every transmitter of each ḥadīth consists of the following conditions:

1- The transmitter is not considered weak (ḍaʿīf)/liar (kadhdhāb)/transgressive Shīʿī (ghālī)/corrupted (fāsid al-madhhab)/syncretist (mukhallit)/confused (muḍtarib) by al-Najāshī, al-Ṭūsī, or even Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī.

Qummī (d. 290/902) which is not as large as al-Maḥāsin or al-Kāfī (See Amir-Moezzi, “al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī (d. 290/902–903) et son Kitāb baṣāʾir al-darajāt”).

209 Modarressi, Tradition, Preface xiv.
2- The transmitter is described as trustworthy (thiqa)/eminent (ʿayn)/truthful (ṣadūq) by al-Kashshāʾī, al-Mufīd, al-Najāshī or al-Ṭūsī which is not in conflict with another author’s evaluation.

3- If the transmitter is neither considered weak (No. 1 above) nor is described trustworthy (No. 2 above), only in the case of being described as trustworthy by both al-Khūʾī (d. 1413/1992) in Muʿjam rijāl al-ḥadīth and al-Shubayrī in Dirāyat al-nūr, he is considered reliable because there is no evidence to reject what he narrated. The author of both works attempted to discover the religious value of an Imāmī transmitter by analyzing early traditions concerning him.²¹⁰

Therefore, the early Imāmī exegetical traditions employed in this section are considered sound (ṣaḥīḥ) in the paths of transmission (ṭuruq)²¹¹ and chain of transmission (isnād) by both early Imāmī traditionalists of Kūfah/Qumm in 3rd/9th and 4th/10th century and theologians of Baghdad in 4th/10th and 5th/11th century. These traditions create an internally coherent Imāmī belief and ritual system which is not only compatible with its exegesis but also is constructed upon those exegetical traditions.

1.1.1.1.2 Early Imāmī categorization of Qurʾānic verses

Endeavors to discover the ‘theory of exegesis’ of the Imāms who did not write a commentary²¹² but whose exegetical traditions were considered as the only authentic interpretation of the Qurʾān among Shīʿas of the first three Islamic centuries is documented in the western scholarship of Bar-Asher, Amir-Moezzi, Lawson, Gleave, and Steigerwald. Bar-Asher, Amir-Moezzi, and Gleave have analyzed some early Imāmī exegetical traditions to discover principles and

²¹⁰ For further information regarding Dirāyat al-nūr see http://www.noorsoft.org/en/software/View/11781/Dirayat-alNoor-12

²¹¹ Ṭuruq (the plural of tariqa) means “paths” or “routes.” Since there are many paths to an early work, in his Rijāl, al-Najāshī “mentioned only one path [of transmitters] to [the works of] a person.” (al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 3).

²¹² Extant Tafsīrs ascribed to Imams Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765) and al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (d. 260/873) are unlikely to be authentic because they are not mentioned in early Imami bio-bibliographical works. However, it is likely that these two commentaries were composed in the 3rd/9th century (See Bar-Asher, “The Qurʾān”; Böwering, “Isnād”; Nwyia, “Le Tafsir”; Mayer, Spiritual, xxii; Gleave, Robert. “Early,” 142). Tafsīr al-Qurʾān attributed to Imam al-Bāqir by Ibn al-Nadīm (Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 36), which is no longer extant as an independent commentary, was in fact a collection of exegetical traditions that Imam al-Bāqir’s disciple Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir quoted from the Imam. (See Modarressi, Tradition, 37; Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 46-56).
techniques which have been employed in early Shīʿī hermeneutics.\textsuperscript{213} Lawson and Steigerwald have studied Twelver Shīʿī hermeneutics more theoretically from historical and sociological points of view.\textsuperscript{214}

In his brief entry in Encyclopaedia Iranica on ‘Hermeneutics’, Todd Lawson studied the development of hermeneutics throughout history of Twelver Shīʿī exegesis. Lawson identifies four types of hermeneutics in chronological order: 1. Hermeneutics of authority; 2. Hermeneutics of compromise; 3. Mystical hermeneutics; and 4. Philosophical Akhbārī Hermeneutics.\textsuperscript{215} Lawson termed the pre-Bāyḍid Hermeneutics, ‘Hermeneutics of authority’ because in this period, the Imām had exclusive authority to interpret the Qurʿān. This important point about the Imām’s position as an absolute exegete in the early Shīʿī community, has been discussed at length by Bar-Asher.\textsuperscript{216} In his article “Early Shiʿi Hermeneutics,” Gleave remarks that the \textit{argumentum ad verecundiam} (appeal to authority) of Shīʿī Imāms to accept their interpretation of Qurʿānic verses is a \textit{non sequitur}.\textsuperscript{217} He analyzed some exegetical traditions attributed to Shīʿī Imāms and finally concluded that there is no coherent and methodical hermeneutics in early Shīʿī School of thought. A close look at early Shīʿī exegetical corpus demonstrates that the Shīʿī Imāms had their categorization to interpret the Qurʿān.

In order to cover all elements of the belief system, it is reported that Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq categorized the verses of the Qurʿān thematically into three major groups and each group

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{213} Gleave, “Early”
\item \textsuperscript{214} Lawson, “Hermeneutic”; “Akbhārī”; Steigerwald, “Twelver.” Steigerwald has relied only on a few secondary sources to write her article and there is nothing new in her sources, method or content.
\item \textsuperscript{215} Lawson, “Hermeneutics.”
\item \textsuperscript{216} See Bar-Asher, “The Authority.”
\item \textsuperscript{217} The logical form of this fallacy of \textit{non sequitur} is as follow:
\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Assumption1:} Imāmī Shīʿī doctrine is true.
\item \textbf{Assumption2:} According to Imāmī Shīʿī doctrine, only Imams know the whole Qurʿān (\textit{tanzīl} and \textit{taʾwīl})
\item \textbf{Conclusion:} Therfore, only Imams’ exegesis is true.
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

This argument does not work in the Shīʿī school because other schools do not accept the first assumption of it. However, it also does not work amongst the Shīʿī as because they can not prove the authenticity of all survived exegetical traditions in their primary sources. (See Gleave, “Early,” 141).
includes two related subjects: 1. The Prophet’s Family [including their Shiʿas] and their enemies 2. Divine laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl) 3. Religious duties (farāʾ iḍ) and legal rulings (aḥkām), each of which being fully explained below. The Imāms employed these three major categories to interpret the Qurʾān systematically. This general classification of Qurʾānic verses is not an interpretive methodology or hermeneutics because the Shiʿī Imāms rejected any personal opinion based on interpretation (exegesis).

1.1.1.1.2.1 The Prophet’s Family and their enemies

Early Imāmi exegetical traditions demonstrate that in the formative period of Imāmi interpretation, relating the verses of the Qurʾān to the family of the Prophet was essential. The first type of verses which were revealed in connection with the Imāms and their enemies are metaphors alluding to the Imāms and their enemies through positive and negative concepts, respectively. A great number of these metaphors are survived personal names, which are

218 Without giving evidence, Bar-Asher, claimed that this categorization refers to the original text of the Qurʾān before its alleged corruption (Bar-Asher, Introduction, 84). Numerous Imami traditions ascribed to Imam al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq demonstrate that they accepted the ʿUthmānī codex and categorized its verses accordingly.

219 Beside this categorization of verses into three major groups, the Imams presented their interpretation in two levels: 1. Exoteric/outward (ẓāhir) and 2. Esoteric/inward (bāṭin) which will be tackled later. The division of the Qurʾānic text into three categories does not mean that there is no overlap between these categories. In early Imami exegetical traditions, two types of divisions (tripartite or quadripartite) are transmitted from three Imams:

1.1. Imam ʿAlī said, “The Qurʾān was sent [consisting of] three parts: one part concerning us [the Prophet’s Family and their Shiʿas] and our enemies, one part divine laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl), and one part duties/commandments (farāʾ iḍ) and laws/regulations (aḥkām).” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:627 no. 2; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:9 no. 3).

1.2. Imam al-Bāqir said, “The Qurʾān was sent [consisting of] three parts: one part concerning us [the Prophet’s Family and their Shiʿas], one third our enemies and the enemies of those before us, and one part customs (sunah) and parables (mathal).” (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:10 no. 7; Furāt al-Kūfī, 138 no. 166).

2.1. Imam ʿAlī said, “The Qurʾān was sent [consisting of] four parts: one part concerning us [the Prophet’s Family and their Shiʿas], one part our enemies, one part duties/commandments (farāʾ iḍ) and laws/regulations (aḥkām), and one fourth treats the lawful (ḥalāl) and the unlawful (ḥarām).” (Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 45-46 no.1).

2.2. Imam al-Bāqir said, “The Qurʾān was sent [consisting of] four parts: one part concerning us [the Prophet’s Family and their Shiʿas], one part our enemies, one part divine laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl), and one part duties/commandments (farāʾ iḍ) and laws/regulations (aḥkām). [And the exalted parts/excellent qualities of the Qurʾān refer to us (wa lanā karāʾ im/faḍāʾ il al-Qurʾān)]” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:628 no. 4; al-Sayyārī, Kitāb al-qīrāʾ āṭ, 8 no. 11; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 46-47 no. 2; 48 no. 3; 249 no. 336; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:9 no. 1).

2.3. Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “The Qurʾān was sent [consisting of] four parts: one part the lawful (ḥalāl), one part the unlawful (ḥarām), one part divine laws (sunan) and laws/regulations (aḥkām), and one part concerning the news of what was before you and the important news of what is after you” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:627 no. 3).
believed to be deleted from the Qurʾān’s divine interpretation. This type of exegetical traditions was termed by Amir-Moezzi as “personalized commentaries” in which the context of persons can reveal the intended message of the Qurʾānic passage. Personalized commentaries are esoteric because they are not apparent and well known. They are secret teachings of the Imāms shared only with the inner circle of their disciples. Amir-Moezzi asserts that “personalized commentary” was the earliest form of Shīʿī exegetical esotericism. The following characteristics of the Imāms are presented here to illustrate their coverage in early Imāmī exegetical hadīth based on the Qurʾānic verses.

**Imāms are granted divine knowledge by God**

According to early Imāmī exegetical traditions, Shīʿī Imāms introduced themselves as the possessors of divine knowledge. Their divine knowledge was based on the Qurʾān (or all other revelations) and other sources of divine inspiration such as the ḥadīth. In these traditions, divine knowledge is of two types: 1. Knowledge which no one knows except He (khāṣṣ/makfūf ʿilm al-kitāb/lawḥ al-maḥw wa al-ithbāt) and 2. Knowledge that He informs His angels and Messengers about (ʿāmm/mabdhūl/umm al-kitāb/lawḥ maḥfūẓ/kitāb mubīn/Imām mubīn). According to early Imami traditions, the type of knowledge that can be conceived for humans to have of God is of two kinds: 1. Knowledge of His Essence (dhāt) 2. Knowledge of His Actions (fiʿl). Knowledge of essence (dhāt) is impossible to be known (maʿlūm) and could not be described (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:107 no. 1; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 139 no. 1). We are not even permitted to think or speak about the knowledge of essence (dhāt) in early Imami traditions (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:92 no. 1). This is addressed in interpretation of [Q 53:42] ‘and to your Lord is the absolute end’ by Imam al-Ṣādiq. He said, “When your discussion culminates in the Essence of God, stop the conversation at once.” (al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-Urayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338). Imāms insisted that the second type of divine knowledge (which His angels and Messengers are informed about) the Imāms also know (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:256 no. 4; See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:147 no. 6; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ ilʿAll ibn Jaʿfar, 326 no. 813; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 109-112 no. 1-18; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:237 no. 206; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 456 no. 9. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:338).
scriptures) and the teachings of the Prophet. The Imāms are chosen by God to inherit His book Qur‘ān after the Prophet. There is no difference between the Prophet and the Imāms in terms of their divine knowledge. After the Prophet, access to all divine knowledge is not possible except through them. The Imāms and the Qur‘ān are the two inseparable sources of religious authority. They are both al-thaqal (a weighty or precious object); however, the Imāms are al-thaqal al-asghar (‘the less weighty object’) and the Qur‘ān is al-thaqal al-akbar (‘the weightier object’) which are mentioned in the Prophetic hadith al-thaqalayn (the tradition of the two weighty things). The Imāms’ knowledge is not restricted to the Qur‘ān. The Shī‘ī Imāms possessed al-Jafr al-abyaḍ (the white divination) which contains all the scriptures including Šuḥuf (Scrolls) of Abraham, Zābūr (Psalms) of David, Tawrât (Torah) of Moses, Injīl (Bible) of Jesus, and the Qur‘ān, in addition to Muḥṣaf (book) of Fāṭima. In fact the main source of all heavens and the earth are in the Pedestal.”

225 It is reported that Abū wallād Ḥafṣ b. Sālim (On him see Mararresi, Tradition, 235 no. 68) asked Imam al-Ṣādiq about the verse [Q 2:121] ‘Those to whom We have given the Book and who follow/ recite it as it should be followed/ recited, they believe in it.’ Imam said, “They are the Imams.” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:172, 173; al-Hilālī, Kitāb Sulaym, 2:616, 647, 655, 763, 894; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Basāʿ ir, 414 no. 6. See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:191 no. 5; al-Hilālī, Kitāb Sulaym, 2:606; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Basāʿ ir, 83 no. 6. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:423 no. 6. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:294 no. 3; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:172, 173; 2:345, 447; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Basāʿ ir, 414 no. 6. See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:191 no. 5; al-Hilālī, Kitāb Sulaym, 2:606 no. 12; 2:791 no. 26. See also Bar-Asher, “The Authority,” 153; Scripture and Exegesis, 93–98; Amir-Moezzi, The Silent Qur‘ān, 75–76. For supplementary sources, see Divine Guide, 86; al-Husaynī al-Mīlānī, Ḥadīth Al-Thaqalayn; al-Masūmī, Ḥadīth Al-Thaqalayn.

226 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:275 no. 3; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Basāʿ ir, 480 no. 2; al-Mufid, al-Ikhtiṣāṣ, 267. The Prophet and ‘Ali have their own excellence.

227 In interpreting [Q 2:189], Imam al-Bāqir said to Jābir al-Ju‘fī, “You have to approach everything from the correct angle.” (al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:86 no. 211 and 213; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:224 no. 143).


229 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:240 no. 3; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Basāʿ ir, 150 no. 1; al-Mufid, al-Irshād, 2:186. For further information on al-Jafr see Kohlberg, “Authoritative Scriptures in Early Imāmī Shī‘īsm.” For more information on
scripts is the same which is called al-Dhikr in the divine dominion. The Imāms insisted that the primary source of their religious knowledge is the Qurʾān.

**Imāms are those to whom obedience is obligatory (muṭaraḍ al-ṭā‘a)**

Ulū al-amr (those in authority among people) is a reference to the Imāms after the Prophet exclusively. They have divine authority and obedience to them is the gateway through which divine knowledge enters the believers’ minds/hearts. Therefore obedience to prophets and Imāms is obligatory upon people on account of reason as well as on account of divine ordinance. If one of the Imāms’ disciples had any doubt about their obligatory obedience, they explained it to him by referring to two verses of the Qurʾān [Q 4:59] ‘O you who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you’ and [Q 5:55] ‘Your walī is only God, and His Messenger, and those who believe, who perform the prayer and give alms while bowing down.’

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Muṣḥaf of Fāṭima see For details of these, see al-Šaftār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 161-162; Newman, The Formative Period, 73–75.

[232] al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:225-226 no. 6; al-Šaftār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 136 no. 6. It seems that al-Dhikr is a reference to the ‘Mother of the Book’ (Umm al-kitāb) [Q 13:39] which is the celebral archetype of all sacred scripture [Q 13:39; 43:4] or the ‘Preserved Tablet’ (al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ) [Q 85:22]. It is reported that Imam al-Šādiq underlined his position as a special member of the people of the house of the Prophet and asid, “God appoints among us one who knows his book from the beginning to the end.” (Al-Šaftār, Baṣāʾir, 1:194, 507; Al-ʾAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 1:16).


[234] In early Imāmī traditions ‘those in authority among you’ does not refer to rulers. It refers only to the Imāms who stand in the place of the Messenger after his death. Ulū al-amr are said to be: ʿAlī (Aṣl ʿAlī b. Ḥabīb, 352 no.30; Fūrāt al-Kūfī, Taṣfīr, 108 no. 107, 109 no. 109-111; al-Qummī, Taṣfīr, 1:141); ʿAlī, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn (Fūrāt al-Kūfī, Taṣfīr, 110 no. 112; al-ʾAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 1:250 no. 169; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:286 no. 1); the Imams (Fūrāt al-Kūfī, Taṣfīr, 108 no. 105; al-ʾAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 1:247 no. 153; 1:251 no. 171; 1:252 no. 173; 1:253 no. 176 and 177; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:276 no. 1; 2:21 no. 9); alḥ al-bayt (al-Thaqafī, al-Ghārātī, 1:116, 196): awṣiyāʾ (al-ʾAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 1:249 no. 168; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:187 no. 7; 1:189 no. 16); al-Muḥammad (Fūrāt al-Kūfī, Taṣfīr, 108 no. 106). In post-Buyid commentaries, this verse is a proof of the Imams’ spiritual infallibility (iṣmah). They claim that since God demands obedience to Ulū al-amr unrestricted without any conditions as He demands obedience to God and the Prophet, Ulū al-amr should be preserved from religious error. (al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 3:236). According to early Imamī traditions, the Imams who are Ulū al-amr distinguished their authority from earthly wulāt al-amr (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:219 no. 12; al-Barqūq, al-Maḥāsin, 1:255 no. 286).

The relationship between obedience to God and the Messenger, is extended to the Imāms in early Shīʿī traditions and whoever obeys the Imāms, obeys the Messenger and ultimately God. For early Shīʿas the obligatory obedience to the Prophet and Imāms was not opposed to worship and obedience to God. A conflict between obedience to Shīʿī Imāms as divine religious authorities and the sincere worship of the One God is not seen. Not only is there no tension between obeying divine authority and obeying God, the only way to obey God is to obey His proof/argument (ḥujja). In early Shīʿī traditions, God has two proofs (ḥujja) unto the people: 1. The hidden (bāṭin) proof: intellect, and 2. The apparent (zāhir) proof: Prophets, and the Imāms. 236 Prophets and the Imāms are endowed with perfect intellects and they perceive the higher degree of reality perfectly. 237

**Imāms are the only divine guides after the Prophet**

The Imāms had the same function of the Prophet except for prophethood. According to the Qur’ān, one of the most important functions of the Prophet is to warn and guide people to the right path with a permission from God. 238 In this regard, Imām al-Bāqir said, “The messenger of God was the warner and at all times there is a guide from us [ahl al-bayt] who guides people to whatever the Prophet brought [for guidance]. The [only true] guide after the Prophet was ‘Alī and then his heirs one after the other.” 239 Since the Imāms are granted divine knowledge and guided by God through His messenger, they are supposed to be able to guide others. If someone cannot guide himself, surely he cannot be expected to be able to guide others. In a rhetorical

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237 According to early Imami traditions, Prophets did not speak to their people with the utmost degree of their intellect because Prophets are commanded by God to talk to people as much as peoples’ intellects will comprehend. (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:23; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:195) Prophets and the Imams have true knowledge and they are the source of divine knowledge (maʿdin al-ʿilm). (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:221; al-Ṣaffār, Baṣāʾir, 1:56, 57, 58; Furāṭ 338, 395).

238 It is reported that Abū Baṣīr asked Imam al-Bāqir about the verse [Q 13:7] ‘you are only a warner and for every people there is a guide.’ Imam said, the Prophet interpreted this verse, “I am the warner and ‘Alī is the guide after me” (Aṣl ‘Āṣim b. Ḥumayd, 183 no. 96; See also al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 30 no. 5; 31 no. 9. See also al-ʿAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 2:203 no. 5; 2:204 no. 7).

239 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:191-192 no. 2; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 29 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 2:204 no. 8; Ibn Bābawayh, Kamāl al-dīn, 667 no. 10.

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question in the verse [Q 10:35] it is asked ‘Is one who guides to Truth worthier to be followed, or one who cannot guide unless he is guided?’ One of the signs of the Imāms who are guided by God is their insight. The Imāms are the most faithful followers of the Prophet who have divine insight (baṣīra). They are able to understand the internal reality because of this divine insight. They can distinguish between the truth and falsehood with absolute certainty. The Prophet was instructed to say [Q 12:108] ‘this is my way. I call to God with insight, I and those who follow me.’ In this verse the word way (sabīl) refers to the religion of Islam that the Prophet brought.

It is reported that in interpreting this verse, Imām al-Bāqir said, “This verse is concerning the Messenger of God, ‘Alī, and the heirs (awṣiyāʾ) [the Imāms] after them.”

Without this divine insight, no one can find out the truth because “One who works without [divine] insight is like one who walks in a wrong direction. It only takes one farther away from the destination.”

To guide people to the right path with certainty, the Imāms are distinguished from others by divine support.

Imāms are supported by the Spirit

The Imāms like the Prophet are supported by the Spirit (rūḥ) who is mentioned in [Q 42:52] ‘Thus We have revealed to you a Spirit by Our Command.’ According to early Imāmī traditions, the Spirit is sent down to be with the Prophet and after him with the Imāms, to support them and

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240 most Sunni exegetes understood one who guides unto Truth as referring to God. However, in early Imāmī exegetical traditions this statement is an allusion to the guidance offered by the Prophet and the Imams (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:122 no. 18; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:312. See also al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 7:249 no. 4).

241 In early Imami exegetical traditions, ‘the one who followed the Prophet with insight’ refers to ʿAlī (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 200 no. 99; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:358; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 201-202 no. 264-267). ʿAlī was the first person who followed the Prophet when he was only nine years old (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:384 no. 8; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:200 no. 100; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:358) In interpreting [Q 26:214] ‘and warn your tribe, your nearest kin’ it is reported in early Imami traditions that when this verse was revealed, the Prophet asked a gathering of his nearest relatives who among them would be his supporter, helper, and trustee; only ʿAlī, who was nine years old, rose to respond (Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 299-304 no. 404-408; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:124 no. 1; Ibn Bābawayh, ʿIlal, 1:170 no. 2; al-Mufid, al-Irshād, 1:49-50; al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ, 19:75; al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 7:182). The Imams are those who follow the Prophet (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:425 no. 66; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 201 no. 101).


243 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:43 no. 1; al-Baqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:198 no. 24; Ibn Bābawayh, Man lā yahduruh, 4:401 no. 5864; al-Amālī, 421 no. 18. Also see al-Mufid, al-Amālī, 42 no. 11.
protect them from sin and error. Based on this verse, Spirit is identified with the realm of Divine command (ʿālam al-amr) or the dominion of God (malakāt). It is reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “Spirit was not with anyone who passed away except the Prophet and the Imāms.” They attempted to remark that this Spirit is not the same as the Holy Spirit (rūḥ al-Qudus) that God sent to Jeses to support him [Q 2:253] ‘We gave Jesus, son of Mary, our clear signs and supported him with the Holy Spirit.’ This Holy Spirit who is mentioned in [Q 16:102] ‘say, the Holy Spirit has brought it down with the truth from your Lord’ is the title given to the Archangel Gabriel. The Imāms cited [Q 97:4] ‘the angels and the Spirit sent down therein by the permission of their Lord’ or [Q 16:2] ‘He sends down angels with the Spirit from His Command’ and argued that on the basis of this verse, the Spirit should be different from all angels.

**Imāms are gifted extraordinary abilities by God**

One of the most important Qur’ānic verses that the Shīʿī Imāms employed to prove their extraordinary ability is the last verse of sūra al-Raʾd [Q 13:43] ‘And those who disbelieve say, You are not sent [by God]. Say, God and whoever has knowledge of the Book suffices as a witness between you and me.’ In most early Sunni traditions, the phrase ‘whoever has knowledge of the Book’ refers to the Medinan Jewish convert to Islam ʿAbd Allāh b. Salām or other Jewish and Christian converts who are said to have known about the Prophet based on references in the Torah and the Gospel. However, Imāmī exegetical traditions rejected this

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244 It is reported that Abū Baṣīr said, “I asked Imām al-Ṣādiq about [Q 42:52] and he said, the Spirit is a creature of God’s creatures, greater than Gabriel and Michael. He was with the Messenger of God to inform him and lead him to the right path. He is with the Imāms after the Prophet.” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:273 no. 1; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ir, 455 no. 2. See also al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ir, 457 no. 13; 460 no. 5; 464 no. 3; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:273 no. 2; 1:273-274 no. 5; 1:274 no. 6). This is the same Spirit who is mentioned in [Q 17:85] ‘They ask you about the Spirit. Say, the Spirit is from the Command of my Lord.’ (al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:26, 279).

245 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:273 no. 3; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:317 no. 163 and 165; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ir, 461 no. 5; 462 no. 8 and 9.

246 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:273 no. 4; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:317 no. 161; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾ ir, 460 no. 1; 461 no. 2, 3, 4, and 6; 462 no. 11 and 12.


interpretation categorically. For example, Burayd b. Mu‘awiya al-‘Iljī (d. 150/767) said, “I asked Imām al-Bāqir about the verse [Q 13:43]. The Imām said: it refers to us only. ‘Alī is the first among us and the most excellent and the best among us after the Prophet.” A comparison between this verse and [Q 27:40] ‘the one who had knowledge of the Book said, I will bring it to you in the blink of an eye’ by the Imāms indicates the extraordinary ability of the Imāms. ‘The one who had knowledge of the Book’ was Solomon’s friend, whose name is usually given as Āṣif ibn Barkhiyā in early Sunni and Imāmī exegetical works. It is reported that he knew a letter of the Greatest Name of God (al-ism al-a‘ẓam) that when called God by that name caused his

249 For example, Abū Maryam ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Aṭāʾ (On him see al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 228 no. 601) was at the mosque with Imam al-Bāqir when a son of ‘Abd Allāh b. Salām passed by (al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿ īr, 214 no. 11) “Abū Maryam said to Abū Ja’far al-Bāqir: this is the son of ‘Abd Allāh b. Salām who believes that his father is the one whom the verse [Q 13:43] was revealed about. Abū Ja’far al-Bāqir said: he lied. This verse is concerning ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib.” (al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿ īr, 215 no. 16; al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:220 no. 77) In numerous early Imāmī exegetical traditions it is transmitted that the phrase ‘whoever has knowledge of the Book’ refers to ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib specifically (al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:220 no. 77; 2:221 no. 79; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:367; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿ īr, 216 no. 21; 1:229 no. 6; al-Ḥibārī, Tafsīr, 285-286 no. 41. See also Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 123-124 no. 134) or to the twelve Imams generally.

250 On him see Van Ess, Theology, 1:388. Burayd b. Mu‘awiya al-‘Iljī (d. 150/767), Zurārā b. A’yan (d. 148/765 or 149/766), Abū Baṣīr Yahyā b. Abī Qāsim al-Asadī (d. 150/767), and Muḥammad b. Muslim al-Thaqafī (d. 150/767) were four most eminent Kūfī disciples of Imam al-Ṣadiq who were looked upon by the Imāmī community of Kūfā as the true representatives of the Imam (al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 138 no. 220; See also Modarressi, Tradition, 213).

251 al-Kulaynī, al-Kūfī, 1:229 no. 6; al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:220 no. 76; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿ īr, 214-215 no. 12; 216 no. 20; See also al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿ īr, 214 no. 7. ‘Alī was the only companion who was ready to spend whatever he possessed to confer with the Prophet. According to early Shi‘î exegetical traditions “‘Alī b. Abī Tālib had four dirhams and he did not own anything else, so he gave a dirham by night, a dirham by day, a dirham secretly, and a dirham openly.” (al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:151 no. 502; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 70-73 no. 42-46; al-Tha‘labī, al-Kashf, 2:279) This story is reported as the occasion of revelation of the verse [Q 2:274] ‘those who spend their wealth by night and by day, secretly and openly, shall have their reward with their Lord. No fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve’ this verse which describes and encourages charity in the way of God in general, is interpreted to be referring to ‘Alī. For example, the verse [Q 58:12] known as the verse of private conversation (āyat al-najāwā) was reportedly revealed about some Muslims who used to confer with the Prophet privately for a long time, so that other people had no opportunity, and the Prophet found it difficult. God wanted to relieve his prophet and sent down [Q 58:12] ‘O you who believe! When you converse with the Messenger in private, offer charity before your private converse.’ The Companions of the Prophet found this verse difficult to apply except ‘Alī who said later, “There is a verse in the Book of God that no one has applied before me and no one will apply it after me: the verse of private conversation. I had a dīnār that I sold it for ten dirhams. Every time I conferred with the Prophet, I spent one dirham [in charity]. Until the verse was abrogated with the next verse [Q 58:13]. Therefore, no one applied it after me.” (Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 469-470 no. 615. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:357; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 469 no. 614; 470 no. 616; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Khiṣāl, 2:574; For early Sunni exegesis confirming the revelation of these verses regarding ‘Alī see al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi’ al-bayān, 28:14-15).
supplication to be answered. The position of the Imāms in early Imāmī traditions is like Dhū al-Qarnayn, the associate of Solomon (Āṣif ibn Barkhiyā), and the associate of Moses (Yūshaʿ b. Nūn) who were not prophets but their heirs.

**Imāms are the people of the reminder**

The Imāms introduced themselves as *ahl al-dhikr* (the people of the reminder) who are referred to in [Q 16:43; 21:7]. In the Qurʾān remembrance is a central human obligation and the believers are instructed to remember various things such as God, the Lord, the name of God, the Last day, God’s grace (*niʿma*), compassion (*raḥma*), the stories of the prophets, the signs (*āyāt*), and the Qurʾān itself which contains remembrance (*dhī l-dhikr* [Q 38:1]). Therefore, the message of the Qurʾān is called a *dhikr*, *dhikrā*, or *tadhkira*. Dhikr is also one of the names of the Qurʾān in several verses. Early Sunni exegetes say that the *ahl al-dhikr* are believers from the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) well versed in the Torah and the Gospel. The Shīʿī Imāms argued that it is impossible to accept that the People of the Book are called *ahl al-dhikr* in the Qurʾān and God enjoined believers to go and ask them their questions while in other verses it accuses the People of the Book of concealing the truth [Q 3:71; 2:42]. Therefore, the Imāms are the people of the Reminder because they have the knowledge of the Qurʾān. In interpreting [Q 43:44] ‘truly, it is a reminder to you and to your people and you will be questioned’ Imām al-

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255 See [Q 15:6, 15:9, 16:44, 38:8, 54:25, and 68:51]. According to al-Ṭabarī, the divine revelation (tanzīl) has four names: *qurʾān*, *furqān*, *kitāb*, and *dhikr* (see al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 1:32).


257 Muhammad b. Muslim reported that “I told Imām al-Bāqir some of our companions think that the verse ‘ask the people of the Reminder, if you do not know’ refers to Jews and Christians (the People of the Book). The Imām said: if you ask them they will invite you to their religion. Then he pointed to himself and said: we are the people of the reminder and people will be asked about us. He added: the reminder is the Qurʾān.” (al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfî*, 1:211 no. 7; al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, 2:260-261 no. 32; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, *Baṣāʾir*, 41 no. 17).
Ṣādiq said, “The reminder (al-dhikr) is the Qurʾān and we are the people of the reminder and we are those who people will be questioned [about].” However, the Reminder is also a name given to the Prophet in the Qurʾān [Q 88:21], and the Imāms are the people of the Reminder in that they are the family of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt). Imāms are those who are purified

According to early Imāmī interpretation of the verse [Q 33:33] ‘God only desires to remove rijs from you, O people of the House, and to purify you completely’, the Shīʿī Imāms are those people of the house of the Prophet who are purified from rijs completely. The root r-j-s in Semitic languages denotes ‘tumult’ which means confusion of mind/heart. Therefore, the Imāms have a spiritual tranquility because God removed any kind of spiritual confusion from their spirit. In interpreting this verse, Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “The Imāms do not have any doubt in their Lord (or religion).” The spiritual tranquility is a kind of certainty which is an epistemic property of beliefs. This spiritual tranquility is extended in other Imāmī traditions to the Imāms actions as well. This immunity from fault and error is referred to by the word ʿiṣmah in early

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258 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:211 no. 5; al-Šaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿir, 37 no. 1. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:210 no. 1 and 2; al-Šaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿir, 37 no. 6; 38 no. 7-8; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:286.

259 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:211 no. 4; al-Šaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿir, 37 no. 2.

260 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:288 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:250 no. 169. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:423 no. 54; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:193; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 110 no. 112; 331-337 no. 451-459. The cause of revelation of this verse is known as “Ḥadīth of the Cloak (kisāʾ)” in early Imami exegetical traditions. It is reported that this verse was revealed in the house of the Prophet’s wife Umm Salamah (d. ca. 60/680). The Prophet was in her house with his daughter Fāṭimah. He asked Fāṭimah to call her husband and sons. The Prophet then “brought ʿAlī, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and Fāṭimah under the cloak and said, O God! Every prophet had a household (ahl) and eminent family members (thaqal). These are my household and eminent family members.” Imām al-Ṣādiq continued, “Umm Salamah asked the Prophet, “Am I am not of your household?” The Prophet answered, “You are good, but these are my household and eminent family members” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:287 no. 1. For early Sunni exegesis see al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ, 22:5-7; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Tafsīr, 9:3131 no. 17673, 17674; 9:3132 no. 17677, 17678, 17679; al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 8:43).

261 Zammit, A Comparative, 189.


Imāmī traditions. The source of the spiritual tranquility of the Imāms is the special divine knowledge which overpowers all their faculties and they use them according to its own wisdom. In this way, the Imām is turned away and protected from any impurity in his belief and his actions.

These aforementioned Qur’ānic characteristics of the Imāms were part of the mainstream of classical Shī‘ī belief system. The opposite of these characteristics are attributed to the adversaries of the Imāms: they do not possess divine knowledge; their obedience is not obligatory; they are not divine guides to the straight path; they do not remind one of God; and they are not purified. In summary, the enemies of the Shī‘ī Imāms (and their followers) are leaders of misguidance who call to Hell.

1.1.1.2.2 Divine laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl)

In early Imāmī traditions, Divine laws and parables are significant because they are repeated throughout the history of creation. The term Sunan (pl. of Sunna) is from the Semitic root s-n-n which means “law.” Law is “method of doing” things or “way of acting” which is “laid or fixed.” It is “a rule of conduct imposed by authority,” God or creatures. Sunan in the Qur’ān are divine orders and regularities implanted by God in His creatures. They are God’s or His

264 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:204 no. 2.
265 In early Imāmī exegetical traditions, ‘people of the house’ in the verse [Q 33:33] refers to ‘Ali, Fāṭimah, al-Hasan, and al-Ḥusayn who had blood ties as well spiritual relationship with the Prophet. It does not refer to the wives of the Prophet. Early Imami exegetes such as al-Qummi mentions that the use of the second-person plural masculine pronoun in this verse clearly shows that this verse applies to ahl al-bayt who are not the Prophet’s wives. (See al-Qummi, Tafsīr, 2:193-194).
266 For this reason, in early Imami exegetical traditions, it is emphasized that there are two types of the Imāms in the Qur’ān: 1- the Imāms who call to God and 2- the Imāms who call to fire. The first category are also called ‘the Imam of justice (ʿadl)’ or ‘the righteous Imam (barr)’ and the second category are also called ‘the Imam of injustice (jawr)’ or ‘violator of religious teachings (fājir).’
267 In this regard, in interpreting [Q 17:77] ‘the way with the Messengers we sent before you. You will find no change in our ways’ Imam al-Bāqir (or al-Ṣādiq) addressed the differences among people and said, “People proceed in accordance with the laws (sunan) and parables (amthāl). They happen to us as they happen to those who were before us” (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:307 no. 134).
268 Zammit, A Comparative, 229; Badawi and Abdel Haleem. Arabic-English Dictionary, 460.
creatures’ ways of acting or patterns of behavior. *Sunna* is the existentiating (*takwīnī*) rules which all creation is created based on.

Qur’ānic *sunan* in early Imāmī exegesis are normally associated with pre-Islamic people especially prophets and their adversaries. However, Qur’ānic *sunan* are not always related to the Imāms or prophets. There are numerous Qur’ānic verses in which the law of God (*Sunna*) is clearly intended. For example, all references to invariant Natural Law (universal law, cosmic law, spiritual law and moral law) in the Qur’ān are under the category of *Sunan*, e.g. [Q 35:43] ‘You will never find any change in God’s Laws (*sunnat Allāh*) and you will never find any alteration in God’s Laws (*sunnat Allāh*).’

The term *Sunan* or its singular *Sunna* occurs eighteen times in the Qur’ān. Juynboll divided these Qur’ānic verses into two categories: *Sunna* means 1- God’s reaction to the disbelievers, and 2- the behavior of disbelievers who refuse to comply with divine authorities.270 An example of *Sunna* in early Imāmī exegetical traditions was what happened to Ṭalḥa b. ʿUbayd Allāh (d. 36/656), Zubayr b. al-ʿAwām (d. 36/656), and ‘Āʾisha bt. Abī Bakr (d. 58/678) who departed Mecca for Baṣra and eventually caused the battle of the Camel in 36/656.271 It is reported that in the aftermath of the battle ‘Alī cited three *Sunna* in the Qur’ān and said, “Which sin is greater than what they did? They (Ṭalḥa and Zubayr) came to the wife of the Messenger of God and made her go out of her home and unveil her veil that God covered her with. However, their wives were in their homes. They did not treat God and His Messenger fairly.” Imām Ali then articulated three qualities, i.e. tyranny (*baghy*), plotting (*makr*), and violating an oath (*nakth*), which correspond to three categorical statements in the Qur’ān, which can be interpreted to be instance of God’s *sunan*. Imām recited, ‘God said [Q 10:23] ‘your tyranny is only against you’, [Q 35:43] ‘evil plotting only rebounds on those who plot’, and said [Q 48:10] ‘whoever violates his oath violates only [the purity of] himself’” He added, “They (Ṭalḥa and Zubayr) treated me unjustly, plotted against me, and violated their oath with me.”272

270 See Juynboll, “Sunna.”
271 See Haider, “Battle of the Camel.”
Besides *Sunan*, the Qur'ānic *amthāl* completes this category. The Qur'ān states that every kind of *mathal* (pl. *amthāl*) has been employed [Q 18:54; 30:58; 39:27] in this book. *Mathal*, depending on context, can mean an allegory, simile, parable, metaphor, example, proverb, or illustrative case. Therefore, *mathal* is employed throughout the Qur'ān in different forms. For example, in the form of short factual narrative like [Q 18:32-43] which is a narrative of objective reality. The *mathal* can be a simile [Q 10:24] or metaphorical images [13:17; 14:18, 24-26; 16:75-76, 112; 18:45; 29:41; 39:29]. *Amthāl* comprises one of the most significant categories of Qur'ānic discourse. Whether the word *mathal* is used in the Qur'ānic *mathal* or not, al-Qāṭṭān identified three types of parables in the Qur'ān: 1. The parable is explicit and the word *mathal* indicates explicitly the kind of similarity intended. 2. The parable contains a concealed similarity and the word *mathal* (or its derivatives) does not occur. 3. Open simile which refers to a Qur'ānic verse in which the word *mathal* does not occur nor is it a rephrasing of a common *mathal*; but the verse has come to be treated as a common *mathal*.²⁷³

Qur'ānic parables are good cases for early esoteric Imāmī exegesis which is fascinated by metaphorical reading or esoteric interpretations of the verses. In a *mathal* which is a form of imaginative literature the literal meanings are not usually intended. In early Imāmī exegetical traditions, a number of Qur'ānic parables is interpreted as references to the Imāms or their adversaries. For example, the Light Verse [Q 24:35], is a symbolic image with deep metaphysical and cosmological meaning. In the Light Verse (*āyat al-nūr*) [Q 24:35] in Shī‘ī exegetical traditions, the niche symbolizes Fāṭimah who was like a shining star among the women of the world, while the lamp represents Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and light upon light refers to the succession of Imāms who were her progeny.²⁷⁴ Light is interpreted as a reference to the Imāms in several Qur'ānic verses. Light is frequently associated with the guidance that comes through the prophets and revelation [6:91; 7:157; 21:48; 57:9, 28; 64:8]. In early Imāmī exegetical traditions, the Imāms like the revelation/Qur'ān, are the light of God. In interpreting [Q 64:8] ‘believe in God and His Messenger and the light which We have sent down’ Imām al-


Bāqir said to Abū Khālid al-Kābulī,275 “I swear by God, the ‘light’ [in this verse] is a reference to the Imāms. O Abū Khālid! The light of the Imām in the hearts of believers is brighter than the light of the sun in midday. The Imāms are those who brighten the hearts of the believers and God obscures their light from whomever He wills, thus making their hearts dark and God covers them with darkness.”276

In early Imāmī esoteric exegetical traditions, the Imāms are the light (nūr) of God who are mentioned in a number of verses. As Elias noted, in the Qurʾān, light is used to indicate guidance, revelation (Torah, Gospel, and the Qurʾān in particular), prophethood (the Prophet in particular), moon, and God.277 God is light and the light of God is what hides God from all beings. The Imāms, like prophets, are divine lights that only by their illumination one can find the straight path in this world and can walk towards Paradise in the next. In interpreting [Q 57:28] ‘O you who believe! Be God-conscious and believe in His Messenger … He makes a light for you by which you may walk’ Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq said, “[the light] means an Imām that you can follow as a [divine] example.”278 The Imāms are mentioned in the verse [Q 57:12] as the believers’ light spreading before them and to their right-hand side because “On the Day of Resurrection, they will walk before the believers on their right side until they bring them to their houses in Paradise.”279 In interpreting [Q 24:40] ‘One whom God has not made any light for, there is no light for’ Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “light is an Imām from descendants of Fāṭima.” If someone does not have a divine leader after the Prophet he will not have “an Imām on the Day of

275 al-Ṭūsī has mentioned two people whose kunyas are Abū Khālid al-Kābulī: 1. His personal name is Kankar and is known as al-akbar (“the greater”). He was a disciple of the Imams Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn and al-Bāqir (al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 119 no. 1213; al-Kashshāi, Rijāl, 120-123 no. 191-193) 2. His personal name is Wardān and is known as al-asghar (“the lesser”). He was a disciple of the Imams al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq (al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 148 no. 1642; 317 no. 4731).


277 Elias, “Light.”

278 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:194-195 no. 3; 1:430 no. 86; Ašl Jaʿfar b. Muhammad al-Ḥadramī, 219 no. 17; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:353. See also Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 468 no. 612 instead of ‘imam’ is ‘ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalib.’

279 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:195 no. 5; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:378; al-Uraydī, Masāʾil ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar, 317 no. 795; See also Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 467 no. 611.
Resurrection with whose light he can walk." Burayd al-ʿIjlī (d. 150/767), a Kūfan disciple of Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq, transmitted from Imām al-Bāqir who interpreted ‘dead’ as “one who does not know this matter (walāya),” ‘a light to walk by among the people’ as “an Imām who is followed” and ‘one who is in darkness from which he cannot come out’ as “one who does not know the Imām.”

All three verses which refer to the light (nūr) of God are interpreted to refer the Imāms in early Shiʿi exegetical traditions. In two of these verses [Q 9:32; 61:8] which are almost identical in their phrasing, it is said ‘they want to put out the light of God with their mouths, but God will perfect His light although the disbelievers dislike it.’

Divine walāya binds the Prophet, Imāms and all believers strongly in this world and in the next. It is reported by several disciples of Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq that he asked the Imām to interpret [Q 14:24] ‘a good tree: its roots are firm and its branches are in the sky.’ The Imām explained this Qurʾānic metaphor by referring to the elements of the family of the Prophet and the believers: “The messenger of God is its trunk (or root), the leader of the faithful ['Alī] is its bough and their descendants (i.e. the Imāms) are its branches. The knowledge of the Imāms is its fruits and their faithful followers represent the leaves of the tree.” The Imām then asked, “Is there anything else in the tree?” Imām’s disciple said, “By God, no.” The Imām continued, “By God, when a believer is born a leaf grows in the tree and when a believer dies a leaf falls off the tree.”

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280 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:195 no. 5; al-Qummī, Taṣfīr, 2:106; al-ʿUrayḍī, Masāʾ il ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar, 317 no. 795. [Q 6:122] ‘Is he who was dead, and We gave him life, and made for him a light to walk by among the people, as one who is in darkness from which he cannot come out?’ This verse which is a metaphorical comparison between believers and disbelievers in general, is reportedly revealed in relation to Abū Jahl who was killed at the Battle of Badr in 2/624, and Ṭaḥmār ibn Yāsir who was killed in the Battle of Ṣifān in 37/657 (Furāt al-Kūfī, Taṣfīr, 135 no. 160 and 161; al-Ṭabarānī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 8:17-18; al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 4:259). Other reports consider the one who was dead a reference to ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, who had initially opposed the Prophet, but later converted to Islam (al-Ṭabarānī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 8:17).


282 This verse refers to those who would seek to put out the walāya of ʿAlī, though God completes his position as leader (imāmah) (al-ʿAyyāshī, Taṣfīr, 1:372 no. 75. Also see al-Ḥimyarī, Qurb al-insād, 347 1255; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:195-196 no. 6; 1:432 no. 91).
In addition to this virtual tree, in early Shi‘ī exegetical traditions, there is a real tree in paradise called ṭūbā whose root is in the house of the Prophet or ‘Alī. In interpreting [Q 13:29] ‘those who believe and do righteous deeds, there is goodness for them (ṭūbā) and a beautiful return’ it is reported that Imām al-Bāqir said, “ṭūbā is a tree in Paradise whose root is in the house of the Messenger of God. There is no believer except that in his house there is a branch of its branches.”

Unlike the Imāms who introduced themselves as the light or the good tree in the Qur‘ān, their adversaries are examples of darkness and bad trees whose actions are void. For example, the following Qur‘ānic mathal is used to express the nullification of the Imāms’ adversaries’ deeds.

In the verse [Q 14:18] the Qur‘ān presents a mathal about the disbelievers’ deeds that because of their disbelief in the truth ‘their deeds are like ashes which a strong wind blows upon on a stormy day. They have no power over what they have earned. That is the farthest one can be in error.’ In commenting on this verse, Imām al-Bāqir said to his disciple Muḥammad b. Muslim, “Whoever worships God in which he exerts effort but without having an Imām [of guidance] from God, his efforts are unacceptable and he is astray and bewildered … by God he who rises in this nation (ummah) without having an Imām from God, who is manifest (or pure) and just, rises astray and lost. If such a person dies in this condition, he dies the death of disbelief and hypocrisy.” The Imām then continued and said, “O Muḥammad! Take notice that unjust Imāms and their...
followers are barred from the religion of God. They went astray and lead others astray. They are like ashes which a strong wind blows upon on a stormy day. They have no power over what they have earned. That is the farthest one can be in error."

1.1.1.2.3 Religious duties (farāʿiḍ) and legal rulings (aḥkām)

The Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq carved out an independent legal and social identity for the Imāmī Shīʿī school of thought through the interpretation of religious duties/obligations (farāʿiḍ pl. of farīḍa) and divine regulations/legal rulings (aḥkām pl. of ḥukm) in the Qurʾān. In his book, Najam Haider examined a few very early discussions on the Basmala, Qunūt in ritual prayer, and drinking matters. He concluded that the Imāmī identity as an independent school of thought originated in the early 2nd/8th century. He suggests that in this period, in the self-identification process, “the ‘proper’ performance of rituals effectively outweighed adherence to (or advocacy of) problematic theological tenets.” Although the number of “verses of the legal rules (āyāt al-aḥkām)” is five hundred (about 8 percent of Qurʾānic verses), about 62.5 percent of traditions in al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī concern legal rules. Thus, it appears that analyzing the early Imāmī exegetical traditions concerning rituals and legal rules is a large project whose outcome can confirm Haider’s conclusion. In this section exegetical traditions regarding religious duties (farāʿiḍ) will be studied.

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286 In this tradition, Imam al-Bāqir interpreted ‘those who disbelieve’ to refer to ‘leaders of injustice (jawr)’ who usurped the rights of the ‘Imams of justice (ʿadl)’ in the Qurʾān. As noted earlier, in general two types of the Imams are mentioned in the Qurʾān: 1- the Imams who call to God ([Q 21:73; 32:24] ‘And We made them imams, guiding according to Our Command’ This category of Imams are also called ‘the Imam of justice (ʿadl)’ or ‘the righteous Imam (barr)’ in the Qurʾān or early Imami traditions). and 2- the leaders who call to the fire ([Q 28:41] ‘And We made them imams calling to the Fire. And on the Day of Resurrection they will not be helped’ This category of Imams are also called ‘the Imams of disbelief,’ ‘the Imam of injustice (jawr)’ or ‘violator of religious teachings (fājir)’ in the Qurʾān or early Imami traditions).

287 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:183-184 no. 8; 1:374-375 no. 2; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:93 no. 48. Also see al-Qummī, Taḥṣīr, 1:368.

288 Haider, The Origins, 251.


290 Pakatchi, “Āyāt al-aḥkām.”
The religious duties, i.e. prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage, which are required of all Muslims in the Qurʾān, are considered the four pillars of Islam. This edifice is built upon five pillars and the central pillar, which is the centre of the structure, is different in early Sunni and Shiʿī belief systems. It is widely reported in early Sunni sources that the Prophet proclaimed “Islam is built upon five pillars/elements: the testimony that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His prophet, [the five] Ritual prayers, the fasts of Ramadan, giving the alms, and pilgrimage to Mecca.” These five religious duties of Islam sum up its essence. According to some Shiʿī traditions, when God granted the Prophet permission to leave Mecca for Medina, he spoke of the same five elements which is mentioned in Sunni sources. But later the central pillar of these five pillars changed in the Shiʿī school of thought to a more comprehensive element. According to Imāmī Shiʿī traditions which discuss the late Medinan period of the Prophet, Islam is built upon five elements: [the five] ritual prayers, the fast of Ramadan, giving the alms, pilgrimage to Mecca, and walāya of God, the Prophet, which extend to the Imāms after the Prophet’s passing.

Walāya, which entails tawhīd and nubuwwa, is the most important Religious duty in early Imāmi exegetical traditions and the last religious duty that God sent down. Walāya is the most


\[292\] al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:18 no. 1, 3, and 5; 2:21 no. 7 and 8; 4:62 no. 1; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:286 no. 429 and 430; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:191 no. 109. The notion of walāya is frequently seen in early Shiʿī exegesis and what Arjomand says, “The cosmological notion of walāya was a later ahistorical approach to the classical perplexity following the death of the 11th Imam” is not evident. (Arjomand, “The Consolation”). It is reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “God has made our walāya pivot (quṭb) of the Qurʾān.” (Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:5) However, the term walāya takwīniyya (the existential and absolute cosmic authority of the Imams) is a later invention of post-Ṣafawid Imāmī scholars which certainly was not accepted by prominent theologians of Baghdād in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries. As Farmāniyān shows, during the last 500 years, Post-Ṣafawid Imāmī scholars proposed the following characteristics for walāya takwīniyya of Imams gradually: Creation of the whole or part of the universe by the Imams; the permanence of the whole or part of the universe by the Imams; management of all or part of the universe by the Imams; Imams mediation in all or part of the affairs of the universe; the obedience of the whole or part of the universe from Imams; the performance of miracles in the hands of the Imams. Form these aforementioned characteristics of walāya takwīniyya, the only one that can be observed in the works of Baghdadi theologians of 4th/10th and 5th/11th is the performance of miracles in the hands of the Imams; other characteristics were not considered essential qualities of the Imams. From al-Mufīd to al-Karājakī, Baghdadi theologians did not mention many of the imams’ miracle traditions in their works. Even about few miracles of the Imams, Baghdadi theologians stated that the extraordinary miracles that are sometimes attributed to the Imams are in fact the acts of God which is performed by the Prophets and the Imams. (See Farmāniyān, “Andīshi-yi”). This moderate status of the Imams somewhat is seen in all Buyid exegesis up to the Ṣafawid.

\[293\] al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:289 no. 4; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:292-293 no. 20; 1:293 no. 22; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:162. This verse concerns the divine revelation of ʿAlī’s walāya to the Prophet and establishes walāya as the last religious
fundamental pillar in Shi‘ī Islam which is a precondition for all other canonical obligations, with the understanding that walāya belongs to God alone [Q 2:257; 3:68] and it is extended to the Prophet (contained in the two declarations of faith, shahādatayn: tawḥīd and nubuwwa) and Imāms. This adjacency (the literal meaning of w-l-y) of God-the Prophet-and the Imāms is confirmed in the Qurʾān, for example, in the following verses: [Q 2:257] ‘God is the walī of those who believed’ and [Q 5:55] ‘Your walī is only God, and His Messenger, and the believers who perform the prayer and give alms while bowing down,’ which is known to signify Alī as the first and archetypal Imām.

These two verses denote the referent for the referring expression walī, God and the Prophet.

Early Imāmī interpretive approach to the Qurʾān

Although the Qurʾān is considered the word of God by Muslims, it was not revealed independent of history. To solve the conflict between its historical temporality and its divine eternity, in early Shi‘ī commentaries it was reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “the Qurʾān was sent down all at once in the month of Ramadan [in the night of decree (laylat al-qadr)] to the much-frequented duty of the same order as other religious duties such as canonical prayers, fasting, alms-giving, and pilgrimage (al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 1, 292-293 no. 21; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 117–120; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:190; See also Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality, 313-314). As the Qurʾān was sent down from God, ‘Alī’s walāya and imāma have been revealed from God and only the Prophet had to declare it. The majority of Quraysh at the beginning of Muḥammad’s divine mission rejected his prophethood as at the end of it they rejected ‘Alī’s walāya. It is reported in interpreting [Q 10:15] that the Meccans demanded the Prophet to ‘Bring a Qurʾān other than this, or alter it.’ In early Imāmī exegetical traditions, the pronoun ‘it’ refers to ‘Alī. At the beginning of Muḥammad’s prophethood the Meccans asked him to bring a different scripture and at the end of his prophethood the Quraysh asked him to at least alter ‘Alī. (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:413 no. 37; al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:1220 no. 11; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:310. Also see Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 177 no. 227) In some traditions, it is mentioned that the Quraysh requested Prophet to alter ‘Alī with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar (See al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:120 no. 10) Therefore, God commanded his Prophet to declare that these are not personal decisions and he is not allowed to alter it.

294 Bar-Asher, Scripture and Exegesis, 196-198; Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality, 241-245.
295 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:437 no. 3; Aasl Ja’far b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī, 214 no. 4; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 75 no. 6-9; See also Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 109 no. 110. The walāya of the Imams is the extension of the walāya of the Prophet and God.
297 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:187 no. 7; al-Mufīd, al-Ikhtīṣās, 277. The Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq noted that this central pillar (walāya), which holds the house of Islam up, is directly referred to in the Qurʾān [Q 5:55]
298 The reference to ‘Alī is discussed in in al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:289 no. 4. The reference to the Imāms from his lineage is confirmed in al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:146 no. 11; 1:187 no. 7; 1:189 no. 16; 1:288 no. 3. See also
House (al-Bayt al-Maʿmūr) and revealed from there to the Prophet in [about] twenty years.”

Therefore, since the Qurʾān was revealed in twenty three years, the occasion of revelation of a sūra or a verse is part of its context for it to be understood. For example, regarding the occasion of revelation of sūra 112 al-Ikhlāṣ, (sincerity) in early Imāmī exegetical traditions, it was reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “A group of Jews asked the Prophet, ‘What are the attributes of your Lord?’ the Prophet delayed the answer for three days until ‘qul huwa Allāh aḥad’ was sent down.” In this case, early Sunni exegetical traditions agree with early Shīʿī sources and both have narrated the same occasion of revelation. However, sometimes the occasion of revelation mentioned in early Imāmī commentaries was different from Sunni commentaries because the historical context in which the verse was revealed is not agreed upon. This problem usually occurs when the Shīʿī occasion of revelation is concerning ʿAlī, his adversaries, the subject of Imāma, or hypocrites. For example, in early Imāmī traditions the occasion of the revelation of [Q 4:108] ‘He is with them when they conspire by night with words that He is not pleased with’ would not be acceptable by Sunni doctrine. According to early Imāmī traditions, this verse, which was concerning those who betray their own selves and try to hide their plot from other people, was a reference to Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and Abū ʿUbayda b. al-Jarrāḥ. At the end of the Prophet’s life, these three used to spend nights thinking of how to take over the leadership of the Muslims after the Prophet. These three friends were allies that at the end of the reign of the first caliphate Abū Bakr appointed ʿUmar as his successor and ʿUmar during his caliphate used to say “If I die when Abū ʿUbayda is alive, I will make him my successor.”

Sometimes an Imām’s reading of a verse is different from Sunni grammatical readings. In [Q 6:19] the Prophet is instructed to tell his people that ‘this Qurʾān has been revealed to me, that

300 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:91 no. 1; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:448 not attributed to an Imam; Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 93 no. 8. Also see Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 617 no. 773.
301 al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 30:221. In early Sunni commentaries, the idolaters or the Jews asked this question which is mentioned in early Shīʿī sources related from Ibn ʿAbbās not the Imams (See al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:448; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 617 no. 773). See Also Nasr, The Study Qurʾān, 1577.
thereby I may warn you and whoever it [i.e., this Qurʾān] may reach.’ In early Sunni exegesis the phrase ‘and whoever it may reach (wa man balagha)’ is attached to “you,” an attached pronoun which is the object of the verb “warn,” and it indicates that the Qurʾān has a universal message not only for the Prophet’s own community in Arabic but also for everyone else in all languages.\(^{304}\) while it seems that this interpretation was accepted as the exoteric meaning of the verse in Imāmī Shīʿī community\(^ {305}\) its esoteric meaning was very different. In the majority of early Imāmī exegesis, the phrase ‘whoever it may reach’ is attached to the subject of the verb ‘warn.’ Therefore, in interpreting the verse in question Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “Whoever from the family of the Prophet reaches [a time] to become an Imām, he warns people with the Qurʾān as the Messenger of God warned people with it.”\(^ {306}\)

In some Imāmī exegetical traditions, Imāms explain a Qurʾānic word in a manner suitable to its audience. For example, concerning the word wisdom (al-ḥikma) in [Q 31:12] ‘and indeed We gave Luqmān wisdom’ (wa la-qad ātaynā Luqmān al-ḥikma) for the theologian Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. 179/795) Imām al-Ṣādiq states, “Wisdom is understanding (al-fāhμ) and intellect (al-ʿaql),”\(^ {307}\) thereby using near-synonym. It seems that for him, Imām al-Ṣādiq used these two words which have separate fields of meaning such that the definition is not a tautology.\(^ {308}\) The “audience design” or flexibility in explaining Qurʾānic words according to audience conditions, was Imām’s conscious choice. Another example of using near synonymous words to explain a Qurʾānic word is the meaning of maḥṣūr in [Q 17:29] (wa lā tajʿal yadaka maghlūlat an ʾilā...)

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304 al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 7:104.
305 al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 226 no. 2; Ibn Bābawayh, ʿIlal al-sharāyiʿ, 1:125 no. 3.
308 Regarding the same verse Imam al-Ṣādiq gives a more esoteric interpretation to his disciple ʿAlī b. al-Qaṣīr. Imam al-Ṣādiq states that Luqmān was given the “knowledge (maʿrīfā) of the Imam of his time.” (al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:161). In Imāmī exegetical traditions, recognition of the Imām was part of Divine Wisdom in the Qurʾān and whoever possess it is praised. In interpreting [Q 2:269] ‘Whoever is given wisdom has been given much good’ Imām al-Ṣādiq told his disciple Abū Başīr that this divine wisdom was “obedience to God and the recognition (maʿrīfā) of the Imām.” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:185 no. 11; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:148 no. 60; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:151 no. 496. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:284 no. 20; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:151 no. 497).
ʻunuqika wa lā tabsūṭhā kullʻ al-baṣṭ fa-taqʻ uda malūm am maḥsūr am). It seems that Imām al-Ṣādiq used various synonyms such as neediness (al-fāqa), to make the meaning of maḥsūr in this text clear.

In some Imāmī exegetical traditions, the ultimate hermenutical point (ghāyat al-taʼwīl) or the greatest hermenutical point (al-taʼwil al-ʿazam) of a verse was expressed by the Imāms. The interpretation of these verses was always related to guidance or relationship with the Imāms. For this reason, in early Imāmī commentaries it was reported that this verse in particular refers to “the kinship of the Prophet (raḥīm āl Muḥammad) which is hung on the throne [of God] which says: O my God! join whoever joins me and break with whoever breaks with me.”

Displaying a connection with the Imām while subject to the power of oppressive rulers is more difficult than joining him when the Imām is in power such as Imām ʿAlī. Therefore, its reward is similar to ‘lending unto God a goodly loan’ in interpreting [Q 57:11].

One exegetical function of the Imāms was to specify a general verse for his followers. For example, in the Qurʼān it is commanded to the believers that [Q 33:41] “Remember God with frequent remembrance.” This general (ʾāmm) command instructs those who believe to remember God. According to a tradition related by Imām al-Ṣādiq in interpreting this Qurʼānic phrase, glorification of Fāṭima (tasbīḥ Fāṭima) is a specific example of Remembering God with frequent remembrance.

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309 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 4:55 no. 6. Two more synonyms are employed in early Imami exegetical traditions to explain the word maḥsūr in this verse: miserliness (al-iqtār) (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:289 no. 61) and bare (al-ʿuryān) (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:19).

310 For example, ʿUmar b. Maryam asked Imam al-Ṣādiq regarding the objective references of ‘joining’ in [Q 13:21] ‘and those who join what God has commanded to be joined.’ The Imam replies: “joining your relatives is part of it but the utmost of its hermeneutics is your connection with us [Imams]” (Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:208 no. 30).

311 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:151 no. 7; 2:156 no. 28; Aṣl Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī, 224 no. 35; Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:208 no. 27 and 29. See also al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:363.


Sometimes the Imām gives a specific time for the verse. For example, in [Q 7:31] all the children of Adam are instructed to take their adornment at every place of worship which is a general statement. Imām al-Ṣādiq gives the specific time of “two Eids (Eid al-Fiṭr and Eid al-Aḍḥā) and Friday” in interpreting the verse.\textsuperscript{314}

In [Q 14:25] “Gives its fruit at [all] times (ḥīn)” the meaning of the word ḥīn is not specific. In Qur’ānic Arabic ḥīn was used as either a free unit which means ‘period of time’ or the first or second part in construct which means ‘when, a while.’\textsuperscript{315} ḥīn which is an old Semitic word found in Epigraphic South Arabian and Akkadian with the same general meaning,\textsuperscript{316} was specified in early Imāmī exegetical traditions which means six months.\textsuperscript{317}

According to [Q 5:5] “The food of those who have been given the Book is lawful for you,” the majority of Muslims believed that they are permitted to eat of the food of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) including the meat slaughtered by them.\textsuperscript{318} Early Imāmī exegetical traditions are in agreement that the Shīʿī Imāms said the food of those who have been given the Book, only refer to grains, herbs, and other foods that did not require ritual slaughtering.\textsuperscript{319}

\textsuperscript{314} al-Kulaynī, al-Ḳāfī, 3:424 no. 8; al-ʾAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:13 no. 27; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:229; al-Mufid, al-Muqniʿa, 202; al-Ṭūsī, Tahdhīb, 3:241 no. 647; 3:136 no. 297. This verse may not limited only to two Eids and Friday. In other exegetical traditions the night of ʿarafa (the eve of the Eid al-Aḍḥā) and the time of every mandatory and recommended prayer are mentioned (See al-ʾAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:13 no. 24 and 25)

\textsuperscript{315} Badawi and Abdel Haleem Arabic-English Dictionary, 247.

\textsuperscript{316} Zammit, A Comparative Lexical Study, 154. In Epigraphic South Arabian, ‘ḥyn’ means ‘time, period’ and in Akkadian ‘inu, enu’ is a preposition for time ‘when.’


\textsuperscript{318} al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 6:64-65. Even in al-Ṭabarī’s commentary it is cited that ʿAlī prohibited the meat of Arab Christians (banū taghlib) (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 6:66).

This devotion to the Imāms (walāya) is a prelude to esoteric hermeneutics for understanding revelation. In another example concerning the interpretation of the verse [Q 5:32] ‘and whoever saves it (the life of one), is as if he has saved mankind altogether’ Fuḍayl b. Yāsār al-Nahdī (d. in or before 148/765), reports that he asked Imām al-Bāqir to interpret this verse. First, the Imām states that “[to save him/her] from burning or sinking.” Fuḍayl continues and asks the Imām: “what about if he/she takes one out of the misguidance to guidance?” the Imām replies: “That is its great hermeneutics.” In another example Sallām b. al-Mustanīr al-Ju’fī, a Kūfan transmitter from Imām al-Bāqir, asks him regarding [Q 2:35] ‘and do not approach this tree.’ In this verse Adam and his wife are warned together not to approach this tree which can denote a particular tree or a kind of tree. Imām al-Bāqir interprets the expression ‘do not approach [this tree]’ (lā taqrabā) to “do not eat from it (lā ta’kulā minhā).”

Sometimes the Qur’ānic text and its context was clear but Shīʿī exegetical tradition changes the discourse profoundly. For example, Zayd b. Yūnus al-Shāḥḥām (d. after 148/765), a Kūfan transmitter from Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq, asks Imām al-Bāqir concerning [Q 80:24] ‘so let man consider his food.’ Zayd says “I asked Imām: what is his food?” Although the next verses are about water, earth, grains, vines, and fruit as sustenance for us and our flocks, the

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320 On him see Modarressi, *Tradition*, 225-226 no. 63. It is reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “Fuḍayl b. Yāsār is one of us, the ahl al-bayt” (al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, 214 no. 381).

321 al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 2:210-211 no. 2; al-Barqī, *al-Mahāsin*, 1:232 no. 182; In a similar tradition Ḥumrān b. Aʿyan reported that he asked Imam al-Ṣādiq about the meaning of the same verse. The Imam states “from burning or sinking” after that the Imam became silent then said “its great hermeneutics is to invite him [to us/God] and he/she respond to it.” (al-Barqī, *al-Mahāsin*, 1:232 no. 183; al-ʿAyyāshi, *Tafsīr*, 1:312-313 no. 84)

322 al-Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*, 115 no. 1152; 137 no. 1450; 218 no. 2888.

323 al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 7:447-448 no. 2; al-ʿAyyāshi, *Tafsīr*, 1:35 no. 20. Contrary to this *ḥadīth* in another tradition narrated from Imam al-Ridā, when Abbasid caliph al-Maʿmūn (d. 218/833) asks him regarding the verse in question, Imam al-Ridā states that “God did not tell them ‘Do not eat from this tree, or any of its kind.’ However, they did not approach that tree and did not eat from it, but rather ate from another tree.” (Ibn Bābawayh, *Uyūn akhbār al-Ridā*, 1:196).

Imām interprets food as “his knowledge that he takes and from whom he takes it.” Although interpreting food as knowledge does not exclude the exoteric interpretation of food, it demonstrates the initiatory and esoteric nature of Imāmī exegesis. Another example that the Qur’ānic context is changed to better match Shīʿī doctrine and hermeneutics is the verse [Q 10:53] ‘and they ask you to inform them, is it true? Say: yes, by my Lord it is true, and you are not beyond reach.’ This verse which is in the context of God’s chastisement in the hereafter is paraphrased and explained in its clear context. Al-Ṭabarī states that in this verse the Meccan idolaters asked the Prophet if the threat of God’s chastisement in the hereafter is true as a retribution for what they have done from the sins in this world. The Prophet is said to have replied in the affirmative and to inform them that they cannot flee from or prevent it. Early Imāmī exegetical traditions report that the people of Mecca asked the Prophet “is it true that ʿAlī is an Imām?” God commanded the Prophet to inform them that “yes by my Lord it is true and you cannot make the divine selection impossible.”

This shift from exoteric context to esoteric context is an important characteristic of several early Imāmī exegetical traditions.

Sometimes the Imāms explained the meaning of a Qur’ānic word which was in dispute among the linguists. For example, Muhammad b. Muslim asked Imām al-Bāqir about the meaning of the word istakānū in [Q 23:76]. The reason for his question was that there was a controversy regarding the meaning of the verb istakāna from the very first Islamic century. Early Arabic grammarians and lexicographers were uncertain about the root of this verb whether it is s-k-n, k-w-n, or k-y-n. However, comparative lexical studies suggest that the verb istakānū is derived from k-y-n not s-k-n. The root k-y-n in Epigraphic South Arabian means “to abase, humble one’s

325 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:49-50 no. 8; al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:220 no. 127; Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 4 no. 6. This tradition should be cited in the lost section of Tafsīr Al-ʿAyyāshī because Al-Kashshī has transmitted it from Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī.

326 al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 11:85-86.


328 The verb istakāna appears twice in the Qur’ān [Q 3:146; 23:76].

329 See Larcher, “Un cas de tāratologie.”
Such confusion was characteristically common in the case of roots with weak radicals. Imām al-Bāqir did not talk about the root of this verb and instead explained that “al-istikāna is [a synonym for] al-khuḍā‘ (to humble).” The Shī‘ī Imāms were not like grammarians to concern themselves with proper speech and demand attention to the detail of literary work.

1.1.1.2 Second half of the 2nd/8th century: Imām al-Kāzim and al-Riḍā’s disciples

With Imām al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq’s systematic exegetical interpretation of the Qur’ān, the earliest comprehensive Imāmī commentaries developed. It is reported that in the second half of the 2nd/8th century some Imāmī scholars began to put together earlier small booklets of tafsīr to make more comprehensive commentaries. For example, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Azdī al-Kūfī put together Abān’s work on gharīb al-Qurʾān with two Tafsīr al-Qurʾān of Muḥammad b. al-Sā‘ib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763) and ‘Aṭiyya b. al-Ḥārith to make a more comprehensive commentary. In this new composed tafsīr, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān compared the content of these three early Shī‘ī tafsīrs to demonstrate the agreements and disagreements between them. Under some Qur’ānic passages, he only used Abān’s work alone; however, sometimes he combined it with the other two works.

A number of Kūfān scholars who compiled tafsīr in this period were disciples of Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju‘fī (d. 128/746 or 132/750) or Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī (d. 150/767). As we discussed earlier both Jābir and Abū Baṣīr had strong esoteric tendencies. Jābir’s commentary

330 Zammit, A Comparative, 362.
331 Badawi and Abdel Haleem, Arabic-English Dictionary, 828.
332 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:480 no. 2; 2:481 no. 6.
333 al-Najāshī has recorded his name as Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. fanatī (Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 12).
335 al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 45; al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 12 no. 7; Modarressi, Tradition, 113.
was transmitted by his pupil Munakhkhal b. Jamīl al-Asadī (d. ca. 202/816) who wrote his own commentary *Kitāb al-tafsīr*. Munakhkhal transmitted directly from Imām al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāẓim. It is likely that because of his esoteric tendency, Munakhkhal was considered a weak transmitter, corrupt in transmission (*fāsid al-riwāya*), and a transgressive Shīʿī (*ghālī*) later by Baghdadis.\textsuperscript{336} This commentary was likely a collection of mostly esoteric exegetical traditions almost exclusively quoted from Jābir al-Juʿfī. There are numerous quotations on the topic from Munakhkhal in later Imāmī works.\textsuperscript{337} For example, in interpreting the verse [Q 2:90] Munakhkhal related from Jābir that Imām al-Bāqir added the word “ʿAlī” to the verse and said, “Gabriel brought down this verse to Muḥammad like this: How evil is that they sold themselves for disbelieving in what God has revealed concerning ʿAlī through [their] outrage.”\textsuperscript{338} In another tradition, commenting on the verse [Q 4:47] Munakhkhal related from Jābir that Imām al-Ṣādiq added the word “fī ʿAlī” to the verse and said, “Gabriel came down to Muḥammad with this verse thus: ‘O you who were given the Book, believe in what We have sent down [to Muhammad] concerning ʿAlī.’”\textsuperscript{339} All of these esoteric exegetical traditions were accepted by early Imāmī traditionalists, but were later filtered out from the Imāmī corpus of exegesis by Baghdadi theologians such as al-Mufīd and his students. Abū Baṣīr’s pupils were more active in spreading esoteric exegetical traditions in Kūfa.

Although Abū Baṣīr did not write his own commentary, he played a significant role in the transmission of early esoteric Imāmī exegetical traditions. He was a Kūfan client of the Banū Asad and a disciple of the Imāms al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq.\textsuperscript{340} He was arguably the most prolific


\textsuperscript{337} All exegetical traditions with a single exception are from Jābir, and all are quoted from Munakhkhal by the same Muḥammad b. Sinān, through ’Ammār b. Marwān al-Yashuri al-Khazzāz.


Imāmī scholar of some prominence in Kūfā in the first half of the 2nd/8th century. As Kohlberg has demonstrated in his case study, Abū Baṣīr was interested in transmitting Shīʿī exegetical traditions concerning “the self-image of the Shīʿa as a select group of believers” and the supreme position of the Imāms vis-à-vis their adversaries. The large number of these esoteric Shīʿī exegetical traditions transmitted by Abū Baṣīr indicates his significant role in the formative period of early Shīʿī tafsīr. Abū Baṣīr had three disciples who compiled commentaries which include: Abū ‘Alī Wuhayb b. Ḥafṣ al-Jurayrī (d. after 183/799), Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ (d. in or after 183/799), and Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭāʿīnī (d. ca. 201/817) (See fig. 5). In addition to his disciples, other Kūfan Imāmī scholars such as Abū Muḥammad Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī (d. after 183/799) who compiled tafsīr, transmitted a number of exegetical traditions from Abū Baṣīr.

Figure 4. Imami commentators influenced by [Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī]

341 Modarressi, Tradition, 395 no. 220.
343 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 4:307 no. 1; 8:91 no. 63
Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī was a disciple of the Imāms al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāẓim and wrote a book entitled *al-Tafsīr*. He transmitted a number of exegetical traditions from earlier proto-Imāmī exegetes such as Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī. The majority of exegetical traditions related from Hishām b. Sālim are direct quotations from Imām al-Ṣādiq. Since Hishām b. Sālim was a theologian, he used exegetical statements of the Imām to construct his theological arguments to debate non-Shīʿī Muslims. Some of the extant exegetical *ḥadīth* related from Hishām b. Sālim concern the figures of the prophets and their tales. Since *tafsīr* and *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* had not yet become separated at this time, exegetical statements about Abraham, Ishmael, Lot, Joseph, David, Solomon, Job, Dhū al-Qarnayn, Zacharias, Jesus, and the aṣḥāb al-rass transmitted by Hishām b. Sālim may represent parts of the material of his *Tafsīr*.

Another transmitter and disciple of Abū Baṣīr was Abū ‘Alī Wuhayb b. Ḥafṣ al-Jurayrī who was a Kūfan client of the Banū Asad. Wuhayb b. Ḥafṣ was a disciple of the Imāms al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāẓim who joined the Wāqifa after the death of the seventh Imām. Wuhayb transmitted only from Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī. Therefore, his commentary *Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān* is likely influenced by Abū Baṣīr’s approach. However, existing exegetical traditions from Wuhayb demonstrate his moderate approach to exegesis. He transmitted the exegetical

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348 MṬF, 618 no. 713.

349 al-Ṭūsī, *Rijāl*, 317 no. 4732. Wāqifa was a group which denied Imam al-Kazim’s death and declared that he was the mahdī (the messiah).

tradition that introduced the Imāms as those firmly rooted in knowledge (rāsikhūn fī al-ʿilm) in interpreting the verse [Q 3:7]. He also transmitted exegetical traditions regarding the occasions of revelation of Qurʿānic verses or Islamic laws.

Two other associates of Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī were ‘Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ and ‘Alī b. Abī Ḥamza Sālim al-Baṭāʾinī. Both of them compiled Kitāb al-tafsīr. Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ (d. in or after 183/799) was a disciple of Imām al-Kāẓim and an associate of Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. Only one exegetical quotation related from ’Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ was survived in Tafsīr of ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī that may originally have belonged to Tafsīr of ’Abd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ. It seems that he joined the Wāqifa later in his life.

His friend Abū al-Ḥasan ’Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭāʾinī (d. ca. 201/817) was a Kūfan client of al-Anṣār and a disciple of Imām al-Ṣādiq and Imām al-Kāẓim who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. Al-Baṭāʾinī was a guide/associate for Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-Asadī (d. 150/767) who was blind. He also was one of the founders of Wāqifa School. According to al-Najāshī, most of the material of al-Baṭāʾinī’s tafsīr was quoted from Abū Baṣīr. Therefore, his commentary should

353 For example, regarding the verse [Q 20:1-2] ‘Ṭāhā, We have not sent down the Quran to you [Prophet] so that you may become distressed’ Wuhayb b. Ḥafṣ related from Abū Baṣīr that Imam al-Bāqir said, “One night the Messenger of God was with ʿĀʾisha. She said, O Messenger of God, why do you tire yourself when God has already forgiven all of your past and future sins? The Prophet replied, O ʿĀʾisha! Should I not be a grateful servant?” The Imam continued, “The Messenger of God stood up on his toes worshipping, then Allah revealed the verse [Q 20:1-2] to him” (Al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:95 no. 6). For the occasion of revelation of the verse [Q 33:68] see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 6:139 no. 5.
355 al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 547 no. 906; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 215 no. 560; Modarressi, Tradition, 162 no. 17.
356 al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:47;
357 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 340.
358 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 245 no. 3402; 339 no. 5049.
359 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 441 no. 1187.
360 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 250 no. 656.
have the same flavour as Abū Basīr’s exegetical traditions. About 325 traditions (mostly exegetical traditions) transmitted by al-Baṭāʾīnī from Abū Basīr have survived in all four canonical books of Twelver Shī’as. Modarressi studied a number of long and short excerpts from al-Baṭāʾīnī’s Kitāb al-tafsīr existing in primary Imāmī sources. He observed that this commentary had the same style and flavour as the earlier Shī’ite tafsīrs of Jābir al-Ju’fī and Abū Ḥāmza al-Thumālī. ʿAlī b. Abī Ḥāmza al-Baṭāʾīnī was very influential scholar in Kūfā who had several disciples who wrote tafsīr (See fig. 6).

**Figure 5.** Imami commentators influenced by ʿAlī b. Abī Ḥāmza al-Baṭāʾīnī

There is an esoteric exegetical tradition transmitted by both ʿAbd Allāh b. Waḍḍāḥ and ʿAlī b. Abī Ḥāmza al-Baṭāʾīnī in ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm’s *Tafsīr* that may originally have belonged to their commenteries. In this exegetical tradition, Imām al-Ṣādiq connects the last verses of sura *al-Kahf*

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361 See Ṭārumī, “Biṭāʾīn.”

to the friendship (walāya) and right (ḥaqq) of the Imāms which was usurped by their adversaries. In commenting on [Q 18:110] the Imām said, ‘‘only I am a human being like you’ it means in the creation, he [the Prophet] is like them, a creature. ‘It has been revealed to me that your God is one God, whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds, and do not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone’ the Imām said: do not take with the friendship (walāya) of the family of Prophet the friendship of others. Their friendship is the ‘righteous deed.’ ‘Whoever associates anyone in the worship of his Lord’, has associated in our friendship and disbelieved in it and rejected the right (ḥaqq) and friendship of the commander of the faithful.’” Abū Baṣīr then asked Imām about the esoteric meaning of [Q 18:101] ‘Those whose eyes were within a cover from my remembrance (dhikrī).’ The Imām said, ‘‘remembrance’ means the walāya of ‘Alī which is ‘my remembrance.’’” Abū Baṣīr said I asked him about the last sentence of the verse ‘They are not able to hear.’ The Imām said, “They are not able to hear the remembrance of ‘Alī because of the intensity of their hatred and enmity towards him and his family.” Abū Baṣīr said I asked the Imām about [Q 18:102] ‘Did those who disbelieved think that they can take My servants as guardians from other than Me? We have prepared Hell for the unbelievers as an abode.’ The Imām said, “It refers to them [Abū bakr and ‘Umar] and their partisans who took them as guardians from other than God and they believe that because of the love of them [Abū bakr and ‘Umar] they will save them from the chastisement of God while because of their love, they were disbelievers.” Abū Baṣīr asked about the interpretation of the last sentence of this verse ‘We have prepared Hell for the disbelievers as an abode.’ The Imām said, “it means [Hell is] a residence which is for them [Abū bakr and ‘Umar] and their partisans which is prepared by God.” 363 It is clear that in Imāmī exegetical literature and discourse a shift from exoterism to esoterism or from God “the Lord of the heavens and the Earth” 364 to the Imāms Lords of the Earth is happening. 365 The effects of this shift still remain in the Imāmī community until today.

363 al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:47.


365 In a tradition related by al-Mufaḍḍal b. ‘Umar, the leader of the Mufawwida, Imam al-Ṣādiq interpreted [Q 39:69] ‘and the Earth will shine with the light of its Lord’ the Imam said: “the Lord of the Earth is the Imām of the Earth” (Al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:253). Bar-Asher remarks that this exegetical tradition places the Imam on an equal footing with God (Bar-Asher, Scripture, 138. On this tradition see Ghaemmaghami, “And the Earth,” 618-620).
A number of Imāmī scholars of this period who compiled *tafsīr* were accused of forging *ḥadīth* or having exaggerated esoteric tendencies. For example, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī (d. ca. 184/800) and his nephew ʿAlī b. Ḥassān b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī (d. ca. 202/816) were two of them. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr was a Kūfan disciple of Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq and a client of ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad (d. 186/802, brother of caliph Manṣūr and governor of Syria in his time and of Mesopotamia in the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd). Al-Najāshī states that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr was a weak transmitter of *ḥadīth* and the Imāmī scholars of his time defamed ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr and said that he was a forger of *ḥadīth*. Al-Najāshī reports that ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr wrote *Kitāb faḍl sūrat Innā anzalnāh* also known as *Kitāb thawāb Innā anzalnāh*. He also wrote *Kitāb al-aẓilla* which was considered corrupted (*fāsid*) and mixed (*mukhtalīt*). Modarressi maintains that this work has possibly survived in a redaction by a later transmitter of esoteric material, Abū ʿAlī Ḥasan b. al-ʿAbbās b. al-Ḥarīsh al-Rāzī. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr’ esoteric tendencies is widely attested in his transmissions. He was a transmitter from Mufaḍḍal b. ʿUmar al-Juʿfī (d. before 179/795) who was well known as a source of esoteric traditions. A great number of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr’s exegetical reports are transmitted by his nephew ʿAlī b. Ḥassān b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī.

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368 al-Najāshī, *Rijāl*, 60-61 no. 138; It is quoted partially by al-Ṣaffār (al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʾir, 222-223 no. 12; 223-224 no. 14) and al-Kulaynī (Al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:242–253 no. 1-9). Al-Kulaynī assumes that Ibn al-Ḥarīsh quoted this redaction from the ninth Imam al-Jawād. Al-Ṣaffār, however, quotes Ibn al-Ḥarīsh as reporting that he showed “the treatise” to Imam al-Jawād who confirmed its authority. There are two long paragraphs in al-Ṣaffār: 224–5 on the topic of this work, both quoted from Imam al-Ṣadiq on the authority of an unspecified Shīʿī transmitter. The second of those two paragraphs asserts that the angels who used to visit the Prophet on the Night of Destiny came down to ʿAlī after his death. Rāwandī in his work (*Kharāʾij*: 2:778–9) has this latter paragraph as quoted from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr. Both paragraphs should therefore originally have been part of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān’s work on the topic. The first of the two, on the Taymī (Abū Bakr) and ʿAdawī (ʿUmar) also appears in the text attributed to Ibn al-Ḥarīsh in al-Kāfī, 1: 249. This may suggest that the treatise that Ibn al-Ḥarīsh allegedly showed to Imam al-Jawād was the work in question, and that Ibn al-Ḥarīsh’s is at most a redaction of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr’s work. (Modarressi, *Tradition*, 172).


ʿAlī b. Ḥassān b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī (d. ca. 202/816) was another Kūfan client of ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad, who wrote a commentary titled Tafsīr al-bāṭin. Concerning this commentary al-Najāshī says that “it is entirely mixed (takhlīṭ)” and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī states, “I saw his book named Tafsīr al-bāṭin and it has nothing to do with Islam.” Al-Najāshī and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī considered ʿAlī b. Ḥassān a very weak transmitter of ḥadīth. Al-Najāshī reports that “some of our colleagues mentioned ʿAlī b. Ḥassān as a transgressive Shīʿī (ghālī) of corrupt doctrine (fāsid al-iʿtiqād).” Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī was one of those Shīʿī scholars who considered ʿAlī b. Ḥassān a transgressive Shīʿī.

Many exegetical quotations from ʿAlī b. Ḥassān through his uncle are survived in early works of ḥadīth and tafsīr. For example, the following excerpts in al-Kāfī seem to represent the original content of Tafsīr al-bāṭin of ʿAlī b. Ḥassān. It was related from ʿAlī b. Ḥassān from his uncle Abd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr that in interpreting [Q 2:138] ‘the colouring by God, and who colours better than God’ Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “God coloured believers with walāya in the covenant (al-mīthāq).” This ‘colouring of God’ which refers to the primordial covenant was not accepted by Baghdadi theologians except as a metaphor. Another example is the interpretation of [Q 49:7] ‘God has endeared to you the faith and has adorned it in your hearts and has made hateful to you disbelief, defiance and disobedience’ it is reported that Imām al-Ṣādiq said ‘faith’ in the first sentence “means the commander of the faithful [ʿAlī]” and ‘disbelief, defiance and disobedience’ in the second sentence refers to “the first [caliph Abū bakr], the second [caliph ʿUmar], and the third [caliph ʿUthmān].” These kinds of exegetical traditions which were prevalent among early Imāmī traditionalists up to the mid of 4th/10th century were rarely accepted by the dominant Imāmī scholars of Baghdad in the 5th/11th century.

A late 2nd/8th century Kūfan transmitter of exegetical traditions from Imām al-Kāẓim who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr was ʿĪsā b. Dāwūd al-Najjār (d. ca. 190/806). His Tafsīr appears to be his only book and for this reason al-Najāshī remarks that ʿĪsā b. Dāwūd has transmitted few traditions. ʿĪsā al-Najjār’s commentary was available to Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd known as Ibn ʿUqda

371 al-Najāshī, Rījāl, 251 no. 660; Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī, Al-Rījāl, 77 no. 88; Modarressi, Tradition, 188-189 no. 34.


373 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:426 no. 71; Tafsīr, 2:319.

374 al-Najāshī, Rījāl, 294 no. 797; Modarressi, Tradition, 298-299 no. 110.
(d. 333/945), an outstanding Kūfan Zaydī Jārūdī scholar, who was credited with a good [voluminous] commentary *Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān* as Al-Najāshī reports.īsā al-Najjār’s *Kitāb al-tafsīr* was also at least partially available to Ibn al-Juḥām (d. after 328/939). In his own commentary *taʾwil mā nazal fī al-nabīyy wa ālih*, Ibn al-Juḥām quotes a large portion of ʿĪsā al-Najjār’s *Kitāb al-tafsīr* through a single line of transmission of Muḥammad b. ʾIsmāʾīl al-ʿAlawī. The fragments of ʿĪsā al-Najjār’s *tafsīr*, which survived in Ibn al-Juḥām’s commentary shows that this *tafsīr* was mixed together with the text of the Qurʾān. Modarressi believes that judging by these fragments, *Kitāb al-tafsīr* of ʿĪsā b. Dāwūd was a purely Shīʿa commentary but not as [exaggerated] esoteric. In all these traditions, Imām al-Kāẓim links verses of the Qurʾān to the concept of Imamate or Imāms such as love (*mawadda*) and obedience (*ṭāʿa*) of the Imāms, especially ʿAlī, up to the twelfth Imām al-Qāʾim. However, sometimes it is difficult to find a connection between the Qurʾānic verse and the Imām’s interpretation. For example, concerning the verse [Q 21:10] “We have indeed sent down unto you a Book wherein is your reminder. Do you not understand?” it is reported that Imām al-Kāẓim said, “obedience to the Imām after the Prophet.” The connection between ‘your reminder’ (*dhikrūkum*) in the verse and the obedience to the Imām (*ṭāʿat al-Imām*) in Imām al-Kāẓim’s interpretation is not clear.


379 For al-Qāʾim see Ibn al-Juḥām, *taʾwil*, 149.


381 Even post-Safawīd commentators such as al-Baḥrānī (d. 1107/1693 or 1109/1697) and al-Qummmī al-Mashhadī (d. after 1125/1713) had problems understanding this interpretation and tried to justify it (al-Baḥrānī, *al-Burhān*, 3:803; al-Qummmī al-Mashhadī, *Tafsīr kanz*, 8:390).
At the last quarter of the 2nd/8th century some Imāmī scholars composed great collections of exegetical traditions and tackled the issue of variant readings. For example, Abū Junāda al-Ḥuṣayn b. Mukhāriq al-Salūlī (d. ca. 190/806) wrote *Kitāb al-tafsīr wa al-qirāʾāt* which was a large commentary. He was a Kūfan disciple and transmitter of the Imāms al-Ṣādiq and al-Kāẓim. It seems that al-Ḥuṣayn b. Mukhāriq addressed the issue of variant readings because they were spreading in Islamic society by that time. In this period, the variant readings were getting their legitimacy from the Prophetic tradition *sabʿat aḥruf* which was narrated for the first time in the Muwaṭṭaʾ of Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/796).

### 1.1.2 From 200/816 to 260/874: Kūfa and Qumm

Some Kūfan and Qummī scholars who wrote *tafsīr* in the first half of the 3rd/9th century such as Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (d. 208/823), al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb (d. 224/839), and al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl (d. 224/839) were considered trustworthy scholars whose transmitted traditions were accepted by the Imāmī community, both traditionalists or theologians. These trustworthy scholars were called later the “People of Consensus (*aṣḥāb al-ijmāʿ*)” by al-Kashshī.

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385 The term *aṣḥāb al-ijmāʿ* is coined in the first half of the 4th/10th century by Abū ʿAmr Muḥammad b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Kashshī (d. ca. 340/951). In his book *Kitāb Maʿrifat al-Nāqilīn ʿan al-aʾimma al-Ṣādiqīn* (to know those who reported from the truthful Imams) also known as *Rijāl*, al-Kashshī refers to three groups of early Shiʿī scholars who were considered by the Shiʿī community to be the most trustworthy transmitters and jurists (*fuqahāʾ*) of their times. These three groups are as follow:

1. Companions of Imam al-Bāqir: Zurāra b. ʿAyan (d. 148/765 or 149/766), Maʾrūf b. Kharrabūd (d. between 144-160/761-777), Burayd b. Muʿāwiya (d. 150/767), Abū Baṣīr Yahyā b. al-Qāsim (d. 150/767), al-Fuḍayl b. Yasār (d. in or before 148/756), Muḥammad b. Muslim (d. 150/767).
period, several Kūfan Imāmī scholars migrated to Qumm and spread the Kūfan Shi‘ī ḥadīth in general and exegetical traditions in particular in this city.

1.1.2.1 Kūfa

Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb al-Sarrād (d. 224/839)\(^{386}\) was a Kūfan scholar who wrote *Kitāb al-tafsīr*.\(^{387}\) According to al-Kashshī, a great number of the Imāmī scholars had concurred on al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb being the most eminent disciple of the Imāms al-Kāẓim and al-Riḍā.\(^{388}\) Al-Ṭūsī reported that al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb was considered [by Imāmī scholars] as one of the four pillars (*al-arkān al-arbaʿa*) of Imāmī scholars of his time (See fig. 7).\(^{389}\) Ibn Maḥbūb’s belief regarding the Imāms and their attributes can be gleaned from his transmission of Imām al-Ṣādiq’s sermon through Ishāq b. Ghālib. In this sermon, Imām al-Ṣādiq introduced the Imāms as those ‘who guide by the truth and do justice thereby’ [Q 7:159, 181]. However, more esoteric characteristics of the Imāms and Imamate are stated in this sermon. For example, in this sermon Imām al-Ṣādiq alludes to the world of particles (*dharr*) and shadows (*aẓilla*) when he describes the primordial creation of the Imām. In this regard he said, “God made/reared him [the Imām] under His sight, in the [world of] particles (*dharr*) when He scattered him, and in the [world of] fashioned things (*bariyya*) when He fashioned him. He [the Imām] was a shadow (*ẓill*) before the creation of any living thing.”\(^{390}\)

In another tradition related from Ibn Maḥbūb from Ibrāhīm Abū Ayyūb al-Kharrāz from Kankar Abū Khālid al-Kābulī in interpreting [Q 64:8] ‘believe in God and His Messenger and the light which We have sent down’ Imām al-Bāqir said, “I swear by

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\(^{387}\) Al-Kashshī noted that some Imāmīyya mentioned al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl and Faḍāla b. Ayyūb instead of al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb; and some have mentioned ‘Uthmān b. ʿIsā instead of Faḍāla b. Ayyūb.


\(^{389}\) Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, 556 no. 1050.

God, the ‘light’ [in this verse] is a reference to the Imāms. O Abū Khālid! The light of the Imām in the hearts of believers is brighter than the light of the sun in midday. The Imāms are those who brighten the hearts of the believers and God obscures their light from whomever He wills, thus makes their hearts dark and God covers them with darkness.” Exegetical traditions related from Ibn Maḥbūb which were survived in early Imāmī books depict him as a jurist with esoteric tendencies in his Imāmology. His friend Ibn Faḍḍāl had similar tendencies.

Figure 6. Imami commentators influenced by al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb al-Sarrād

391 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:195 no. 4; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:371. Also see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:194 no. 1. In a more esoteric exegetical ḥadīth, al-Ḥasan b. Maḥbūb asked Imam al-Riḍā about the interpretation of [Q 4:33] ‘And for all, we have made heirs to what is left by parents and relatives. And to those [with] whom your oaths made a pledge’ Imam said, “By this God meant the Imams. To them God has made your oath bound” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:216 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:240 no. 120).
Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl (d. 224/839) was a Kūfan client of Taym Allāh and a disciple of Imām al-Riḍā, who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. Al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl was a Faṭaḥī (believing in the Imāma of ʿAbd Allāh b. Jaʿfar also known as Aftah) who allegedly changed his mind and later recognized the Imamate of Mūsā al-Kāẓim at the end of his life. Al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl’s closest friend in Kūfa was ʿAlī b. Asbāṭ b. Sālim al-Kūfī (d. in or after 220/835) who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr.

ʿAlī b. Asbāṭ’s esoteric tendencies in exegesis is clear from a few exegetical traditions survived in his extant Nawādir (or Aṣl). In this notebook of ḥadīth, ʿAlī b. Asbāṭ transmitted [through two intermediaries] from Imām a-Ṣādiq who interpreted [Q 4:77] ‘have you not seen those to whom it was said: restrain your hands and perform the prayer.’ The Imām said, “This verse was revealed regarding al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī whom God commanded to restrain fighting.” The Imām then explained about the next sentence of the verse and said, “then when fighting was prescribed to them’ was revealed for al-Ḥusayn who God prescribed upon him [to fight] and prescribed upon the people of the earth to fight alongside him.” This esoteric interpretation relating every verse of the Qurʾān to the Imāms or their enemies was becoming prevalent in the Imāmī community of Kūfa in this period. Perhaps for this reason for the first time a Kūfan Imāmī scholar collected exegetical traditions concerning only ʿAlī. Abū Mūsā Ḥārūn b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Mujāshiʿī (d. ca. 210/825), a disciple of Imām al-Riḍā, wrote Kitāb mā nazal fī al-Qurʾān fī ʿAlī ʿalayhi as-salām.

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392 Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 278; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 124 no. 164; Rijāl, 354 no. 5241; On Whom see al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 34-36 no. 72. As mentioned earlier according to al-Kashshī, some Imami scholars considered al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl amongst the People of Consensus (aṣḥāb al-ijmāʿ) (See al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 556 no. 1050).
393 MṬF, 3:380 no. 1017.
394 al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 562 no. 1061.
395 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 252 no. 663.
397 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 439 no. 1182. Amir-Moezzi called this genre ‘individualised interpretations’ (Amir-Moezzi, “The Tafsīr of al-Ḥibarī,” 125). He gave a list of Shiʿī commentaries of this genre; however, he has not mentioned Ḥārūn b. ʿUmar al-Mujāshiʿī ʿī’s commentary on the top of his list.
Figure 7. Imami commentators influenced by ‘Alī b. Asbāṭ b. Sālim al-Kūfī

Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. ’Alī b. Sālim Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā’īnī (d. after 220/835) wrote *Kitāb faḍā’il al-Qurʾān*. Like his father, al-Ḥasan was one of the leaders of Wāqifa.\(^{398}\) It is not clear that he wrote a *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* or taught Qur’ānic exegesis and his pupil ’Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Faḍḍāl (d. after 270/884) wrote it.\(^{399}\) A good number of exegetical traditions from al-Ḥasan b. ’Alī al-Baṭā’īnī still survived in early ʿImāmī works. He related some of these exegetical traditions from his father ’Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā’īnī, himself an author of a work on *tafsīr*, but many traditions from others.\(^{400}\) One of the transmitters of al-Ḥasan b. ’Alī b. Abī Ḥamza was

\(^{398}\) MT, 3:193 no. 872; See Modarressi, *Tradition*, 250.

\(^{399}\) al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, 552 no. 1042.

\(^{400}\) al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:112 no. 1; 1:137 no. 1; 2:5-6 no. 7; 4:190 no. 1; 5:330-331 no. 5; 5:511 no. 2; 6:406 no. 1.
Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbbās b. ʿĪsā al-Ghādirī (d. ca. 250/864) who wrote *Kitāb al-tafsīr*.401

In this period some Kūfan Imāmī scholars gathered earlier Imāmī *tafsīrs* in one volume to create more comprehensive commentaries. For example, Abū al-Ḥasan Mūsā b. Ismāʿīl (d. ca. 250/864) wrote *Jawāmiʿ al-tafsīr*.402 Little information about him and his commentary is available. Another unknown Kūfan Imāmī scholar of this period who wrote *Kitāb al-Tafsīr* was Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ṣabīḥ al-Asadī (d. ca. 240/854).403

In addition to Kūfa some Imāmī scholars in Baghdad and Baṣra compiled their commentaries. In this period, Baghdad was the Abbasid’s capital and Imām al-Jawād (d. 220/835) sometimes visited this city (for instance in 215/830 and again in 220/835). One of Ibn Maḥbūb’s pupil was Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Yaqṭīnī (d. after 254/868) who wrote *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*. He was young when he transmitted *ḥadīth* from b. Maḥbūb.404 Later, he resided in Baghdad.405 He was a transmitter of Imām al-ʿAskarī,406 al-Jawād, al-Hādī,407 and al-ʿAskarī.408 Al-Ṭūsī notes that “it is said, Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā was an adherent of the doctrine of the *ghulāt*” which was disputed by al-Najāshī. Al-Ṭūsī notes that Qummī scholars considered ...
Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā a weak transmitter. In Baṣra Abū al-Ḥasan Muʾallā b. Muḥammad al-Ḥasārī (d. after 254/868) wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. Al-Najāshī describes him as jumbled (muḍṭarib) in ḥadīth and doctrine (madhhab) but notes that his books are close to the mainstream [of Baghdādī theologians’] doctrine.

In this period, some Kūfan Imāmī exegetes migrated to Ahwāz (a city in Khūzistān in southwestern Persia) or to Qumm. For example, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn b. Saʿīd b. Ḥammād al-Ahwāzī (d. after 254/868) was a Kūfan scholar who first migrated with his brother al-Ḥasan to Ahwāzī and later to Qumm. He wrote thirty books, one of which was entitled Kitāb Tafsīr al-Qurʾān/Kitāb al-tafsīr. Another Imāmī exegete of this period whose family was originally from the village of Dawraq in Khūzistān was Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Mahziyar al-Ahwāzī (d. before 254/868). He was a transmitter from Imāms al-Riḍā, al-Jawād, and al-Hādī (See fig. 9). ‘Alī b. Mahziyar became a wakīl (authorized to collect funds for them) of Imāms al-Hādī and al-ʿAskarī. He was a friend and transmitter from Ḥusayn b. Saʿīd al-Ahwāzī. ‘Alī b. Mahziyar composed thirty books similar to the latter’s’ books one of which entitled Kitāb al-tafsīr. Imāmī community considered him a trustworthy transmitter. In addition to his tafsīr, al-Ṭūsī attributed another work to him entitled Kitāb ḥurūf al-Qurʾān. Al-Ḥusayn b. Saʿīd al-Ahwāzī left Ahwāz and went to Qumm because this city flourished as a major hub for Imāmī scholars to teach and study by this time. He resided in the home of al-Ḥasan b. Abān al-Qummi and taught his collection of books including his Tafsīr to Qummi scholars such as

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410 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 391 no. 5758.
411 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 418 no. 1117; MṬF, 3:584 no. 1183.
412 On Ahwāz see Tillier, “al-Ahwāz.”
413 Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 277; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 58 no. 137; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 150; MṬF, 3:220 no. 891.
414 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 253 no. 664; MṬF, 3:409-411 no. 1039.
415 al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 265 no. 379.
416 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 60 no. 137.
Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ṭāʾsā al-Ḫāṣʾārī al-Qummī (d. after 274/887) who had a decisive role in the second half of the 3rd/9th century to define ghuluw in the Imāmī Shīʿī community.

1.1.2.2 Qumm

By the end of the 2nd/8th century, Qumm was a center of Imāmī Shīʿī Islam. In the first half of 3rd/9th century, the Shīʿī hadīth and tafsīr center was moving from Kūfa to Qumm and the latter became the chief center of Shīʿa hadīth transmitters. As Bosworth remarks, Qumm in 3rd/9th century started to become a projection of Shīʿī Kūfa, as Balkh, Marw and Nīshāpūr were becoming a projection of Baṣra. In this period several Kūfan Imāmī scholars emigrated from Kūfa to Qumm and its environs. One reason for their migration was that in 201/816 the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Maʾmūn brought over the eighth Imām ʿAlī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā to Marw, his capital in Khurāsān. Another reason for their migration was the severe persecution of Kūfan Shīʿa under Manṣūr, the second ʿAbbāsid ruler (r. 136-158/754-775), which continued to the end of the reign of his grandson, Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170-193/787-809).

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417 al-Najāshī, Rījāl, 81-83 no. 198. He was the head of Shīʿa in Qumm who used to meet the sulṭān (ruler) in this city.

418 Daftary, A History, 69.


420 Bosworth, Historic, 297.

421 Bayhom-Daou, “ʿAlī al-Riḍā.”

The main transition from exoterism to esoterism presumably occurred in the Imāmī community of Qumm during the first half of the 3rd/9th century when Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim (d. after 247/861), father of ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, emigrated from Kūfa to Qumm. It is said that, he was a disciple of the eighth Imām ʿAlī al-Riḍā (d. 203/818) and a pupil of Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān (d. 208/823). With his migration, the Kūfan traditions diffused quickly and increased sharply in Qumm. In this regard, both al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī note that “our companions (aṣḥābunā) say: Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim was the first Kūfan scholar who spread Kūfan traditions in Qumm (awwal man nashara ḥadīth al-kūfiyyin bi Qumm)” As al-Khūʾī (d. 1413/1992) noted, “no transmitter- in various generations- gets close to him in the great number of transmission. He has transmitted from about one hundred and sixty Imāmī scholars (shaykh).” Al-Khūʾī then

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423 MTF, 3:55 no. 762.
424 al-Ṭūsī, Riḍā, 353 no. 5224. Al-Najāshī expresses concern (wa fīhi ʿnaẓarun) regarding al-Kashshī’s report that Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim was a pupil of Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān.
425 al-Najāshī, Riḍā, 16 no. 18; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 12 no. 6.
426 Khūʾī, Muʾjam, 1:317 no. 332.
added, “He is in the chain of transmission of about 6414 ḥadīth. From this number of ḥadīth it can be inferred that although a few of Kūfan esoteric exegetical traditions were available in Qumm before Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim, it was he who caused to change the mainstream Qummī exoterism to esoterism. The next two generations of Qummī scholars after him, who collected those traditions that were spread by Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim, consolidated the foundation of esoteric Imāmī traditions up to the present day.

The first Qummī Imāmī scholar who was reported to have written a tafsīr is Abū Muḥammad Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qummī (d. 208/823). An account shows that Yūnus met Imām al-Ṣādiq during a pilgrimage between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa; however, he did not transmit any traditions from him. Yūnus was an eminent disciple of Imām al-Kāẓim and Imām al-Riḍā. He was also a pupil of the well-known theologian Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. 179/795) and the most prominent representative of his kalām circle. Yūnus was not only an expert jurist but also a theologian. He wrote two books in the field of the Qurʾān entitled: Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān and

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427 Khūṭī, Muʿjam, 1:318 no. 332.  
428 al-Najāshī reports that Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān was born in the time of the Umayyad caliph Hisham b. ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 105–25/723–43). Yūnus was a client of ‘Alī b. Yaqṭīn b. Mūsā (d. 182/798) and Banū Asad. (See al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 446 no. 1208). Al-Ṭūsī notes that Qummī scholars criticized Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and considered him as a weak transmitter (Al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 346 no. 5167; 368 no. 5478). However, when he gives more information on Yūnus in his al-Fihrist, it seems that some Qummī scholars did not consider Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. ‘Abayd (one of the transmitters from Yūnus) reliable not Yūnus himself. Al-Ṭūsī reports that “Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. al-Husayn Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991) said that I heard from my teacher Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Walīd al-Qummī (d. 343/954) that all books of Yūnus are authentic and reliable except what is related by only Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā b. ‘Abayd and no one else has narrated it. It is not relied on this kind of traditions and no verdict is issued based on it.” (Al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 512).  
429 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 346 no. 5167; 368 no. 5478. Yunus was so expert in jurisprudence and theology that it is reported al-Riḍā advised his followers to learn their knowledge [of religion] from Yunus and listen to his verdicts. For this reason, he was considered one of the People of Consensus (aṣḥāb al-ijmāʿ) by al-Kashshī. (Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 556 no. 1050). After al-Kazim’s death, Yunus acknowledged ’Ali al-Riḍā’s imamate. Accordingly, he was seen disputing against the Wāqifa who offered him great money. Yunus rejected their offer and remained loyal to Imam al-Riḍā. Imam al-Riḍā ordered Yunus to prevent the Imami followers from the temptation of following Muḥammad b. Furāt al-Juʿfī who claimed he is the gate of the Imam or prophet (Al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 554 no. 1047 and 1028; al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 363 no. 976). One of Yunus works entitled Kitab al-Radd ‘alā al-ghulat (Book of the Refutation of the transgressive Shiʿīs) probably indicates the spread of transgression (guluww) among Imamis in his time.  
A number of Qummi scholars who wrote tafsīr were disciples of Yūnus (See fig. 10).

Although Yūnus’s Tafsīr is no longer extant, retrieving his commentary from early Imāmī works demonstrates that about 72 percent of exegetical traditions related by Yūnus are from Imām al-Ṣādiq and 16 percent of them are from Imām al-Bāqir. Therefore, even Yūnus who was a disciple of Imām al-Kāzim and al-Riḍā compiled the majority of his commentary from exegetical traditions transmitted from Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq.

Figure 9. Imami commentators influenced by Yūnus b. Ṭāhil b. Ṭāhil al-Qummī

Exegetical traditions related from Yūnus in al-Kāfī show his normative approach to exegesis. Some of the exegetical traditions transmitted by him are typical Imāmī occasions of revelation. For example, he related from Abū Baṣīr that Imām al-Ṣādiq said in interpreting the verse [Q

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431 al-Najāshī, Ṣajāj, 447-448 no. 1208.
4:59] ‘Obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you’ “it was sent down regarding ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn.”

Sometimes Yūnūs related from Abū Basīr more esoteric traditions regarding the divine characteristics of the Imāms. For example, in commenting on the verse [Q 17:85] ‘They ask you about the Spirit. Say, the Spirit is from the Command of my Lord’ Yūnūs transmitted that Imām al-Ṣādiq said to Abū Basīr, “[the Holy Spirit is a] creature greater than Gabriel and Michael. He was with the Messenger of God and He is with the Imāms after the Prophet. He belongs to the dominion of God (malakūt).” After Yūnūs, some of his pupils continued his approach in Qumm and wrote tafsīr.

Abū Ṭālib ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt al-Qummī (d. ca. 220/835) was a pupil of Yūnūs b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. He was a client of the banū Taym Allāh, and a transmitter of Imām al-Riḍā and Imām al-Jawād. Although al-Najāshī’s path (ṭarīq) to ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt’s Tafsīr is his son ʿAlī b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt, the exegetical traditions related from ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt which are survived in al-Kāfī are transmitted by his nephew Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ṣalt al-Qummī. Some of these exegetical traditions are exoteric and some are esoteric which represent the mainstream of classical Shīʿī tradition. For example, in interpreting [Q 40:7] ‘those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it glorify [God] with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed’ Abū Basīr related from Yūnūs that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “O Abū Muḥammad [another kunya of Abū Basīr] God has some angels who remove sins from the backs of our Shīʿas, as the wind drops the leaves from the trees in the fall.” Imām then recited [Q 40:7] and said, “By God,
those who have believed are] only you Shīʿa.

This is one of a great number of verses that in early Imāmī exegetical corpus are interpreted by the Imām as referring to the Shīʿa to reinforce their self-image as a select group of Muslims.

Another pupil of Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and a colleague of ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt al-Qummī was Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Khālid b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Barqī (d. after 220/835) who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. Muḥammad b. Khālid was a disciple of three Imāms, al-Kāẓim, al-Riḍā, and al-Jawād. Although al-Ṭūsī considers him trustworthy (thiqa) al-Najāshī and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī consider him a weak transmitter. His survived exegetical traditions in al-Kāfī demonstrate his esoteric tendency. For example, in interpreting [Q 70:1-2] it is related from Muḥammad b. Khālid from Abū Baṣīr that Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “A man [mockingly] asked for a punishment bound to happen to the disbelievers’ in the walāya of ‘Alī ‘there is no preventer’.” The Imām then said, “By God this verse was revealed by Gabriel like this upon Muḥammad.” This kind of exegetical tradition in which a word or expression concerning ‘Alī in particular or the Imāms in general are reportedly absent from the official version of the Qurʾān were not accepted by later Baghdadi theologians who placed their confidence in the ‘Uthmānic codex. Although Muḥammad b. Khālid was not accused of

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439 Another example is interpretation of [Q 57:11] ‘Who is he that will lend God a goodly loan so He will multiply it for him and he will have a noble reward?’ ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ṣalt related from Yūnus that Imam al-Kāẓim said, “[it means] the relationship with the Imam in the state of sinners (dawla al-fasaqa)” (Al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:302 no. 461).

440 al-Kashshī, Rijāl, 306. His ancestor Muḥammad b. ‘Alī was arrested and later executed by Yūsuf b. ‘Umar al-Thaqafi (the governor of Iraq during the years 120–126/738–744). His grand father ‘Abd al-Raḥmān fled to a small village in the rural area of Qumm called Barqa Rūd when Khālid was very young (Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 76 no. 182). For further information on the Shīʿī family of al-Barqī who lived in Qumm during the 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries see Vilozny, “Pre-Būyid Hadīth Literature: The Case of al-Barqī from Qumm (d. 274/888 or 280/894) in Twelve Sections.”; Ansari and Gholami, “Al-Barqī.”

441 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 343 no. 5121; 363 no. 5391; 377 no. 5585; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 335 no. 898; MTF 3:496 no. 1110. It is possible that he had another book in the field of commentary titled Kitāb al-tanzīl wa al-taʿbīr.

442 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 363 no. 5391.

443 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 335 no. 898; Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾ irī, al-Rijāl, 93 no. 132.

444 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:422 no. 47.
ghuluww or takhlīṭ, a few of Imāmī scholars in this period who compiled tafsīr were indicted for that.

The boundaries of ghuluww in Shīʿī thought has been a controversial issue throughout their history.445 According to Anthony and Amir-Moezzi’s list, Imāmī Shīʿī heresiographers and theologians mentioned the following most frequently: the importance of esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān (taʾwīl); belief in the corruption/falsification (tahrīf) of the Qurʾān; the delegation (tafwīḍ) of divine powers to the Imāms; the return of Imāms and/or the righteous dead at the end of time (al-rajʿa); the occultation of the eschatological saviour (al-ghayba); the continuation of divine revelation (wahy) and inspiration (ilhām) after the Prophet Muḥammad’s death; the Imāms’ and/or their followers’ possession of a preternatural knowledge of the unseen (ʿilm al-ghayb); the metempsychosis (tanāsukh); the inherence of the divine in humans (ḥulūl).446 Although Amir-Moezzi claimed that all of these notions are present in the early corpus of the Imāmī traditions,447 the metempsychosis (tanāsukh) and the inherence of the divine in humans (ḥulūl) are not found in early corpus of Imāmī traditions in any form. For this reason tanāsukh and ḥulūl were rejected by early Imāmī scholars and considered ghuluww.448 If we add the concept of antinomianism (ibāḥa) to tanāsukh and ḥulūl, these three concepts were signs of Nuṣayriyya ghulāt who were outcast by mainstream Imāmī scholars. Other ideas such al-rajʿa, al-ghayba, ilhām/tahdīth, ʿilm al-ghayb, taʾwil, and tahrīf were accepted by early Imāmī traditionalists based on the Qurʾān and the Imām’s exegetical traditions because they were transmitted frequently in early Imāmī authentic exegetical traditions.

One of the Imāmī exegetes of this period who was accused of ghuluww was Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Ūramah al-Qummī (d. after 247/862). He was a transmitter from Imām al-Riḍā

445 Mazzaoui, The origins, 3–4, 63–73; Rizvi, “‘Seeking the Face of God’,” 391–402.
448 The tradition which is cited by Amir-Moezzi as an example for tanāsukh (Amir-Moezzi, The Divine, 42, 130) is concerning transportation (naql) of the light (or soul) in different worlds which is not transmigration of light/soul which is similar to reincarnation in one world. For ḥulūl Amir-Moezzi has not given any example from early Imami traditions. On antinomianism see Papas, Antinomianism.”
and a pupil of ʿAlī b. Hassān and Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī. He was suspected by Qummī scholars of ghulūw and for this reason even Ashʿarīs of Qumm decided to kill him. Apparently he was accused of ghulūw because of his commentary Tafsīr al-bāṭin which was described by al-Najāshī as mukhallaṭ. It is reported that Ashʿarīs observed his rituals and saw that he prayed from the beginning of the night up to the end. Therefore, he was cleared of charges and the Ashʿarīs stopped trying to kill him. Muḥammad b. Üramah was one of a group of Imāmī exegetes who were accused [at least by later Baghdadi theologians] of ghulūw, takhlīṭ, or Iḍṭirāb. This chain is as follow:


Apparently, these Imāmī scholars were interested in illustrating the discussions of walāya of the Imāms as part of the text of the Qurʾān which was deleted by their adversaries. For example, regarding [Q 33:71] the same chain of exegetes transmitted from Imām al-Ṣādiq stated, “‘and whoever obeys God and His messenger’ in walāya of ʿAlī and the walāya of the Imāms after him ‘certainly has achieved a great triumph.’ This verse was revealed thus.” Another example from the same chain of commentators was the interpretation of [Q 67:29] ‘so you will know who is in a clear error’ Imām al-Ṣādiq said, “the Prophet said ‘you will know’ o group of liars that I informed you the message of my Lord regarding the walāya of ʿAlī and the Imāms after him, ‘who is in a clear error’.” The Imām then continued, “In this way it was revealed.” Again in

449 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 329 no. 891; Ibn al-Ghaḍāʿirī, al-Rijāl, 93 no. 133. See also Modarressi, Crisis, 35 note 100; 36 note 101.


451 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:414 no. 8; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:198. The same idea is narrated in two traditions in Tafsīr Furāt; however, interestingly the same expression ‘this verse was revealed thus’ is absent. But ‘it was revealed regarding ʿAli’ which tally eliminate the problem of mixing interpretation with the codex of the Qurʾān. (Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 288-9 no. 388 and 390).

452 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:421 no. 45.
this tradition, these commentators emphasize that part of the literal revelation (tanzīl) which was about the Imāms and their friendship was missing in the ‘Uthmānīc codex.

Abū al-Faḍl (or Abū Muḥammad) Salama b. al-Khaṭṭāb al-Barāwastānī (d. ca. 250/864) wrote Kitāb tafsīr Yāsīn. Salama was from Azdūrqānī in the environs of Rayy from the district of Barāwastān in Qumm. Salama b. al-Khaṭṭāb did not transmit traditions from the Imāms directly, however, Qummī scholars such as Aḥmad b. Idrīs, Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allāh, Ṣaffār al-Qummī, and al-Ḥimyarī narrated traditions from him. Salama b. al-Khaṭṭāb was declared weak in his transmission by al-Najāshī and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī. It seems that the transmission of esoteric traditions from Mufaḍḍal b. ʿUmar al-Juʿfī (d. before 179/795) caused al-Najāshī and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī to consider Salama b. al-Khaṭṭāb weak in his transmission.

Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥarīsh al-Rāzī (d. ca. 250/864) was a disciple of the ninth Imām al-Jawād. He wrote a book entitled Faḍl innā anzalnāh fī laylat al-qadr. The validity of this book is an example of the serious disagreement between the two Imāmī schools of Qumm and Baghdad in accepting or rejecting a particular kind of exegetical tradition which deals with exaggeration in the divine knowledge of the Imāms. Qummī traditionalists such as al-Ṣaffār and al-Kulaynī apparently accepted this book, for reasons such as its reputation among Qummī scholars and the trust of scholars such as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Ashʿarī al-Qummī (d. after 274/887). On the contrary, Baghdadi scholars such as Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾīrī and Al-Najāshī,
strongly criticized this book and its author, and questioned its validity.\textsuperscript{460} Ansari showed that this book is one of the fundamental esoteric (\textit{bātinī}) texts of Shīʿī Islam. He claims that this book was written at the time that Imāmī Shīʿī Islam was forming and for politico-historical reasons, ghulāt developed within it. He concluded that the book of Ibn al-Ḥarīsh demonstrates an incontestable proximity to the belief of Nuṣayrīs concerning \textit{laylat al-qadr} (the Night of the Destiny).\textsuperscript{461}

With migration of these Kūfan Shīʿī scholars to Qumm and the conflict between exoterism and esoterism, the head of Shīʿī as in Qumm at about the mid 3\textsuperscript{rd}/9\textsuperscript{th} century Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Asḥʿarī (d. after 274/887), started to evaluate the knowledge of these new immigrants from Kūfa. He was a prominent Jurist and expert in \textit{rijāl} who was known for his excommunication of the ghulāt from Qumm. He considered the Qummī belief system as the normative Shīʿī doctrine and the most important criteria for his assessment of ghuluww or takhlīṭ. In a public action he commenced to banish every scholar who was accused of ghuluww from Qumm.\textsuperscript{462}

In this chapter the formative period of Imāmī exegesis was examined. In this period, the fifth Imām al-Bāqir and the sixth Imām al-Ṣādiq established an interpretive basis for the next phase of the Imāmī Shīʿī school of thought and created a general tri-partite Qurʾānic discourse for the systematic construction of the Imāmī doctrine. In this phase, I located and identified the proto-Imāmī exegetical notebooks which are recorded in the early Imāmī biographical or bibilographical books of the 4\textsuperscript{th}/10\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th}/11\textsuperscript{th} centuries. There is no evidence that Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī had access to these early Imāmī notebooks of exegetical traditions. However, he borrowed a great number of early Imāmī exegetical \textit{hadīth} through later Imāmī works which will be discussed in the last chapter in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}’s sources. In the subsequent chapter the next three phases of Imāmī exegesis from the beginning of Minor Occultation in 260/874 up to the death of al-Ṭūsī in 460/1067 will be analyzed.

\textsuperscript{460} Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾ ĩrī, \textit{Al-Rijāl}, 51-52 no. 34; Al-Najāshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 60-61 no. 138; al-Ṭūsī, \textit{Fihrīst}, 136-137.


\textsuperscript{462} al-Kashshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 512; See Modarressi, \textit{Crisis}, 34-35.
Chapter 2
An Overview on Imāmī Exegesis: From 260/874 up to 460/1067

The Imāmī Shīʿas direct access to the Imams’ interpretation of the Qurʾān ended in 260/874. As a result, in the second phase of Imāmī exegesis some scholars and transmitters of the exegetical teachings of the Shīʿī Imams, compiled great collections of Imami exegetical traditions. The second phase of Imāmī exegesis which began with the Minor Occultation in 260/874 and ended in the third decade of the 4th/10th century will be examined at the beginning of this chapter. In the third phase, the transition from traditionalism to Muʿtazili rationalism started in the Imami community. The process of transition, which occurred during the height of Būyids’ power, was complete by the last decades of the 4th/10th century when al-Mufīd al-Baghdādī redefined theological and jurisprudential principles of the Imami School compatible with Muʿtazilī tradition. The fourth phase of Imāmī exegesis began with al-Maṣābīḥ of al-Maghribī and was completed with al-Tībāʿī of al-Ṭūsī. In this chapter, these three phases of Imami exegesis will be analyzed to shed more light on the development of Medieval Imami exegesis which resulted in the fifth phase and the emergence of Rawḍ al-jinān. Imami exegesis during the fourth and fifth phases will be studied along with its theology because the history of Twelver Shīʿī exegesis shows that it was influenced profoundly by theological discussions.

2 Phases of Imāmī Exegesis

2.1 Second phase of Imāmī Exegesis: Minor Occultation (260-329/874-940)

When the last active Imam Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-ʿAskarī (d. 260/874) passed away, according to the Imāmī traditions the twelfth and last Imam entered into a “Minor Occultation.” The immediate unavailability of the Imam at the beginning of this phase, caused Imāmīs to move towards the Muʿtazilī School of thought and the separation of Imāmī theologians from the earlier doctrinal tradition of the Imams. In this period, Imāmī traditionists compiled their collections of ḥadīth while Imāmī theologians were engaged to answer questions raised mostly by Muʿtazilīs. In the interaction with Muʿtazilas during this period, a great number of Imāmī theologians started to
turn towards the Mu’tazilī School of thought. Lack of immediate access to the Imam in this period, started a period of confusion (*ḥayra*) or self-reflection in the Imāmī community over theological and socio-political questions. During this period, four ambassadors (*safīr*) became the representative of the Hidden Imam in the Imami community. Abdulsater observed that most theological challenges evolved throughout the time of the second *safīr*, Abū Ja’far Muhammad b. `Uthmān al-ʿAmrī’s (d. 305/918), and culminated under third *safīr* Abū l-Qāsim Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ al-Nawbakhfī (d. 326/938). During Ḥusayn b. Rūḥ office the *ghulāt*, mostly Kūfāns were excluded from Imami community, and the Qummī traditionists were accepted as reliable authority. A number of these early *ghulāt* were members of Nuṣayriyya (also known as ‘Alawīyya) which was founded by Muḥammad b. Nuṣayr al-Namīrī (ca. mid-3rd/9th century) during the Imamate of the Imam al-ʿAskarī or his father ImamʿAlī al-Naqī (d. 254/868). Nuṣayrī theological doctrine was partly founded on the writings of the Imāmī ghālī al-Mufaḍḍal b. ʿUmar al-Ju’fī (d. before 179/795), the leader of the *mufawwida* school of Shīʿī transgression (*ghuluww*). Studies show that Ibn Nuṣayr proclaimed deification of the Imām, believed in metempsychosis (*tanāsukh*) and spread antinomianism (*ibāḥa*).

Due to the widespread presence of *ghuluww* among Imami traditionists of this period, a group of prominent Imami scholars in Kūfā and a group of eminent Imami scholars in Qumm attempted to Assess the works of Imami traditionists in general and exegetes in particular. A number of Imami scholars who composed *tafsīr* in this period were accused of *ghuluww* (transgression) or *takhlīṭ* (syncretism/mixing). The term *takhlīt*, which is mentioned only in early Shīʿī biographical

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464 Daftary, *A History of Shiʿī Islam*, 63. It is reported that during Minor Occultation Imami Shīʿas could ask their religious questions through Four Envoys (*Safarāʿ* sing. *Safīr*).
466 See Abdulsater, “Dynamics of Absence.”
468 See Steigerwald, “Ibn Nuṣayr.”
sources, indicates syncretism or conflation of possibly esoteric with exoteric doctrines.\textsuperscript{469} The person who practises takhlīt is called mukhallīṭ, one who is a careless transmitter (in the view of later Imami scholars such as al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī) who quotes and mixes esoteric and exoteric doctrines. The following Imami exegetes of this period were accused of ghuluww or takhlīt.

Abū ‘Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Sayyārī (d. approximately 268/881) compiled early Imami exegetical traditions concerning falsification of the Qurʾān and was accused of ghuluww. He was a Başran scholar who served as secretary to the Ṭāhiriids (\textit{min kuttāb āl Ṭāhir}) in Qumm. He wrote \textit{Kitāb thawāb al-Qurʾān} and \textit{Kitāb al-Qirāʾāt} (or \textit{al-Tanzīl wa al-tahrīf}).\textsuperscript{470} Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-‘Aṭṭār, who was a leading Imami scholar of his time in Qumm,\textsuperscript{471} is reported to have transmitted from al-Sayyārī only those of his traditions that did not contain elements of ghuluww or takhlīt.\textsuperscript{472} In this period, some transmitters of al-Sayyārī such as Abū Saʿīd Sahl b. Ziyād al-Ādamī al-Rāżī, a transmitter from the Imams al-Jawād, al-Hādī, and al-ʿAskarī, were expelled from Qumm to Rayy by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Asḥarī (d. after 274/887) after being accused of ghuluww and lying (kidhb).\textsuperscript{473} Another immediate authority of al-Sayyārī was Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Mihrān who was a transmitter from al-Jawād and al-Hādī. Ibn Mihrān was accused of being transgressive Shīʿī (ghālī), lying (kadhdhāb), corrupted in belief (fāsid al-madhhab) and most of his books were considered takhlīt by al-Najāshī.\textsuperscript{474}

\textsuperscript{469} Modarressi, \textit{Crisis}, 22–23

\textsuperscript{470} al-Najāshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 80 no. 192. On him and his work, see Amir-Moezzi and Kohlberg, “Qurʾanic Recensions and Political Tendencies.”

\textsuperscript{471} Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-ʿAṭṭār al-Qummī was a prominent Qummī traditionalist. He is described by al-Najāshī as a prominent Imami scholar of his time (al-Najāshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 353 no. 946). His farher Yaḥyā b. Muthannā and his son Aḥmad b. Muḥammad were also prominent transmitters of \textit{ḥadīth}.

\textsuperscript{472} al-Najāshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 80 no. 192.


\textsuperscript{474} al-Najāshī, \textit{Rijāl}, 350 no. 942.
Abū Sumayna (or Abū Jaʿfar) Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qurashī (d. approximately 280/893) was a contemporary exegete with al-Sayyārī in who was accused of ghuluww. Abū Sumayna was a Kūfan hadīth transmitter who entered Qumm while he was well-known for lying in Kūfa. He stayed with Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿĪsā al-Ashʿarī till he became notorious for al-ghuluww and was expelled from Qumm by his host. Abū Sumayna was in the chain of transmitters of Jābīr’s Tafsīr. He also wrote a commentary on chapter 78 of the Qurʾān titled Kitāb tafsīr ʿamm yatasāʾalūn. A survived tradition related from Abū Sumayna shows his interest in the subject of al-Qāʾim. In interpreting [Q 2:148] ‘wherever you are, God will bring you all together’ it is reported that Abū Sumayna transmitted an esoteric interpretation from Abū al-Ḥasan Imam al-Riḍā (or al-Hādī) who said, “By God it means when our Qāʾim rises, God will gather our Shīʿa as from all cities to him.” These examples demonstrate clearly that at the beginning of Minor Occultation some exegetical traditions regarding Imami variant readings or perhaps concerning the Qāʾim were considered by prominent Qummī scholars as ghuluww or takhlīṭ.

An Imami stream of Qummī exegetes in this period who was not accused of ghuluww or takhlīṭ could be located. An example of this normative Imami exegetes of this period in Qumm was Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Mūsā Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī (d. 329/941), father of Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq. He was a jurist and a leading Imami scholar in Qumm who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr. His son Muḥammad b. ʿAlī transmitted a great number of Imami exegetical traditions through his father. Composing exegetical works was not the only form of spreading exegetical traditions in Qumm. For example, in this city Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAḥmad b. ʿĪsāfahbudh al-Qummī (d. ca. 338/948) who was a blind exegete used to give lectures on the Qurʾānic exegesis orally.

\[475\] al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 129 no. 332.
\[476\] al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 332 no. 894; Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, al-Rijāl, 94.
\[477\] al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:66 no. 117.
\[478\] al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 261 no. 684; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 274 no. 393.
\[479\] al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 97 no. 241; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 73 no. 92; Rijāl, 416 no. 6021. His book transmitted by Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Qulawayh al-Qummī (d. 368/979 or 369/980) is not his Quranic commentary; it is a commentary of dreams (tafsīr al-ruʿā īyā).
other cities near Qumm such as Kāshān Imami scholars were also active in interpreting the Qurʾān likely according to early Imami exegetical traditions. One of these scholars, who was titled al-mufassir, was Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥasan al-Qāsānī who lived in Qāsān (Kāshān), the first of the large oasis along Qumm. 480

One of the Imami doctrines which was a matter of controversy between “normative” and “transgressive” Shīʿī as in this period was regarding the allegorical and esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān (taʾwīl), especially those verses which was interpreted in some Imami exegetical traditions as a reference to the Imams. 481 For example, in Kūfa Ibrāḥīm b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd al-ṬhAQāFFī (d. 283/897) was a convert from Zaydī Shīʿī Islam. He wrote Kitāb Mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalayhi al-salām (also known as al-Tafsīr). He also wrote his book al-Maʿrifah regarding virtues (manāqib) of the Imams and vices (mathālib) of their enemies which some Kūfan scholars thought the book’s content was inappropriate to be published (perhaps it was considered very offensive). Therefore, they requested Ibrāḥīm b. Muḥammad to leave his book and not publish it. Ibrāḥīm b. Muḥammad moved from Kūfa to Isfahān and resided there to narrate his book. It is said that a group of scholars from Qumm such as Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī travelled to Isfahān as envoys and asked Ibrāḥīm b. Muḥammad to move to Qumm but he refused. 482 Another Kūfan scholar at the end of this period who wrote a tafsīr was Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusayn b. al-Qāsim al-Kātib (d. ca. 330/941). He was a teacher of Furāt al-Kūfī 483 and wrote Kitāb asmāʾ amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalayhi al-salām min al-Qurʾān (‘the names of the commander of the believers in the Qurʾān’). 484 Kūfan Imami scholars of this period, travelled to other regions to spread Shīʿī exegetical thought. For example, Abū al-Faḍl

480 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 236 no. 626.
483 Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 214 no. 287.
484 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 66 no. 157; MṬF, 4:341-342 no. 1538.
Muḥammad b. Ahmad al-Ṣābūnī (d. after 329/941) who wrote *Kitāb tafsīr maʿānī al-Qurʾān* resided in Egypt.\(^{485}\)

Similar to Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Thaqafī, a few of Imami scholars in this period compiled in their *tafsīr* exegetical traditions regarding Imam ʿAlī. For example, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad known as Ibn Abī al-Thalj (d. 323/935 or 325/937) also known as al-kātib al-Baghdādi was a typical Imami scholar in Baghdad who coexisted with non-Imami scholars peacefully.\(^{486}\) He wrote *Kitāb mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī amīr al-muʾminīn ’alayhi al-salām* (‘The Book of Revelation from the Qurʾān about the commander of believers’)\(^{487}\) also known by *al-Tanzīl fī amīr al-muʾminīn ’alayhi al-salām*.\(^{488}\)

At the end of this era, some Imāmī exegetes wrote voluminous thematic commentaries. Not surprisingly, the main theme of these commentaries was Imamate and the Imams. For example, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Isfarāʾīnī, an Imami scholar from Isfarāʾīn in northern Khurāsān, wrote *Kitāb al-maṣābīḥ fī dhikr mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī ahl al-bayt ’alayhim al-salām*. He was a blind exegete known by the title of *al-mufassir*. Al-Najāshī and al-Ṭūsī described his *tafsīr* as voluminous, good, and with many benefits.\(^{489}\) In Baghdad Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās al-Bazzāz al-Baghdādī known as Ibn al-Juḥām (d. after 328/939) wrote four commentaries entitled *Kitāb mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī ahl al-bayt*, *Kitāb taʾwil mā nazal fī shīʿatihim*, and *Kitāb taʾwil mā nazal fī aʿdāʾihim*, and *Kitāb al-tafsīr al-kabīr*.\(^{490}\) *Kitāb al-tafsīr al-kabīr* was apparently the collection of all three commentaries. Regarding *Kitāb mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī ahl al-bayt*, al-Najāshī states that “A group of our companions (aṣḥābunā) say, it is a book that it has no parallel in its genre. It was said, it is a thousand


\(^{488}\) al-Ṭūsī, *Fihrist*, 426 no. 664.

\(^{489}\) al-Najāshī, *Rijāl*, 93 no. 231; al-Ṭūsī, *Fihrist*, 67 no. 84; *Rijāl*, 416 no. 6015.

\(^{490}\) al-Ṭūsī, *Fihrist*, 423 no. 653.
According to Ibn Ṭāwūs (d. 664/1266) who had a copy of Kitāb mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī ahl al-bayt, it was two large volumes in ten sections. Ibn Ṭāwūs notes that Ibn al-Juḥām “has narrated all exegetical traditions in this book from Sunni scholars to be more solid in argument (ḥujja) and clear in dispute (maḥajja).”

The second volume of Ibn al-Juḥām’s commentary, from Sūrat al-‘isrāʾ to the end of the Qurʾān, was available to Sharaf al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Ḥusaynī al-Astarābādī al-Najafī (d. ca. 940/1534) who wrote Taʾwīl al-āyāt al-ẓāhira fī faḍāʾil al-ʿitra al-ṭāhira.

Another Imami exegete who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr was Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Khazzāz (d. ca. 300/).

He was a teacher of the prominent Zaydī scholar Ibn ʿUqda (d. 333/945) and a good number of his exegetical quotations are survived in Shawāhid al-tanzīl li-qawāʾid al-taḥdīl of Allāh al-Ḥakim al-Haskānī (d. after 470/1077).

Simultaneously with the formation of early Imami hadith collections in this period, the first Imāmī Shīʿī commentaries such as Tafsīr of Abū l-Qāsim Furāt b. Ibrahīm al-Kūfī (d. ca. 3rd/9th century), Tafsīr of Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. Ibrahīm b. Hāshim al-Qummī (d. in or after 307/919), and Tafsīr of Abu al-Naḍr Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī (d. early 4th/10th century) were composed. These first commentaries have common features: all of them 1- were written before the Major Occultation in 329/940; 2- were written before the Būyid (the first Shīʿa dynasty) period; 3- are about select verses or Qurʾānic expressions and are not comprehensive; 4- narrate only Shīʿī traditions (not from other Companions (ṣaḥāba) or their Followers (tābiʿīn)); 5- like ancient Sunni hadīth books, occasionally narrate some traditions about the falsification of the Qurʾān; and 6- do not pay attention to some topics in their contemporary Sunni commentaries, such as variant readings, quoting pre-Islamic poetry, or linguistic discussions. The reason for this
approach in the early Shīʿa commentaries was the absolute authority of Shīʿa Imams in the interpretation of the Word of God, which did not leave room for quotation from others. What we are considering early Imāmī hermeneutics in this period is not a coherent body of work, but interpretations of verses that establish Imāms’ status in Shīʿī doctrine.

The structures and methods of these early commentaries from the formative period of Imami exegesis are studied by Meir M. Bar-Asher in his seminal work *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmī Shiism*. In addition to these three early Imami commentaries, Bar-Asher studied Muḥammad b. ʿĪbrahīm b. Jaʿfar al-Nuʿmānī (d. ca. 360/971) and his exegetical work which is not a commentary, rather it is a treatise constituting a sort of introduction to the Qurʾān. Since all these exegetical works are *tafsīr bi-l-maʾthūr* (exegesis based on transmitted traditions), their authors’ opinions may be discerned from the choice and selection of material cited and omitted.497

The interaction between Imami and Zaydī scholars in Kūfa in the second half of the 3rd/9th century is clear in Furāt al-Kūfī’s commentary.498 *Tafsīr* of Furāt al-Kūfī was probably written at the end of the 3rd/9th century because both *Tafsīr* al-ʿAyyāshī and *Tafsīr* ʿAlī b. ʿĪbrahīm al-Qummī cited it.499 At the beginning of the 4th/10th century, ʿAlī b. ʿĪbrahīm al-Qummī wrote his commentary in Qumm.500 However, the existing recension of the *Tafsīr al-Qummī* commonly

497 During the Minor Occultation Imami scholars started to express their personal opinion, mostly in the introductory passages; however, few comments within the text is seen. For example, al-Kulaynī in the introduction to his *al-Kāfī* or ʿAlī b. ʿĪbrahīm al-Qummī and al-ʿAyyāshī in the introduction to their respective *Tafsīrs* (see Bar-Asher, *Scripture*, 35–36, 61–62).

498 It appears that Furāt al-Kūfī was not a known Imami scholar in Kūfa and for this reason he is not mentioned in earliest Imami bibliographical works (Bar-Asher, *Scripture*, 29-30). However, there are several references to *al-Qāʾim* (the ‘riser’) from the family of Muḥammad (Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, 274 no. 371, 293 no. 395, 400 no. 532, 482 no. 627, 514 no. 673, 563 no. 721, 568 no. 727, 582 no. 747) or *al-Mahdī* in this commentary (Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, 75 no. 48, 112 no. 113, 240 no. 324, 465 no. 607). Furāt al-Kūfī transmitted several traditions from the Zaydīs and there is a ḥadīth in this commentary related from Zayd b. ʿAli in which he states, “only five persons -Muḥammad, ʿAli, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn - from us (the family of the Prophet) are infallible (*maʿṣūmūn*)” (Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, 340 no. 464).


ascribed to ʿAlī b. İbrāhīm al-Qummī was probably not by that scholar.\(^{501}\) When Furāt al-Kūfī and ʿAlī b. İbrāhīm al-Qummī were composing their commentaries, Abu al-Naḍr Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī al-Samarqnaḏī (d. early 4th/10th century)\(^{502}\) was studying in Kūfa in order to compile his Kitāb al-Tafsīr later at the outset of the 4th/10th century in Samarqand.\(^{503}\)

When he was in Kūfa to study hadīth and tafsīr, al-ʿAyyāshī was aware of different trends in early Imāmī exegesis. Therefore, he started to collect information on early Shīʿa exegetes and in this regard he asked his teacher Ibn Faḍḍāl about Imāmī exegetes. Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl (d. after 270/884) was al-ʿAyyāshī’s best teacher in Kūfa.\(^{504}\) Regarding ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Faḍḍāl, it is reported that his student al-ʿAyyāshī said, “I did not see among scholars whom I met in Iraq and the region of Khurāsān any better than ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan in Kūfa. There was not a single book of the Imams’ traditions except he possessed it and he was the person with the keenest memory (ahfaẓ al-nās).”\(^{505}\) ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan was the author of two Qurʾānic works: Kitāb al-tafsīr and Kitāb al-Tanzīl min al-Qurʾān wa al-tahīf.\(^{506}\) It was reported that like his father, ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan was a Faṭāḥī, believed in the Imamate of ʿAbd Allāh al-Afṭāḥ, the son of Imam al-Sadiq. In spite of being Faṭāhīs, the family of Ibn Faḍḍāl were considered reliable and trustworthy in Imami community of the 3rd/9th century. Al-Ṭūsī reports that ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan later became a companion of the tenth and eleventh Imams al-Hādī and al-ʿAskarī.\(^{507}\)

\(^{501}\) Modarressi, *Tradition*, Preface xvii. Study of the differences between the traditions narrated from ʿAlī b. İbrahim in the introduction of Tafsīr al-Qummi with the same traditions in the body of this commentary shows that the compiler of Tafsīr al-Qummi and the author of the introduction is someone other than ʿAlī ibn İbrahim (Mīrzāyī, ‘Bāzkāvī’).

\(^{502}\) On him see Bar-Asher, *Scripture*, 56-63.


\(^{505}\) al-Kashshī, *Rījāl*, 530 no. 1014.


\(^{507}\) al-Ṭūsī, *Rījāl*, 389 no. 5730; 400 no. 5867. It is also reported that some companions of Imam al-ʿAskari asked him about the authenticity of traditions narrated by Banū Faḍḍāl. Imam answered, “Accept what they have narrated and leave what they believe in.” (al-Ṭūsī, *Kitāb al-ghaybah*, 389-390).
In Kūfa, al-ʿAyyāshī started to collect information on early Shīʿa exegetes. In this regard, he asked Ibn Faḍḍāl about a number of early Imami exegetes. For example, he asked Ibn Faḍḍāl about ʿAlī b. Ḥassān [b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī]. Since there are two Shīʿa by the name ʿAlī b. Ḥassān, Ibn Faḍḍāl replied, “About which one did you ask me?” He then continued, “[ʿAlī b. Ḥassān] al-Wāṣiṭī is a trustworthy person. But the one who was with us (in Kūfa) and transmitted from his uncle ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr was a liar and a Wāqifī.”

In another report narrated by al-Kashshī and Al-Najāshī “al-ʿAyyāshī said: I asked ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan [b. ʿAlī] b. Faḍḍāl concerning al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Sālim Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭāʾīnī. He [criticized him and] said: al-Baṭāʾīnī was a liar, and damned (malʿūn). I transmitted many traditions from him and I wrote the whole commentary of the Qurʾān from the beginning to the end transmitting traditions from him. But now I do not transmit even a single tradition from him.” In another account al-ʿAyyāshī asks Ibn Faḍḍāl about Munakhkhal b. Jamīl the author of Kitāb al-tafsīr. Ibn Faḍḍāl says, “Munakhkhal b. Jamīl was nothing! He is accused of ghuluww.” ʿAyyāshī also asks Ibn Faḍḍāl about Abū Baṣīr. Since there were two Abū Baṣīrs among early Shīʿa, Ibn Faḍḍāl replied, “His name was Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim and he was called by the kunya Abī Muḥammad and he was a client of Banī Asad and he was blind.” ʿAyyāshī asks Ibn Faḍḍāl “Is he accused of transgression?” Ibn Faḍḍāl answers ... He is not accused of transgression (ghuluww); however, he was a syncretist (mukhallīf).

Voluminous tradition-based commentaries which emerged during the Minor Occultation did not include some elements such as variant readings, theological and linguistic points that other schools’ commentaries covered. Therefore, Imāmī Shīʿī exegesis began its gradual epoch-making paradigm shift from a tradition-centered exegesis towards a comprehensive independent reasoning approach which is noted by a number of scholars of Qurʾānic or Shīʿī Studies such as Amir-Moezzi, Bar-Asher, and Lawson. Imāmī exegetes needed to establish their method of

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509 al-Kashshī, Rījāl, 552; al-Najāshī, Rījāl, 36 no. 73.
510 al-Kashshī, Rījāl, 368.
511 al-Kashshī, Rījāl, 173.
exegesis to present more coherent hermeneutics to their rival schools. As a result, Imāmī theologians alongside traditionalists commenced writing commentaries.

2.2 Third phase of Imāmī Exegesis: Early Būyid period (ca. 320-380/932-990)

The Būyid period of the 4th/10th century is termed ‘the renaissance of Islam’ and ‘the Shīʿī century’ because the socio-political conditions of the Muslim world changed in favor of the Shīʿas. The early Būyid period, which was the time of their rise and height of power, was considered the starting point of transition from esoteric to exoteric exegesis and the gradual acceptance of non-Imam authorities in interpreting the Qurʾān in the Twelver community. Imami scholars who wrote Qurʾānic commentaries during this period were traditionalists as well as theologians. For example, two Imāmī theologians of Nishābūr wrote commentaries. One of them was Abū Jaʿfar (or Abū Aḥmad) Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abdak al-Jurjānī (d. after 360/971) known as al-ʿAbdakī. He was a great Imāmī theologian and jurist, and also the teacher of al-Ḥākim al-Nishābūrī (d. 405/1015). Al-ʿAbdakī wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr which was a good voluminous book as al-Ṭūsī notes. Another Imāmī theologian and al-ʿAbdakī’s contemporary in Nishābūr who wrote another large commentary entitled Tafsīr al-Qurʾān was Abū Manṣūr al-Ṣarrām (d. ca. 370/981). It seems that these two theologians were influenced by Imāmī theologians of Baghdad in their belief and approach. For example, both Ibn ʿAbdak and al-Ṣarrām like Imāmī theologians of Baghdad believed in the divine threat of eternal punishment of the unrepentant grave sinner (waʿīd) in contrast to the deferment of judgement of sinners

512  Kraemer, Humanism, 1-5
513  al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 382 no. 1040.
514  al-Samʿānī, al-Ansāb, 9:85.
515  al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 548-549 no. 909; MṬM 2:154-155 no. 152.
516  al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 537 no. 876; MṬM 2:60-61 no. 64.
(irjā’). Abū al-Qāsim ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥākim al-Ḥaskānī (d. after 470/1077), who was a Ḥanfī jurist and exegete in Nishābūr, who narrated some pro-ʿAlī exegetical traditions in his commentary Shawāhid al-tanzīl li-qawāʾid al-taṣlīl through al-ʿAbdakī.\footnote{al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 538 no. 877.}

In addition to Nishābūr, in other major cities of Imāmīs such as Kūfa, Baghdad, Qumm, and even Baṣra Imami scholars composed tafsīrs. In Kūfa Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-Kūfī al-Khadijī (d. 352/963) wrote Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān which he did not complete.\footnote{For example, see al-Ḥaskānī, Shawāhid, 1:120.} He was a Kūfan scholar who claimed he was a ‘Alawī (a descendent of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib). However, it was not accepted by the Imami community. \footnote{al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 266 no. 691.} Al-Najāshī and Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī reported that ‘Alī b. Aḥmad was a liar who became a transgressive Shīʿī at the end of his life. He was accused of ghuluww and takhlīṭ. \footnote{Ibn al-Ghaḍāʾirī, al-Rijāl, 82 no. 104.} In Qumm, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. [Aḥmad b.] al-Walīd al-Qummī (d. 343/954) wrote Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān. He was a prominent scholar and jurist of Qumm. \footnote{al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 271-272 no. 390.} He had his class (majlis) in Qumm and Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991) used to participate in it when he was an adolescent. \footnote{Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 279; Al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 383 no. 1042.} Another Qummī scholar who wrote Kitāb al-tafsīr in this period was Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Qummī (d. 350/962). \footnote{al-Ṭūsī, Kitāb al-ghaybah, 320.} It is recorded that at the beginning of this period Abū Aḥmad’ Abd al-ʿAzīz b. Yaḥyā al-Jalūdī (d. 332/944) from Baṣra wrote Kitāb mā nazal fī al-khamsa (‘That which was revealed about the Five’) and Mā nazal fī ʿAlī min al-Qurʾān (‘That which was revealed about ‘Alī extracted from the Qurʾān’) and Kitāb

\footnote{al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 538 no. 877.}
The third phase can be termed as the beginning of the transition from esoterism to exoterism in Imami exegesis.

2.2.1 From esoteric intellectualism to exoteric rationalism

Amir-Moezzi termed the early proto-Imami exegesis as the “original esoteric and nonrationalistic” tradition. To him early Shīʿī doctrine is a hermeneutical doctrine with a mystical faith in the figure of the imam at its center. The Imam is the “hermeneut,” the interpreter *par excellence* and his teachings are meant above all to be an explicit interpretation (*tafsīl, taʿbīr*), exegesis (*tafsīr*), hermeneutics or spiritual elucidation (*taʾwīl*) of the Book. He noted that the letter of revelation (*tanzīl*) and its spiritual hermeneutic (*taʾwīl*), stands at the very center of a dual vision of the sacred Scripture in accord with which every divine Word bears at least two levels: a level manifest and exoteric (*ẓāhir*) layer which conceals a level that is secret and esoteric (*bāṭin*), with the hidden imparting meaning to the manifest. The dispute between rationalism and nonrationalism in early Imami traditions could be traced back to the distinction between reason and intellect.

The intellect (*ʿaql*) which is reflected in early Imami traditions is higher than the reasoning as the knowledge (*ʿilm*) is higher than scientific knowledge. Therefore, spiritual intellectualism is different from theological reasoning as the word ‘intellect’ is different from the word ‘reason’ and the word ‘knowledge’ is different from ‘science’. Intellect is capable of direct comprehension of transcendent realities, whereas ‘reason’ is of an indirect, discursive nature which works with logic and arrives at mental concepts of those realities. With the intellect, one is

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528 Amir-Moezzi, *The Silent Qurʾan*, 77. He noted that in early Shīʿī Islam, the most important role of Ḥadīth is exegesis of the Qurʾān, both the literal, exoteric (*tafsīr*) as well as the spiritual, esoteric commentary, or hermeneutics (*taʾwīl*) (Amir-Moezzi, *The Silent Qurʾan*, 197 footnote no. 9).
529 The etymology of this word, helps us to understand it better. In classical Latin *intellectus* means action of recognizing or discerning, action of understanding or comprehending. See “reason, n.1” OED Online. June 2017. Oxford University Press.
able to comprehend and ‘see’ the higher degree of reality; however, with reason, one can only think about it rationally to learn about it scientifically. Therefore, thinking and reasoning are not the proper tools to perceive the reality, however, they are recommended to be employed in early Imami traditions.

Early Imami intellectualism was different from Muʿtazilī rationalism. In his recent study of *Kitāb al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī* of al-Kulaynī, Madelung remarks on the unambiguous affirmation of the primacy of reason over prophetic revelation, in early Shiʿī Islam. What Madelung found in his study, was what the Ibāḍī theologian ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī (d. after 179/795) denounced in his writings in the second half of the 2nd/8th century. Both see the similarity between proto-Imāmī Shiʿa and Muʿtazila in their rationalism; however, they have not differentiated between Shiʿī intellectualism and Muʿtazilī rationalism.

The Shiʿī Imams criticized using rational reasoning in exegesis if the theological assumptions are the imperfect. An example of inadecacy of theological assumptions to interpretate a text or an event is the story of Khiḍr and Moses in [Q 18:65–82] when Moses was applying rationality, whereas Khiḍr was not. Without an explanation of the hidden meaning (*taʾwīl*) of those

530 In this study, the word ‘spirituality’ also differs from ‘esoterism’. The word ‘esoterism’ denotes the secret doctrines which have been taught by the Imams to a select few among their disciples. Whereas the word ‘spirituality’ is derived from Latin *spīritus* which means breathing (in Hebrew *rūaḥ* and in Arabic *Rūḥ*) should be experienced by practising divine teachings. (See “spirit, n.” in OED)


532 Madelung, ‘Early’, 466. Madelung claims that Shiʿī Imams “progressively came to endorse Muʿtazilī perspectives” (Madelung, ‘Early’, 468) but his evidence and analysis is not compelling. He also does not consider the difference between “the realities of faith (*ḥaqāʿiq al-īmān*)” and Imaginings of hearts (*ʾawḥām al-qulūb*). ʿHaqāʿiq al-īmān is an esoteric expression related to truth and belief and cannot be understood by textual analysis as a phenomenon.


534 Abū al-Futūḥ quotes an imami tradition that is an example of merging traditionalist approach in rationalist approach. Abū al-Futūḥ says, “it is in tradition (*khabar*) that it is asked from Mūsā b. Jaʿfar – peace be upon him– that: Khiḍr was more knowledgeable or Moses? He said: Moses asked Khiḍr a question that he did not know the answer and Khiḍr asked Moses a question that he did not know the answer. If they both come to me, I will ask them...
actions by Khiḍr, even Moses could not understand of what happened by his reason. In Shīʿī doctrine, like Khiḍrs’ actions which had hidden meanings, everything in the material world or in scripture has esoteric meanings. The hidden meaning of the action or the spiritual hermeneutic of the scripture is known only to God and a very few of His servants. That is why Imam al-Ṣādiq states “the example of ʿAlī and us (Imams) after him is like the example of the prophet Moses and that knowledgeable servant [Khiḍr] … our knowledge is disagreeable with ignorant people and they do not take it while it is truth with God.” The Imams are thoroughly informed about this hidden meaning of the Book. Early Shīʿas read the reference to Khiḍr’s taʾwīl of his actions in conjunction with the reference in [Q 3:7] to a taʾwīl of revelation, known only to God and those firmly rooted in knowledge (rāsikhūn fī al-ʿilm).

According to early Imāmī traditions, the outward (ẓāhir) of the Qurʾān is called al-tanzīl (from the root n-z-l and literary means ‘causing something to descend’) and the inner (bāṭin) of the Qurʾān is al-taʾwīl (from the root ʾ-w-l and literary means ‘causing something to return to its origin’). Al-tanzīl is the lower degree of revelation’s reality which pertains to textual analysis. Al-taʾwīl is the higher degree of revelation’s reality which pertains to spiritual hermeneutics. Al-

535 al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:332. In early Imami sources, the comparison between ʿAlī and Khiḍr has attributed to the Prophet. Abū Dharr al-Ghaffarī (d. 32/652) reports that “I was with the Prophet in the cemetery of al-Baqīʿ when he said: by whom my soul is in His hand, among you is a person who will fight for the spiritual hermeneutics of the Qurʾān, just as I fought polytheists for the literal revelation of it. Then the prophet notes that those enemies of ʿAlī will testify that there is no god but God however, most of them believe not in God and they ascribe partners to Him. Their killing will be too difficult for people so that they will criticize the walī of God and they will be angry with his action as Moses was displeased from what happened to the ship, the young boy, and the wall. Damaging the ship, killing the young boy, and setting up the wall were pleasure of God but displeasure of Moses.” (Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 200-201).

536 Fuḍayl b. Yasār (d. in or before 148/765), a prominent scholar of the Shīʿī community of Kūfah (on him see Modarressi, Tradition, 225) asked Imam al-Ṣādiq about this famous saying of the Prophet that “every letter of the Qurʾān has a outer [meaning]/back (ẓahr) and an inner [meaning]/belly (baṭin).” (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ, 1:10) The Imam explains that “its outer [meaning] (ẓahr) is its literal revelation (tanzīl) and its inner [meaning] (baṭin) is its spiritual hermeneutics (taʾwīl).” After that Imam adds “some of its hermeneutics has passed and some it has not been passed yet. It is current as the sun and the moon are in circulation.” Then Imam recited [Q 3:7] ‘and none know it’s hermeneutic except God and those firmly rooted in knowledge’ and stated that “we know it.” al-Ṣaffār, Baṣāʿir, 1:196; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:11. According to early Imami exegetical traditions, the Imams are the only firmly rooted in knowledge (al-rāsikhūn fī al-ʿilm) after the Prophet. In interpreting [Q 3:7] it is reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “We [the Imams] are those who are firmly-rooted in knowledge; so we understand [the Qurʾān’s] hermeneutics.” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:213 no. 1; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:164 no. 8; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿir, 203-204 no. 5; 1:204 no. 6).
ta’wil involves taking the word of God back up through the levels through which it descended to its very origin in the Divine. Regarding these two categories, it is reported that the Prophet said “the outward of the Qurʾān (ẓāhir) is elegant” which is subject to linguistic studies “and its inner (bāṭin) is deep, wherein is a kernel, and a kernel within a kernel”\(^537\) which cannot be studied. In a tradition attributed to Imām al-Ṣādiq he said, “God taught his prophet literal revelation (tanzīl) and the spiritual hermeneutics (taʾwil) [of the Qurʾān] and the messenger of God taught it to ‘Alī and by God he taught us.”\(^538\) The Shiʿī Imams declared that the only learned scholars who have divine authority to interpret the Qurʾān after the Prophet are the Imams.\(^539\)

The Shiʿī Imams encouraged their companions to ask their religious questions;\(^540\) however, they did not like their companions to question their decisions or answers. The Imams also advised their followers not to employ their personal opinion (raʾy) or reasoning by analogy (qiyās) in religious matters. Unquestioning acceptance (taslīm) of the Imam’s instructions was at the centre of Shiʿī belief.\(^541\) In particular, early Imāmī exegetical traditions rejected clearly any raʾy (personal opinion or independent reasoning) in interpretation of the Qurʾān.\(^542\) Although the Imams praised intellectualism and accepted rationality highly as the supreme virtue of

\(^{537}\) al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:599 no. 2; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:3 no. 1.


\(^{539}\) In a long tradition where ‘Alī was clearing up the doubts of someone in the Qurʾān, he warns him that “be careful not to interpret the Qurʾān with your opinion until you learn it from the intellectuals” (Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 264). According to early Imami traditions, Imams are those learned intellectuals who are masters of interpretation and hermeneutics (al-Ṣaffār, Baṣāʿir, 1:9).

\(^{540}\) For example, it is reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq said to Ḥumrān b. Aʿyan “People are destroyed only because they do not ask [what they do not know]” (al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:40 no. 1).

\(^{541}\) Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality, 269.

\(^{542}\) Bar-Asher, “The Authority to Interpret the Qurʾān,” 158. Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “Whoever interprets a verse from the Qurʾān according to his independent opinion (bi-raʾyihi) certainly he has disbelieved.” (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:18 no. 6) Interpreting the Qurʾān according to one’s subjective opinion is not accepted because “nothing is farther from the men’s intellect than the interpretation of the Qurʾān.” (al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 2: 300; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:11, 12, 17) al-tafsīr bi-raʾy was not accepted even if the commentator interprets the Qurʾān correctly because it is not just the interpretation which should be correct, but the process to interpret the word of God should be correct. In this regard, the Prophet said “whoever interprets the Qurʾān according to his opinion even correctly, he has made a mistake” (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 1: 27) and “will not be rewarded.” (al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1: 17).
mankind, they rejected analogical reasoning (qiyās) without comprehensive data as a source of divine knowledge. They cited what is reported in the Qurʾān that Iblīs compared himself with Adam and said to God [Q 7:12 or 38:76] ‘You created me from fire, and created him from clay.’ Imam al-Ṣādiq said “the first who used analogical reasoning was Iblīs.” For the Imams, Iblīs’ problem was not his use of analogical reasoning, but his lack of comprehensive knowledge for an appropriate analogy. The Imams rejected analogical reasoning as a source of religious knowledge even if non-Shīʿas subordinate its authority to the Qurʾān and Prophetic practice. But this situation did not last in the absence of the Imam because Imami scholars did not have access to the Imam anymore. The most prominent Imami scholar of the 4th/10th century who was mindful of method and authority to interpret Qurʾānic verses instead of the Imams was the Qummī scholar Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq.

2.2.2 Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Ṭālim b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī known as al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991)

At the outset of the Būyid period (mid 4th/10th century) Rayy and Qumm were considered the most important centers of the Imāmī traditionalists (aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth/muḥaddithūn). One of the reasons for the increased presence of Imāmī traditionists in Rayy in mid 4th/10th century was the emigration of Ibn Bābawayh Muḥammad b. Ṭālim, also known as al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991-2) from Qumm to Rayy. Al-Ṣadūq was the most prominent Imāmī scholar of that time in Khurāsān.

543 Madelung, “Early Imāmī Theology,” 466.
544 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:58 no. 20; 3:104 no. 2; 4:113 no. 5; 4:135 no. 1; al-Qummī, Taḥṣīl, 1:42; al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:211 no. 80; Ibn Bābawayh, Taḥārāyī, 1:86 no. 1-2; 1:87 no. 3; 1:88-89 no. 4; 1:89-90 no. 5.
545 On Ahl al-Ḥadīth see J. Schacht, “Ahl al-Ḥadīth”; Ahmed Pākatchī, “Aṣḥāb ḥadīth”; In the Imāmī tradition, the term aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth (or ahl al-ḥadīth) is a title that Imāmī theologians such as al-Mufīd or al-Murtaḍā of Baghdad used to refer to the Imāmī traditionists of Qumm and Rayy. Those Imāmī scholars of Baghdad tried to describe the Imāmī traditionists similarly to the Sunni traditionists and separate them from the mainstream Imāmī scholars. However, Imāmī aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth did not diverge from Imāmī theologians fundamentally. Divergence between these two groups was only in their approach to using tradition. It should be noted that in Sunni Islam, aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth are considerably different from Sunni theologians. On this issue, see Anṣārī Qummī, “Akhbārīyān va aṣḥāb-ḥadīs-ī Imāmīyya: nīm nigāhī bi tahavvulūt-i fīgh-i Imāmī dar sadihāyī nakhustūn.”
547 al-Najāshī, Rījāl, 389 no. 1049.
Among Imāmī scholars there had been no one like him in the view of his vast knowledge and number of ahadith he had committed to memory.\(^ {548} \) Al-Ṣadūq went to Rayy, the Būyid capital, at the invitation of the Būyid king Rukn al-Dawla (d. 366/977) likely between 339/950 to 347/958 and resided there to the end of his life.\(^ {549} \)

Al-Ṣadūq attempted to preserve the exegetical tradition dated back to the imams, however, he was aware that Imāmī scholars needed to reconstruct their doctrine due to the absence of the Imam, and extensive presence of Muʿtazilīs in the intellectual society. But he did not want to follow the structure of the Muʿtazilī theology. He elaborated his theology on the basis of ḥadīth, with a minimum use of independent reasoning (raʾy) or analogical reasoning (qiyyās).\(^ {550} \) Al-Ṣadūq knew that at the very end of the 3\(^{rd} \)/9\(^{th} \) century, Sunni traditionalists were reconciled with rationalists. As a result of this reconciliation the beginning of the 4\(^{th} \)/10\(^{th} \) century witnessed the rise of uṣūl al-fiqh (Islamic legal theories/Principles of Jurisprudence) and a rapid development of al-kalām (Islamic theology) among Sunni scholars.\(^ {551} \) Moreover, Ibn Bābawayh was under the pressure of the Būyid vizier Abū l-Qāsim Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbbād known as ‘al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād’ (d. 385/995) and the ongoing Muʿtazilī arguments at the Būyid court of Rayy.\(^ {552} \) When qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī (d. 415/1025) came to Rayy, following the invitation of the Būyid vizier al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād’ Rayy became a centre of Muʿtazilī thought. Ibn ʿAbbād, a former student of Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Baṣrī and an important representative of the Muʿtazila with inclinations towards Zaydī Islam, actively promoted the study of Muʿtazilī kalām in Rayy. As Schmidtke remarks, Ibn ʿAbbād was instrumental in promoting the teachings of the Muʿtazila

\(^ {548} \) al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 442.


\(^ {552} \) McDermott, The Theology, 13, 349; On ibn ʿAbbad’s critique of Ibn Bābawayh see Maurice Alex Pomerantz, “Licit Magic and Divine Grace: The Life and Letters of al-Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād (d. 385/995)” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2010), 132-34.
throughout Būyid territories and beyond, with Rayy as its intellectual center. Especially since Muharram 367/August–September 977 when Ibn Ḥābid appointed ‘Abd al-Jabbar chief judge in Būyid territories, the latter attracted a large number of students and followers, Muʿtazilīs as well as Zaydīs, to Rayy, turning it into the leading intellectual center of the movement.\footnote{Schmidtke, "The Muʿtazilite Movement (III): The Scholastic Phase" in The Oxford handbook of Islamic theology, 166.}

Even though Ibn Bābawayh started to criticize some Imāmī traditions (akhbārs) and organize Imāmī’s ideology in his books, his tradition-based arguments were not sufficient to respond systematically to all the Muʿtazilī’s rational ideological questions and concerns for many reasons.\footnote{al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist kutub al-shīʿa wna usūlihim wa asmāʿ al-muṣannifīn wa aṣḥāb al-uṣūl, 442 no. 710. Al-Ṭūsī characterizes al-Ṣadūq as “nāqidan li-l-akhbār.”} One of those reasons was that many of the Imāmī traditions had not been narrated outside their community and, moreover, Imāmī theological reasoning was not as developed as well as the Muʿtazilī’s. Consequently, in the second half of the 4th/10th century, Imāmī Shiʿī ideology needed a revision. In the field of Qurʿānic exegesis al-Ṣadūq knew that traditionalists like him could not generate new traditions and the tree of Shiʿī exegesis would be doomed to disappear.

In Canadian law there is a concept of the “living tree” metaphor. According to this metaphor, the Canadian constitution is organic, which by way of progressive interpretation accommodates and addresses the realities of any time.\footnote{See Waluchow, “The Living Tree,” 891.} The living tree approach is different from its rival originalism which seeks to tie the meaning of a text to history. Similarly, in post-occultation, Imāmī scholars needed to view the Qurʿān in a similar manner because of the absence of the Imam who had the absolute authority to interpret the Qurʿān. Pre-occultation traditions frequently stress that for every age there is an Imam from the house of the Prophet who is the true scholar, guide, and exegete of the Qurʿān.\footnote{al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:191 no. 2; al-Ṣaffār, Baṣāʿ ir, 1:498 no. 9.} But after the absence of the Imam within the Imāmī community a shift from the interpreter of the Qurʿān (Imam as al-Qurʿān al-nāṭiq) to the text of the Qurʿān (al-Qurʿān al-ṣāmit) as a live scripture which is subject to different
interpretations in different contexts was undergoing. This emphasis on the flexibility in the interpretation of the Qurʾān is seen in some of the traditions transmitted by Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq who was well aware of the problems of interpreting the Qurʾān during the Imam’s absence. He narrates the following tradition to emphasize the interpretation of the Qurʾān without limits of place, time or authority. Imam al-Riḍā transmitted from Imam al-Kāẓim that “A person asked Imam al-Ṣādiq, 557 ‘why is it that the more Qurʾān is spread and studied the more lively it feels?’ Imam al-Ṣādiq responds, ‘God did not create the Qurʾān for a particular time to the exclusion of other times or for particular people to the exclusion of other people. It is new in every time, and alive for every nation until the Day of Judgment.’” 558 This flexibility in applying the Qurʾān to any day and age, paved the ground for a non-tradition based and dynamic exegesis.

Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq had to solve the problem of authenticity of the ʿUthmānic codex in the Imami community which was firmly established among Sunnī orthodoxy by that time. 559 He was the first Twelver scholar who declared that “the Qurʾān which God sent down to His Prophet Muḥammad, is [the same as] the one between two covers (mā bayn al-daffatayn) which is in the hands of the people, nothing more.” He insisted that “whoever ascribes to us [Twelvers] that we say it is more than that (ʿUthmānic codex) is a liar.” This declaration could be his actual belief or could be based on taqiyya to foster unity among Muslims. 560 He also attempted to justify the Imami tradition related by Imam al-Ṣādiq who said, “The Qurʾān which was brought by Gabriel to Muḥammad was seventeen thousand verses.” 561 In explaining this tradition he said “God sent down the revelation which was not the Qurʾān [but] that if it is added to the Qurʾān it will be

557 The same tradition is attributed to Imam al-Hādī (d. 254/868) when the grammarian Ibn al-Sikkīt al-Nahlwī (d. 244/858) asks him the same question. (al-Ṭūsī, al-Amālī, 581).

558 Ibn Bābawayh, ʿUyūn, 2:87 no. 32.


561 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:634 no. 28. In some manuscripts of al-Kāfī, it is ‘seven thousands’ instead of ‘seventeen thousands’. Since Ibn Bābawayh narrated the same tradition of ‘seventeen thousands’ in his al-Iʿtiqādāt, it seems that later scribes or transmitters dropped the word ‘ʿashar’ from ‘sabʿata ʿashar’.
seventeen thousand verses." Al-Ṣadūq did not elucidate the type of revelations considered to have been collected along with the Qurʾān. But he was very cautious about transmitting early Imāmī Shīʿī traditions which reveal the Shīʿī differences with the ʿUthmānic codex. For example, he did not transmit the well known Imāmī traditions concerning the textual substitution of aʾimma (Imams) for umma (nation or community) in verses such as [Q 2:143] wa kadhālika jaʿalnākum ummatan wasaṭan (and thus We made you a middle community) or in [Q 3:110] kuntum khayrat ummatan ukhrijat li-al-nās (you are the best community brought forth unto mankind). However, in some cases he passed in silence over the traditions which mention falsification, erasure or alteration (taḥrīf, maḥw, tabdīl/taghyīr) in the Qurʾān as Kolberg and Amir-Moezzi aptly noted. Al-Ṣaduq asserted that “the Qurʾān is one, descended from one [God] upon one [prophet], but the difference is in the transmitters.” By shifting the source of variation in the Qurʾān from the Imams to the transmitters, he attempted to change the Imami discourse from the issue of falsification (taḥrīf) of the Qurʾānic text, which was common in early Shīʿī traditions, to the variant readings (qirāʿāt).

Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq who was the most prominent and prolific Imāmī scholar of his generation, went to Baghdad in 355/966, when he was a young scholar, to learn and spread his vast knowledge of tradition. In the list of his books, two commentaries have been mentioned: Kitāb tafsīr al-Qurʾān and Kitāb mukhtaṣar tafsīr al-Qurʾān. Unfortunately, none of his two commentaries has been survived. Although al-Ṭūsī notes that al-Ṣadūq did not finish his

562 Ibn Bābawayh, al-Iʿtiqādāt, 84.
563 al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:63.
564 al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:10, 110; Al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:195 no. 128 and 129; al-Sayyārī, Kitāb al-qirāʾāt, 32 no. 114; See Kohlberg and Amir-Moezzi, Revelation, 98.
565 Kohlberg and Amir-Moezzi, Revelation, 27.
566 Ibn Bābawayh, al-Iʿtiqādāt, 86; Al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:630 no. 12.
567 Ibn Bābawayh, Maʾānī, 94-95; Man lā yahdūrūh, 3:459. By Ibn Bābawayh’s time variant readings had been accepted as a genre among Muslims. (See Nasser, The transmission). I believe that ‘Variant recitations’ is a better word for ikhtilāf al-qirāʾāt because ‘reading’ is more of an interpretive, psychological process, however, ‘recitation’ is more of a phonological process.
568 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 391, 392 no. 1049.
commentary, al-Ṣadūq has referred to this *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* in his other books. These references indicate that al-Ṣadūq’s commentary should be a tradition-based work. However, his change in method of interpretation of the Qurʾān by tradition to the interpretation of the Qurʾān by using other tools from other fields is evident in his other works. Al-Ṣadūq does not accept interpretation which is not supported by intellect (*ʿaql*) or authentic tradition (*samʿ*). Al-Ṣadūq has interpreted some verses of the Qurʾān through other verses because he believes that “the book of God attests (*yuṣaddiq*) part of it with other parts and does not contradict (*yukadhdhib*) part of it with the other parts.” For example, when he wants to demonstrate that the unseen (*ghayb*) in [Q 2:3] ‘those who believe in the unseen (*ghayb*)’, is the hidden Imam (*al-ḥujja al-ghāʾib*) he cites two other verses [Q 10:20] and [Q 23:50] to support this claim. Al-Ṣadūq has also interpreted some verses of the Qurʾān by Imāmī exegetical traditions which is seen in his various books. Apart from these two methods of interpretation, al-Ṣadūq used Arabic poetry and Arabic proverbs as textual evidence to explain the meaning of some uncommon words of the Qurʾān. He also employed etymology and lexicology, morphology and syntax, and rhetoric to interpret a Qurʾānic word or verse.

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569 ʿUyūn, Fihrist, 444 no. 710.
573 Ibn Bābawayh, *Kamāl*, 1:18; 2:340-341. Ibn Bābawayh argued that 1. In the verse [Q 10:20] a ‘sign (*āya*)’ means ‘unseen (*ghayb*)’. Moreover, 2. In the verse [Q 23:50] a ‘sign (*āya*)’ means ‘divine proof (*hujjā*)’. Therefore, unseen (*ghayb*), is the divine proof or hidden Imam (*al-hujjā*). Therefore, unseen (*ghayb*), is the divine proof or hidden Imam (*al-hujjā*).
574 Probably soon Imāmī scholars of Iran or Iraq will publish al-Ṣadūq’s commentary independently which will be a collection of all Imami exegetical traditions transmitted by al-Ṣadūq in his books.
Sometimes al-Ṣadūq employs Qur’ānic verses and their contexts to define the subtle differences between Qur’ānic synonyms. For example, he cites five verses to distinguish between khawf, khashya, wajal, rahba, and hayba all of which mean “fear.”577 He remarks that “khawf is for āṣīn (disobedients), khashya is for ālimīn (scholars), wajal is for mukhbitīn (those who have humble hearts), rahba is for ābidīn (worshipers), and hayba is for ārifīn (mystics).” He continues “khawf is because of sins (dhunūb) as God says [Q 55:46] ‘and for one who fears (khāfa) standing before his Lord are two gardens’, khashya is because of seeing the falling short (taqṣīr) [in knowledge] as God says [Q 35:28] ‘only those among His servants who have knowledge fear (yakhshā) God’, wajal is because of leaving the service [tark al-khidma] as God says [Q 8:2] ‘those whose hearts fear (wajilat) when God is mentioned’, rahba is because of seeing falling short (taqṣīr) [in worshiping] as God says [Q 21:90] ‘and they called upon us with desire and fear (rahaban)’, and hayba is because of the God’s testimony When uncovering secrets of mystics (ārifīn) as God says [Q 3:28] ‘and God warns (yuḥaḍḍir) you of Himself.’”578

Such a distinction between synonyms according to Qur’ānic verses is not found in any existing Shīʿī or Sunni exegesis prior to al-Ṣadūq.579 Applying these methods to interpret the Qur’ānic, clearly show that a prominent Imāmī traditionalist such as Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq no longer limited himself to exegetical traditions in interpreting Qur’ānic verses. In this period, the Imāmī Qur’ānic exegesis tree was evolving without its classical roots, the Imams.

577 Parkinson, Using Arabic Synonyms, 149-150.

578 Ibn Bābawayh, Kitāb al-khiṣāl, 1:281-282. In interpreting wajilat gulaḥbuhum of the verse [Q 8:2], Abū al-Futūḥ notes that in the codex of Ibn Mas‘ūd instead of wajilat gulaḥbuhum is farīqat gulaḥbuhum (their hearts were afraid). Then he mentions that the following synonyms (al-khawf, al-khashya, al-wajal, al-faraq, al-faza‘, and al-raw‘) have the same meaning as fear but he does not elaborate the differences between these synonyms (see Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jīnān, 9:61).

579 Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq has not provided enough explanation to relate the first verse to the notion of ‘khawf because of sins’ as he does not have sufficient interpretation to connect the last verse to the notion of ‘hayba because of the God’s testimony’.
2.3 Fourth phase of Imāmī exegesis: late Būyid period (ca. 380-447/990-1055)

The decline of the Būyid dynasty began during the last two decades of the 4th/10th century. In this period some Imami scholars were still attempting to justify the absence of the Imam by appealing to the Qurʾān. For example, the Baghdadi scholar Abū ʿAbd Allāh ʾAḥmad b. Muhammad b. Ḥasan Ibn ῖAyyāsh al-Jawharī (d. 401/1010) wrote a specific commentary to tackle this problem. He wrote one of the earliest collections of Shīʿī exegetical traditions that interprets verses from the Qurʾān about the twelfth Imam titled Kitāb mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī šāhib al-zamān (‘The book of what is revealed in the Qurʾān about the Master of the Time’) also known as Kitāb mā nazala min al-Qurʾān fī šāhib al-ʾamr. As Ibn ῖAyyāsh al-Jawharī relied on Sunni ḥadīths in his book Muqtaḍab al-athar to prove the validity of the Twelve Imams, it may be the case that in his commentary he used Sunni exegetical ḥadīths well. After two centuries, Abū al-Futūḥ used the same method in Rawḍ al-Jinān. As Abū al-Futūḥ has mentioned in his commentary, he searched exegetical “traditions which are narrated by opponents of Shīʿī (Sunnis) but agreed with the traditions that came through Shīʿī scholars and their sources.” That is why Abū al-Futūḥ chose the Sunni commentary al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān of al-Thaʾlabi (d. 427/1035) as the main source of Rawḍ al-Jinān which will be discussed later.

In this period of political expediency, the needs of Twelver Shīʿī community caused their scholars to undergo a socio-religio-political transition from traditionist orthodoxy to a climate of

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580 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 86 no. 207.

581 al-Ṭūsī, Fihrīst, 78 no. 99. During the Buyid period, a number of Sunni scholars also compiled commentaries concerning the family of the Prophet. For example, Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) composed Mā nazala min al-Qurʾān fī amīr al-muʾminīn (Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī. al-Dharīʿa, 19:28); the fragments of this work cited by other sources were edited by Muhammad Bāqir al-Mahmūdī in al-Nūr al-mushtab min kitāb Mā nazal min al-Qurʾān fī amīr al-muʾminīn (Tehran, 1406/1985). Another Sunni scholar of this period who wrote al-Āyāt al-nāzila fī ahl al-bayt was Ibn al-Faḥḥām al-Nisābūrī (d. 458/1066) (Ibn Ḥajar, Lisān, 2:251).

582 al-Jawharī, Muqtaḍab, 1.

583 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 15:75.

584 For further information on Ibn al-Juḥām see Anṣārī, ‘al-Juḥāmal-Juḥām’
compromise with respect to competing schools or from what Corbin characterized as “the
discipline of the arcane”\textsuperscript{585} to what Lawson considered “hermeneutics of compromise”\textsuperscript{586} The
simultaneous political weakness of both the Būyid kings and the ʿAbbasid Caliphs in Baghdād
during this late Būyid period caused the leading Twelver Shīʿī scholars living under Būyid rule
in this city to establish their authority and present Imami doctrine publically. For this purpose, al-
Mufīd commenced to revise Imami system of belief extensively. As a result, in this phase a
paradigm shift from intellectual esoterism to rational exoterism occurred in the Twelver Shīʿī
institution of Baghdad. Following the absence of the Imam in the community, Imāmī legal
theory, jurisprudence and exegesis began to emerge as independent disciplines, as it was felt that
Ḥadīth was no longer a sufficient expression of the law or interpretation of the Qurʿān.\textsuperscript{587} For
this reason, the aforementioned methods of al-Ṣadūq in exegesis, which were employed in very
limited circumstances in his works and in other Imāmī commentaries in general, had been
accepted and applied widely by al-Ṣadūqs’ students in Baghdad. Among these students, al-Mufīd
employed rational principles and methods of Qurʿānic interpretation more than his teacher al-
Ṣadūq. He also provided the basis for the radical development of the Imāmī legal theory,
jurisprudence, and theology, which al-Maghribī and al-Ṭūsī later used to revolutionize Imāmī
exegesis. Al-Mufīd’s disciple Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015)
wrote two works in the field of Qurʿān: Takhlīṣ al-bayān fī majāzāt al-Qurʿān and Ḥaqāʾiq al-
taʾwīl fī mutashābih al-tanzīl.\textsuperscript{588} Although none of these works fit within the formal definition
of classical tafsīr, they illustrate the broadening of the discipline in the move away from the
formative period. They clearly reflect the rise of Muʿtazilī-influenced theology. In this section,
four prominent Imami scholars of this phase, who played an important role in changing the
Imami’s approach of exegesis, will be studied.

\textsuperscript{585} Corbin, History, 37.
\textsuperscript{586} Lawson, Hermeneutics.
\textsuperscript{588} al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 398 no. 1065.
2.3.1 Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022)

During the Būyid period, for the first time Imami scholars gained socio-political power and the opportunity to present their doctrine. In this new era, they could no longer keep the esoteric teachings of their Imams hidden within their small community because of the interaction with the larger community. Imami scholars such as Ibn Bābawayh attempted to present Imami doctrine systematically and in this regard, he collected teachings of the Imams thematically. But Baghdadi scholars such as al-Mufīd were looking for a more rational belief system, which could withstand the challenges and criticisms of other Islamic schools, especially the Muʿtazilas. Some of Muʿtazili challenges and criticisms were convoluted and difficult to respond to with Imāmī traditions. As a person who lived in the diverse religio-cultural open society of Baghdad in the late 4th/10th and early 5th/11th century, al-Mufīd saw that the other Muslims’ religious beliefs which centered God in the system of existence were not compatible with the Imāmī traditionalist school of Qumm and Kūfa which could be perceived to have over-emphasized Imamate. The survival of the Imāmī School in Baghdad was not possible with traditionalism in general and the narration of esoteric traditions in particular. The Imami school of thought needed a new non-esoteric exegesis, systematic legal theory and developed theology. The advanced studies centers of Baghdad were places for rational answers in the framework of accepted principles by all Islamic schools, not the narration of the esoteric traditions transmitted only by one Imāmī authority.

The reconstruction of Imāmī theology was an inevitable historical paradigm shift in Imāmī Shiʿī thought. It was employed to defend Imāmī beliefs and to express Imāmī doctrines in a logically consistent manner similar to Muʿtazili theology in the multicultural pluralistic society of 9th/3rd century Baghdad where different trends and ideas were in circulation. This paradigm shift happened at the end of 9th/3rd and the beginning of 10th/4th Baghdad by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Nuʿmān al-Ḥārithī al-ʿUkbarī also known as al-Shaykh al-Mufīd.

589 Other Islamic schools, especially Muʿtazili theologians could not accept an ideological system that believes the whole universe was created from the beginning to the end for fourteen infallible people or by them, even if attributed ultimately to God, sustain them, watch them and manage the circulation of all parts of the system of existence. Al-Mufīd maintained that these are what al-Mufawwīd stated (See al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 133).
590 Muʿtazilas rejected the existence of the world of particles (dharr) before this world, which is forgotten. In this regard see the al-Barqī, al-Maḥāsin, 1:241 no. 225; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:40 no. 112; al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:248.
(d. 413/1022). He is credited as the first leader of the ‘rationalist’ Imāmi school of Baghdad who tried to depart from the traditionalism of the early period and succeeded.\(^{591}\)

Al-Mufīd reconstructed Imāmī theology that was under development by two prominent Imāmī theologians of Banū Nawbakht, Abū Sahl Ismāʿīl b. Ḥ. Alī and his nephew al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī.\(^{592}\) Al-Mufīd’s comparative study of the Imāmī and Muʿtazilī theology prompted him to apply methods of the Muʿtazilīs to develop the rational Imāmī theology.\(^{593}\) He considered the Muʿtazilites his intellectual rivals and addressed the major theological and legal controversies in his works against them. In this regard he wrote his book Awāʾil al-maqālāt fī l-madhāhib al-mukhtārāt to show the differences between the Imāmīyya and Muʿtazilī school of thought. Al-Mufīd used apologetics and even polemical arguments against Muʿtazilīs to restructure Imāmī theology and change its form, style, language, approach and content.\(^{594}\) His movement helped the traditionalist Imāmī theology beyond its thematic explanation and organization and helped define its own distinctive identity \textit{vis-à-vis} non-Imāmī theology.\(^{595}\)

Al-Mufīd denounced his teacher Ibn Bābawayh, who was the representative of traditionalists in Qumm and Rayy, and in his works strongly criticized Ibn Bābawayh’s doctrine.\(^{596}\) However,\(^{597}\)

\(^{591}\) As GhaneaBassiri has shown in his article, this paradigm shift was an effective strategy for change from prevailing modes of \textit{Kalām} argumentation in his time rooted in epistemological reasoning to new ways of making rational theological arguments fundamentally based in metaphysics to be compatible with traditional Imāmī Shīʿī beliefs. (GhaneaBassiri, “Prioritizing Metaphysics”, 201-202).


\(^{596}\) Madelung, “Imamism and Muʿtazilite Theology,” 21-25; For example, see al-Mufīd, \textit{Tashḥīh al-iʿtiqād; al-Masāʿ il al-sarrīyya}, 72-73. Al-Mufīd composed a point-by-point criticisms on \textit{al-iʿtiqādāt}, a work of theology produced by Ibn Bābawayh (d. 381/991) on some 39 issues. This text shows the disagreement within the Imami community of late 4\(^{th}\)/10\(^{th}\) century. Al-Mufīd criticized Qummī traditionism to establish his own methodological alternative to that of traditionalism, and his views on the hierarchical structure within the community during the Imam’s absence. (See Newman, “Minority Reports,” 438). On the matter of ‘exaggeration and delegation (al-ghuluww wa al-tawwīl)’ al-Mufīd criticised the view of Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Walid (d. 343/954–955), on ‘falling short (taqṣīr),’ that is failing to accord to the Prophet and the Imams their rightful place. Al-Mufīd held that
both al-Mufīd and Ibn Bābawayh believed in intellect (ʿaql) in the domain of divine revelation and restricted to authentic traditions (samʿ). The major disagreement between al-Mufīd and Ibn Bābawayh was the essence of intellect and its function in proving and explaining articles of belief. Al-Mufīd believes in rationalism (rather than intellectualism) and theological debate (jidāl aḥsan) realizing that the authentic tradition is only complementary evidence for rationalism. He employed new theological principles extensively and methodologically to prove and explain his new systematic ideology. He proposed a new methodological approach in considering reason and tradition, based on giving the priority to reason when it stands in contradiction to tradition. Al-Mufīd’s Baghdadi exoteric rationalism stood in opposition to, and not simply complementary to, Ibn Babawayh’s Qummī esoteric intellectualism.

It is possible that the reason for this opposition between these two approaches was the harsh words of Imāmī scholars of Baghdad such as al-Mufīd and al-Murtadhā to criticize traditionalist Imāmī scholars of Qumm and Rayy such as Ibn Babawayh al-Ṣadūq to remove Qummī traditionalism from the Imāmī religious sphere. Al-Murtadhā, like his teacher al-Mufīd, accused Imāmī traditionists of Qumm of having irrational beliefs; however, he excluded Ibn Bābawayh from among them.

In the field of Islamic legal theories, al-Mufīd and al-Murtadhā formulated principles of Imāmī jurisprudence. Al-Mufīd wrote his book al-Tadhkira bi-uṣūl al-fiqh (a reminder to the principles of jurisprudence), which prepared the ground for a more expanded book in Imāmī legal theories when Ibn al-Walīd and other Qummī traditionalists argued that in denying that the Prophet and the Imams could be distracted in their prayers they were guilty of the fault of exaggeration (ghuluww). (See al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ, 33, 238-241).

597 McDermott, The Theology, 395; Šarḥi, “Taqrīb-i.”


599 For example, al-Murtadhā (d. 436/1044) wrote two books al-Dhakhîra fī ʿilm al-kalām (The treasure of theology) and Sharḫ jumal al-ʿilm wa al-ʿamal (Explanation of the whole science and action), Abū al-Ṣalāḥ al-Ḥalābī (d. 447/1055) wrote Taqrīb al-maʿārif (Approach knowledge), Abū al-Fath al-Karājākī (d. 449/1057) wrote Kanz al-fawāʿid (Treasure of beneficial pieces of knowledge) and al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) wrote Tamhīd al-uṣūl (Introduction to the principles of theology).

600 Madelung, “Imamism and Muʿtazilite Theology,” 22.

601 Modarressi, Zamīn dar fiqḥ-i Islāmī, 56.
(uṣūl al-fiqh) named al-Dharī‘a ilā uṣūl al-sharī‘a by al-Murtaḍā. This latter book was considered the first detailed work in Imāmī legal theory. After these two Baghdadi scholars, their prominent student al-Ṭūsī collected his legal opinions in a very influential book in the history of Imāmī legal theories entitled al-‘Udda fī uṣūl al-fiqh. However, al-Mufīd’s students’ agreement with their teacher does not mean that they did not have new opinions on theological or legal issues. Although they agreed in approach and principles with their teacher, they also had minor disagreements in derivative principles. The developed approach in Imāmī theology and legal theories had a considerable impact on the Imāmī commentaries on the Qurʾān.

Radical changes in Imāmī theology and legal theory are related to changes in Imami exegesis because in Muslim intellectual history, theology and law can be subsumed under the concept of “exegetical thinking.” Although al-Mufīd did not write a comprehensive commentary on the Qurʾān, according to Imami bibliographical works, he composed several books related to the Qurʾān and exegesis which include: Kitāb al-Kalām fī wujūh iʿjāz al-Qurʾān, Kitāb jawābāt Abī al-Ḥasan siḥt al-Muʾāfi bin Zakariyyā fī iʿjāz al-Qurʾān, Kitāb al-bayān fī taʿlīf al-Qurʾān, Kitāb fī imāmat amīr al-muminīn min al-Qurʾān, Kitāb fī taʿwil qawlih taʿāla ‘fas’alī ahl al-dhikr’, Kitāb al-kalām fī ḥudūth al-Qurʾān, Kitāb al-nuṣra fī faḍl al-Qurʾān, and Kitāb al-ladāʾi il al-Qurʾān, Kitāb al-bayān ʿan ghalat Quṭrub fī al-Qurʾān, and Kitāb al-radd ‘alā al-Jubbāʾī fī al-tafsīr. None of these books is extant. His exegetical approach can still be studied

602 See Ḥusaynī, “Maktab-i uṣūli-yi Shaykh-i Mufid.”


604 Ibn Ṭāwūs mentions a famous treatise by the Imāmī scholar Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāwandī (d. 573/1177) who collected about 95 subjects in the science of uṣūl al-fiqh which al-Murtaḍā and al-Mufīd differed. Ibn Ṭāwūs adds that “at the end of his treatise, al-Rāwandī states that ‘if I mention all the subjects that al-Murtaḍā and al-Mufīd differed, my treatise would become lengthy’.” See Ibn Ṭāwūs, Kashf al-maḥajja, 64.

605 See Schöller, Exegetisches, 97.

606 Muhammad b. al-Mustanīr Quṭrub (d. 206/821) was a student of Sībawayhi who wrote Iʿrāb al-Qurʾān (Maʿānī al-Qurʾān). See Sezgin, Geschichte, IX: 64-65; Brockelmann, History, 1:89.

because most of his exegetical statements are collected in a book entitled *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-majīd al-mustakhraj min turāṭh al-shaykh al-Mufīd* by Ayāzī.\(^{608}\) In addition to his exegetical statements, the type of exegetical traditions cited in his works are important to study his hermeneutics. Al-Mufīd had to declare his stance on the authenticity of the ʿUthmānic codex and his opinion on esoteric Imami exegetical traditions which mention falsification, alteration, or omission in the Qurʾān.

Al-Mufīd had to tackle the problem of fallibility of the Qurʾān in the Imami community in a practical manner. Although his teacher Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq declared that the Qurʾān which God sent down to His Prophet was the same as the ʿUthmānic codex and nothing more,\(^{609}\) al-Mufīd could not ignore all the early Imami traditions which indicate non-authenticity of the ʿUthmānic codex. For him, aside from Shīʿī traditions, early Sunni reports substantiated this claim.\(^{610}\) Regarding the composition (*taʾlīf*) of the Qurʾān, al-Mufīd claimed, “Imāmiyya agreed that those who misguide people disagreed in the gathering [e.g. in the order] of the scripts of the Qurʾān [with the Imams of guidance] and turned away from the occasion of revelation [attributed to the Imams] and the *Sunna* of the Prophet.”\(^{611}\) In the same book *Awāʾil al-maḥālāt*, al-Mufīd addressed this matter in more detail stating that “there is a sufficiently large (*mustafīda*) number of traditions from the Imams of guidance of the family of the Prophet concerning the Qurʾān being different [from the ʿUthmānic Codex] and what some of the transgressors have done including deletion (*ḥadhf*) and omission (*nuqṣān*).” He continues that “in the existing compilation [the ʿUthmānic codex], primacy and recency [of revelation] (*taqdīm al-mutaʾakhkhir wa taʾkhīr al-mutaqaddim*) is canonized. Whoever tells abrogating (*nāsikh*) from abrogated (*mansūkh*), or Meccan from Medinan verses [knows that the Qurʾānic verses] are not put in order.”\(^{612}\) For al-Mufīd, the ʿUthmānic codex, which is not compiled according to the order of

\(^{608}\) See Ayāzī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-majīd*.


\(^{610}\) See Modarressi, “Early Debates”


divine revelation, is not a [divine] proof (ḥujja) in all its aspects. When Abū al-Layth al-Awānī asked al-Muţfīd, “Is the divine proof present in what is compiled by ʿUthmān or not?” He answered, “If by divine proof he means the miracle, it is in it [ʿUthmānic codex] and if [by divine proof] he means divine proof in everything which is revealed, most of it is in it, but not all of it.”

Al-Muţfīd had to conclude the discussion about falsifications, alteration, or omission in the ʿUthmānic codex pragmatically without being silent about many early Imami traditions which mentioned them.

As McDermott concluded in his lengthy discussion, al-Muţfīd ultimately maintained that the ʿUthmānic codex contains no additions, falsifications, or alterations. However, the correct order of the revealed verses has been changed. In order to support his thesis, al-Muţfīd’s explanation was to declare that those Imami traditions which indicate falsification or alteration of the text of revelation are single source (āḥād) traditions, or the transmitter made a mistake, or there are variant readings.

Regarding omission, al-Muţfīd apparently first held that some verses are omitted from the ʿUthmānic codex; however, later he justified his belief and inclined towards the doctrine that what is omitted was the revealed interpretation of the Qurʾān.


614 al-Muţfīd, Al-Masāʾil al-sarawiyya, 82-84.

615 al-Muţfīd declared that the ʿUthmānic codex is not the complete text of revelation. For him although nothing is interpolated in the ʿUthmānic codex, some Qurʾānic words, or verses were omitted from the text. In his al-Masāʾil al-sarawiyya, al-Muţfīd remarked that “what is in between of two covers (mā bayn al-daffatayn) of the Qurʾān (ʿUthmānic codex) is the word of God and his revelation. There is nothing of the word of man in it and it is a very large number of revealed verses (jumhūr al-munzal).” He declared that the ʿUthmānic codex is part of the original text of the Qurʾān “and the rest of what God revealed is with the guardian of the divine law (sharīʿa) and depositor/protector of the divine rules, nothing is dropped from it.” (al-Muţfīd, al-Masāʾil al-sarawiyya, 78-79) Therefore, Imams as the divine protectors of religion have the full text of the revelation. He continued “the person who collected what is in between of two covers now, did not include the explanatory verses as part of what he collected for some reason, such as: his shortness of knowledge of those verses, his doubt and uncertainty about some verses, and his deliberate removal of some of them.” For al-Muţfīd, the edition of the Qurʾān which ʿAlī collated was different from ʿUthmānic codex. He says that the codex of ʿAlī was rejected by the first three caliphs because of his great pressure on the kings (mulūk) of his time (i.e. first three caliphs). Moreover, “ʿAlī was among their opponents and was considered their rival.” (al-Muţfīd, Al-Masāʾil al-ʿukbariyya, 119).

616 For his lengthy discussion on the text of the Qurʾān see McDermott, The Theology, 92-99, 102. See Also Abdulsater, Shiʿi Doctrine, 191-192. Al-Muţfīd maintained that nothing was missing from the ʿUthmānic codex except explanatory verses to interpret and explain (taʿwil wa tafsīr) other verses. All these explanatory verses were recorded in what he referred to as the recension of ʿAlī. Al-Muţfīd does not confine his discussion on this subject to historical reports. To explain his doctrine concerning legitimacy of the ʿUthmānic codex and the possibility of any omission (nuqṣān) or addition (ziyāda) in it, al-Muţfīd divided his discussion into two parts: 1- the theological
Al-Mufid asserted that it is necessary for Shīʿas to be bound to recite and use the ʿUthmānic codex. In this regard, he said “sound traditions are transmitted from our Imams, instructing that they [Shīʿas] read what is in between of the two covers [ʿUthmānic codex] and not to go beyond it and refrain from turning one’s attention to what is added to the text (ziyāda) or what is missing from the text (nuqṣān) until the Savior (qāʾim) rises and recites to the people the Qurʾān as God revealed it and the commander of the faithful [ʿAlī] inscribed it.”

For al-Mufid the only complete copy of the Qurʾān is the recension (muṣḥaf) of ʿAlī. In this regard he states, “The commander of the faithful [ʿAlī] collected the Qurʾān from the beginning to the end and inscribed it as it should be inscribed in order [of revelation]. He inscribed Meccan verses before Medinan verses, abrogated before abrogating, and put every verse in its place. Therefore, Imam al-Ṣādiq said: ‘By God if the Qurʾān is recited as it is revealed, you will find us named as the one who was before us (prophets or their heirs) is named.’” Despite his belief in the incompleteness of the ʿUthmānic codex, al-Mufid employs the official copy of the Qurʾān to interpret and argue with his opponents.

In the field of the Qurʾānic exegesis, al-Mufid rejected the authenticity of many early Imami traditions because they oppose the surface wording/sense of the Qurʾān (ẓāhir al-Qurʾān), well-possibility and 2- the historical reality (according to early Shīʿī accounts). Regarding the theological possibility of omission in the Qurʾān, al-Mufid remarks that “minds (ʿuqūl) do not consider it (omission) impossible and do not preclude it from happening.” He then continues, “I examined the doctrine of those who claimed that omission in the Qurʾān is impossible. I spoke against this claim to the Muʿtazilas and others for a long time. I did not get any convincing argument by which I could confirm the incorrectness of the theological possibility of omission.” After that he reports that “a group of the people of the imamate said that not a word, or a verse, or a sura is missing [from the Uthmānic codex]. What is omitted are the spiritual hermeneutics (taʾwīl) and exoteric interpretations (tafsīr) which was recorded in the codex of ʿAlī; that was part of revelation (al-tanzīl) and it was fixed and revealed even if it was not the same as the words of God Almighty, which is the Qurʾān as a miracle.” Al-Mufid gives an example from the Qurʾān that the spiritual hermeneutics (taʾwīl) is called Qurʾān. He cited [Q 20:114] ‘and do not hasten with the Qurʾān before its revelation is completed for you and say: O My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.’ and said that in this verse the spiritual hermeneutics of the Qurʾān is called Qurʾān. It is an admonishment to the Prophet not to hasten to elucidate the spiritual hermeneutics before its complete revelation. Al-Mufid says “in my opinion this doctrine makes more sense than the doctrine of those who claimed the omission of some words from the Qurʾān itself not from its spiritual hermeneutics [nevertheless] I am inclined to believe it.”

617 al-Mufid, al-Masāʾ il al-sarawiyya, 81.

618 al-Mufid, al-Masāʾ il al-sarawiyya, 78-80. He also cited the well known tradition that Imam al-Sadiq said: ‘The Qurʾān was sent in four parts: one part concerns us, one part concerns our enemies, one part deals with the divine norms (sunan) and the parables (amthāl), and one part deals with duties (furāʾiḍ) and laws (aḥkām). The noblest parts of the Qurʾān belong to us ahl al-bayt.’
attested multiple source (mutawātir) traditions, or the consensus (ijmāʿ) of scholars. For example, in pre-Būyid commentaries it is reported that Imam al-Ṣādiq said, “the Qurʾān was sent down all at once in the month of Ramadan [during the night of decree (laylat al-qadr)] to the much-frequented House (al-Bayt al-Maʿmūr) and revealed from there to the Prophet in [about] twenty years.” Unlike his teacher Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq who declared the same statement as the doctrine of Twelvers, al-Mufīd maintained that “part of the Qurʾān was revealed all at once in the night of decree (laylat al-qadr) and the rest of the revelation came after it until the passing of the Prophet.” Al-Mufīd’s interpretation was not based on early Imami ḥadīths, rather his exegesis is theological because he advocates naẓar (debate), hijāj (argument), and jidāl [bi-al-ḥaqq] (dispute). He noted that “the Imams used to argue/debate for the religion of God and to raise objections to the enemies of God the most exalted. Their great companions in every age employed debate (naẓar), used argument (hijāj), and used to examine the truth and invalidate falsehood with arguments and evidence. The Imams praised them for that and extolled them and spoke of them appreciatively.” Al-Mufīd invigorated Imami theologians and justified their authority in the absence of the Imams. He was the leader of a new movement in Imami School of thought which would be called the school of Uṣūlī Shīʿī as less than two centuries later by ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī in his book Naqḍ.

For al-Mufīd the whole Shīʿī doctrine is built on three presumptions about of the Imams of the House of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt). He understood ahl al-bayt in [Q 33:33] as a reference to ʿAlī and his family who are the people of the House of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt) exclusively. They are the ultimate source and authority in: 1- religious knowledge; 2- the true interpretation of the Qurʾān; and 3- the sound tradition of the Prophet. In his works, al-Mufīd did not go beyond these

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619 al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 124; See Hansu, “Notes on the Term Mutawātir”
621 Ibn Bābawayh, al-Iʿtiqādāt, 82.
622 al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 124.
623 al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 70.
characteristics of the Imams as the heirs of the Prophetic knowledge. He did not cite most esoteric exegetical traditions attributed to the Imams in pre-Būyid Imami commentaries which were not justifiable rationally or proved scripturally. He attempted to introduce Imams as historical figures and defended their exclusive rights by theological explanations.

Al-Mufīd only cited those exegetical traditions which were in line with his theological view. For this reason, he filtered out some of the early Imami hadīths that were part of the mainstream beliefs of the Imāmiyya. For example, regarding the Imams, al-Mufīd asserted that they are historical figures who are the heirs (waratha/awṣiyā) of not only the Prophet but all the prophets. They inherited the Prophets’ divine knowledge as well as all Prophets special legacies such as the Ark and the Tablets of Moses, and the weapon of Muḥammad.625 For al-Mufīd the recognition (maʿrifah) of and obedience (ṭāʿah) to the Imam after the Prophet is a religious duty as it is mentioned in the Qurʾān. He narrated that Imam al-Bāqir said to Zurāra b. Aʿyan, “The highest point of amr (decreed guidance),626 its key, the door to things [i.e. concepts], and the satisfaction of God All-Merciful is obedience to the Imam after knowing him.” The Imam then related the obedience to the Imam as obedience to the Messenger and God by reciting the verse [Q 4:80].627 Al-Mufīd recognized that God associated Imam ‘Alī with Prophet Muḥammad as friends as well as brothers and made ‘Alī the Prophet’s heir.628 Moreover, ‘Alī is also the witness (shāhid) from God for His messenger in [Q 11:17].629 Al-Mufīd notes that the Ulū al-amr in the verse [Q 4:59] “O you who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” applies only to the Imams who are the only persons who had divine authority among

625 al-Mufīd, al-Irshād, 2:187; al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:28 no. 77; al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī, Baṣāʿir, 139 no. 4; 183 no. 32; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:231 no. 2. For a comprehensive list of ‘icons of power’ which the Imams have inherited see Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality of Shi‘i Islam, 201; The Silent Qurʾan, 103.

626 Amir-Moezzi noted that in early Imami literature, amr is synonymous with walāya (See Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality, 243, 270).

627 al-Mufīd, al-Amālī, 68 no. 4; See also al-‘Ayyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:259 no. 202; al-Barqī, al-Mahāsin, 1:287 no. 430; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:185-186 no. 1; 2:19 no. 5.


629 al-Mufīd, al-Amālī, 145 no. 5.
people after the Prophet.\textsuperscript{630} For him this verse which is a reference to the Imams is evidence of their spiritual infallibility (ʿiṣmah).\textsuperscript{631}

Al-Mufid’s opinion on the subject of association with and love of the Imams (tawallī) and dissociation from the opponents of the family of the Prophet (tabarrī) is different from early Imami belief. To him the root of a Shi’a’s tawallī cannot be traced back to the previous worlds (al-Ashbāḥ, al-Arwāḥ, and al-Dharr). For al-Mufid kawthar (abundant good) in [Q 108:1] is a river under the throne of God which is exclusively for the Prophet, ʿAlī, and the lovers of ʿAlī according to a tradition related by the Prophet.\textsuperscript{632} ʿAlī and his Shi’as are the foremost (sābiqūn) of the community of the Prophet in [56:10] “who go first to the paradise because they are the close people to God.”\textsuperscript{633} Therefore, he does not differ from an Imami traditionalist such as his teacher Ibn Bābawayh in this regard. For al-Mufid one cannot both love ʿAlī (and other Imams) and love his (their) enemies. In interpreting [Q 33:4] ‘God has not made two hearts for any man in his interior,’ Imam ʿAlī said “Our love and the love of our enemy never come together in one heart. One does not have two hearts to love us with one and love our enemies with the other.”\textsuperscript{634} However, concerning dissociation from the opponents of ahl al-bayt, he did not introduce the first three caliphs as the adversaries of ʿAlī despite believing their caliphate was illegitimate.

Al-Mufid was a rational theologian who knew that esoteric commentaries are meant to be experienced only by a small circle of Shi’as. Therefore, he discarded a great number of Imami exegetical traditions (even with sound chains of transmission according to Baghdadis in addition to Qummīs) that speak of the worlds before this world and all covenants that have been taken

\textsuperscript{630} al-Mufid, al-Amāli, 349 no. 4; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 108 no. 107; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:187 no. 7; 1: 189 no. 16.

\textsuperscript{631} Abdulsater, Shi’i Doctrine, 213.

\textsuperscript{632} al-Mufid, al-Amāli, 294 no. 5; Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 609 no. 766; al-Ṭūsī, al-Amāli, 69. Kawthar (abundant good) in [Q 108:1] is subject to various interpretations. It is interpreted as a river in Paradise given to the Prophet, prophecy, a pool in the Garden given to the Prophet. Al-Ṭabarī prefers it to be interpreted as the river which will be given to the Prophet in Paradise. (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmiʿ al-bayān, 30:207-210).

\textsuperscript{633} al-Mufid, al-Amāli, 298 no. 7; See Furāt al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 549; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:213 no. 259.

\textsuperscript{634} al-Mufid, al-Amāli, 233 no. 4; See al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:171; al-Kūfī, Tafsīr, 61 no. 24.
from mankind. One of the reasons al-Mufīd rejected the notion of any pact between God and the prophets or mankind before this world is his view regarding the creation of human souls. Unlike his teacher Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq, who affirmed the idea that the souls of all mankind are created before their particle (dharr) bodies, al-Mufīd rejected it and remarked that this belief leads to the heretical notion of tanāsukh (reincarnation/metempsychosis/transmigration).

However, al-Mufīd accepted that the progeny (dhurriyah) of Adam were drawn forth in the form of particles (dharr) according to a sound tradition. He rejected that those particles were alive, listening and responsive because they had intellect. In interpreting the verse of the covenant (mithāq) [Q 7:172], al-Mufīd claimed that this verse is a metaphor (majāz) based on rational evidence (al-adilla al-aqliyya) and scriptural proofs (al-ḥujaj al-sam iyya). He insisted that all traditions concerning the creation of souls before this world and the divine test from the particles about Muhammad’s prophethood and ‘Alī’s Imama in the world of shadows (ażilla) or particles (dharr) are void because they refer to metempsychosis (tanāsukh) which is a doctrine that existed among the earliest Ghulāt of Shī‘as. Although al-Mufīd and his Baghdadi disciples rejected the traditions concerning the world of particles (dharr) and attributed this doctrine to Ghulāt, it is evident that the prime creation of human beings and the whole ontology of mainstream early Imami scholarship was constructed on this doctrine. Al-Mufīd’s two most important students al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015) and al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) and, later on, the Abū Ja’far al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) belonged to this theological school. This example of al-Mufīd’s theological views, among others, informed Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s, which he inherited through al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī. Al- Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī’s exegesis will be discussed below and their connection to Abū al-Futūḥ’s will be presented in Chapter six.

2.3.2 Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044)

Since Abū al-Qāsim Alī b. al-Ḥusayn known as al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) wrote Tafsīr surat al-Ḥamd, and Tafsīr surat al-Baqara it seems that he started to write a commentary which

635 Ibn Bābawayh, al-I tiqādāt, 48.

636 al-Mufīd, Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 81-84. metempsychosis is rebirth in another body or lower material form

637 al-Mufīd, al-Masāʾ il al-sarawīyya, 44-48; Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt, 82-88.
was never completed. He also wrote commentary on some specific verses such as 5:93, 6:151, and 17:70. It is likely that his approach in exegesis resembled al-Mufid’s theological approach except that as Ansari and Schmidtke remark, al-Mufid had maintained in many issues the doctrines of the Mu'tazili School of Baghdad. But his disciple al-Murtađā departed from the theological views of his teacher al-Mufid, in favour of the Bahshamiyya because al-Murtađā was influenced by the grand judge ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), the most prominent scholar of the Bahshamiyya of his time. For this reason, al-Murtađā’s theological views were influenced by the Basran Mu’tazili School, as compared with al-Mufid’s theological views which were closer to Baghdadī Mu’tazili School. Ansari aptly noted that after al-Murtađā, most of Imami theologians of al-Ṭūsī’s generation by and large endorsed the doctrines of the Bahshamiyya. The presence of ʿAbd al-Jabbār in Rayy influenced and attracted some Zaydī and Imami scholars to Bahshamiyya theology which developed in Rayy under the reign of the Būyids, who made the city of Rayy the center of the Bahshamiyya’s chief theologians. Many Zaydī and Imami scholars of Rayy studied and expounded Bahshamiyya theology during the 5th/11th and early 6th/12th centuries. Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, who was a resident of Rayy, was one of those Imami

638 al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 270 no. 708.

639 The Bahshamiyya (or Bā Hāshimiyya) was a branch of Başran Mu’tazili school named after Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’t (d. 321/933), who redefined the doctrinal foundations of this school. Bahshamiyya was established a firm foothold in Baghdad by 314/926 (Schwarz, “Abū Ḥabdallāh al-Baṣrī”). When Mu’izz al-Dawla came to power in Baghdad in 334/946, the Bahshamiyya doctrine attracted the Būyids who were apparently Zaydīs at this time. As a result, the foremost Bahshami scholars of Baghdad such as Abū Ḥabdallāh al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī al-Baṣrī (d. 369/980), and Abū l-Ḥasan Ḥabīb al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī (d. 415/1024) gained the support of the Būyids in Baghdad. During this period, many Baghdadi Imami Shi’īs who were bewildered after the major Occultation were attracted to Bahshamiyya (Madelung, “Der Imam al-Qāsim,” 176). Since Bahshamiyya was the predominant doctrinal school of the Mu’tazila in al-Mufid’s time (See Madelung, “Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī”), he and his student al-Murtađā were influenced by it.


641 Daftary, A History, 71.

642 Ansari, “Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī,” 478. The only exceptions were al-Karājīkī (d. 449/1057), Abū Ya’lā al-Ja’fari (d. 463/1070) and possibly Abu al-Ḥasan al-Buṣrāwī (d. 443/1051) who remained faithful to al-Mufid.

643 Ansari, “Zaydī Theology in Yemen,” 476.

scholars who throughout his commentary Rawḍ al-Jinān regularly discusses theological questions, opting as a rule for the Bahshamiyya position which will be discussed later.

As has been shown by Newman, al-Mufīd and al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā attempted to encourage acceptance of non-tradition based exegesis and to secure their full authority over both the articulation of doctrine and practice. They introduced themselves as the rationalist clerics who received the legacy of the hidden Imam who had absolute authority during his presence. At the same time as this change in the nature and extent of the authority of Imami scholars in doctrine and practice, the authority to interpret the Qurʾān, which was a privilege exclusive to the Imams, was being delegated to the Imami scholars. The first Imami scholar who applied new principles, methods, styles, and sources to generate a new generation of Imami exegesis were al-Maghribī whose new approach was completed by al-Ṭūsī.

2.3.3 Ḥusayn b. Ṭālī al-Wazīr al-Maghribī (d. 418/1028)

With the absence of Imams and crisis of leadership in Imāmī community during the Minor Occultation, transition from traditionalism to an appropriation of Hellenistic dialectical rationalism took place in the Imami community of Baghdad in the late 4th/10th century. This lead to the development of Imāmī theology and legal theory in early 5th/11th century, and the political engagement of Imāmī scholars of Būyid period and the Imāmī commentary paradigm shift. Modern scholars such as Bar-Asher and Rippin for years used to believe that al-Tusi was the initiator of this new paradigm of interpretation by independent reasoning (in contrast to interpretation by traditions (al-tafsīr bi al-maʾthūr) approach in Imāmī Shiʿī School. But recently it is shown that al-Ḥusayn b. Ṭālī known as al-Wazīr al-Maghribī (d. 418/1028) was a pioneer in establishing this new paradigm in the Twelver Shiʿī interpretation by writing his

645 Newman, “‘Minority Reports’,” 452.


647 In the 4th/10th century, Muslim philosophers such as Fārābī (d. 339/950) or theologinas such as al-Mufīd did not copy Aristole, but explained and expanded on him, consistent with an Islamic ontology.

commentary entitled *al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*. The credit that has so far been made to al-Ṭūsī and his commentary *al-Ṭibyān* in changing the Shiʿī exegetical paradigm from commentary by tradition (*tafsīr bi-l-maʿthūr*) to comprehensive independent reasoning commentary should be given to al-Wazīr al-Maghribī. The innovator of this comprehensive approach to Imami exegesis was al-Wazīr al-Maghribī and al-Ṭūsī completed it. Since *al-Ṭibyān* was the first comprehensive Imāmī exegesis which combined early Imami traditionalist and rationalist exegesis, its content and style of interpretation has remained relatively unchanged for about four centuries till Safawid period as the framework among the Twelver Shiʿī commentators.

In his commentary *al-Maṣābīḥ*, al-Wazīr al-Maghribī employed non-Shīʿī elements, in addition to the Shiʿī legal and theological teachings for the first time in Imami exegesis. The most important new non-Shīʿī features in *al-Maṣābīḥ* include: paying attention to syntax, morphology, etymology, rhetoric, and pre-Islamic poetry; using to Sunni commentaries such as *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān* of al-Ṭabarī to use Prophetic traditions in addition to exegetical accounts of the prophet’s Companions (*ṣaḥāba*) and the Followers (*tābiʿīn*); diminishing the amount of quotations from the Shiʿī traditions without reference to early Shiʿī commentaries, focusing on the theological discussions of the day, especially by Muʿtazila’s for the first time; considering literature and narratives of Prophet’s expeditions (*maghāzī*) and biography (*sīra*); and a direct reference to the Old Testament and the New Testament, for the purpose of quoting their similar or opposing verses to the Qurʾān along with criticizing the Bible and sometimes accepting it.

Al-Maghribī’s method, tools, and sources, except quoting from the Bible, are accepted in al-Ṭūsī’s school of exegesis, and are used in *al-Ṭibyān* and other Imāmī commentaries from the 5th/11th century to the end of the 9th/15th century, such as *Rawḍ al-jinān* by Abū al-Futūḥ (in or after 552/1157), *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* by al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1154), *Mutashābih al-Qurʾān wa al-

649 In their PhD dissertations al-Zahrānī and Kariminia showed this fact. Al-Zahrānī believes that al-Wazīr al-Maghribī was a Shiʿa like al-Nisāʾī and al-Ṭabarī who loved Ahl al-bayt but were not Twelver Shiʿa. (see ’Abd al-Karīm al-Zahrānī, “al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm” (PhD dissertation, Jāmiʿat Umm al-Qurā, 2000)); However, Kariminia considers al-Wazīr al-Maghribī a Twelver Shiʿa and tried to prove it. (Kariminia, “Vazīr-i Maghibī va ravishhināsī al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān” (PhD dissertation, Dānishgāh Tehrān, 2016).

650 Kariminia, “Vazīr Maghibī.”
Mukhtalaf fiḥ by Ibn Shahr ashūb (d. 588/1192), Fiqh al-Qur’ān by Rāwandī (d. 573/1177), Muntakhab al-Tibyān by Ibn Idrīs (d. 598/1202), Nahj al-Bayān ‘an Kashf Ma‘ānī al-Qur’ān by Shiybānī (d. ca. 640/1243), and Kanz al-‘Irjān fī fiqh al-Qur’ān by Fādil Miqdād (d. 826/1423). A comparison between al-Maṣābīḥ of al-Maghribī and al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī shows that the latter was aware of the former’s commentary and used it in his exegesis. However, neither al-Najāshī nor al-Ṭūsī has mentioned this important commentary as a work of al-wazīr al-Maghribī in their bio-bibliographical works.

2.3.4 Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067)

Al-Ṭūsī’s commentary al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān (The elucidation in interpretation of the Qur’ān), which is one of the main sources of Abū al-Futūḥ in writing Rawḍ al-jinīn, is the fruit of the Imāmī rational school of Baghdad. Al-Ṭūsī’s approach in writing this commentary radically differs from the early Imami commentaries. Since al-Ṭūsī wrote his commentary for tafsīr connoisseurs in Arabic, it was not commonly utilized by ordinary Persian speakers. Rawḍ al-jinīn addressed the need of the Persian speaker in the Imāmī community, and it was influenced by al-Ṭūsī’s approach in writing commentary and socio-political status of Persian-speaking Iranians under the Great Seljuqs. In the following subsections methods and sources of al-Tibyān will be discussed.

2.3.4.1 Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān: Method

Al-Tibyān was not al-Ṭūsī’s only contribution in the field of exegesis. He gives a list of 43 of his own works in his book al-Fihrist (catalogue) and among them, there are three books in the field of Tafsīr: 1. al-Masā‘il al-Dimashqiyya (The Damascus questions). This treatise consists of twelve questions regarding Qur’ānic exegesis. 2. al-Masā‘il al-rajabiyya fī tafsīr āy min al-Qur’ān (The Rajab questions in commentary of some verses of the Qur’ān). 3. al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān (An elucidation in commentary of the Qur’ān), which al-Ṭūsī claims that no other commentary has been written like it. This last seminal exegesis, al-Tibyān, is the first

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652 al-Ṭūsī, al-Fihrist, 450 no.714.
comprehensive Imāmī exegesis. None of the extant Shīʿī commentaries preceding *al-Tibyān* includes all the verses of the Qurʾān.

Al-Ṭūsī wrote *al-Tibyān* after the death of his teacher al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) with the aim of completing *al-Maṣābīḥ* of al-Maghribī and filling an intellectual need for the emerging new Imāmī rationalist community.653 This commentary is an outcome of a dynamic academic environment that promotes a challenging exchange of knowledge and ideas especially for Shīʿī scholars during the Būyid dynasty (r. 334-447/946-1055) in Baghdad. The rulers of the Būyid dynasty, who on the one hand, had a tendency towards Shīʿī beliefs and, on the other hand, had to face the Sunni intellectuals, strove to create a somewhat stable Intellectual environment especially within Baghdad.654 In this new intellectual condition for Imāmī scholars in Baghdad, contrary to other scholars who lived in entirely Shīʿī locations such as Qumm, for the first time Baghdadi Imāmī scholars had attained the permission to teach and publish their work in a Sunni environment. However, because of the special atmosphere of that society they were obligated to face the Sunni scholars. It is possible that the quotation of Sunni narrations in Shīʿī books of literature, commentary, theology, jurisprudence and principal beliefs, in the works of al-Mufīd, al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī, were an attempt by these scholars in order to get close to a mutual atmosphere of dialogue and to attain acceptance of the main Shīʿī canonical belief set.

Al-Ṭūsī aspired to generate a complete Shīʿī commentary based on different sources rather than only Imāmī traditions to complete challenging the conventional approach after al-Maghribī. In the introduction of his commentary, al-Ṭūsī criticizes Shīʿī scholars’ incomplete commentaries and explains his motive for writing *al-Tibyān*. He states: “what urged me to write this book was that I have seen none of our companions -ancient or modern- write a complete commentary including the entire Qurʾān and comprising of its various meanings. Only some of them have engaged in citing what is narrated from books of tradition, and none of them completed it and

653 For a preliminary study on the chronology of al-Ṭūsī’s works see Riḍādād and Ṭabāṭabāʾī, “Gāhshumārī-yi āthār-i Shaykh-i Ṭūsī,” 63-64.

654 On the socio-cultural environment of Baghdad during the Buyid era see Kraemer, Humanism; Donohue, The Buwayhid Dynasty; Sajjadi, “Āl-i Būya.”
worked on the interpretation of what is needed.”\textsuperscript{655} Al-Ṭūsī’s critique of his preceding Imāmī scholars and their commentaries does not mean that he ignores them in his holistic approach to the interpretation of the Qurʾān. Al-Ṭūsī employed a great number of Imāmī traditions in \textit{al-Tibyān} to interpret different sorts of verses of the Qurʾān such as those related to Islamic law or to explain occasions of revelation; however, his careful selection and contextualization of these traditions are different from his previous Imāmī exegetes.\textsuperscript{656}

Al-Ṭūsī continues and demonstrates his mastery over different approaches relevant to exegesis among Sunni scholars. He divides the Sunni exegetes into three groups: those such as al-Ṭabarī who gathered a long tradition in the commentary of the Qurʾān; those who have concerned themselves with brief interpretations of difficult words in the Qurʾān; and those who have taken the middle path and concentrated more on the sciences in which they themselves possessed skills. In this regard, he states:

“I noticed that there are scholars in Muslim community who have tried to do it [to write an excellent \textit{tafsīr}], but some of them, like al-Ṭabarī and others, are very lengthy in all its meanings and details in what has been said about its variety, while others are neglectful confined to mentioning the difficult vocabulary of the Qurʾān and the meaning of its words. Some of them, whose commentaries are middle-sized, embarked upon commenting which was their strength and abandoned what they did not know. For example, al-Zajjāj, al-Farrāʾ and other grammarians did their utmost in syntax and morphology. Mufaḍḍl b. Salama and other linguists paid much attention to linguistics. Theologians such as Abū ’Alī al-Jubbāʾī Concentrated on theological meanings. Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī and other jurists added to the aforementioned sciences and inserted expansion of derivative laws and diversity of jurist’s opinions into their commentaries.”\textsuperscript{657}

\textsuperscript{655} al-Ṭūsī, \textit{al-Tibyān}, 1:1.

\textsuperscript{656} Khuḍayyir, \textit{al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī mufassīrūn}.

\textsuperscript{657} al-Ṭūsī, \textit{al-Tibyān}, 1:1.
Al-Ṭūsī only accepts the commentaries of two Muʿtazilī scholars: Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Isfahānī (d. 322/934) and ‘Alī b. Īsā al-Rummānī (d. 384/994).658 However, he points out that sometimes they too concern themselves with unnecessary matters.

In al-Tibyān, al-Ṭūsī reduced the length, included all associated sciences and excluded all unrelated sciences to the Qurʾān’s interpretation. He attempted to correct all the flaws in the preceding commentaries as he mentions in his introduction “I have heard from some of our [religious] companions -ancient and new- that they desire a concise commentary which contains all various Qurʾānic knowledge such as various readings, meanings and syntactic analysis, the addressing of ambiguous verses, answers to atheist taunts and other liars such as the determinists (al-mujabbira), anthropomorphists (al-mushabbiha and al-mujassima), and to mention what evidence exists for our [religious] companions (ašḥābunā) in different verses of the Qurʾān for the veracity of their beliefs in fundamental principles of religion and its derivative branches. And if God wills, I begin it briefly and concisely containing all necessary knowledge, not to be so long that it will be annoying, and not to be so short that it will be difficult to understand.”659 Consequently, in al-Tibyān, for the first time an Imāmī Shīʿī exegete uses Sunni commentaries and even praises some of them, especially the Muʿtazilī’s commentaries. He also refers to pre-Islamic poetry, uses works of philologists and grammarians, variant readings of the Qurʾān, jurisprudence and theological works, and sometimes interpretations of some early exegetes who were mostly non-Shīʿa.660

Al-Ṭūsī’s method comprised the production of many decades of intellectual effort by the Imāmī theologians in Baghdad, during the Būyid era. Within the core of this group of scholars lies al-

658 Only a small part of al-Rummānī’s commentary exists. This part which was unedited manuscript form includes only five chapters of the Qurʾān: Ibrāhīm:17-52, al-Ḥijr, al-Nahl, al-Isrā’, al-Kahf:35-37. Khīrūr Muḥammad Nabhā collected other parts of al-Rummānī commentary through al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī and along with that manuscript published them in 2009 as Tafsīr Abī al-Ḥasan al-Rummānī entitled al-Jāmiʿ li-ʿilm al-Qurʾān in the series of “Encyclopedia of Muʿtazilite commentaries.” Therefore, what Lane claims that there is no indication that al-Ṭūsī used al-Rummānī’s commentary does not appear to be correct (see Lane, “Reclining upon,” 222 footnote 3).


Ṭūsī himself, who could be considered the greatest Imāmī scholar throughout the middle ages. Also his method, in comparison to the indisputable guidelines used by some of his teachers and his contemporaries such as al-Muţfīd, al-Maghrībī, and al-Murtaţā has been influential. This new method in exegesis and his comprehensive look could be called the al-Ṭūsī School of Exegesis or the Baghdadi Imāmī theologians School of Exegesis which influenced many succeeding Imāmī commentaries such as Majma‘ al-bayān of al-Ṭabarisi (d. 548/1153), Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān of Abū al-Futūh Rāzī (d. in or after 552/1157), and Fiqh al-Qurʾān of Quṭb Rāwandī (d. 573/1276) in the 6th/12th century.

Al-Ṭūsī’s approach in al-Tibyān is not similar to pre-Būyid Imāmī commentaries and he changed all characteristics of this school of exegesis. The pre-Ṭūsī commentaries have some common characteristics, more or less none of which can be noticed in al-Tibyān. In his study, Bar-Asher mentions the following characteristics that qualify pre-Būyid Imāmī School of exegesis as a unique school:

(a) Exegesis by ḥadīth. The authors of early Imami commentaries up to the end of the 4th/10th century only narrated the ḥadīth of the Imams and rarely reported a narration from the companions (aṣḥāb) or the followers (tābi‘īn) of the Prophet. They were not concerned with the syntactical or morphological analysis, jurisprudence, and theological points within the verses.

(b) Exegesis of selected verses of the Qurʾān. None of these collections were composed with the intent of a complete interpretation of all the chapters and verses of the Qurʾān from the beginning to the end. In these commentaries, the basis of selection of the verses of the Qurʾān was generally with regard to the verses which are concerned with the theological, historical, and jurisprudential issues of the Imāmīs vis-à-vis Sunnis, especially those connected to the virtues of the Imāms and shortcomings of their enemies.

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661 Bar-Asher put the pre-Ṭūsī Shī‘ī commentaries into the category of “the pre-Buwayhid school of exegesis” because all of these commentaries were written before Buyid dynasty. On this issue see Meir M. Bar-Asher, “The Pre-Buwayhid School of Exegesis,” chap. 2 in Scripture and exegesis in early Imāmī Shī‘īsm (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

662 For example, the Tafsīr attributed to Imām al-Ḥasan al-‘Askarī, only covers until the end of verse 282 of the second sūra Baqara; Tafsīr al-Nu‘mānī also divides Qurʾānic verses into 60 different topics through a conversation between the Imām and the narrator in which close to 500 verses of the Qurʾān were interpreted.
(c) Focus on issues pertaining to the institution of Imāma

(d) Anti-Sunni tendencies. These early Imāmī exegetes, in the same manner, express some traditions, which contain the rebuke of the first three caliphs, and some of those who accompanied the Prophet. 663

(e) Belief in the falsification (disarrangement or deletion) of the ʿUthmānic codex of the Qurʾān could be added to Bar-Asher’s list. 664

(f) Additionally, they did not refer to pre-Islamic poetry to determine the meaning of a word or an expression.

All the aforementioned pre-Būyid characteristics changed in al-Tibyān as it becomes a fully developed commentary. For example, firstly, apart from including traditions of the Imāms, there is also frequent mention in al-Tibyān of other early commentators of the Qurʾān. Secondly, al-Tibyān is a complete commentary of all the verses of the Qurʾān. Thirdly, al-Ṭūsī has paid attention to various sciences in his commentary such as grammar, syntax, etymology, rhetoric, tradition, theology, jurisprudence and history. Fourthly, while defending the teachings of Imāmī jurisprudence and interpretations in his commentary, al-Ṭūsī almost never mentions traditions indicating any rebuke of the first three caliphs, companions of the Prophet, or generally the Sunnis. Moreover, al-Ṭūsī denies any kind of falsification, addition or deletion or disarrangement, in the Qurʾān. In his introduction, al-Ṭūsī states:

The consensus among Muslims is to deny the possibility of addition (al-ziyāda) in the Qurʾān. And about the deletion (al-nuqṣān) in the Qurʾān, apparently Sunni belief is opposed to it and this is more suited to our belief and al-Murtada defended this view. This is obvious from traditions; however, numerous traditions have been narrated by al-khāṣṣa (i.e. Shīʿa) and al-ʿāmma (i.e. Sunnīs) regarding the diminution of many verses of the Qurʾān and the translocation of some verses from one place to another place. The methods of transmission of these traditions are Single-source narrations (al-āḥād) which

663 Bar-Asher, Scripture, 73.
664 See Kohlberg and Amir-Moezzi, Revelation and falsification, 24-30.
does not make a knowledge or action necessary and it would be better to avoid them and abandon being preoccupied with them because their interpretation (taʾwīl) is possible.\footnote{al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 1:3. Before al-Ṭūsī and al-Murtada, their teacher al-Mufīd expressed his belief in deletion in the Qurʾān. (al-Mufīd, al-Masāʾ il al-sarawiyya, 78-9). Al-Ṣadūq’s belief concerning the Qurʾān is similar to al-Ṭūsī. Although al-Ṣadūq is a traditionalist Imāmī scholar, he states that “our belief is that the Qurʾān, which God revealed to His prophet Muḥammad, is (the same as) the one between the two covers (daftatayn) and it is that which is in the hands of the people, and is not more than that. Its number of sūras in the view of the [Sunnī] people is one hundred and fourteen. According to us al-Ḍuḥā and alam nashraḥ together form one sūra, and li-ilāf and alam tara kayfa together form one sūra. Whoever attributes to us that we say it [the Qurʾān] is more than this [the ʿUthmnānic codex] is a liar.” (Ibn Bābaywah, al-I tiqādāt, 84). On the possibility of some deletion of the Qurʾān in early Sunnī traditions see Hossein Modarressi, “Early Debates on the Integrity of the Qurʾān: A Brief Survey,” Studia Islamica 77, (1993): 5-39. For further information about falsification in early Shīʿī belief see Kohlberg and Amir-Moezzi, Revelation and falsification.}{\textsuperscript{665}}

In his commentary Rawḍ al-jinān, Abū al-Futūḥ follows al-Ṭūsī’s approach and uses al-Ṭūsī’s views without acknowledging explicitly that al-Ṭūsī is the first Imāmī exegete who applied this rational-based interpretation comprehensively. Since Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary draws directly from al-Tibyān, the study of al-Ṭūsī’s sources in his commentary helps us to investigate the origin of part of Rawḍ al-jinān.

\textbf{2.3.4.2 Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān: sources}

Rāmyār notes that al-Ṭūsī has quoted three hundred and sixty people, Sunnī as well as Shīʿās, in al-Tibyān and approximately sixty percent of al-Tibyān is quoted from only twenty individuals.\footnote{Rāmyār, “Shaykh Ṭūsī: The Life and Works of a Shīʿī Leader,” 103-114.}{\textsuperscript{666}} Although al-Ṭūsī had access to many Shīʿī and Sunnī sources during his lifetime, he used and mentioned only a few of them by title. Al-Ṭūsī’s sources in al-Tibyān can be categorized into three different groups: Early Shīʿī commentaries, Shīʿī exegetical-theological Sources during the Būyid period in Baghdad, and Sunnī commentaries.\footnote{For a preliminary study on the sources of al-Ṭūsī in al-Tibyān see Karīm niyā, “Shaykh-i Ṭūsī va manābiʿ-i tafsīrī-yi viy dar al-Tibyān,” 88-107.}{\textsuperscript{667}} In the following, a brief examination of al-Ṭūsī’s sources in al-Tibyān is presented.

\textbf{2.3.4.2.1 Early Shīʿī Sources}

\textbf{Early Shīʿī commentaries}
Al-Ṭūsī’s first group of sources in *al-Tibyān* is early Shīʿī commentaries in particular and Shīʿī exegetical traditions in general. A review of al-Ṭūsī’s works show that he knew his preceding Imāmī exegetical commentaries such as *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*, *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, and *Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī* and many of them were available in his library. However, his use of these commentaries is very restricted, and his selection criteria and careful citation of Imāmī traditions in *al-Tibyān* are somewhat cautious. Al-Ṭūsī named early and recent Sunni exegetes, from the companions and followers of the Prophet and also later exegetes, such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Farrāʾ, Abū Alī al-Jubbāʾī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī many times, and sometimes cites from ʿAlī b. ʿIsā al-Rummānī and Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Isfahānī with wonder and praise; however, he very rarely mentions early Shīʿī exegetes. It should be noted that one century later in his commentary *Majmaʿ al-bayān*, which was based on *al-Tibyān*, al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1154) mentions many early Shīʿī commentaries and uses their traditions. The names of the Shīʿī commentaries which were left behind from the 2nd/8th, 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries, such as the works of Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī, Ibn Juḥḥām (or Ḥujjām) (fl. 328/940), al-Ḥibarī, Furāt Kūfī, Qummī, al-ʿAyyāshī have also not been mentioned in *al-Tibyān*.668 However, with close reading in his commentaries there are indications that al-Ṭūsī took from these works. This is discussed below.

Except for the two commentaries of al-Juʿfī and Abū al-Jārūd, none of early Shīʿa commentaries was mentioned in *al-Tibyān*; however, their works were mentioned in many pre-Ṭūsī commentaries such as al-Ḥibarī, al-ʿAyyāshī, Furāt al-Kūfī and ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm Qummī, and post-Ṭūsī commentaries such as *Rawḍ al-jinān* and *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*. The only early Shīʿī commentary that al-Ṭūsī has clearly mentioned frequently is Abū al-Jārūd’s commentary.669 Exegetical opinions that have been cited from Abū al-Jārūd in *al-Tibyān* are restricted to cases, which do not support Shīʿī beliefs. In most cases, after mentioning some narrations from the companions and followers of the Prophet, al-Ṭūsī states that Abū al-Jārūd has narrated the same tradition from Abī Jaʿfar al-Bāqir670 and sometimes al-Ṭūsī narrates the whole tradition from Abī

668 On al-Ḥibarī see Ḥakīm bāshī, “Ḥibarī,” in *EWI*.


Jaʿfar al-Bāqir. Since many Sunni scholars were opposed to Abū al-Jārūd’s commentary, it is possible that al-Ṭūsī attempted to indicate that Abū al-Jārūd has narrated the same tradition that the Sunni exegetes have mentioned and to cite the common exegetical traditions between Shiʿas and Sunnis.

From amongst the pre-Ṭūsī commentaries, I only came across very few traditions from *Tafsīr Qummī* and *Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī* in al-Tibyān. Moreover, al-Ṭūsī never mentions al-ʿAyyāshī in his commentary, and only twice does he mention ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm Qummī. It is likely that in the rare traditions, which are common in *al-Tibyān* and *Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī*, al-Ṭūsī has used early collections of Imāmī traditions rather than *Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī*. al-Ṭūsī’s infrequent use of traditions from the two commentaries of *Tafsīr Qummī* and *Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī* does not at all comprise unusual Imāmī traditions or Interpretive statements, rather it is only restricted to ideas which are similar to the Sunni traditions or sayings of the Companions and Followers of the Prophet which are acceptable for both Schools. For example, in the interpretation of [Q 4:159] ‘There is not one of the People of the Scripture except that he will assuredly believe in him before his death’, al-Ṭūsī states that exegetes have different views regarding the references of the pronoun ‘his’ in ‘his death’ and the quality and the timing of belief in ʿĪsā. Henceforth, after the explanation of the second view, al-Ṭūsī mentions that “Ibn Ṭabārī, Abū Mālik, al-Ḥasan, Qatāda, Ibn Zayd all Sunni scholars hold the view that the timing of this verse is when the faith is of no benefit to them and al-Ṭabarī chose this interpretation and states: this verse is particularly referring to the people of that time.” Al-Ṭūsī then continues “this view is what ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm mentioned within our [religious] companion’s commentary.” In another case in the

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672 See Bahrāmiyān, “Abū al-Jārūd.”
interpretation of [Q 17:44] ‘…and there is not a thing but it glorifies Him [i.e., God, which is elided] by his [i.e., the thing’s] praise but you do not comprehend their glorification…”, al-Ṭūsī states “al-Hasan says that ‘there is not a living creature but which glorifies Him with His praise; however, ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm and other scholars believe that everything even the sound of the door glorifies His praise.” 676 None of these two interpretations are restricted to Imāmī exegetical traditions and in the second case ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm’s interpretation is very pleasing for Sufis as well. Apart from these two cases, the name of ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm Qummī has never been mentioned clearly in al-Tibyāṁ. It should be noted that in a few cases al-Ṭūsī does bring narrations from Tafsīr al-Qummī, without mentioning the author’s name. 677 Al-Ṭūsī’s use of Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī and citing its traditions in al-Tibyān is less than his use of the commentary of ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī. However, these few cases of use of Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī are not among those beliefs peculiar to Shiʿ as such as the divine characteristics of the Twelve Imāms. 678 In order to understand the cause of al-Ṭūsī’s careful use of Imāmī traditions in his commentary it should be mentioned that in Baghdad, between 436/1044 to 449/1057, the commentary of al-Tibyān could not take sides in any denominational ideology.

Shīʿī Exegetical-Theological Sources during the Būyid period in Baghdad

The second group of al-Ṭūsī’s sources in al-Tibyān is Shīʿī theological and exegetical works within the ‘Imāmī Baghdadi school of exegesis.’ al-Ṭūsī was one of the most important founders of this Imāmī rational school of thought in Baghdad during the 5th/11th century. He was the apprentice of al-Mufīd during his first five years in Baghdad from 408/1017 up to 413/1022; and thereafter he became one of the special students of al-Murtaḍā for twenty-three years. We do not have any independent commentary from al-Mufīd. However, he interpreted many of the verses of the Qurʿān within his books of theology and jurisprudence. The collection of these

676 al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 6:483.


678 For examples of al-Ṭūsī’s use of Tafsīr al-ʿAyyāshī see al-Tibyān under Q. 2:189 and 4:15.
Two other exegetical and literary works by al-Mufīd’s students, al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015) and al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044), are Ḥaqāʾiq iḥtaʾwīl fī mutashābih al-tanzīl by al-Raḍī and Ghurar al-fawāʿid and durar al-farāʿid (also known as al-Amālī) by al-Murtaḍā.

Al-Ṭūsī refers to al-Murtaḍā’s works more often than those by al-Mufīd and al-Raḍī. The names of these two last scholars have never been mentioned in al-Tibyān, even though some of their literary, theological and exegetical opinions are employed by al-Ṭūsī. On the contrary, al-Ṭūsī mentioned his teacher al-Murtaḍā, with much respect and mostly by his full name ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Murtaḍā al-Mūsawī and accepts his opinions. Another observation that shows the connection between al-Ṭūsī and his teacher al-Murtaḍā more clearly is the problem of the nature of separated letters (al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭaʿāt) at the beginning of 29 sūras of the Qurʾān. Al-Murtaḍā with complete rejection of different perspectives of the Islamic scholars concerning the meaning of these letters, described each letter as a name for the sūra it belongs to. Then al-Murtaḍā tries to answer all the possible criticism and objections to this opinion. Al-Ṭūsī accepts al-Murtaḍā’s view as the only plausible explanation for separated letters in his commentary and, without mentioning al-Murtaḍā’s name, employs his opinion in detail in al-Tibyān frequently. Although al-Ṭūsī has taken the details of this view regarding the separated letters from his teacher al-Murtaḍā, sometimes he attributes that opinion to early scholars such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Abū al-Qāṣīm al-Balkhī, or Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī. Interestingly, in other

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679 See Muḥammad ʿAlī Ayāzī, Taṣfīr al-Qurʾān al-majīd: al-mustakhraj min turāth al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (Qumm: Būstān-i Kitāb, 1382 /[2003]).

680 For example, look at the critical analysis of one of the literary opinions of al-Akhfash and al-Iskāfī in al-Tibyān, 3:59 and compare it with al-Raḍī’s discussion in Ḥaqāʾiq iḥtaʾwīl al-taʾwil, 288.

681 al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 1:3; 2:9, 398; 5:452; 9:149. In an interesting case, firstly he ascribes an opinion to his teacher al-Murtaḍā and later in another place he states that “an opinion came to mind and I attributed it to him [al-Murtaḍā] and he approved it.” (al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 9:149).

682 Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, Rasāʾil, 3:297-301.


places al-Ṭūsī ascribes different opinions about the separated letters to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Abū al-Qāsīm al-Balkhī.685

An obscure Shīʿī scholar whose ideas are employed almost sixty times in *al-Tibyān* is Abū al-Qāsim Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī al-Maghribī, known as Ibn Maghribī (d. 418/1027). Ibn Maghribī is the grandson of Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nuʿmānī, to whom a Qurʾānic commentary is attributed.686 Ibn Maghribī was born in Egypt and spent many years of his life in the company of Fatimids, Būyids and ʿAbbāsids, as a vizier and most of his fame comes from politics and literature.687 Shīʿī scholars in Baghdad had a strong relationship with him when Ibn Maghribī was the vizier of Būyids. As reported by Ibn Shahrāshūb, al-Murtaḍā has written his book *al-Muqniʿ fī al-ghayba* for Ibn Maghribī,688 who was likely a teacher of al-Murtaḍā.689 Although the most of the works attributed to al-Maghribī is in the field of literature, history and politics, two books named *al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* and *Khaṣāʾiṣ ʿilm al-Qurʾān* are ascribed to him.690 Al-Maghribī’s succeeding Imāmī exegetes such as al-Ṭūsī in *al-Tibyān*, al-Ṭabrisī in *Majmaʿ al-bayān*, Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī in *Rawḍ al-jinān* and Quṭb al-Rāwandī in *Fiqh al-Qurʾān* frequently mentioned al-Maghribī’s exegetical or literary opinions.691

2.3.4.2.2 Early Sunnī Sources

**Sunnī commentaries**

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685 al-Ṭūsī, *al-Tibyān*, 1:47; 8:441. The only person who may have had this opinion regarding separated letters of the Qurʾān before al-Murtaḍā is ʿAlī. ʿĪsā al-Rummānī. At the end of his commentary, al-Ṭūsī ascribes this view to al-Rummānī (al-Ṭūsī, *al-Tibyān*, 9:246).


In the first four centuries of Islam, Sunni commentaries were more extensive than Shīʿī commentaries, in quantity and size. Some of these commentaries such as Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān of al-Ṭabarī had great credibility throughout the Islamic world, and still have not lost their influence. The collection of Sunni sources during the first four Islamic centuries can be divided into three main groups: 1- Lexical and literary commentaries such as Mushkil al-Qurʾān, Majāz al-Qurʾān, and Maʿānī al-Qurʾān. 2- Tradition-based commentaries (al-tafsīr bi-al-maʾthūr) such as Jāmiʿ al-bayān and also exegetical traditions from interpreters of the 1st/7th century within Sunni canons such as Şihāḥ al-sītta. 3- Muʿtazītī theological commentaries such as the works of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, ‘Alī b. ʿĪsā al-Rummānī and Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-İsfahānī.

**Sunni Lexical and literary Commentaries**

In some of the early Sunni commentaries, attention has been paid to discussions about language, morphology, syntax, etymology, and sometimes eloquence. Through this, the commentary and literary compilation of some are available. Al-Ṭūsī’s use of them has changed the style of al-Tibyān in comparison to early tradition-based Imāmī commentaries. These books include: *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān* by al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), *Taʾwīl mushkil al-Qurʾān* by Ibn Qutayba (d. 210/825), *Majāz al-Qurʾān* by Abū ʿUbayda Muʿammar b. al-Muthannā (d. 210/825), *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān* by al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ (d. ca. 215/830), *Ḍiyāʾ al-qulūb fī maʿānī al-Qurʾān* by Mufaḍḍal b. Salama (d. 300/912), and *Maʿānī al-Qurʾān wa iʿrābuh* by Abū Ishāq al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923). Al-Ṭūsī’s did not use them to the same degree. He brings fewer narrations from certain people such as Ibn Qutayba and Mufaḍḍal b. Salama, but he refers to some others more frequently. Examples are al-Farrāʾ, al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ and Abū ʿUbayda; In *al-Tibyān* al-Zajjāj has been cited 975 times, al-Farrāʾ 720 times, Abū ʿUbayda 245 times and al-Akhfash 92 times. Most of these citations are without commentary; however, sometimes al-Ṭūsī scrutinizes some of these ideas making certain opinions weak or preferring some others. Al-Ṭūsī’s use of these lexical and literary Sunni commentaries is not limited to linguistic and grammatical explanations; he even narrates some exegetical points, variant readings, and grammatical justifications about each reading from some of these works. His liberal references to linguistic or

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692 For example, see al-Ṭūsī, *al-Tibyān*, 1:130 in the refutation of Abu Abū ʿUbayda’s opinion.
literary narrations of Sunni exegetes of the 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th centuries, within Imāmī works in the 5th/11th century of the Baghdadi school of thought, is different in comparison to the of pre-Ṭūsī Imāmī commentaries. Although, the emergence of this approach within al-Tībyān is prevalent and easily witnessed, it must be considered that a few decades before al-Ṭūsī in Baghdad, Imāmī scholars such as Sharīf al-Raḍī and his brother al-Murtaḍā also used this method in their works such as Ḥaqāʾiq al-taʿwīl fī mutashābih al-tanzīl by al-Raḍī and al-Amālī by al-Murtaḍā. After al-Ṭūsī, this method of citing early Sunni literary commentaries reached its peak in Majmaʿ al-bayān by al-Ṭabrisī and Rawḍ al-jīnān by Abū al-Futūḥ and it was so prevalent that no Imāmī scholar, rationalist or traditionalist, disagreed with it.

Sunni tradition-based commentaries (al-tafsīr bi-al-maʾthūr)

Al-Ṭūsī is heavily influenced by al-Ṭabarī’s commentary Jāmiʿ al-bayān. Although this voluminous commentary has not collected all exegetical traditions available in its time, it was counted as the most complete collection of exegetical traditions attributed to the Prophet, his companions (aṣḥāb) and the followers (tābiʿīn) at his time. In his citation of exegetical traditions, occasions of revelation, historical accounts, and even the exploration of literary points, al-Ṭūsī used Jāmiʿ al-bayān. Without repeating all the chain of narrations in Jāmiʿ al-bayān to the companions and followers of the Prophet, al-Ṭūsī organizes the exegetical traditions and opinions of companions and followers of the Prophet and mentions them concisely. Through this method, most exegetical traditions are available in al-Tībyān, including those of Mujāhid b. Jabr (Meccan, d. 103/721), Qatāda b. Diʾāma (Basran, d. 117/735), ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbbās (Companion d. Taʾīf, 68/687–8), al-Suddī (Kūfān, d. 127/744), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (Basran, d. 110/728), ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Zayd b. Aslam (Medinese, d. 182/798), al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim (Kūfān, d. 106/724), Saʿīd b. Jubayr (Kūfān, d. 95/714), ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿūd (Companion, d. 32/652 or 33/653), and ʿIkrima b. ʿAbdallāh (Medinese, d. 107/725) and others cited by al-Ṭabarī.693 Al-Ṭūsī mentions al-Ṭabarī’s name over 650 times in his commentary and frequently uses al-Ṭabarī’s personal opinions and preferences. However, al-Ṭūsī criticizes al-Ṭabarī’s opinions in a

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693 These are al-Ṭabarī’s leading authorities in descending order of frequency of citation (See Melchert, “Locating Hell,” 118. His data is based on an unpublished paper by Ismail Lala).
number of cases.⁶⁹⁴ Al-Ṭabarī has not cited the narrations of some early exegetes with Shi‘ī tendencies such as Muḥammad b. Sā‘īb al-Kalbī (d. 146/736), Muqāṭal b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767) and Muḥammad b. ‘Umar al-Wāqidi in his commentary. But, al-Ṭūsī cites all three scholars in al-Tibyān.⁶⁹⁵ Except for al-Wāqidi, al-Ṭūsī’s source of citation for the two other scholars works is not known explicitly. Apart from the possibility of direct referral to their works which does not seem very unusual, al-Ṭūsī perhaps used al-Kashf by al-Tha‘labī to provide such exegetical traditions which al-Ṭabarī ignored.

Another Sunni commentary which al-Ṭūsī used in composing al-Tibyān is Aḥkām al-Qurʾān, a jurisprudent commentary by Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Rāzī known as al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 370/980). Al-Ṭūsī cites Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s commentary three times and in none of these three cases al-Ṭūsī narrates or analyzes a jurisprudential opinion from Aḥkām al-Qurʾān.⁶⁹⁶ In two cases al-Ṭūsī narrates the occasions of revelation of two verses of the Qurʾān that agree with the Shi‘ī theological viewpoint about Ahl al-Bayt and in the third case al-Ṭūsī narrates a grammatical point and then refutes it. It should be noted that in one of his citations, al-Ṭūsī cites Aḥkām al-Qurʾān through what Imāmī scholar Ibn Maghribī has narrated from that book indicating the importance of Ibn Maghribī in Imāmī exegetical legacy.

**Muʿtazilites theological commentaries**

Theological commentaries of the Muʿtazilites, and general Muʿtazilī theological works, are amongst the most important sources of al-Ṭūsī in al-Tibyān. Al-Ṭūsī’s extensive use of Muʿtazilī theological works is so frequent that some later Imāmī exegetes such as al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī consider al-Tibyān a theological commentary.⁶⁹⁷ Two Muʿtazilī commentaries by Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Bahr al-Isfahānī (d. 322/934) and ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), whose conciseness was clearly appreciated by al-Ṭūsī in the introduction of al-Tibyān, are no longer

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available. Moreover, al-Ṭūsī’s use of the works of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī (d. 303/915), Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/931), Ibn al-Ikhshīd (d. 326/937) and in a few cases Abū Bakr al-Naqqāsh (d. 315/927) are significant. Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-Hamadānī (d. 415/1025) is the only important Muʿtazili whom al-Ṭūsī never mentions; however, his theological and exegetical works such as Mutashābih al-Qurʾān, al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd, and Tanzīh al-Qurʾān ʿan al-maṭāʿin which are available today indicate that al-Ṭūsī cited or borrow from them in his commentary.

Two commentaries of al-Jubbāʾī and al-Balkhī, which are no longer extant, have been frequently used in al-Tibyān. Sharif al-Raḍī, Sharif al-Murtaḍā and Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār in their works have stated several times that a certain opinion has been noted in the commentary of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī, or the commentary of al-Balkhī. However, we rarely come across such a statement in al-Tibyān and al-Ṭūsī does not refer to al-Jubbāʾī or al-Balkhī’s commentary, even though the name of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī has been cited more than 770 times and the name of Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī has been mentioned more than 400 times in al-Tibyān.

Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī had a voluminous commentary that was constantly used by exegetes who came after him. Al-Jubbāʾī would dictate his commentary to his students, and the final text came

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698 The original 14-volume commentary of Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Bahr al-Ḥṣafāḥānī is no longer extant. Recently, a collection of quotations from the original work that are found in later commentaries, mainly in the Majmaʿ al-bayān li-ʿulūm al-Qurʾān of Ṭabarsī, the Mafāṭīḥ al-ghayb of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, the Rawḍ al-jīnān of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, and al-Tahdīḥ of Ḥākim al-Jushamī has been published by Muḥammad Sarmadī. See Muḥammad b. Bahr Iṣfahānī, Muḥammad Hādī Maʿrifat, and Muḥammad Sarmadī, Jāmiʿ al-taʾwīl li-mubkam al-tanzīl: kuhantarīn tafsīr-i ʿīzālī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ʿIlmī va Farhangī, 2009).

699 Kulinich believes that Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī, Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī and Ibn al-Ikhshīd were part of a distinct exegetical tradition that allowed for certain differences of opinion and for al-Rummānī their authority extended beyond their views on the theological implications of the Qurʾānic verses (Kulinich, “Beyond theology”). She has shown that al-Rummānī was, perhaps, the best example of an early medieval scholar who operated in three disciplines of linguistics, theology, and exegesis (Kulinich, “Representing ‘a Blameworthy Tafsīr’”).


out to one hundred parts (ajzāʾ sing. juzʿ). 702 Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār in his Mutashābih al-Qurʾān, 703 Sharīf al-Raḍī in Haqaqīq al-taʿwil704 and Sharīf al-Murtaḍā in his Amālī705 all use al-Jubbāʾī’s commentary frequently and mostly approve of his opinions. Al-Ṭūsī used al-Jubbāʾī’s commentary more than his teachers. Sometimes he recounts al-Jubbāʾī’s exegetical opinions besides other opinions, sometimes he prefers al-Jubbāʾī’s views to others706 and sometimes he engages in rejection of al-Jubbāʾī’s exegetical opinions. 707 None of al-Jubbāʾī’s exegetical opinions that al-Ṭūsī cites or even accepts as better than other exegetical opinions, is related to Imāmī main teachings or its particular theological beliefs. In such cases, after analysis and exploration of al-Jubbāʾī’s opinions, al-Ṭūsī rejects them. 708

The commentary of Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī is another source for al-Tibyān, which is mentioned by al-Ṭūsī in his introduction. As Ibn Ṭāwūs states, this commentary was called Jāmiʿ ilm al-Qurʾān709 in twelve volumes. 710 Al-Ṭūsī, who mentions that this commentary is full of jurisprudential opinions,711 mostly analyzed al-Balkhī’s literary and jurisprudential opinions,


703 For example, see al-Hamadānī, Mutashābih al-Qurʾān, 1:170, 172, 190.

704 For example, see al-Shāfīʿī, Ḥaqāqīq al-taʿwil, 8, 52, 67, 88, 92, 127, 135, 202, 333.

705 For example, see al-Shāfīʿī, Ḥaqāqīq al-Murtaḍā, al-Amāli, 2:55, 96, 127; 3:3, 115; 4:35, 73.


709 Ibn Ṭāwūs, Saʾd al-suʿūd, 192; See also ʿAbbās Zaryāb, “Abū al-Qāsim Balkhī.”


especially those cases contrary to the Imāmī beliefs; however, he mostly narrates al-Balkhī’s theological opinions besides other Muʿtazilī opinions and sometimes refutes them.

Two Muʿtazilī commentaries by Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Isfahānī and ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā al-Rummānī are other exegetical sources in *al-Tibyān*. As I mentioned earlier, in his introduction to *al-Tibyān*, al-Ṭūsī favoured these two and describes them as excellent commentaries. Al-Ṭūsī’s use of Abū Muslim’s commentary is less than his use of al-Rummānī’s. Abū Muslim’s name has been mentioned fewer than 40 times, and al-Rummānī’s name has been cited more than 340 times in *al-Tibyān*. The reason for this difference is that al-Rummānī is more significant than Abū Muslim within the Muʿtazilī School. Moreover, al-Rummānī was an erudite theologian and literalist who had a close association with the Imāmī scholars of Baghdad. However, al-Mufīd wrote a book by the name of *al-Naqḍ ʿalā ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā al-Rummānī [fi al-imāma]* in refutation of al-Rummānī. Sunnis biographers such as al-Dhahabī and Ibn Ḥajar state that al-Rummānī accepted ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib to be the best companion of the Prophet and describe al-Rummānī as a Rāfiḍī Muʿtazilī.

Al-Rummānī was one of the students of Ibn Ikhsīd. Ikhsīdī Muʿtazilīs were opposed to Bahshamiyya Muʿtazilīs (who were devotees of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāʾī), and also showed more loyalty to the theological tradition of Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī. During the Būyid dynasty in Baghdad, Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār was a supporter of Ikhsīdī Muʿtazilī School (the Başrān School) and al-Rummānī was a supporter of Ikhsīdī Muʿtazilī School (the old Baghdad school). Al-Rummānī even wrote a book criticizing Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāʾī. Imāmī theologians such as al-Mufīd were intellectually inclined toward the Baghdadī Muʿtazilīs such as Ibn Ikhsīd and al-

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Rummānī; and showed great opposition towards the Başran Muʿtazī School such as Abū Hāšim al-Jubbāʾī. 

Because of this tendency of al-Mufīd towards Baghdadi Ikhshīdī School, it is not surprising that al-Ṭūsī borrows most of his exegetical, literary, and theological opinions from Abū ʿAlī al-Jubbāʾī and al-Rummānī and accepts most of their opinions. However, he rarely quotes from Abū Hāšim al-Jubbāʾī and his patron Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār. Because al-Rummānī was a distinguished grammarian as well as theologian and exegete, most of al-Ṭūsī’s citations from his works are related to morphology, syntax, etymology, and grammatical justifications for variant readings of the Qurʾān. Abū Muslim Muḥammad b. Baḥr al-Isfahānī’s involvement in political affairs was greater than his scientific works. Some of his opinions were known by Islamic scholars to be unusual, to the extent that Sharīf al-Raḍī expresses his astonishment of the strangeness and weakness of some of his opinions, and thus rejects them.

Al-Murtaḍā sometimes applauds Abū Muslim’s opinions, and at times finds them to be strange. Nevertheless, it is probable that Abū Muslim’s literary proficiency and tendency toward Muʿtazī School of thought were the greatest reason for attention paid to him by Baghdadi Imāmī commentaries such as al-Raḍī, al-Murtaḍā, and al-Ṭūsī.

Al-Tibyān is the result of the exploratory, critical and comprehensive study of al-Ṭūsī and the legacy of the rational Imāmī movement in Baghdad. The elements of time and place in the composition of this commentary are important. Imāmī religious scholarship at the end of the 4th/10th and beginning of the 5th/11th century in Baghdad (the fourth phase), in addition to the needs, difficulties and principal ideological questions they encountered, made al-Maghribī and al-Ṭūsī’s commentaries distinctly different from previous Imami commentaries (the first three phases). The first three phases were exclusively the products of Imami thought and al-Maghribī

717 Madelung, Religious Schools, 52.

718 For a while he was busy in the ʿAlawī organization in Ṭabarīstan, working as a teacher. Later during the reign ofAbbasid Caliph, al-Muqtadir bi-ālam, he became the governor of Isfahān and Fārs; and it seems that during the year 309/922 for a while he was the governor of Qumm. See Ḥabībī Maẓāhirī, “Abū Muslim Isfahānī.”

719 al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Ḥaqāʾiq al-taʾwīl, 244-245.

720 al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, Amāli, 2:16.

721 al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, Amāli, 1:52.
and al-Ṭūsī were a departure from that exclusively Imami School. *Al-Tiblyān* is a concise synthesis of the most important literary, jurisprudential, theological Shīʿī and Sunni commentaries within the genre of Qurʾānic exegesis to the era of al-Ṭūsī. By writing *al-Tiblyān*, al-Ṭūsī completed the paradigm shift from traditionalism to theological rationalism in Imami history of writing Qurʾānic commentary which began by al-Maghribī. His style, approach, structure and content, which were influenced by the Sunni commentaries, became dominant for about five centuries because of the authority of al-Ṭūsī. However, less than one century later two major Imāmī commentaries, both of which were influenced by *al-Tiblyān* emerged (the fifth phase). Al-Ṭabrisī restructured *al-Tiblyān* in his work *Majmaʿ al-bayān* which prevailed with the Imāmī Shīʿīs who were able to read Arabic, and independently Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī in *Rawḍ al-jinān* provided new content in Persian which prevailed among Imāmī Shīʿīs whose language was Persian.

In summary, in the previous chapter the first phase of Shīʿī exegesis was investigated. In this chapter, first I demonstrated that during the Minor Occultation the exegetical traditions scattered in ḥadīth works were connected with early exegetical notebooks to create larger Imami commentaries. This phase laid the foundation of Imami doctrine and consolidated it. After that in the third phase the hermeneutics of Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq as the most prominent Imami scholar in the transition phase was studied. The fourth phase spearheaded by al-Mufīd witnessed a turning point from a tradition-based esoteric approach to a lexico-theological rationalistic approach within Twelver Shīʿī commentary. The emergence of rational commentary in the fourth phase declined due to the changing religious and political pressures of the Seljuqs (434-552/1042-1157). In the next four chapters the fifth phase focusing on studying Abū al-Futūḥ’s life and examining his commentary *Rawḍ al-jinān* in its sociopolitical context will be studied. In the fifth phase Imami scholars’ rational theological exegesis did not develop for at least a century, in fact, to some extent they returned towards the early tradition-based commentaries especially in the new Imāmī theological-exegetical schools of Rayy and Khurāsān.
Chapter 3
A Brief Religio-political History of Rayy and its Diversity of Faith Communities in the time of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī was born, lived, and died during the Great Seljuq Period (434-552/1042-1157) in Rayy. Seljuq Turks invaded and ruled the Middle East and Central Asia in the 11th and 12th centuries. They were recent converts to Sunnī Islam, who exerted socio-political pressure on Shīʿas of Rayy. The pressure of Seljuqs caused Abū al-Futūḥ to become a rather silent, moderate scholar like most of Imāmī scholars of Rayy in this time. However, this scholar wrote one of the most popular commentaries on the Qurʾān for Persian speaking Muslims in the last 900 years. For a better understanding of Abū al-Futūḥ and his commentary, we need to study the religio-political history of Rayy during the Great Seljuq Period. Modern scholars have realized the importance of the Great Seljuq Empire which witnessed profound demographic, religious, political, and social changes in Islamic world. However, still there is not any book, article or dissertation on the religious, social and political conditions of medieval Rayy during this period. Therefore, I will highlight what is essential for our purpose in this chapter. On the next pages, first the pre-Seljuq history of Rayy is reviewd briefly. Afterwards, I will review what happened in Rayy during the Great Seljuq period. Finally, I try to show the role of Ṭālibid Naqībs of Rayy who prepared the grounds for the emergence of the most voluminous Shīʿī exegesis in Persian Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān by Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī.

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722 Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*, 246-250. This is a Medievale example of the truth that recent converts to Islam are more likely to feed into extremist ideology rather than those initially brought up as Muslims!

723 Recent studies of British scholars such as Bosworth, Peacock, Herzig and Mecit show their interest in studying the beginnings of Turkish settlement in Turkey and Iran.

724 Recently in 2015, Rante and Afrourd published a monograoph on Rayy from archaeological and historiographical perspective. I wrote this chapter 5 years before his published his book.
3 A Brief History of Rayy

3.1 Pre-Būyid Period

The city of Rayy, which is now a poor district to the south of the Greater Tehran metropolitan area, was one of the metropolises of the Muslim world from the early 1st/7th century to the Mongol invasion in the year 617/1220. Rayy is believed to lie on the site of an ancient city called Ragâ which is mentioned in the Zendavesta as a sacred land created by Ahūrā Mazdā; it also appears as a province of Media in the Old Persian Behistūn inscription. This city during the Great Seljuq period can now only be revisited through the help of scholarship. History, literature and numismatics must be utilized to reconstruct the history of that lost city.

The Arabo-Islamic period of Rayy began when it fell under the rule of the Arab governors after their conquest of this city circa 30/651. The Arab conquerors settled in this city and its inhabitants commenced adopting Arab customs and language as a complex social phenomenon. The process of change in the religion and language of the people of Rayy must have been gradual. In terms of the language, from later developments we know that Persian must have survived as the spoken language of the majority of people of Rayy while Arabic was accepted as the lingua franca during the period of Umayyads (41-132/661-750).

Arabisation and Islamisation progressed a long way under the Umayyads. In terms of religion, the majority of the Rayy’s inhabitants became Nāṣibīs or opponents of the people of the House of the Prophet. The religious upheaval in Rayy which began with Naṣb (the enmity towards

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726 Westergaard, Zendavesta, 345; Raḍī, Vindīdād, 1:196, 235; Farhang-i nāmhā-yi Avistā, 2:815.

727 King and Thompson, The Sculptures and Inscription, 35, 42, 122, 127, 181, 185.

728 Pourshariati, Decline and Fall of the Sasanian Empire, 253, 469; the year of the conquest of Rayy is variously narrated. See Kennedy, The Great Arab Conquests, 176-7; Bosworth, Historic Cities of the Islamic World, 447. For further detail, see al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh al-ʾUmam wa al-Mulūk, 150-151; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 3:22, 24; ʿUsd al-Ghābah, 4:100; Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya, 7:120-122.


730 al-Iskāfī, al-Mī yār wa al-muwāzanah, 32.
ʿAlī and his family) in the second quarter of the 1st/7th century came to the opposite end of the spectrum Rafḍ (the enmity towards the first three caliphs and the rejection of their legitimacy in favour of the caliphate of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib) in the 8th/14th century. Interestingly enough, this gradual change in religious beliefs of the residents of Rayy reached maturity and great doctrinal diversity in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries.

The passing of power from the Umayyads to the ʿAbbāsids took place at Rayy in 131/748. Soon afterwards in 141/758, al-Manṣūr (d.158/775) sent his eldest son Muḥammad, now given the royal title al-Mahdī, to Rayy to act as his viceroy in Khurāsān and the east. Rayy was rebuilt and fortified by al-Mahdī who named the new city al-Muḥammadiyya; however, the old name continued to be used. Al-Mahdī started to construct a masjid jāmiʿ (congregational mosque) in Rayy which was completed in 158/775. This mosque, which was in the hands of Ḥanafīs until the Great Seljuq period, became a symbol for the tensions between Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs which will be referred to later. He also commenced to construct the judiciary simultaneously. He appointed Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb Anṣārī, the prominent student of Abū Ḥanīfa, as his judge in Baghdad. As a result, the judiciary of the Muslim world in general and Rayy in particular fell into the hand of Ḥanafīs in the second half of the 2nd/8th century. At this time, most of the Rayy’s population chose Ḥanafī Islam as their madhhab (legal school) and a strong community of Ḥanafīs appeared in Rayy. This early ʿAbbāsid period has been described by some Arabic geographers such as Ibn al-Faqīh and al-Muqaddasī (or al-Maqdisī) as a time of economic prosperity and social security in Rayy. These two Arabic geographers of the late 3rd/9th and the mid 4th/10th centuries are full of praise for Rayy in the second half of the 2nd/8th century.

732 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 5: 506. See also Kennedy, The Court of the Caliphs, 21, 41.
733 Ibn al-Faqīh, Kitāb al-buldān, 537.
735 Jalālī, “Ḥanafiyya.”
736 Madelung, Religious trends, 29.
and report that renowned Arabic philologist ʾAṣmaʾī (d.ca 216/831) called Rayy the bride of cities (ʿArūs al-bilād).\footnote{Ibn al-Faqīh, Kitāb al-buldān, 540; al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsān al-taqāsīm, 385; al-Ḥamawi, Muʿjam al-buldān, 3:118.}

It was during the end of the 2nd/8th century that presumably Shīʿa Islam appeared in Rayy; however, this denomination did not become prevalent in Rayy until the second half of the 3rd/9th century.\footnote{Jaʿfariyan, Tārīkh-i gustarish-i tashayyuʿ dar Rayy, 15-22.} The presence of Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Ḥasanī (d. 252/868), a companion of the ninth Imām Muḥammad al-Jawād and tenth Imām ʿAlī al-Hādī, who came to Rayy about the second quarter of the 3rd/9th century and taught and died there, increased the presence of Imāmīs in this city.\footnote{On him see Madelung, “Abd-al-Azim al-Hasani.”}

Shāfiʿī was introduced in Rayy from the middle of the 3rd/9th century too.\footnote{Madelung, Religious trends, 27.} This denominational diversity when accompanied by intolariance caused the first civil war between the Shīʿas and the Sunnīs in Rayy in 250/865. The contending parties were the Zaydī ʿAlīds of Ṭabaristān on one side, and the Ṭāhirids and later the caliph’s Turkish generals on the other side.\footnote{Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 7:133. Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn al-Ḥasan revolted at Rayy in favour of Zayd, prince of Ṭabaristān, and his opponents were the Khurāsānīs. He was captured and turned over to Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir ibn ʿAbdullāh, who was the governor of Rayy; Bosworth, Historic Cities, 447.} This event confirms the strong presence of Shīʿa Islam vis-a-vis Sunnī Islam in the mid 3rd/late 9th century.\footnote{For more detailed information regarding the early Shāfiʿī in Rayy see Halm, Die Ausbreitung, 133-137.}

When al-Muqaddasī published an account of his travels including his visit to Rayy, writing about 378/989, he considers this city one of the most beautiful cities of the Islamic world.\footnote{al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-taqāsīm, 391. Al-Muqaddasī compares Rayy and Nīshāpūr for one of his friends and states: “Nīshāpūr is greater and its inhabitants are more prosperous. However, Rayy is more splendid with more excursion spots and plentiful water.” He then continues by pointing out Rayy’s negative aspects and says “but their [the people of Rayy’s] water causes diarrhea, their melon kills and their scholars mislead. Most of their food animals are cows [not sheep].”}

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\item \footnote{Ibn al-Faqīh, Kitāb al-buldān, 540; al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsān al-taqāsīm, 385; al-Ḥamawi, Muʿjam al-buldān, 3:118.}\footnote{Jaʿfariyan, Tārīkh-i gustarish-i tashayyuʿ dar Rayy, 15-22.}\footnote{On him see Madelung, “Abd-al-Azim al-Hasani.”}\footnote{Madelung, Religious trends, 27.}\footnote{Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 7:133. Muḥammad ibn Jaʿfar ibn al-Ḥasan revolted at Rayy in favour of Zayd, prince of Ṭabaristān, and his opponents were the Khurāsānīs. He was captured and turned over to Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir ibn ʿAbdullāh, who was the governor of Rayy; Bosworth, Historic Cities, 447.}\footnote{For more detailed information regarding the early Shāfiʿī in Rayy see Halm, Die Ausbreitung, 133-137.}\footnote{al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-taqāsīm, 391. Al-Muqaddasī compares Rayy and Nīshāpūr for one of his friends and states: “Nīshāpūr is greater and its inhabitants are more prosperous. However, Rayy is more splendid with more excursion spots and plentiful water.” He then continues by pointing out Rayy’s negative aspects and says “but their [the people of Rayy’s] water causes diarrhea, their melon kills and their scholars mislead. Most of their food animals are cows [not sheep].”}
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Arab geographer of the second half of the 4th/10th century, Ibn Ḥawqal, describes Rayy as the most flourishing city in the eastern part of Islamic world extending from Iraq to Khurasan apart from Baghdad. However, al-Muqaddasī discusses the religious fanatics among denominations in Rayy and states: “[They have] less firewood, more strife, withered flesh and harsh hearts. [They are] disagreeable people. The office of imām in their principal mosque rotates between the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfiʿīs.” The religious tensions among the Sunnī denominations in Rayy increased in the late 4th/10th century and continued until the 7th/13th century.

Al-Muqaddasī mentions the presence of Ḥanafīs, Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanbalīs in Rayy. According to him Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence was the predominant Sunnī madhhab in Rayy and Ḥanafīs were Najjāriyya in doctrine. However, the Ḥanafīs in the environs (rasātīq) of Rayy were Zaʿfirāniyya, who differed from the Najjāriyya only in rejecting the doctrine of the creation of the Qurʿān. Regarding Ḥanbalīs, al-Muqaddasī states that “there are also many Ḥanbalīs living in Rayy who are clamorous people.” However, these Ḥanbalīs did not play a major role in the religious conflicts in Rayy. It seems that the Ḥanbalī denomination did not propagate in Iran in general and in Rayy in particular because its followers were very hostile to Shīʿas and

744 Miquel, “Ibn Ḥawkal.”

745 Ibn Ḥawqal, Kitāb šarḥ al-ʻard, 309, 316. Ibn Ḥawqal also states that Nīshāpūr is greater than Rayy; however, Rayy is the most flourishing city in terms of business.

746 al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-taqāsīm, 391. For more information regarding Medieval Nishapur see: Saleh, The Formation, 25-28; Also see Bulliet, The Patricians of Nishapur.

747 The Najjāriyya was the theological school of al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Najjār (fl.200/815) and a specifically Ḥanafī school of kalām. They were Murjiʿite in their definition of faith, strictly predestinarian, but close to the Muʿtazila in their anti-anthropomorphist doctrine concerning the attributes of God. In view of this combination of basic theological views, they were often counted among the Jahmiyya, though there is no evidence that they looked to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān as one of their teachers. For further information on Najjāriyya see J. van Ess, “Ḍirār b. ʿAmr und die ‘Cahmiya’.” The Zaʿfirāniyya was a subgroup of the Najjāriyya. See al-Shahristānī, al-Mīlāl wa al-nīhal, 37.

748 For the early history of Ḥanafī school in Rayy to the end of the 3rd/9th century look at Tsafrir, The History of an Islamic School of Law, 73-75.

Muʿtazilīs. For this reason, even though the Ḥanbalīs had some followers in Rayy in the 4th/10th century, in the 5th/11th century there was no trace of Ḥanbalī Sunnī Islam in Rayy.

No sources mention the presence of followers of the Mālikī denomination in Rayy, and that is because they simply did not exist. In his biographical work, Ibn al-Anbārī (d.577/1181) has written a story regarding the deprivation of Mālikīs in Rayy in the second half of the 4th/10th century. He states that “Ibn Fāris (d.395/1005) resided in Rayy in the final years of his life … Despite the fact that he was an accomplished Shāfiʿī jurist he converted to the Mālikī denomination. When he was asked about the reason behind changing his denomination, he replied: ‘My motive behind this change was that I was filled with admiration for this popular imām and I thought that a city like Rayy should not be deprived of his denomination. Hence, I constructed the shrine attributed to him to manifest the greatness of imām Mālik in this city because Rayy is pre- eminent among other cities in its many denominations which dispute with one another.’” This account indicates the multisectarianism of Rayy and general religious tolerance in this time which coincided with a period of economic prosperity.

3.2 Būyid Period

Aside from the Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanafīs there were no other Sunnī denominations remaining in Rayy during the 3rd/9th century. In the first half of the 4th/10th century, the Būyids (or Buwayhids, r. 320–454/932–1062) were influential in the promotion of Shiʿī Islam in Rayy. The reason for the pro-Shiʿa policies of the Būyids and their viziers was that they were Daylamī Shiʿa, possibly of Zaydi persuasion. Not only did Shiʿī Islam spread amongst the people of Rayy, but also Rayy after Qumm probably housed the most substantial Imāmī community in Iran during the Buyid

750 Madelung, Religious trends, 27.


752 Rayy was a trading centre for the Buyids at the end of 4th/10th and the beginning of 5th/11th centuries. When the Ghaznavids conquered it in 420/1029, their yield in booty was said to amount of 1,000,000 dinārs in coingage and 500,000 dinārs of jewels. Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 9:371. Part of this wealth came from trade in the production of silk, which was taxed by the government. Thompson, “Abrīšam.”

Rayy became the central court of the Būyids in the year 335/946 and Imāmī scholars were endorsed in this city. The local Buyid ruler of Rayy Rukn al-Dawla (d. 366/947) invited Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Bābawayh (d. 381/991), one of the most eminent Twelver Shīʿa theologians of Qumm, to Rayy as a guest of honour and the latter went to Rayy circa 350/962. Consequently, this city became a major place for blossoming of Shīʿa theology and jurisprudence. This significant change in the Imāmī community of Rayy in particular was due to the Shīʿī tendencies of Būyid rulers, along with Rayy’s geographic proximity to Qumm. Ibn Bābawayh formulated the Imāmī beliefs influenced by the Muʿtazilī arguments to defend it against other denomination’s accusations.

At the end of the 4th/10th century some Imami scholars of the eastern part of Iran such as Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī (the second grandfather of Abū al-Futūḥ) and Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) migrated to western part parts such as Rayy or Baghdad. These scholars began their scholarly career in their homeland Khurāsān and specifically in multicultural Nīshāpūr. Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī was the first person from Abū al-Futūḥ’s family who left Nīshāpūr to Study in Baghdad. They left Nīshāpūr because the academic reputation of Baghdad and its diversity had reached other major cities such as Nīshāpūr. Moreover, unlike Rayy and Baghdad, Nīshāpūr was not a safe place to live and study in this period. Nīshāpūr which was completely beyond Samanid influence in this period became a centre for conflicts between the Buyids, Samanids and local authorities from 373/982. This city came under Maḥmud of Ghazna’s

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754 Madelung, Religious trends, 84.
755 Kraemer, Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam, 49.
756 Faqīḥī, Tārīkh-i āl Būyah, 40.
757 Qumm became the main center of the Imāmī learning in the 3rd/9th century. Al-Muqaddasī, writing in the 4th/10th century, states that people of Qumm are ghālī Shiʿites. al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-taqāsīm, 395.
758 He wrote his book al-Tawḥīd to defend the Imāmīs against false accusations of anthropomorphism and determinism. Ibn Bābawayh, al-Tawḥīd, 17.
759 On al-Ṭūsī’s biography and works see Ansari and Schmidtke, “Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī,” 483-491.
760 Spuler, Iran in the early Islamic period, 98.
administration, who had been left in Nīshāpūr by his father from 382/992. In 390/1001 the Samanid prince Abū Ibrāhīm Ismāʿīl after a clash with Maḥmūd of Ghazna’s brother Naṣr, occupied Nīshāpūr. However, this success did not last and he was defeated and killed by Maḥmūd in 395/1005. Faced with this predicament, the second grandfather of Abū al-Futūḥ went to Baghdad (before 406/1016), where he became a student of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1016), al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) and later, al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067). I will discuss him in the third chapter.

In the Buyid age, Rayy also became a center of Muʿtazilī School. This was due in particular to the efforts of Muʿtazilī scholars who had great ties to Būyids such as Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād. Ṣāḥib was the Buyid vizier who appointed the leading Muʿtazilī scholar of the time, ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Hamadhānī (d.415/1024-1025), as qāḍī al-quḍāt (chief judge) in Rayy in 366/976. Although Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār personally was a Shāfiʿī, his impact as a teacher was evidently strongest among the Ḥanafīs and the Shiʿas, Imāmī and Zaydīs, who also enjoyed the favour of Ibn ʿAbbād. Ibn ʿAbbād and ʿAbd al-Jabbār were strongly committed to Muʿtazilī theology and cooperated closely with each other to support the largest circle of Muʿtazilī scholars at the time until the death of Ibn ʿAbbād two decades later in 385/995. According to al-Muqaddasṣī, during these twenty years, Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād sent Muʿtazilī duʿāt (missionaries) to the Ḥanafī communities in the region. Ibn ʿAbbād who tried to revivie Muʿtazilī school in Rayy and its environs repressed Ibn Bābawayhs teaching of tradition in this city at the last quarter of 4th/10th century.

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761 Spuler, *Iran in the early Islamic period*, 103.
762 Spuler, *Iran in the early Islamic period*, 105.
763 Muntajab al-Dīn, *al-Fihrīst*, 32 no. 1. Since Muntajab al-Dīn regarded him as a student of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1016), it can be concluded that the presence of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn in Baghdad was before 406/1016.
767 al-Tawḥīdī, *Akhlāq al-wazīrayn*, 167. Before this incident, Ibn Bābawayh apparently had a good relationship with Ṣāḥib ibn ʿAbbād and wrote some of his books for latter’s library in Rayy. Ibn Bābawayh begins his book
After the Būyid period Rayy was in Ghaznavid hands for 12 years. In 420/1029 the Būyid Majd al-Dawla (387-420/997-1029) unwisely recruited the help of sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna against the Daylamīs. Maḥmūd, who was a supporter of the ʿAbbāsid caliphate, grasped this opportunity and tried to limit the Būyid dynasty. He removed Majd al-Dawla from power and annexed his lands, which included Rayy and much of Jībāl. The Ghaznavid age in Rayy was a time of growing Sunnī solidarity in the face of Shīʿas, Imāmīs and Ismāʿīlīs. As a result, the sectarian balance of Rayy was upset in favour of Sunnī Islam. When Maḥmūd of Ghazna attacked Rayy, he got a great reception from the Sunnī inhabitants of this city, mostly the Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs. Maḥmūd, who was a Sunnī, used military force to suppress Shīʿī Islam and Muʿtazilī school in Rayy. Since Rayy was the center of the daʿwa for Ismāʿīlīs in north-west Iran, Maḥmūd ordered the stoning of anybody suspected of holding Ismāʿīlī beliefs, in particular the Bāṭinīs and Qarmaṭīs. His army did not distinguish between Shīʿī sects and according to Ibn al-Jawzī, Rayy “was emptied of the Bāṭinī duʿāt along with eminent Muʿtazilīs and Rawāfiḍ.” The author of the BFR mentions Maḥmūd’s opposition towards the Imāmīs and his army’s atrocities towards them; he states that “they painted the faces of Imāmī scholars in black, broke their minbars, and forbade them from holding any lectures.” Furthermore, they exiled Muʿtazilīs to Khurāsān and burned their books as well as philosophical books.

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769 Halm, *Shiʿism*, 173. On Ismailism in Rayy before and under the Seljūqs see De Smet “From Khalaf (beginning of the 4th/10th century?) to Ḥasan al-Ṣabbāḥ (d. 518 H/1124 CE).”
770 The term Bāṭinī/Bāṭiniyya meaning ‘esotericists’ historically is coined by some Sunnis to refer pejoratively to Ismāʿīlīs. Those Sunnis accused Ismāʿīlīs of dispensing with the ẓāhir, or the commandments and prohibitions of the sharīʿa. (see Daftary, *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies*, 32).
771 Gardīzī, *The ornament of histories*, 100.
Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092) explicitly describes, by quoting from Maḥmūd’s letter, that he stopped his military expedition to India and came to ‘Irāq ‘Ajam not for the purpose of conquering it, but to reform the corrupt situation in this region. Maḥmūd writes: “I came towards Iraq ‘Ajam and put the Turk army, who are all proper Muslims and Ḥanafi, in charge of Daylamīs, Zanādiqa and Bāṭinīs to abolish their race. Some were killed by their swords, and some were imprisoned, while others became wanderers of the Earth. Positions were given to the noblemen and landlords of Khurāsān who are all proper Ḥanafite or Shāfīʾī. These two tribes are enemies of Rāfīḍīs and Bāṭinīs and are compliant with the Turks.”

The Ghaznavid conquest of Rayy, which caused serious hardships to the Shīʿas of Rayy, did not lead to the complete annihilation of Shīʿī Islam in the region and according to ʿAbd al-Jalīl “when Maḥmūd was gone, Shīʿī scholars returned to their norms and arrangements, despite the presence of his security forces and deputies.”

Maḥmūd remained at Rayy until he entrusted the governorship of Rayy to his son Masʿūd and returned to Ghazna. Masʿūd’s power in Rayy did not last long and it was soon replaced by a few more years of Būyid rule. ‘Alāʾ al-Dawla, who had fled Rayy at the time of the Maḥmūd’s attack on that city, was able to recapture Rayy and Iṣfahān from the Ghaznavids. Although the Ghaznavid rule in Rayy lasted for only 12 years, it was characterized by persecution of Shīʿas and the destruction of their books. In other words, during Ghaznavid brief rule in Rayy, Shīʿīa Islam like Muʿtazilī school received a serious blow, not only politically but also intellectually; however, it did not permanently break their influence.

The short period of Ghaznavid dominance of Rayy was followed by the Seljuq conquests. In 429/1037-1038 Ṭughril-Beg entered Nīshābūr as ruler and sat upon Masʿūd Ghaznavi’s (d. 775) throne.

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775 Niẓām al-Mulk, Siyar al-mulūk, 88.
776 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 49.
777 It was in the final years of the Ghaznavid rule over Khurāsān in 427/1035 that the distinguished Shāfīʾī exegete, Ṭabarzānī b. Muḥammad al-Thaʿlabī died in the Ghaznavid capital of Nīshābūr. Since there is a close connection between Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary Rawḍ al-jinān and al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary al-Kashf, the study of the latter done by Walid Saleh sheds light on the formers content and style in its socio-political context which will be discussed in next chapters.
432/1041) throne and therefore called himself the first sultan of the Seljuqs. The Seljuqs defeated the Ghaznavids of Rayy at the end of 433/1041-1042, when Ibrāhīm Yināl, the maternal half brother of Ţughril-Beg, moved from Khurāsān to Rayy and entered this city with his troop.

There, Ibrāhīm had been preceded by scattered bands of Oghuz, who had fled from the wars in Khurāsān and were subjects of him and of his two brothers Ţughril-Beg and Dāwūd. These bands of nomads fled from Ibrāhīm’s approach and abandoned Rayy. The Seljuqs ruled over Rayy from 434/1042 to 590/1194 and exerted considerable influence on Imāmī Shīʿa Islam in this city. Ţughril-Beg followed the same religious policies as the Ghaznavids and continued to persecute the Shīʿa in Rayy. Furthermore, he disrupted the established balance between two major Sunnī legal schools in Rayy. The early Seljuq period marked the beginning of the intellectual dominance of the Ḥanafīs. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the political-social conditions and sectarian diversity of Rayy during the Great Seljuq period in chronological order. This discussion sheds light on the religio-political situation of the Shīʿa of Rayy during this period and helps us to contextualize Abū al-Futūḥ’s exegesis.

Historical primary sources for the study of the Great Seljuq period are very limited and as Meisami points out there is no historical work in either Arabic or Persian that dates from the first half-century of Seljuq rule. However, since 1962 recent contributions have advanced our knowledge of Great Seljuq Rayy, when Claud Cahen stated that “the Seljuqs, in spite of several useful partial studies, still await the comprehensive historian whom their role in Muslim history would seem to deserve.” The most detailed accounts of the religio-political situation of Rayy in the 6th/12th century are written in the book entitled Baʿd mathālib al-nawāṣib fī naqd ‘Baʿd

778 Nīshāpūrī, Saljūqnāma, 11; Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Āl Saljūq), 12.
781 Meisami, Persian Historiography, 141-142; “Rulers and the Writing of History,” 83.
782 See Cahen, “The historiography of the Seljuqid period.” A comprehensive bibliography for studies of the Great Seljuq period has been provided in appendix 1. Chapter eight of The numismatic history of Rayy written by Miles in 1938 is a good work for numismatology of Rayy during the Great Seljuq period.
faḍāʾiḥ al-rawāfiḍ’ (Some Vices of those who declare enmity on the Shīʿa Imāms (nawāṣib))

in the Refutation of ‘Some of the Ignominies of the Rawāfiḍ’ also known as Naqd. The author of Naqd, Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī attempts to refute claims made in a book called Baʿd faḍāʾiḥ al-rawāfiḍ (BFR) which has not been survived, but has been cited in two hundred thirty five quotations containing sixty seven ignominies (faḍīḥat) by Abd al-Jalīl. The author of BFR claims to have been a Twelver Imāmī till his twenty fifth year of age, and then converted to the Shāfiʿī Sunnī Islam. He wrote BFR in an abusive language to refute some of the Imāmī beliefs. His objections to Shīʿa Islam and Abd al-Jalīl’s responses in Naqd supply a vivid picture regarding the history, geography, culture, religious customs and ceremonies in Shīʿa Islam as well as the lives of Shīʿī governors and scholars of Rayy in the 6th/12th century.

3.3 The Great Seljuq Period

3.3.1 The reign of Ṭughril-Beg b. Mīkāʾīl in Rayy (r. 434-455/1042-1063)

In a recent study, Başan points out that there is a consensus among Turkish historians that those Türkmen affiliated to the Seljuqs were mainly a mixture of Oghuz, Karluk and Kipçak tribesmen who had converted to Islam. Presumably, Saljūq b. Duqāq, Ṭughril-Beg’s grandfather, was the

783 Nāṣibī (pl. nawāṣib/nuṣṣāb) is the one who is an adversary of ʿAlī (or someone who does not recognise ʿAlī’s superiority over the other Companions), the enemy of all the ahl al-bayt, or, in a more general fashion, the adversary of the Shiʿis. (See Amir-Moezzi, The Spirituality of Shiʿi Islam, 278-279 n. 4)

784 For Rawāfiḍ (Pl. of Rāfīḍī) see Kohlberg, “The term ‘Rāfida’ in Imāmī Shiʿī usage.”

785 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 525-714; See also Bausani, “Religion in the Saljuq Period,” 285.

786 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 18.

787 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 292.

788 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 11-12.

789 BFR was finished in Muḥarram 555/Jan 1160 (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 714); however, it was mainly written during the reign of Muḥammad II b. Maḥmūd II b. Muḥammad b. Malik-Shāh (r. 548-554/1154-1159) (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 15-16).

790 Başan, The Great Seljuqs, 22.
first person of his family who converted to Sunnī Islam in the middle years or third quarter of the 4th/10th century. At the beginning of 434/1042-1043 Tughril-Beg, leader of the Seljuq Turks, left Khurāsān for Rayy and on hearing of his coming, his step brother Ibrāhīm Yināl went to meet him. Tughril-Beg took over Rayy and moved his capital from Nishāpūr to Rayy in the same year. He gave Nāṣir al-ʿAlawī charge of Rayy and ordered this city to be reconstructed. Afterwards, Rayy which had suffered so much in the Ghaznavid era became one of the major Seljuq cities and Tughril-Beg made it his residence. In the same year Tughril-Beg began minting dīnārs in Rayy, on both sides of which were the bow and arrow, likely to symbolize sovereignty. It was on this first dīnār that Tughril-Beg used the title al-amīr al-Sayyid. However, in 438/1046, when he minted a new dīnār in Rayy, that simple title changed to an honourific title al-sulṭān al-muʿaẓẓam shāhanshāh which probably indicates the consolidation of his political power and his growing influence throughout the region.

Tughril-Beg adhered to Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence and fully endorsed it. He built his house in the predominantly Ḥanafī neighborhood of Rayy. In addition, he strengthened the Ḥanafīs by building a second congregational mosque for them beside his house, which was

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792 Nīshāpūrī, Saljūqnāma, 14; Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣudūr, 104; Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Āl Saljūq), 15; Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 9:507; Başan, The Great Seljuqs, 27: 64.
794 Minorsky and Bosworth, “Rayy”, 448.
795 See Shimizu, “The bow and arrow on Saljuqid coins.”
796 The title “al-amīr al-sayyid”, used by the Buyids in their coins (Miles, The Numismatic, 174-181; Treadwell, Buyid Coinage, XXXI-XXXIV), is used only in dīnārs minted in Rayy from 434/1044 until 438/1046 and in Qumm in 434/1042. It should be noted that it is maintained that the first coin minted in Rayy with the inscription “al-amīr al-sayyid Tughril-BegMuḥammad ibn Mīkāʾīl” date to 432/1040, or more likely to 433/1041. However, it is difficult to believe that the date reading can be correct because Tughril-Beg came to Rayy in 434/1042. Miles, The Numismatic, 194-195.
797 Miles, The Numismatic, 196-198. From 438/1046 on, Tughril-Beg used two titles, “al-sulṭān al-muʿaẓẓam” or “shāhanshāh,” in nearly all his mints. For more detail look at Kuçu, “A study on the coins of Tughril Beg, the Sultan of the Great Seljuqs,” 1608 Table 3.
798 Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣudūr, 18.
known as Jāmiʿ Ṭughril. Although before him judiciary and legal decisions in Rayy were based on the Ḥanafī school, Ṭughril-Beg appointed imāms, judges, and preachers of the Ḥanafī school in areas that were directly under his power more than ever before. For instance, he brought Abū al-Ḥasan Ismāʿīl b. Șāʿid (d.443/1051) and his nephew Abū Saʿd Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad (d.460/1068) of the Șāʿidī family of Nīshāpūr to Rayy and appointed them consecutively as his qāḍīs. This politics of increasing support for the Ḥanafīs is a trend that can be seen throughout the Great Seljuq era.

When Ṭughril-Beg conquered Iṣfahān in Muharram 443/15May-13Jun 1051 he found it a pleasant city. Consequently, he transferred his treasury and possessions from Rayy to Iṣfahān and took it as his residence. Despite the fact that Ṭughril-Beg had made Iṣfahān the capital of his domains, he did not remain there for a long time and returned to Rayy at the end of this year. His strong sentimental attachment to Rayy and Hanafī Islam led to sectarian conflicts among different Sunnī schools in Rayy, especially Ḥanafīs and Shāfīʿīs.

In the year 445/1053 Ṭughril-Beg’s policies, which caused the weakening of the Shāfīʿīs and Shīʿas, reached its climax. In this year ʿAmīd al-Mulk al-Kundurī (d. 456/1065) Ṭughril-Beg’s vizier, issued a command to curse the Rawāfīḍ and Ashʿarīs on the pulpits of Khurāsān. As a result, numerous Shīʿī and Shāfīʿī Ashʿarīs from Nishāpūr such as Juwaynī (d. 478/1085) and Qushayrī (d. 465/1073) were forced into exile. In general, at the beginning of the Great Seljuq era, sectarian strife was discouraged by the government; however as time went on the city’s sects grew more radical and engaged in violence which ultimately led to the destruction of Rayy. In

799 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 405-406, 604. As I mentioned earlier, there was a congregational mosque in Rayy built by al-Mahdī, in which Ḥanafite and Shāfīite imams took turns in leading the prayer in the time of al-Muqaddasī.

800 al-Qurashī al-ḥanafī, al-Jawāhir al-muḍīʿa, 1:410 no. 336. Ismāʿīl became the qāḍī al-quḍūt of Rayy and its environs. Before his death he was transferred to the judgeship of Nīshāpūr. See Madelung, Religious trends, 33; “The Spread of Māturīdism and the Turks,” 127-128.


other words, in the long term Ṭughril-Beg and his vizier’s favouritism towards one sect–both in political policies and in religious matters–disturbed the stability and equilibrium that was established among different schools of the Sunnī sects during the Būyid era.

Rayy was not only Ṭughril-Beg’s residence but also his military base. In the year 446/1054 he occupied Ādharbāyjān and returned to Rayy.805 Next year in Muḥarram 447/April 1055 he travelled to Hamadān and thence to Baghdād where the khutba was read in the pulpit in his name on Friday, the Ramaḍān 447/December 1055.806 In other words, after his dominance in Iran, Ṭughril-Beg went to Baghdād and received political legitimation from the ’Abbāsid caliph, who was the spiritual reference for the Islamic world.

Imāmī Shīʿas struggled to engage in socio-political activities during the early Seljuq period. Moreover, Seljuqs could not renounce them altogether. One of the Shīʿas who held a government position in this period was the amīr Abū al-Faḍl Ἧrāqī; and among his accomplishments was the building of the rampart of Rayy, the old mosque of Qumm and the shrine of Fāṭima, the daughter of the seventh Shīʿī Imām.807 Imāmī scholars also established few prominent schools in Rayy during this period; however, they were constrained. For example, the school of Sayyid Ṭāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ἦusayn Kīskī (alive in /1084)808 was built in Rayy’s Kulāh düzān (the hatters) district during this period.809

To consolidate his political power, Ṭughril-Beg proposed marriage to the daughter of the ’Abbāsid caliph al-Qāʾim in 454/1062. Since she did not accept this proposal, Ṭughril-Beg threatened the caliph and his daughter with violence and took his young bride to live in Rayy in

806 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 9:611.
807 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 236.
808 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-ʿArbaʿūn ḥadīhan, 89. Sayyid Ṭāj al-Dīn Muḥammad Kīskī was an Imāmī jurist and the most senior of the descendants of the Prophet in Rayy in that time.
809 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 39-40. Apparently they had to resort to taqīyah in order to penetrate the government system.
However, he did not obtain his aim and passed away in the village of Ṭajrasht (today Ṭarasht) twenty kilometers north of Rayy in Ramadhan 455/September 1063. He was buried with an abundance of jewels and ornaments in the Tower of Ṭughril (Burj-i Ṭughril) in Rayy and a handwritten Qurʾān by the Imāmī scholar Sayyid al-Murtaḍā was also placed in this tower.

With the consolidation of the power of Ṭughril-Beg in Rayy, the hard times for the Shīʿas began after the flourishing under the Buyids. Abū al-Futūḥ’s grandfather, Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Nīsābūrī who was active in this city just before Ṭughril-Beg served as a connection between his uncle in Nīsāpūr and scholars in Rayy. He was a transmitter of his uncle Abū al-fath Muḥsin b. Ḥusayn al-Nīsābūrī who was a resident of Nīsābūrī. It is my assertion that Abū al-Futūḥ’s grandfather was interested in exegesis and he is the person who transferred al-Kashf wa-al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qurʾān of al-Thaʿlabī from Nīsāpūr to Rayy and introduced it to Abū al-Futūḥ’s father and his grandson. For this reason, he is described by ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī as an exegete (mufassir).

At the beginning of the Ṭughril-Beg’s power in Rayy, al-Ṭūsī took over the leadership of the Imāmiyya community in Baghdad after the death of his teacher al-Ṭūsī in 436/1044. In this short period period from 436/1044 to 447/1056 in Baghdad (and later 447/1056 to 460/1067 in Najaf) most of leading Imāmī scholars who flourished during the second half of the 5th/11th century studied with al-Ṭūsī. Abū Muḥammad

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810 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:12. Ṭuqhril-Beg’s first wife died in Dhu al-Qaʿda 452/December 1060 in Zanjān and was buried at Rayy.


812 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 674. Burj-i Ṭughrul is one of the few monuments remaining from the pre-Mongol dynasties in Iran. ʿAbd al-Jalīl Qazwīnī Rāzī regarding this tower states: “The mausoleum of the auspicious great king, Ṭuqhril-Beg, in Rayy is one of a kind in luxury and extravagance after a hundred years.” Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 638.

813 He transmitted ḥadīth from Abū al-ʿAbbās Ṭuqhril-Beg’s first wife died in Dhu al-Qaʿda 452/December 1060 in Zanjān and was buried at Rayy.

814 Muntajab al-Dīn Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 101-102 no. 360.

815 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 156-157.
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad (known as al-Mufīd al-Rāzī) was one of those al-Ṭūsī’s disciples who stayed in Baghdad and later Najaf and traveled to other Islamic major cities. Eventually during the reign of Malik-Shāh (r. 465-485/1072-1092) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad settled in Rayy and started to teach. He is one of few scholars who transferred developments and paradigm shift of the Imāmī school of Baghdad to Rayy and other cities.

3.3.2 The reign of Muḥammad Alp-Arslān b. Chaghri Beg in Rayy (r. 455-465/1063-1073)

The death of Tughril-Beg brought to the fore the problems of succession. Ṭuqhril-Beg did not have any children so he appointed Sulaymān, son of his brother Chaghri as his successor because Sulaymān’s mother was married to Ṭuqhril-Beg after Chaghri. After hearing the news of Ṭuqhril-Beg’s death, his vizier ʿAmīd al-Mulk Kundurī, who was away from Rayy, returned immediately and appointed Sulaymān. The news of Ṭuqhril-Beg’s death spread swiftly while some amīrs and Niẓām al-Mulk decided to appoint Muḥammad Alp-Arslān as the sultan instead of Sulaymān. In this anarchical situation, Qutlumush, a cousin of Alp-Arslān, revolted and headed towards Rayy. Alp-Arslān, who had been campaigning in Nishāpūr, set out against Qutlumush on the 1st of Muḥarram 456/31 December 1063. After realizing that Alp-Arslān had more followers, ʿAmīd al-Mulk appointed Sulaymān as the crown prince to Alp-Arslān. Qutlumush plundered the villages of Rayy but got no further, and Alp-Arslān entered the city at the end of Muḥarram 456/Jan 1064 and defeated Qutlumush. Later Alp-Arslān killed Sulaymān, with the assistance of Niẓām al-Mulk, and announced himself the sultan in Rayy, selecting Niẓām al-Mulk as his vizier. He minted dīnārs in his name in Rayy and on a dīnār of 461/1068-69 he added the title Rukn al-Dīn.

817 Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Āl Saljūq), 20.
818 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:36-37.
820 Miles, The Numismatic, 204.
Alp-Arslan attempted to settle social and cultural problems and in consultation with his powerful Shafi'i vizier, Nizam al-Mulk in the year 457/1064-65. The Nizamiyah schools were established in Baghdad and other large cities. It seems that these schools were established to redress the balance in favour of Shafi'i's, and it was successful. According to Ibn 'Asakir (d.571/1176), who lived during the fall of the Seljuqs, after Alp-Arslan came into power and the vizierate of Nizam al-Mulk, the affairs settled and the existing prejudice between Hanafis and Shafi'i's disappeared. Scholars such as Juwayni and Qushayri returned to their cities and Nizam al-Mulk established the Nizamiyah school of Nishapur for Juwayni. Instituting these schools that were dedicated to the Shafi'i sect in Baghdad and other major cities recovered some degree of the lost equilibrium between Hanafis and Shafi'i's. In this period the differences between the tendencies of Alp-Arslan and Nizam al-Mulk did not put an end to these sectarian conflicts. Nizam al-Mulk quotes Alp-Arslan’s attachment to the Hanafi denomination on many occasions and points out his prejudice towards Shafi'i's. On the other hand, Alp-Arslan also expresses his discontent for having a Shafi'i vizier, and this would cause Nizam al-Mulk to be more cautious when acting in support of the Ash'aris. Even in this time judiciary and legal decisions were based on the Hanafi sect and Yahya b. Muhammad b. Sadi (d.460/1068), a Hanafi jurist, became Chief Justice of Rayy after his uncle passed away; and he stayed in this position until he passed away in this city.

Like all Central Asian Turks, Alp-Arslan was a zealous Sunnī who regarded Shi'i as heretics. He was intolerant of Twelver Shi'i and Isma'ili's and treated them harshly. He scolded one of his Turk amirs who had an Isma'ili servant. When that servant said I am a Shi'i, Alp-Arslan turned to him and said: ‘Is Shi'ism such a great faith that you have used it as a shield

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821 Ibn al-Athîr, al-Kâmîl, 10:49.
822 Ibn 'Asâkir, Tabyîn Kîdhb al-Mu'tarî, 214.
823 Nizâm al-Mulk, Siyar al-mulâk, 129.
825 Halm, Shi'ism, 57.
for Baṭinism? This is bad and the other is even worse.” However, Niẓām al-Mulk respected some of the great Imāmī scholars. For example, when he traveled to Rayy, every two weeks he would go to Dūryast environs of Rayy to attend Abū ʿAbdallah Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Dūryastī’s classes.

Towards the end of Alp-Arslān’s kingship in Rayy, this city was the centre of the Ismāʿīlī daʿwa in the Jibāl. Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ (ca.455-518/1053-1124), the first dāʿī of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, converted to the Ismāʿīlī sect in Rayy and he later became the founder of the Ismāʿīlī government in Iran and instigated a new Nizārī Ismāʿīlī daʿwa. His family, who apparently had moved from Qumm to Rayy during Ḥasan’s childhood, were probably Imāmī Shīʿas and settled in the Rudah neighborhood in Sufi alley. Even though ʿAbd al-Jalīl tries to introduce Ḥasan and his family as a Sunnī Ashʿarī, it appears that during his early childhood Ḥasan was raised as a Twelver Imāmī Shīʿa in Rayy. He was first introduced to the Ismāʿīlī sect at the age of seventeen through a local Ismāʿīlī missionary (dāʿī) named Amīra Ḍarrāb who was one of several dāʿīs in Rayy during this period. Later another missionary named Abū naṣr Sarrāj also presented the teachings of the Ismāʿīlī sect, which ultimately lead to his conversion to this sect. In the year 464/1072, Ḥasan, who was a young convert in the Ismāʿīlī school of thought, was noticed by Ibn ʿAṭṭāsh, the leader of the Ismāʿīlīs who had just come to Rayy. Ibn ʿAṭṭāsh was so impressed by him that he appointed Ḥasan as his deputy.

The Ismāʿīlīs were accepted by neither one of the sects in Rayy and they were referred to as Malāḥida (atheists) or Bāṭinīs (esoterics) by the leaders and believers of other schools. It is

826 Niẓām al-Mulk, Siyar al-mulāk, 217.
827 According to Muntajab al-Dīn Rāzī, Abū ʿabd Allh Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Dūryastī was alive in 474/1080 (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 45 no. 67). Dūryastī was one of the students of al-Mufīd and al-Murtaḍā, to acquire Hadith. Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 157.
828 Daftary, The Ismāʿīlīs, 311-312; Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 135.
829 al-Juwaynī, Tārīkh jahāngushā, 3:187-188.
830 ʿAbd al-Jalīl claims that the Ismāʿīlīs had a bad social reputation among the common people of Rayy and they were usually accused of assassination and kidnapping. In an account given by him in the Naqḍ, he states that the Ismāʿīlīs “kidnapped a noble child from Rayy and took to the castle of Alamūt. His father endured a great deal of hardship and expended a significant amount of money to get his son back. He finally bribed one of the Ismāʿīlīs
interesting to know that followers of each religious school tried to accuse supporters of the other sects of being associated with Ismāʿīlīes and their leaders tried to show deep enmity towards Ismāʿīlīs. For example, when Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ emerged from the outskirts of Alamūt, “News of his uprising reached Qazwīn and Rayy. Muḥammad Zaʿfarānī the leader of Ḥanafī denomination moved his army towards Alamut. However, he did not find the caliph’s or the sultan’s [military] aid and returned in vain.”831 This Ḥanafī scholar is a descendent of that Sunnī jurist who incited the people of Rayy against the Ismāʿīlīs several years ago.832

Rayy remained one of the major Seljuq cities in this period. Byzantine emperors from outside Seljuq territory and Seljuq rulers from inside always had an eye on this city and wished to take control of it. For example, when Alp-Arslan encountered the Byzantine emperor, Romanus, in 463/1070 he sent to the emperor with a request for a truce. Romanus replied, ‘There will be no truce unless I get Rayy.’833 A good example from inside the Seljuq family is that when the sultan Alp-Arslān had been wounded in Balkh in Rabī’ I 465/November 1072 he named his son Malik-Shāh, who was with him, as his successor and ordered the army to swear allegiance to him. After a few days, when Alp-Arslān died, Malik-Shāh ascended to the throne, retained Niẓām al-Mulk in his post as vizier and marched with his army from Balkh to Nishāpūr and from Nishāpūr to Rayy.834 When Malik-Shāh’s uncle Qāvurt-Beg who was in Kirmān, heard of the death of his brother, Alp-Arslān, he marched towards Rayy, planning to take control of the kingdom, but Malik-Shāh and Niẓām al-Mulk arrived first and then marched from there against him.835 In general, during Malik-Shāh’s reign Rayy was like a garrison town which had to be ready for defence against eastern threats. For example, in Shaʿbān 473/Jan 1081 Malik-Shāh went to Rayy

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831 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 341.
832 Daftary, The Ismāʿīlīs, 111.
834 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:73-76.
835 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:78.
from Baghdad where he reviewed the army and raised them to march against his brother Tekish who had revolted in Khurāsān.836

3.3.3 The reign of Malik-Shāh b. Alp-Arsān (r. 465-485/1072-1092)

The balance of power between the ʿAbbāsid caliphate and the Seljuqs changed when the Great Seljuq Empire reached its highest point under sultan Malik-Shāh, recovering from decades of warfare and migrations.837 Malik-Shāh’s political rival, the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Qāʾim, passed away on 13 Shaʿbān 467/9 April 1075 and his grandson al-Muqtadī bi-amr-allāh, who was 19 years old, succeeded him.838 This young caliph developed his relationship with Malik-Shāh in 15 years and received more attention from the sultan in 481/1088. This development is seen on Beautiful dīnārs minted in Malik-Shāh’s name in Rayy during this period. On all remaining dīnārs from 472/1080 to 480/1087 Malik-Shāh’s titles are “al-Sultān al-Muʾazzam Shāhānshāh Muʾizz al-Dīn Rukn al-Islām Malik Shāh” and the ʿAbbāsid caliph only as al-Muqtadī bi-amr-allāh.839 However, the ʿAbbāsid caliph’s titles on the dīnār minted in Rayy in the year 481/1088 are: al-Imām al-Muqtadī bi-amr-allāh Khalīfat-allāh Amīr al-Muʾminīn.840 Abū al-Futūḥ was most likely born during the reign of Malik-Shāh in Rayy. This estimate of his birth date comes from information concerning the death of his teacher and the birth of his disciple. Abū al-Futūḥ mentions Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī (b. 467/1075 and d. 538/1144) as shaykh-i mā (our master) in Rawḍ al-jinān.841 Therefore, he should be born after 467/1075. On the other hand Abū al-Futūḥ should be born before 484/1091 because his disciple Muntajab al-

836 Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:118.
839 Miles, The Numismatic, 205-207.
840 Miles, The Numismatic, 207-208. On this beautiful dīnār, besides the titles commonly given to Malik-Shāh on the dīnārs in Rayy, are added the historically well-known title Jalāl al-Dawlah and Jamāl al-Millah.
841 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 16:170.
Dīn al-Rāzī was born in 504/1111 according to al-Rāfīʾī. This period was one of the most difficult eras for Imāmī Shīʿa as in Rayy during the Great Seljuq period.

During this time Imāmī Shīʿas and Ismāʿīlīs living in Rayy and all lands governed by the Seljuqs faced more constraints. Niẓām al-Mulk assigned his son-in-law, Abū Muslim Rāzī, who was now the governor of Rayy, to capture Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ. However, Ḥasan became aware of this order and was cautious not to get caught by Abū Muslim and his men. Ḥasan continued to live secretly in Rayy until the year 467/1074-1075 when he escaped from this city with Ibn ʿAṭṭāsh to Iṣfahān. Abū Muslim realized that Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ has left the city and followed him but he could not catch him. Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ first went to Iṣfahān, and later in 469/1077 by Ibn ʿAṭṭāsh’s instruction he went to Cairo, the capital of the Fatimids. He was banished from Egypt in Dhū al-Ḥijja 473/June 1081 and returned to Iṣfahān. He then spent nine years travelling within Iran as a missionary of the Ismāʿīlī school of thought until he decided to settle in Alamūt castle and never got to return to Rayy.  

Imāmī scholars were also under the government’s increasing pressure, especially from Niẓām al-Mulk. It should be noted that theoretically all through the Siyāsat-nāma, which Niẓām al-Mulk wrote towards the end of his life, he appears to be intolerant of Imāmī Shīʿas and emphasizes putting them through strict and difficult measures. The highpoint of these strict measures was seen during Malik-Shāh’s period. Siding with Sunnīs and putting Shīʿas under pressure had caused Sunnīs to go into the Shīʿī mosques and write on the walls their beliefs, such as “The best
person after the Prophet was Abū Bakr.” These writings remained on the walls for decades.\footnote{Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 158.} The author of BFR has noted Niẓām al-Mulk’s strictness towards Imāmī scholars. He mentions that in Malik-Shāh’s period Imāmī scholars were forced to express regret over their Shīʿī beliefs and accept the Sunnī creeds.\footnote{Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 46.} In describing this event he states: “It was in the era of Malik-Shāh, God’s mercy upon him, that Niẓām al-Mulk Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. Ishāq was aware of the secrets of their [Shīʿas] beliefs. He degraded and insulted them.” The author of the BFR adds “Niẓām al-Mulk ordered that whoever in Rayy claims he is an Imāmī scholar, like Ḩaskā Bābawayh, Bū Ṭālib Bāwayh, Abū al-Maʿālī Imāmatī, Ḥaydar ziyyāratī Makkī, ‘Alī ‘Alim, Bū turāb Dūryastī, Abū al-Maʿālī Nigārgar and others from among the twelvers who indulged in frequent vilification, be taken to the pulpits, have their heads uncovered, be disrespected and treated with contempt, and be told: You are the enemies of religion. You curse Islam’s predecessors, and your motto is the motto of disbelievers. Let them believe in [true Islam] and be averse to what the twelvers say.”\footnote{Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 154.} In response to this claim, ʿAbd al-Jalīl uses the method of dissimulation which is used throughout \textit{Naqd} and says that Malik-Shāh and Niẓām al-Mulk respected the Shīʿī descendants of the Prophet and Shīʿī scholars. However, elsewhere in the same book he seems to accept the quoted event from the author of the BFR about the Imāmī scholars’ situation in Rayy. He believes that the reason behind Malik-Shāh’s strictness towards Imāmī scholars is that some of their enemies gossiped behind their backs when they visited Malik-Shāh.\footnote{Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 47.} Maybe by gossip ʿAbd al-Jalīl is referring to the remarks that were made in front of the Sultan or his vizier about Imāmī scholars’ beliefs and the author of the BFR refers to one of them, that for example “Ḥaskā Bābawayh said: I will never go to sleep at night, unless I curse Muʿādh b. Jabal one hundred times.”\footnote{Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 325.}
The above mentioned scholars that were disrespected and belittled by the government were some of the greatest Imāmī scholars in Rayy during this period and Shī‘as would turn to them if they had any questions. An example of this was the case when Rayy’s Shī‘as were blamed for not naming their children after Abū bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān. ‘Abd al-Jalīl describes this event and says: “The old fanatic Sunnī scholar issued a verdict to delude the Turks [and said] because these Rāfīḍīs name their sons Abū bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān out of hatred for those companions of Prophet, and then they call their sons unbeliever, pagan and bastard with the intention of disrespecting the honourable companions this way.” In this situation Imāmī Shī‘as of Rayy asked their scholars such as ʿAlī the scholar, Būl Maʿālī Imāmatī the jurist, Shams al-Islam Ḥaskā Bābawayh, Sayyid Muḥammad Kīskī and Sayyid imām Mānagdīm Raḍī concerning this accusation. Imāmī scholars advised against naming Shī‘a children after the first three caliphs. They stated “if you choose these names and Sunnīs calumniate you, abandon this blessing and avoid naming your children after those Caliphs which is a religious rite (sunna) in order to not allow anyone say anything against you.”

Overall, the government would not readily allow Imāmī Shī‘as to build Shī‘ī school (madrasa) or lodge (khānaqāh), in Rayy as they would allow Shāfī‘īs and Ḥanafīs to do so. This does not mean that the Shī‘as of Rayy did not build schools or khānaqāh at all. Despite the restriction, in this same period Shī‘as built the ‘Alī ‘Uthmān khānaqāh, which according to ‘Abd al-Jalīl “was always the house for ascetic scholars from among the descendants of the Prophet and they conducted congregational (Jamāʿat) prayers there and recited the Qurʾān continuously.” The school of ascetic Sayyid Abū al-Futūḥ was also built in the same period, it was located in the Darvāza Āḥanīn neighborhood; and the school of the jurist ‘Ali Jāsbī in the alley of

853 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 440-441.
854 In Rayy and all Khurāsān, the Persian term khānaqāh (Arabised as khānqāh/khānaqāh) is used. While in Arabic-speaking regions and in south-western Iran the term ribāṭ was more common. In other regions other terms, such as duwayra (little house), buqʿa (site), and zāwiya (corner) were also in use. (See Karamustafa, Sufism, 121.)
855 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 39.
856 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 41.
Iṣfahāniyāns. Shīʿas’ presence in the governmental courts in this era indicates their influence among Seljuqs. For example, Majd al-Dīn Asʿad b. Muḥammad Barāvistanī Qummī (d.492/1099) was trusted by the Sultan even though he was a Shīʿī. At the end of Malik-Shāh’s reign he was the mustawfī of the dīwān istīfā.\(^{859}\)

Since Niẓām al-Mulk openly defended the Shāfiʿī denomination, Thaʿlabī’s exegesis *al-Kashf* became very well known in Sunnī and Shīʿī circles because Thaʿlabī was a Shāfiʿī scholar. Moreover, in this period some exegetes even wrote their own exegesis based on this book. For example, among the Sunnīs, Ibn Abī Randaqa Ṭurṭūshī (d.520/1126), who was a Mālikī scholar from Andalusia, summarized the commentary *al-Kashf* in this period.\(^{860}\) The judge Abū Bakr b. ʿArabī Ishbīlī (d.543/1148) another Mālikī jurist, studied this book in his youth in the year 487/1094 in Jerusalem with Ibn Abī Randaqa.\(^{861}\) Moreover, not long after them, Ḥusayn b. Maṣʿūd Baghawī (d.516/1122) the great Shāfiʿī scholar wrote his own exegesis *Maʿālim al-tanzīl*, based on *al-Kashf*.\(^{862}\) Aside from that, in the first half of the 6th/12th century Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī (ca.554/1160), the Imāmī Shīʿī scholar, wrote his twenty volume exegesis *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān* on the basis of *al-Kashf*, which will be further discussed in detail in the following chapters.

During the era of Malik-Shāh, between the years 465/1073 to 484/1092, Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallah Nāṣiḥī served as Rayy’s judge. He was imām of the Ḥanafīs and a theologian with Muʿtazilī tendencies. In addition to that, during Alp-Arsāl’s reign he was appointed as supreme judge in Nishāpūr. At the beginning of Malik-Shāh’s reign, Nāṣiḥī was accused of receiving

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858 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 281.
859 Nishāpūrī, *Saljūqnamā*, 32; for mustawfī and dīwān istīfā see Lambto, *Continuity and change*, 60-61.
860 Barg nīsī, “Ibn Abī Randaqa.”
bribes, and was therefore transferred from Nishāpūr to Rayy, where he lived and was the supreme judge of Rayy until he died in 484/1092.863

The end of Malik-Shāh’s reign coincided with the capture of the Alamūt castle, armed uprising of Iran’s Ismāʿīlīs against Seljuqs, and the killing of important military, political and religious individuals. By the order of Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ, Niẓām al-Mulk was assassinated in Ramadhan 485/October 1092 by Abū Ṭāhir ʾArrānī, one of the fidāʾī of the Ismāʿīlī sect.865 Forty days later Malik-Shāh died, presumably by being poisoned, and thus the conflicts over power started between his sons. In his writings, Rashīd al-Dīn describes this period by saying: “after Niẓām al-Mulk’s death the country’s affairs were disrupted and unstable and chaos came to be in the land.”866 Following this unrest, the difficult measures against Imāmīs and Ismāʿīlīs decreased and both groups found opportunities for regaining their power and status.

As previously mentioned, the Seljuq sultans and their viziers usually disagreed over supporting different sects. As a result of this, the sectarian conflicts among Muslims led to political and social turmoil. For example, ‘Amīd al-Mulk supported the Ḥanafīs, and Niẓām al-Mulk sought to create religious unity, and propagate the Shāfiʿī School to achieve political unity. Their tendencies to monosectarianism did not bring an order to the existing political turmoil; rather it created political weakness and social insecurity. It motivated sectarian conflicts, which resulted in emigration, exile, and death of government politicians and religious scholars of different schools. The religious conflicts caused Rayy’s division into three main sections of Ḥanafīs, Shāfiʿīs, and Shīʿas. As a result of this sectarian separation in the urban fabric of Rayy, security and social cohesion, one of the main elements of continuity of community life vanished from this city. Instead, interests of co-sects took priority over interests of the city’s habitants as a whole. In other words, each sect that lived in a specific part of Rayy would seek only the welfare of its own


864 Fidāʾī was a self-sacrificing devotee who carried out targeted mission in public places and normally lost his own life in the process. fidaʾis were similar to Suicide (intihar) among today’s Salafis. (See Israeli, Islamikaze: Manifestations of Islamic Martyrology, 71.)

865 Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Ismāʿīliyān), 132.

866 Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Ismāʿīliyān), 112.
group living in its part of the city. Therefore, since at times the interests of different groups were in contrast, during the Seljuq era, many conflicts existed within cities like Rayy.

At the end of the reign of Malik-Shāh (d. 485/1092), the Seljuqs increased their pressure on the Shi‘as. Many of Imāmī scholars such as Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzā‘ī Rāzī, were humiliated and tortured by Seljuqs. For this reason there is no mention of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father in the Imāmī works or chains of narrations although he was a member of the council of Imāmī scholars in Rayy. But Imami scholars of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father’s generation were not able to actively engage in discourse over matters of both doctrine and practice. Therefore, from this period many Imami scholars of Rayy such as Ḥasakā Bābawayh approached Sufi’s lodge and left the hostility with them. I will discuss Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father and Ḥasakā Bābawayh in the third chapter. The Imāmī situation went on like this during the reign of two of Malik-Shāh’s sons Berk-Yāruq and Muḥammad (Tapar) in Rayy until it got better during the reign Malik-Shāh’s third son Sanjar.

3.3.4 The reign of Berk-Yāruq b. Malik-Shāh in Rayy (r. 485-498/1093-1104)

After Malik-Shāh’s death in 485/1093, his first wife Tarkān Khātūn tried to place his young son Maḥmūd, a little more than four years old, on the throne. Al-Muqtadī the ‘Abbāsid caliph (467-487/1075-1094) accepted him as Malik-Shāh’s successor, and on Friday Shawwāl 485/December 1092 he was named Maḥmūd in his prayer sermon. However, Tarkān Khātūn knew that her son would not remain in power because of Malik-Shāh’s another son Berk-Yāruq, from Zabīdah his other wife. As a result, she sent one of her confidants to Iṣfahān to take Berk-Yāruq captive. He was not successful because Niẓāmiyya servants had already helped Berk-Yāruq to escape from Iṣfahān to go to Rayy. Tarkān Khātūn and her alliances took the citadel of Ṭabarak and placed Maḥmūd on the throne. At the same time, Abū Muslim Rāzī who was still Rayy’s


868 Nīshāpūrī, The Saljūqnāma, 36; Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣūdūr, 139-140; Husynī Yazdī, al-‘Urāda, 72-73; Ibn Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:214.
governor, crowned Berk-Yāruq with a studded crown and gathered about twenty thousand horsemen for him in Rayy.869

Maḥmūd b. Malik-Shāh’s reign in Rayy (485-487/1092-1093) was nothing except a transition period to the age of Berk-Yāruq. When Berk-Yāruq ascended the throne and Rayy became under his rule, he was not more than fourteen years of age.870 Afterwards, the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Muqtadaḍ bi-amr-allāh died in Muḥarram 487/Feb 1094 and was succeeded by his son al-Mustaẓhir bi-allāh, who was 8 years old.871 In this new situation, neither caliphate nor the state (Seljuq ruler) had enough power to govern the Islamic territory. That is why Başan and some other Turkish historians call this period the Interregnum which ended in the dissolution of the Great Seljuq Empire.872 In Berk-Yāruq’s time during which the Seljuq Empire began to decline, the quantity and quality of their coinage declined with it. Before the news of the Caliph’s death had reached Rayy at the beginning of 487/1094 an interesting dīnār was minted in this city with the following titles for Berk-Yāruq: al-Sultān al-Muʿaẓẓam Rukn al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn Malik al-Islām wa al-Muslimīn. However, next year in 488/1095 the title Malik al-Islām wa al-Muslimīn was omitted from dīnārs minted in Rayy.873

All the areas dominated by the Seljuqs, including Rayy, were unstable and internal conflicts were visible. For example, at the end of 487/1095 the rivalry between Berk-Yāruq and his uncle Tutush, Atabeg of Damascus, came to a head. Tutush invaded Iran and finally entered Rayy and minted a dīnār in the same year in this city.874 Subsequently, Berk-Yāruq engaged in a battle

869 Nīshāpūrī, *The Saljūqnāma*, 36; Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Āl Saljūq), 41; Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣudūr, 140-141; Ḥusynī Yazdī, al-ʿUrāḍa, 73.
870 Rāwandī and Ibn Khallikān report that Berk-Yāruq was born in 474/1081 which means he was only eleven years of age at the time of his accession to the throne. Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣudūr, 138; Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-Aʿyān, 1:268; Ibn Athīr states that Berk-Yāruq was born in 471/1078-79. Ibn Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:112; Nīshāpūrī believes that Berk-Yāruq was thirteen years old when his father Malik-Shāh died. Nīshāpūrī, *The Saljūqnāma*, 35.
with his uncle in a place near Rayy, which ultimately resulted in Berk-Yāruq’s victory. In 490/1097, Niẓām al-Mulk’s son Mu‘ayyid al-mulk, who was deposed from Berk-Yāruq’s ministry, went to Ganja to see Muḥammad, Berk-Yāruq’s brother from another mother, to incite him to take over the throne. Muḥammad accepted the plan and announced his name as sultan in that land in his sermon, and chose Mu‘ayyid al-mulk as his vizier. Then, in Dhū al-Qa’dā 492/October 1099 they captured Rayy and killed Berk-Yāruq’s mother Zabīah.

During Berk-Yāruq’s reign and the vizierate of ʿIzz al-mulk son of Niẓām al-Mulk, which also coincided with the year Niẓām al-Mulk was assassinated in 485/1092, and Malik-Shāh’s death in the same year, Majd al-mulk Barāvistānī went to Iṣfahān and withdrew from government positions. In the year 489/1096, he came to Rayy for a while where he was the minister to Zabīdah Khātūn, Sultan’s mother, as well as the head of Sultan Berk-Yāruq’s Dīwān Istīfāʾ. Eventually he became Berk-Yāruq’s vizier in 490/1097. In the same time period, Barāvistānī reconstructed some of the Imāmī holy places in Medina, Iraq and Iran. One such example is the shrine of Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm al-Ḥasanī in Rayy, which was reconstructed by him. The author of the BFR accuses Majd al-mulk of siding with Shīʿas. He narrates a story that reveals that Majd al-mulk even detested Abū Bakr’s name. Even though Majd al-mulk’s presence in the government led to strengthening of Imāmī’s situation, the story in the BFR does not seem to

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875 Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-sudūr, 143; Bundārī, Zubdat al-nuṣra, 84-85; Husynī Yazdī, al-ʿUrāḍa, 76; Ibn Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:244-245.
877 Nīshāpūrī, The Saljūqnāma, 36; Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-sudūr, 139.
878 Ibn Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:252, 263.
879 Siddīq, “Barāvistānī.”
880 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 236.
881 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 89-90.
be true because Ibn Athīr also says that Majd al-mulk admired the companions of the Prophet and damned whoever cursed the companions.882

The difficult measures against Shi‘a as continued until the end of the Seljuq Empire; however, during Berk-Yāruq’s reign, which was more like a temporary government during the decline of the Seljuq era, the situation was different, mainly due to the constant conflicts between Berk-Yāruq and his brother Muḥammad. Hence, as a result of the existing ravage in the government and disintegration in other parts of the Seljuq domain the Shi‘a were under less pressure. In addition to that, the Ismā‘īlīs also got a chance to consolidate their position and they sent a missionary to every city.883 Therefore, during Berk-Yāruq’s reign the Ismā‘īlīs of Iran proliferated and they spread to near Iṣfahān, which was the capital of the Seljuqs.884 The proliferation of Ismā‘īlīs in Rayy coincided with a number of murders committed by them. For example, in the year 488/1095, Abū Muslim who was the governor of Rayy for more than twenty years, was killed by an Ismā‘īli fidā‘ī by the name of Khudā dād Rāzī.885 In 490/1096 Arghush al-Nizāmī, a mamluk of Nizām al-Mulk, was killed in Rayy. He had attained a great position in that he had married the daughter of Yāqūtī, the maternal uncle of Sultan Berk-Yāruq. He was killed by an Ismā‘īli, and his killer was himself killed.886 In Sha‘bān 491/ July 1098 Abū, ‘Īsām Rāzī was killed by ‘Abdallah ghazi Ṭāshir. In the year 492/1099, Abū ‘Amīd who was a

882 Ibn Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:290. ‘Abd al-Jalīl narrates a story he heard from sayyid Fakhr al-dīn the son of sayyid Shams al-dīn ‘Alawī, who was the leader of Rayys’ Shī‘a and descendant of the Prophet. The story is: “One day I was with Majd al-Mulk in the presence of my father, sayyid ‘Alī ’Alawī, and two foreign merchants came. One was from Aleppo and the other was from Transoxiana. The merchant from Transoxiana was a Ḥanafī and his name was ‘Umar, while the other merchant from Aleppo was a Shī‘ī and his name was ‘Alī. Both men were there to get their money from the Sultan. Majd al-mulk ordered that the man from Transoxiana, whose name was ‘Umar, be given gold from the treasury right away. However, ‘Alī from Aleppo was sent to another city to get his money. A servant was present and said: My God, is this not strange that ‘Umar is given his money right away, but ‘Alī is only given the credit? He said: I know, but this is so the world knows that in governing and business there is no place for prejudice; otherwise I respect ‘Alī and I like him.” Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 91. At this time, sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn was very young and his father held a high status. ‘Abd al-Jalīl narrates about sayyid Shams al-Dīn and says: “in all circles and gatherings of Ḥanafīs and Shāfi‘īs no one ever sat or could sit above him.” (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 435.)

883 Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-sudūr, 155.

884 Daftary, “Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ.”

885 Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Ismā‘īliyān), 132.

mustawfī in Rayy was killed by Rustam Damāvandī, and, in Ramaḍān 492/August 1099, Abū al-Faraj Qarāgin was killed by an Ismāʿīlī fidāʾī. Later, in Dhu al-Ḥijja 493/October 1100, an Ismāʿīlī murdered an amīr in Rayy.

Evidence shows that one of the Seljuq strategies during this period was to have good relationship with the Sufis and Sunnīs. However, of the different Sunnī sects, sometimes the Ḥanafīs and at other times the Shāfīʿīs received most of the attention and were the priority for the Seljuq sultans and viziers. An example that verifies this is presented in the book BFR, where the author tells a story about Majd al-Mulk Barāvistānī, the Shīʿī vizier of Berk-Yāruq, and ʿAbd al-Jalīl in his defense states “All his consideration, grace giving, obedience and amenability towards Sufis, Sunnī scholars, and in particular Ḥanafīs is more evident than the sun.” ʿAbd al-Jalīl’s affirmation of Barāvistānī’s actions describes the Seljuq’s overall political policy in compliance with Sufis, Sunnīs and especially those of the Ḥanafī sect. Hence, acting in accordance with this policy was of utmost importance for all those in power, be it Shīʿī or Sunnī, in order to keep their positions. Apparently, for Seljuq sultans after Malik-Shāh, Sufism was more important than sectarianism. They needed stability in Muslim communities which was not possible with sectarian conflicts. It is highly probable that as Safi argues, in the second half of the 5th/11th century, the Sufis allied with the Seljuq ruling power. The ideological linkage of Sufism with Shāfīʿī school of jurisprudence and Ashʿarī school of theology in Khurāsān enjoyed an unprecedented expansion, not only on a local scale, but also outside the region. Naturally, Ḥanafī and Shīʿīa Islam were also able to adapt and integrate themselves within this movement.

Imāmī scholars’ adaptation to the post Būyid environment occurred gradually and some of them inclined to Sufism. Although a number of studies have found that Twelver Shīʿīa Islam and Sufism have common elements such as their love of the Ahl al-bayt and spirituality, it seems that

887 Hamadānī, Jāmiʿ al-tawārīkh (Tārīkh Ismāʿīliyān), 133-134.
889 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 91.
891 Chabbi, J. “Khānḵāh.”
Shīʿia Islam did not have a close connection to Sufism historically until the time of the Great Seljuqs in the 5th/11th century. Despite the similarity between Shīʿia Islam and Sufism, they did not have a close connection in early history of Islam. For example, Pourjavady argues there was a certain amount of hostility toward Sufism among the Twelver Shīʿa as up to the Mongol invasion of Iran. It is evident that some prominent Shīʿī scholars of Rayy at the beginning of the 6th/12th century tended toward Sufism. For example, for the first time in the history of Twelver Shīʿa Islam, it was observed that a prominent scholar such as al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. Bābawayh known as Ḥaskā, who was a distinguished student of al-Ṭūsī and the grandfather of Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, gave lectures in a khānaqāh instead of a mosque or school. According to the Naqḍ, it seems that Ḥaskā’s khānaqāh was an accepted place for Shīʿa in Rayy during the first half of the 6th/12th century and became part of a complex containing several institutions, e.g. masjid-madrasa-mausoleum, after Hasaka’s death. Abd al-Jalīl makes note of two other khānaqāhs where Shīʿa gathered: khānaqāh Amīr Iqābī and khānaqāh ‘Alī-i ʿUthmān. Concerning the latter he states: “‘Alī-i ʿUthmān’s khānaqāh is a place where learned pious and religious descendents of the prophet congregate.” This khānaqāh was built during the reign of sultan Malik-Shāh and it was a popular place. Group prayers and recitation of the whole Qurʾān were taking place there circa 556/1161 when Abd al-Jalīl was

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893 See Pourjavady, “Opposition to Sufism in Twelver Shiism.”
894 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 46 no. 72.
895 This information is based on Ḥaskā’s student Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarī (d. after 553/1158) who was in Rayy from Muḥarram to Rabīʿ al-Awwal 510/June to August 1116. In the chain of narrations of some traditions in his book Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, al-Ṭabarī mentions that his teacher Imam Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. Bābawayh taught him or gave him permission (ijāza) to transmit a tradition in his Khāniqāh in Rayy. al-Ṭabarī, Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, 2:40, 46, 70, 124, 125, 128, 129, 136.
896 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 40.
writing his book. It is certain that the growth of Sufism and the increasing dominance of Persian language in the east and centre of Iran happened during the Seljuk era.

Another aspect of the Shi'i tendency towards Sufism is seen in Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s exegesis. For the first time he incorporated Sufi ideas into Shi'i Qur'ān interpretation. He translated almost all of Tha'labī’s mystical traditions in addition to Imāmī traditions to construct a new type of Imāmī exegesis. This new exegesis was based on the presence of an esoteric form of knowledge in order to adapt to the Rayy environment during the Great Seljuq period. This new tendency among Shi'i scholars of Rayy paved the way for a firm bond between Shi'i Islam and the Sufism during the Il-Khanid and the Timurid periods. However, the mainstream Twelver Shi'as were opposed to Sufism. 'Abd al-Jalīl Qazwīnī Rāzī and Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḫusayn Rāzī are two examples of prominent Imāmī scholars of Rayy during the the 6th/12th century who frequently criticized Sufism in their works. For example, 'Abd al-Jalīl refused to accept that Sufis had the power to perform miracles and his invective remarks about a reputed Sufi are interesting. Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rāzī went further and criticized Sufism by quoting hadiths from the twelve Imāms against Sufis or refusing their miracles by arguing against specific Sufi doctrines and practices in his book Tabṣirat al-ʿawāmm fī maʿrifat maqālāt al-anām.

In sum, Berk-Yāruq’s reign was marked by instability and intergovernmental conflicts, as well as conflicts between different sects and strengthening of the Ismāʿīlīs who fought the Seljuqs armed

897 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 41.
898 Peacock, The Great Seljuk Empire, 319. Peacock is certain about "the growth of Sufism, conversion to Islam and increasing dominance of the Persian language" in the East. However, all of those socio-religious phenomena certainly happen in the central Iran too except conversion to Islam.
899 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 583. 'Abd al-Jalīl states: “That determinist (mujbir) anthropomorphist (mushabbih) master is behind closed doors every day, yet he lies by saying: Shiblī and Junayd and Būbakr Ṭāhirān, and this Bahmānī and that Kharaqānī had miraculous deeds; and what he attributes to each of them is more surprising than ten miracles! For example, one has traveled from Abhar to Mecca in one hour. The other one has not eaten food for forty days; while the other had received dates from the 'Umm Ghaylān tree. One has taken sweets from Hamadān to Mecca while they were still warm; and the other’s house is said to be circumbulated by the Kaaba from above, in a way that people can see it’s the Kaaba.”
with weapons.\textsuperscript{901} Besides, after a few decades of Nizām al-Mulk’s endorsement for Shāfi’ī ism, Shāfi’ī scholars encountered serious problems. For example, in the year 496/1103, following the Shāfi’ī scholar from the school of Nizāiyyah in Iṣfahān, Abū al-Muẓaffar b. Muḥammad b. Thābit Khujandī’s lecture in Rayy, a conflict broke out between Shī‘as and Sunnīs. Meanwhile, as Abū al-Muẓaffar was coming down from the minbar, he was killed by an ‘Alawī Shī‘a named Abū al-Faṭḥ Sijzī; who was of course later murdered by Sunnīs.\textsuperscript{902} The same incident happened in 498/1105, to Khujandī’s student Abū Ja‘far b. al-Mashshāṭ. This Shāfi’ī scholar was also killed like his teacher while he was descending from the minbar. Abū Ja‘far taught and lived in Rayy and his murderer was an Ismā‘īlī man named Muḥammad Damāvandī.\textsuperscript{903}

Finally, in Rabī’ al-thānī 498/Dec 1104 Berk-Yāruq died after his last battle with Muḥammad. At first, his attabeg ʾAyāz tried to put Berk-Yāruq’s four year old son Abū al-Faṭḥ Malik-Shāh into power, and mentioned his name in the Friday sermon in Iṣfahān, Bagdad, Rayy and other cities. However, Abū al-Faṭḥ’s uncle, Muḥammad, captured Abū al-Faṭḥ and made him blind. Muḥammad also killed ʾAyāz and therefore the Great Seljuq kingship was given to Muḥammad.\textsuperscript{904}

\textsuperscript{901} In 495/1102, Berk-Yāruq fought with his brother Muḥammad and the latter occupied Rayy for eight days. On the 9th, Berk-Yāruq expelled him from the city and Muḥammad fled to Iṣfahān (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:332). In the same year, Berk-Yāruq minted a dīnār in Rayy (Miles, \textit{The Numismatic}, 211). In Ṣafar 496/Nov 1102, Yināl b. Anūshtekīn had occupied Rayy in the name of Sulṭān Muḥammad, and the sermon had temporarily been read in the latter’s name there. But it did not last for a long time. In Rabī’ I 496/Jan 1103 Yināl was forced to flee, giving up the city to Basraq b. Basraq, an officer of Berk-Yāruq (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:353). Next year in Rabī’ II 497/January 1104 Berk-Yāruq was in Rayy and he asked Muḥammad to make peace with him. Finally they decided to divide different regions amongst themselves and Rayy remained under Berk-Yāruq’s command (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 10:369).


\textsuperscript{904} Hamadānī, \textit{Jāmi‘ al-tawārikh (Tārīkh Āl Saljūq)}, 46-47.
Muḥammad Tapar took the power in Rayy in 498/1105 and next year minted dīnār in this city with his titles: “Bū Shujāʿ al-Sulṭān al-Muʿāẓzam Ghiyāth al-Dunya wa al-Dīn.” Like the time of his brother Berk-Yāruq, Muḥammad’s era was also marked by unrest, and the difficult measures used against Shīʿas and Ismāʿīlīs did not change. The author of BFR states: “during the time of the last sultan Muḥammad, Malik-Shāh’s son-May God soothe his sleep- if an amīr had a headman, he would bribe the Sunnī scholars to tell the Turks: He is not a Rāfīḍī, he is a Sunnī or Ḥanafī.” Although during Berk-Yāruq’s reign Shiʿas were under less pressure due to Seljuqs internal dissensions, they only awaited the reappearance of their absent Imām to take their revenge from the Seljuqs. Since Sayf al-Dawla Ṣadaqa b. Maṇṣūr b. Dubays al-Asadī (d. 501/1108), the Shiʿite ruler of one of the minor Bedouin dynasties commonly known as the Mazyadids, had gone to Egypt, carrying a white flag, and had killed some of his Sunnī enemies, some Shiʿas of Iran congratulated each other and thought that the deputy of their awaited messianic leader al-Qāʾīm has risen. They said to each other, “now is the time for the family of the Prophet Muḥammad.” However in Rajab 501/Feb 1108 sultan Tapar faced Ṣadaqa, and the small army of the sultan triumphed over the army of Ṣadaqa and consequently, the condition of the Shiʿa as did not change.

Not only Shiʿī scholars, but also some of Rayy’s manāqib khāns (reciters of the virtues of the Imāms) were not safe in this era. The manāqib khāns would recite poems praising the Shiʿī Imāms, especially ʿAlī, and they would describe their many virtues. They would also vilify some of the Prophet’s companions, especially the first three caliphs, in public places like the

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905 Miles, The Numismatic, 212-213.
906 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 123.
907 Goodson, Cities, Texts, and Social Networks, 88.
908 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 514.
bazaars. At times, some of them would lampoon the Sunnī caliphs, some of the Prophet’s wives, or his companions, and as a result they would be prosecuted by the government. Abū Ṭālib and Abū al-ʿAmīd were amongst the most extreme manāqibīs who were prosecuted by the Seljuq Turks in Rayy. These two manāqibīs who would lampoon some of the Prophet’s Companions and reproached ‘Ā’isha and Ḥafṣa (two of the Prophet’s wives) in Rayy, had to escape to Māzandarān. Khātūn SulQumm, Malik-Shāh’s daughter and a zealous Sunnī, was married to Najm al-Dīn Qārūn b. Shahriyār (d.ca.510/1116) and lived in Māzandarān. She ordered the two aforementioned manāqibīs to be arrested. Eventually, Abū Ṭālib manāqibī was arrested and his tongue was cut off. However, they could not apprehend Abū al-ʿAmīd and he died in Sārī.

Aside from these two cases, according to the author of BFR and the verification of ʿAbd al-Jalīl, the Great Seljuqs’ overall policy was to not arrest manāqibīs in Rayy, because they did not want to openly get involved with minor religious disputes among people. According to the BFR, the reason for this policy was that the Turks did not understand Persian poems very well; therefore, they did not get involved with the manāqibīs. However, ʿAbd al-Jalīl believes that the Turks did not want to disrespect the manāqibīs. Both of their reasonings seem incorrect. The Turks had educated Iranian viziers; hence, they could easily understand what the manāqibīs were saying and they were able to stop the manāqibīs all together because they disrespected the caliphs’ and prophet’s wives. It seems as though according to the Seljuq political strategy it was not appropriate to stop all Shīʿī manifestations and rituals, and in the best interest of their monarchy at times they tolerated them. In general, the sacred ritual of reciting the virtues of the Imāms

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910 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 71.
911 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 81.
912 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 118-120.
913 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 281. Also see Sajjādī, “Āl Bāvand”; Rāzpūsh, “Bāvandiyān.”
914 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 118-120. Since the marriage of Khātūn SulQumm and ʿAlāʾ al-dawlah was after 500/1107, Abū Ṭālib must have been arrested after this date.
915 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 118.
reached its peak in Rayy during the Būyid era, while during the Seljuq period it was faced with serious opposition.\textsuperscript{916} Despite the opposition, this ritual continued to grow not only in cities like Qumm, Kāshān, Ābah, Māzandarān and Sabzivār, where the majority of the residents were Shīʿī, but also in other cities like Rayy where there was sectarian diversity in the Seljuq time.

In Shīʿī cities reciting the Imāms’ virtues was considered a job, but in cities like Rayy in addition to a job, it was considered a form of missionary work.\textsuperscript{917} Since reciting the virtues of the Imāms was also a form of religious propagation, manāqibīs would recite their lyrics not only in Shīʿī neighborhoods of Rayy, but also in Sunnī neighborhoods like Quṭb rūda, Barashti Nirṣa, Sarblīsān or even in the old mosque of Rayy, which was mainly in the hands of the Ḥanafīs.\textsuperscript{918} The poets who would write the lyrics were mostly Persian Shīʿī poets such as Amīr Qawāmī Rāzī, the theologian ‘Alī Rāzī, Aḥmadcheh Rāzī, ‘Abd al-Malik Bunā Qummī, As’adī Qummī and Qāʾimī Qummī who lived in Rayy and Qumm. There were also some Sunnī poets like Ẓafar Hamadānī who wrote the manāqibs.\textsuperscript{919} Qawāmī Rāzī is one of the most important Imāmī Persian poets who lived in Rayy during this period, and his collection of poetry still remains.\textsuperscript{920}

Counter to Shīʿī manāqibīs, there were also Sunnī faḍāʾil Khāns (reciters of merits) who would read poems about the merits of the Prophet companions, especially the first caliphs. According to ‘Abd al-Jalīl’s report, during the Seljuq era one of the Sunnī reciters in Rayy who hated the twelve Imāms of the Shī’ as was a man named Bikānak. When people would gather around him, the faḍāʾil khān or those in the crowd would sometimes rebuke the Shī’ as well.\textsuperscript{921} As reported by ‘Abd al-Jalīl one of these rebukes that was heard in the bazaars was:

\textsuperscript{916} Izadī, “Manāqib khānī dar duriyi Āl Būyah.”
\textsuperscript{917} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 85.
\textsuperscript{918} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 82.
\textsuperscript{919} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 249.
\textsuperscript{920} See Qawāmī Rāzī, \textit{Dīwān}.
\textsuperscript{921} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 71-72.
“Thank God we are Muslims. We are neither from Qumm nor from Kāshān.”

According to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, in the second half of the 6th/12th century Shīʿ as constituted most of the population of Rayy. Some neighborhoods in Rayy, such as Muṣlihgāh, Dar Zāmihrān, Dar Rashqān, Dar ʿĀyish (or ʿĀbis) and Dar Jārūb Bandān were only inhabited by Shīʿ as; and each of these neighborhoods had its own features. For example, most Shīʿī descendants of the Prophet lived in the Dar Zāmihrān neighborhood. Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad Kīskī (alive in 477/1084) lived in the Kulāh dūzān neighborhood, which was in close proximity to Dar Zāmihrān, where he also built his school. In the Dar ʿĀyish neighborhood, a number of people were shoemakers while some were military commanders. Some districts were specific to Sunnīs, like Dar Kindah, Bāṭān, Pālāngarān, Dar shahristān. Even though Bāṭān was a Sunnī neighborhood from the 6th/12th century, Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Ḥasanī, who was an Imāmī was buried there.

Naturally, the most important Shīʿī schools were also located in the Shīʿī neighborhoods of Rayy. ʿImād al-Dīn Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarī (alive in 553/1158), the author of Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, who was in Rayy in 510/1116, has emphasized at the beginning of some of his traditions that he studied them under al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b.

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922  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 635.
923  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 493. According to Rāzī Qazwīnī, in this period most Shīʿī scholars were Uṣūlī theologians (see Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 499-500).
924  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 476.
925  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 39-40.
926  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 299, 476.
927  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 476.
928  Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 635. The reason to bury him in a sunnī district is a dream that the Sunnī owner of the garden, ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb had in regards to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Ḥasanī’s burial.
Bābawayh known as Ḥaskā in his khānaqāh. Further more, according to ʿAbd al-Jalīl’s account, during sultan Muḥammad’s reign two schools were built: the school of Ḥaydar Makkī in the neighborhood of Muṣliḥgāh and the school of Rashīd Rāzī in the neighborhood of Darwāza Jārūb Bandān. The school of Rashīd Rāzī was a large school with a comprehensive library. In the first half of the 6th/12th century, two hundred Shīʿī scholars were educated in theology and jurisprudence in this school which is indicative of the fact that in comparison to the time of the former Seljuq sultans pressure on the Shīʿa was steadily decreasing. Dar Muṣliḥgāh was located in the northwest of Rayy, near the shrine of Imāmzada ʿAbdallāh. This region was very important for Shīʿa because of the aggregation of Shīʿa and their schools in this area. Shams al-Dīn Lāgharī is a Sunnī poet who believed that since Dar Muṣliḥgāh was a Shīʿī city it should be burned:

“O’ Majesty, the locations of the Bāṭinīs (Ismāʿīlīs) are Qumm, Kāshān, Ābah and Ṭabarish

Keep the credit for four companions and set fire to these four places

Then set fire to Farāhān and Muṣliḥgāh (Rayy) in order to make your four rewards six.”

After years of research and investigation on the boundaries between Rayy’s neighborhoods, Karīmān roughly defined the Shīʿī and Sunnī neighborhoods in Rayy and he also created a map based on his findings.

It is probable that towards the end of this period Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī as an Imāmī scholar did not participate fully in the intellectual life of Rayy due to the disorder in this city during these times and the oppression of the Shīʿī population of this city by the Seljuq Turks. Therefore, he spent

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929 al-Ṭabarī, Bishārat al-muṣṭafā, 2: 40, 46, 70, 124, 125, 128, 129, 136.
930 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 41.
931 Rāwandī, Rāḥat al-ṣudūr, 394-395.
most of his time writing the Rawḍ al-Jinān. The reason for this assumption is that throughout his exegesis there is no mention of Rayy’s situation and its people. It is important to note that in contrast to scholars like ʿAbd al-Jalīl, who praised the Seljuq Turks, Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī did not admire the Seljuqs, not even in the form of dissimulation. The fact that there is no good mention of the Seljuq Turks in Abū al-Futūḥ’s voluminous exegesis, even though he lived all his life during their rule, suggests that he had little contact with them. It should also be noted that Abū al-Futūḥ only mentions the Turks when he mentions different ethnic groups like Arabs, non-Arabs (ʿAjam), Romans, or Indians.\(^{933}\) In addition to that, in one instance he translates what Tūsī has said about Turks,\(^{934}\) and in two other cases he translates what Thaʿlabī has said about them.\(^{935}\) However, this by no means implies that he praised them; rather it is a form of defamation.

The only time Abū al-Futūḥ mentions the Seljuq Turks, he does so indirectly while he tells the story of the prophet Ibrahim being burnt [Q 21:68] through which he refers to the bad conditions of his time. He says:

I wonder, if you burn, hit, or kill your enemy, will your corrupt belief be corrected? The people of your time do the same thing. When they do not have evidence they preach sedition and if they cannot achieve their purpose by sedition they fight with the maces of the Turks. They want to show they are [like] Turks by abandoning the right. If they cannot make evidence for their purpose, they refer to something impossible as Manṣūr Faqīḥ said [in the following poem]:

The offspring of sin are gathered from each corner they vilify the descendants of the Prophet publicly.

\(^{933}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-Jinān, 5:141; 11:249, 289; 16:73.

\(^{934}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-Jinān, 1:269.

\(^{935}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-Jinān, 16:202; 17:293.
If I tell them your master is 'Alī they band together against me and say: you revile Muʾāwiya.  

In the above passage, Abū al-Futūḥ mentions the two methods through which the Shiʿas’ opponents would deal with the Shiʿas of his era, and perhaps he himself was suffering from it as well. The first method is creating chaos among people and against the Shiʿas, and the second method is using the Seljuq Turks’ power or force against them. Apparently, by mentioning Manṣūr Faqīh’s couplet, Abū al-Futūḥ is comparing the Seljuq Turks’ regime to Muʿāwiyah’s period, when praising 'Alī or his family was interpreted as a resistance towards the governor. Comparing Seljuq period with the Būyid era, especially referring to how Rukn al-dawlah in Rayy would greatly respect al-Ṣadūq, shows that Shiʿī scholars’ eminence had declined sharply in Rayy. In this difficult situation preaching gatherings played an important role in protecting the beliefs of the Shiʿas during this period. For this reason, in his book al-Fihrist, when referring to most Shiʿī scholars, Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī refers to them as preachers. Afandī, the author of Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ, describes an event mentioned in Abū al-Futūḥ’s book, Sharḥ Shihāb al-akhbār (commentary on ‘Shihāb al-akhbār’). While he explains the hadith “God affirms this religion with a dissolute (fājir) person!” which demonstrates an important part of Abū al-Futūḥ’s life. Afandī quotes Abū al-Futūḥ about himself saying:

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Banū al-ʿithm majmūʿ ūn min kulli zāwiyatin  yasubbūna ʾawlāda al-nabīyya ʾalāniyata
ʿidhā qultu mawlākum ʿAlīyun tajammaʿū ʿalayya wa qālū qad shatamta Muʿāwiya.

937 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 567.

The al-Fihrist (or Fihrist ’asmāʾ al-Shiʿah wa muṣannīfīhim) was written by Muntajab al-Dīn Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, as requested by sayyid ʿIzz al-dīn Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad (d.590/1194) the naqīb of Rayy at that time, as an appendix to the Fihrist written by al-Ţūsī (d.460/1068) (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 29-30.) The Fihrist of Muntajab al-Dīn contains important information pertaining to the twelver scholars of Iran in the 5th/11th and 6th/12th century. Muntajab al-Dīn was one of the last remaining members of the Bābawayh family in Rayy. According to his student, Rāfīʿī, Muntajab al-Dīn did not travel a lot; however, he would benefit from any scholar who lived in or would travel to Rayy. He has also written a book on the history of the city of Rayy (al-Rāfīʿī, al-Tadwīn, 3: 221 no. 2610) which is not available to us today; however, its traces are seen until the 9th/15th century in other books that were written after it. For example, part of what al-Subkī (d.771/1369) has written about Abū al-Fadāʾil Mashshāṭ is from Tāriḵ al-Rayy written by Muntajab al-Dīn (Subkī, Ṭabaqāt al-shāfiʿīyyat al-kubrā, 7: 90 N 786.) Similarly, Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d.852/1448) has repeatedly utilized this book, Tāriḵ al-Rayy, in his book Lisān al-Mīzān (Ibn Ḥajar, Lisān al-mīzān, 1:325, 335, 356, 376, 403, 407, 448, 558, 666; 4: 74, 83, 85; 5: 294; 6: 509, 555, 576, 584; 7: 6, 12, 29, 33, 36, 399, 518, 526.)
I used to hold a gathering in my youth, in a caravanserai known as Khān ʿAllān, and a group would meet there. I had gained credibility this way. However, some of my acquaintances were jealous, and would go before the governor and complain about me. The governor, then, prevented me from having these gatherings. There was a man in my neighborhood that had a close relationship with the Sultan. When this incident happened to me, it coincided with the days of Eid and he had a tradition of having drinking gatherings during this period. Once he heard that I was prevented from having my gatherings, he abstained from holding his gathering and immediately got on his horse and went to see the governor to inform him that those who had complained to him were jealous of me and my reputation among people, and what they had told him was untrue. After hearing this, the governor was distressed and immediately came to my house and took me to the [preaching] session. He placed me on the pulpit and he himself sat through my whole lecture until the end. At the end of my talk, I addressed the people and said this is why the prophet said: “God affirms this religion with a libertine.”

Whether this story is true or not, its historical mamory indicates that Seljuqs not only did not respect the Shīʿī scholars, they could also easily stop them from having gatherings in which they could deliver sermons and preach.

Apparently, during the end of the 4th/10th century and the beginning of the 5th/11th century the Sufi khānaqāh had spread extensively. Since the Seljuqs’ general policy was to be considerate of the Sufis, a lot of the khānaqāhs were built right next to the mosques during this period. Hence, for practical reasons some of the educational programs, the group prayers and Qurʾān recitations that were previously held at the mosque were transferred to the khānaqāh. Construction of the khānaqāh continued during sultan Muḥammad Tapar’s reign. The Zanān (Rayyān) khānaqāh was a school built in-between the two large schools of Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Afandī, *Riyāḍ al-ʿUlamāʾ*, 2:177.

939 Munfarid, “Khānaqāh.”
Muḥammad Kīskī and school of Shams al-Dīn Ḥaskā Bābawayh. This khānaqāh was for descendants of the Prophet from among the Kīskī family and their residence.\(^{940}\)

Shīʿas were politically active during this era and some of them who were present in the government system are Saʿd al-Mulk Āwī Rāzī (d.500/1107), Abū Saʿd Hindū b. Muḥammad Qummī (d.506/1113) and Anūshirvān b. Khālid (d. 532/1138). Saʿd al-Mulk Āwī Rāzī, who was a twelver Shīʿī\(^{941}\), began his work as the vizier of Sultan Muḥammad Tapar from the Muḥarram 498/October 1104. In the same year, Abū Saʿd Hindū b. Muḥammad Qummī was appointed as the head of Dīwān Istīfāʾ and was given the title Zayn al-Mulk.\(^{942}\) Two years later, the qādī al-quḍāt of Iṣfahān Abū Ismāʿīl ʿUbaydallah b. ʿAlī Khaṭībī (d.502/1108)\(^{943}\) went to Sultan Muḥammad and told him that Saʿd al-Mulk has a tendency towards the Ismāʿīlī sect and that he corresponded with those in the Dizkhūh castle and he revealed government information to them.\(^{944}\) Following this accusation of betrayal, Sultan Muḥammad first incarcerated Saʿd al-Mulk, and in Shawwāl 500/June 1107 he publicly hanged him along with four of his companions at the gates to Iṣfahān.\(^{945}\) After Saʿd al-Mulk was killed, Zayn al-Mulk Abū Saʿd Hindū b. Muḥammad Qummī was also discharged and incarcerated in the same year.\(^{946}\) The discharge of Saʿd al-Mulk and Zayn al-Mulk diminished the presence of the Shīʿas in the government of Sultan Muḥammad; however, their presence was so extensive that after Saʿd al-Mulk was hanged, Abū al-Mafākhir Shams al-Dīn Rāzī went in front of Sultan Muḥammad and loudly recited the following poem about Zayn al-Mulk’s incarceration:

Saʿd and Bū Saʿd were your companions when you put the crown on your head

\(^{940}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḥ*, 40.

\(^{941}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḥ*, 130.

\(^{942}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḥ*, 89-92; Iqbāl, *Vizārat dar ʿahd salāṭīn buzurg Saljūqī, 176-177.*


\(^{944}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḥ*, 128.


\(^{946}\) Iqbāl, *Vizārat dar ʿahd salāṭīn buzurg Saljūqī, 176.*
You had to hang both of them You had to take a firm hold of both of them.  

The Shīʿī poet, Abū al-Mafākhir, possessed a great status with sultan Muḥammad and his son Masʿūd, and he had repeatedly expressed his objection to him in this manner. During Sultan Masʿūd’s time, when he and his army stopped in Rayy on their way to Māzandarān, Sultan Masʿūd ordered his troops to release their livestock in the city’s farms. At that time, Abū al-Mafākhir wrote another piece addressing the Sultan regarding the injustice against the people, and he sent the poem to the Sultan. After reading his poem, the Sultan ordered his men to stop damaging the people’s farms.  

Of course there were other Shīʿī poets in Sultan Muḥammad’s court like amīr Iqbālī who was Sultan Muḥammad’s courtier and poet. One of the indications of his presence in sultan Muḥammad’s court was that during this time a khānaqāh known as the khānaqāh of amīr Iqbālī was built for the Shīʿīs of Rayy.  

Another influential person in the government of sultan Muḥammad who had tendencies towards Twelver Shīʿa Islam was Sharaf al-Dīn Anūshirvān. During the vizierate of Ḍiyāʾ al-Mulk Aḥmad b. Niẓām al-Mulk (500-504/1107-1110), he was appointed as the head of Dīwān ʿArḍ and towards the end of Sultan Muḥammad’s life he was given the unofficial power to manage the affairs by the Seljuq bureaucrats. Anūshirvān was originally from Fīn Kāshān but he was born into a Shīʿī family in Rayy in the year 459/1067. Later on he became a Dīwān sālār and

947 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 130-131.
948 Dulatshāh Samarqandī, Tadhkirat al-Shuʿrā’, 62.
949 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 249.
950 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 41.
951 Bundārī, Zubdat al-nusra, 97.
953 al-Samʿānī, al-Ansāb, 10:283.
vizier in the Seljuq government, and held significant influence in the ‘Abbāsid caliphate, which will be discussed later.

During first years of Sultan Muḥammad’s reign, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Dihistānī (d.503/1109), a Ḥanafī jurist, was the Chief Justice of Rayy. Afterwards, in 502/1108 ʿImād al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Astarābādī (d.541/1146) was appointed by the judge Muḥammad b. Naṣr Harawī as the Caliph’s representative, and he came to Rayy. He was a Muʿtazilī and was the greatest legal scholar of the Ḥanafīs in Iraq ‘Ajam during his own time. Astarābādī was the qādī al-quḍāt in Rayy and resided there. He respected the descendants of the Prophet and the Shiʿa, and was also likewise respected by them. Furthermore, some of Rayy’s Zaydī and Imāmī Shiʿa as such as Sayyid Abū al-Faṭḥ Vanakī, judge Sayyid Abū Turāb ʿAbbāsī, Abū al-Mafākhir Qazwīnī and the judge Abū al-Maḥāsin Kiyākī were trusted by him. However, it appears that since there were many sects in Rayy, Astarābādī only accepted the testimony of the people of each sect, especially the Shiʿa, for people of other sects not their own. His son Zāhir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Astarābādī, was his vicegerent in judiciary affairs.

3.3.6 The reign of Sanjar b. Malik-Shāh in Rayy (r. 511-552/1118-1157)

After the death of sultan Muḥammad b. Malik-Shāh in Dhu al-Hijja 511/April 1118, the Seljuqs were once again faced with internal conflicts over his successor. Although Muḥammad Tapar appointed his son Maḥmūd the next Sultān, his brother Sanjar, who had controlled the eastern

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957 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 612-613; Qawāmī Rāzī, Diwān, 158.
958 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 644.
959 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 126, 206.
960 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 642-643.
961 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 59-60.
provinces since 490/1097, came from Khurāsān to Rayy to take the throne. Sanjar defeated Maḥmūd in 512/1118-19 and became overlord of the Great Seljuq house. Sanjar was not able to stay in Rayy because he felt insecure away from Khurāsān which was under the threat of military invasion of Yamīn al-Dawla Bahram Shāh Ghaznavī (d.548/1154). Therefore, Sanjar made Maḥmūd ruler of the Irāq branch of the family; however, he took some estates in every major city to be in contact with the western part of his territory and made three cities his own base: Rayy, Sāwah and Khuy. In the same year, Rabī’ II 512/Aug 1118 the ‘Abbāsid caliph al-Mustaẓhir bi-llāh died and his son al-Mustarshid bi-llāh (512-529/1118-1135) succeeded him. The reign of sultan Sanjar was the consolidation of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī state in Iran and Nizārīs had entered a new period in their relations with the Seljuqs; however, they encountered serious difficulties in Rayy. This city was important for Nizārīs because it was located at the center of the northern part of Iran and it was where Ḥasan Šabbāḥ joined the Ismāʿīlīs and it appeared to be a suitable place for daʿwa. Sanjar left Rayy’s affairs in the hand of one of his generals named Muqarrab Jawhar who was an Abyssinian servant. Jawhar appointed his own slave ʿAbbās, as the governor of Rayy and left Rayy’s affairs in his hands. Rayy’s affairs were practically under the supervision of Amīr ʿAbbās until the year 534/1140 when Jawhar was assassinated by an Ismāʿīlī, while that Ismāʿīlī was dressed in female attire. After this incident, Amīr ʿAbbās was officially appointed as the governor of Rayy by Sultan Sanjar, and all Rayy’s affairs were fully in his control until 541/1146, even though he had unofficially been in control since 513/1119-20. In taking revenge for Jawhar’s blood, Amīr ʿAbbās massacred the Nizārīs of Rayy and according to Bundārī he killed more than one hundred thousand Ismāʿīlīs (mass

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966 Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nafthat al-maṣdūr*, 145.
967 Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs*, 357.
genocide). Then he built a minaret from their skulls and sent a *muʿadhdhin* to call the Muslims to prayer from its top. In the year 536/1142, Ibrāhīm Sahlawī, the leader to the Ismāʿīlīs, was killed and Amīr ʿAbbās’s sons even burnt his corpse in its coffin.

As I mentioned earlier, Rayy was such an important city for Sanjar that he chose it as his base between Baghdad and Khurāsān and appointed one of his generals as its governor. In the year 536/1142 Sultan Masʿūd went to Rayy from Hamadān because Sultan Sanjar was angry with the governor of Rayy, ʿAbbās, and Sanjar asked Masʿūd to invade Rayy. The reason for his anger was his defeat at the battle with Khārazm-Shāh and the absence of any support from ʿAbbās. Consequently, Sanjar ordered Masʿūd to capture ʿAbbās and take Rayy from him. As soon as Sultan Masʿūd arrived in Rayy, ʿAbbās sent him extravagant offerings and welcomed him. Sultan Masʿūd decided that removing ʿAbbās from Rayy was inadvisable because he was warlike and doing so would bring Masʿūd into disrepute in the public eye. After a while, Sultan Masʿūd returned to Baghdad. Later Amīr ʿAbbās was killed in 541/1146 by Sultan Masʿūd and amīr Āqsunqur Fīrūz kūhī who served in ʿAbbās army was chosen as the governor of Rayy.

In this period the Twelvers Shīʿas tried, more than ever before, to separate themselves from the Ismāʿīlīs in order to avoid harm from the Seljuqs. To that end, Imāmī scholars began writing books that would introduce the Ismāʿīlīs and their leaders. One such example is the book of ʿAbd al-Jalīl about which he says: “in a brief answer we gave last year to the *Malāḥida* and their doctrinal falsity, which was sent to us from Qazwīn, we have given the names, titles and kinship

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of these discredited and false propagandists.”\textsuperscript{975} Moreover, Imāmī scholars would enter debates against Ismāʿīlīs. In other words, after a period of restriction under the early Seljuqs, Imāmī Shīʿas were gaining power in the first half of the 6\textsuperscript{th}/12\textsuperscript{th} century in Rayy. This period was a time of sectarian revival and controversy in this city which often resulted in religious disputes and debates among scholars. Each Islamic school of Shāfiʿī, Ḥanafī, Imāmī, Ismāʿīlī and Zaydī propagated its doctrine and they had their own religious centres.\textsuperscript{976} The \textit{Naqḍ} is an example of such disputes which brings to mind a number of such discussions and biased controversies in Rayy during the Great Seljuq period in detail.\textsuperscript{977}

Twelvers Shīʿas had a strong presence in Sanjar’s government and two out of six viziers of Sultan Sanjar were Imāmīs. Sharaf al-Dīn Abū Ṭāhir Mahīsah Qummī\textsuperscript{978} and Muʿīn al-Dīn Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Faḍl Kāshī (d.521/1127) were Sultan Sanjar’s viziers and were trusted by him.\textsuperscript{979} Abū Naṣr Kāshī was Sanjar’s vizier from Ṣafar 518/April 1124 to Ṣafar 521/March 1127. During this time the Twelver Shīʿas had a better status and were under less pressure. Therefore, government officials asked Kāshī to make peace with the Ismāʿīlīs; however, he refused and continued his oppression of them. Furthermore, he imposed heavy taxes on the Ismāʿīlīs and captured and killed thousands of them until 521/1127 when he was killed by an Ismāʿīlī man.\textsuperscript{980}

\textsuperscript{975} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 518-519.

\textsuperscript{976} Zaydīs were present in Rayy at this time along with other sects. Daftary believes that it was under the Būyids that Rayy became an important center of Zaydī learning (Daftary, “Sectarian and National Movements in Iran, Khurasan and Transoxania during Umayyad and Early ʿAbasid times,” 54) and according to the \textit{Naqḍ}, this city remained as a major center for them during the first half of 6th/12th century because there were many Zaydīs inhabiting the city including many descendents of the Prophet and scholars. ʿAbd al-Jafīl writes the following on the Zaydīs: “[Zaydīs] operate prominent schools. Many of the sublime jurists as well as naqībs and leaders have descended from the Prophet and follow the Zaydī school of thought. For instance, imam Abū al-Fatḥ Vanakī and Khāja imam Bū jaʿfar Gīl who sit above all of the Ḥanafīs are just and pious.” (Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 457.)

\textsuperscript{977} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 154-155, 488-489, 490-491.

\textsuperscript{978} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 237.

\textsuperscript{979} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 282.

\textsuperscript{980} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 143.
Murtaḍā Qummī’s grandson, Sharf al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Ṭālī (504-566) who had left school at the age of twenty two, traveled from Qumm to Rayy during Sanjar’s time and was settled there. He had deposed Sayyid Qāsim Ḥasanī from the *Niqābat* (the office of a naqīb), and took his place as the chief Naqīb in Iran. He was always envied and slandered by chamberlains, royal family members and Naqībs. Sharf al-Dīn’s kinship with the Seljuqs ensured his position. His mother was ʿĀyisha khāṭūn, Alp-Arslān’s daughter, Malik-Shāh’s sister and Sultan Sanjar’s aunt. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī states that Sanjar gave him priority over all the Seljuq children. He was much respected and the Seljuq sultans sat him on the throne beside them and they sought blessing in being with him, his father, and his children. Qawāmī Rāzī was a prominent poet in the 6th/12th century in Rayy, and he wrote many poems in his admiration. Sharf al-Dīn Muḥammad was one of the credible Shīʿī theologians and scholars of Hadith of his time. He gave lessons and had a great library in Rayy. Muntajab al-Dīn Rāzī and ʿUmar b. Ḥusayn, father of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, were his students. He was very vigilant when it came to doctrinal issues and when he met with some prominent Imāmī scholars and they discussed the book BFR, he asked them to urge ʿAbd al-Jalīl Qazvīnī to write an accurate book in response to BFR in a way that nobody could deny.

Muʿtazilīs were also active during this time in Rayy. According to Shahrīstānī’s (d.548/1153) account, most of Muʿtazilīs living in Rayy and its surroundings were Najjārī Ḥanafīs in the first half of the 6th/12th century. They denied the possibility of seeing God with one’s eyes, and they

987 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 8. The Seljuqs and Imāmī Naqībs had a good relationship in Rayy to the extent that when Ṭālī al-Dīn Takish Khārazm Shāh (r. 568-596/1173-1200) conquered Rayy in 590/1194 and after that entered Baghdad, he killed sayyid ʿIzz al-Dīn Yaḥyā the son of sayyid Sharf al-Dīn Muḥammad who was the chief Naqīb and one of the Imāmī scholars because Takish thought he was supporting the Seljuqs.
believed that the Qur’ān was created.\(^\text{988}\) However, Rayy’s powerful Ḥanafīs, who apparently consisted of Maturidis, tried to force the Najjārī Ḥanafīs to join their school of thought. ʿAbd al-Jalīl states: “in the time of Qashqar and Amīr ʿAbbās they summon Ḥanafīs to the presence of the sultan several times to testify to seeing God with one’s eyes and to write that the Qur’ān is eternal. Those Ḥanafīs such as Abū al-Futūḥ Naṣrābādī, Maḥmūd Ḥaddā Ḥanīfī and others were refuted.”\(^\text{989}\) However, it should be noted that the Seljuqs did not torture the Ḥanafīs like they did the Shī`as and Shāfi`īs.

In the year 522/1128 sultan Sanjar departed Khurāsān with a huge army and went towards Rayy. The cause behind Sultan Sanjar’s action was that Dubays b. Ṣadaqa and Malik Ṭughril II went to Sultan Sanjar and told him that the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Mustarshid billah and sultan Maḥmūd had united against him. Sultan Sanjar sent a messenger to Sultan Maḥmūd who was in Hamadān and called him to his presence. Sultan Sanjar’s main objective was to find out if Sultan Maḥmūd still obeyed his command, or if as assumed by Dubays, he had turned his back on him. When Sultan Sanjar’s messenger arrived in Maḥmūd’s presence and delivered the message, Sultan Maḥmūd immediately rushed to his uncle, Sultan Sanjar. When Maḥmūd arrived in Rayy, Sultan Sanjar ordered his troops to go to meet him and welcome him. Sanjar sat Maḥmūd beside him on the throne and honoured him. Sanjar stayed with Sultan Maḥmūd in Rayy until Dhū al-Ḥijja 522/December 1128 and then returned to Khurāsān.\(^\text{990}\)

Imāmī scholars of this time in Rayy were divided into two groups: Uṣūlī and Akhbārī. Uṣūlīs were the followers of Baghdad and Najaf theologians and jurists such as al-Mufīd, al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī in particular. Akhbārīs were mostly follower of al-Ṣadūq ibn Bābawayh. In order to be accepted among Sunnīs in general and the Seljuqs in particular, Uṣūlīs had to stay away from the Akhbārīs and to avoid any kind of conflict with the Sunnīs. In this regard, sometimes Rayy’s Imāmī leaders would ask their scholars to write a book about one of the topics of conflict among Shī`as and Sunnīs; for example, the companions’ or the prophet’s wives’ place among the


\(^{989}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 47.

Imāmīs. Moreover, before the distribution of the book among the people, they would take the book to the Sunnī scholars to get their approval on the book. An example would be the book of ‘Abd al-Jalīl that was written in 533/1139 during the time of Amīr ‘Abbās. ‘Abd al-Jalīl stated:

I have written a book to absolve ‘Ā’ishah [of the accusations of the Shi‘as] at the request of the leader of the descendants of the Prophet and Imāmī Shī‘as, Sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn b. Shams al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī –may God sanctify their souls–. The qāḍī al-quḍāt ’Imād al-Dīn al-Ḥasan Astarābādī -may God illuminate his tomb- read this book carefully and wrote an excellent foreword with complete approval. The original copy of this book has been taken to Amīr ‘Abbās’ treasury, and there are other copies if they seek them. They can read it to learn about the beliefs of the Imāmī Shī‘as about the Prophet’s wives, so they will not make false accusations about them.991

Evidently, ‘Abd al-Jalīl has talked about all the wives of the prophet in his book and he has defended them.

These books were written to achieve a better relationship with the Sunnīs. In fact, this approach was based on the approach of the Uṣūlī movement in Baghdad but it was more lenient toward Sunnī Islam. For example, al-Ṭūsī mentions a tradition in his book al-Tahdhīb concerning ‘Ā’isha, the Prophet’s wife, that Imām al-Ṣādiq used to curse four men and four women after his prayers. The narrator says that “Imām al-Ṣādiq used to mention their names; however, in considering my own interest I have used the terms fulān and fulānah.”992 Before al-Ṭūsī’s narration, this hadith was also narrated by Kulaynī in the book al-Kāfī993 and in fact the leaders of both Shī‘i schools of thought, Baghdadī and Qummī, have accepted it. This shows that apparently before the Seljuqs’ dominance, cursing both ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah was a part of the Imāmīs’ belief; however, during the Seljuq era people like ‘Abd al-Jalīl tried to change this view and present ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah like the prophet’s other wives. ‘Abd al-Jalīl has done the exact

991 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 258, 320-321.
same thing in his other book *Miṣṭāḥ al-rāḥāt fī funūn al-ḥikāyāt*⁹⁹⁴ to defend ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb’s devotion and to create convergence with Sunnis, and to avoid offending the Imāmīs opponents.

One of Rayy’s governors in this time was Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Khāzin.⁹⁹⁵ Khāzin was Muʿīn al-Dīn Abū Naṣr Kāshī’s servant and ʿAbd al-Jalīl believes that he was a fanatical Sunni.⁹⁹⁶ Khāzin became Sanjar’s treasurer and was Rayy’s governor for a long time. Later, for unknown reasons, he was incriminated by Sultan Sanjar and was jailed in a castle near Qazwīn. He was taken out of jail during sultan Masʿūd’s time, and was given the vizierate of Sultan Masʿūd.⁹⁹⁷ Khāzin was Masʿūd’s vizier for seven months in the year 533/1139, but was killed by Sultan Masʿūd’s amirs near Zanjān.⁹⁹⁸ Moreover, towards the end of Sanjar’s reign, the son of Muʿīn al-Dīn Kāshī, named Fakhr al-Dīn Kāshī, was appointed as Rayy’s governor by Sanjar himself.⁹⁹⁹ During this period the Imāmīs have regained their academic status in Rayy.¹⁰⁰⁰

This period was again marked by the Ḥanafīs’ dominance and radicalism. Apparently, the reason behind this was that the pundits and politicians such as Najm al-Dīn Rashīd Jāmahdār, Jamāl al-Dīn Iqbāl Jāndār, Sharf al-Dīn Gird bāzū, Masʿūd Bilālī, ʿImād al-Dīn Ẓawāb, Shams al-Dīn Kāfūr, Amīn al-Dīn Faraj in sultan Masʿūd’s administration were all dogmatic and powerful Ḥanafīs who had animosity with the Ashʿarīs. They believed that by oppressing the Ashʿarīs they were getting closer to God. They harassed sectarian leaders of all non-Ḥanafī sects, especially

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⁹⁹⁵ Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nasfhat al-maṣḍūr*, 276
⁹⁹⁶ Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 142.
⁹⁹⁷ Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nasfhat al-maṣḍūr*, 133.
⁹⁹⁸ Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nasfhat al-maṣḍūr*, 134.
⁹⁹⁹ Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nasfhat al-maṣḍūr*, 213.
¹⁰⁰⁰ For example, Abū Saʿd Yaḥyā b. Ṭāhir Rāzī (d.after 537/1143) who was born into a Muʿtazilite family had developed inclinations towards Shīʿa Islam. *al-Qurashī al-ḥanafī, al-Jawāhir al-muḍīʾ a fī ṭabaqāt al-ḥanafiya*, 3:591 n 1802.
those of the Ashʿarī school of thought; or they would banish them from their towns. As a result, in the year 536/1142, Shāfiʿī scholars in Rayy such as Abū al-Faḍāʾil Saʿd b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. al-Mashshāṭ (d.546/1152) and Abū Saʿd ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Aḥmad al-Wazzān were forced in sultan Masʿūd’s presence to give written confessions repudiating their Ashʿarī doctrines and cursing al- Ashʿarī.

The presence of the twelver debaters in Rayy in this period indicates that they felt a serious need to engage in debate with their opposition, to avoid being eliminated in the dominantly Sunnī environment of Rayy of that time. For example, Najīb al-Dīn was an Imāmī theologian, competent in legal theory who was a skilled debater such that he was invited to chair others’ debates in Rayy. In a debate between Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Khurāsānī and Abū al-Faḍāʾil al-Mashshāṭ about the necessity of knowledge, judge Ẓahīr al-Dīn, Bū Naṣr Hisinjānī, and Najīb al-Dīn were chosen as the debate moderators. Rashīd al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. Masʿūd b. Ṣamʿānī, al-Taḥbīr, 1:295-296 n 228; al-Dhahabī, Tārikh al-Islam, 37:241-242 n 318) and had written a book about the concept of seeing God. Saʿd b. Abī Ṭālib the Imāmī theologian in Rayy, known as Najīb al-Dīn, wrote another book called Naqḍ Masʾalat al-Ruʿyat al-anbiyāʾ in refutation of sayyid al-Murtaḍā ʿAlam al-Hudāʾs book Tanzīh al-anbiyāʾ. Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 15.

Once in the presence of Sultan Masʿūd and other government officials, the Ḥanafī qāḍī al-quḍāt Ẓahīr al-Dīn Nuʿmān al-Zamān said that Mujbira/Mujabbira (Ashʿarīs) and Malāḥida (Ismāʿīlīs)

1001 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 490.
1002 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 68 no. 185; Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 227.
1004 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 491-492.
1005 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 77 no. 226.
1006 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 227.
1007 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 40.
are on a par and forced the leader of the Ashʿarīs in Rayy to write a renunciation of his belief. Abū Saʿd ʿAbd al-Karīm b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm Wazzān Rāzī was the leader of the Shāfiʿī school in Rayy during this period. The Wazzān family was known for its grace and knowledge in Rayy and one after another the members of this family became the leaders of the Shāfiʿīs in this city. At this time, the leader of the Shīʿas in Rayy was Sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn, the son of Sayyid Shams al-Dīn ʿAlawī. The fact that he was a mediator in some interfaith problems illustrates his position among all faith communities in Rayy during this period.

Most officials and influential people during the Great Seljuq period were of the Ḥanafī school of thought. Other Islamic sects, especially the Ismāʿīlīs and to some extent the Imāmīs were marginalized. Hence, during this era the administration and military were always in the hands of either the Ḥanafīs or the Shāfiʿīs. However, since the Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs were always in conflict, especially in Rayy, and these religious conflicts would transform into social and political tensions, the Shīʿas were naturally drawn into the conflicts as well. Imāmī Shīʿas would usually find their place in the government by disguising themselves as Sufis in a form of dissimulation. Unlike Imāmīs, the Ismāʿīlīs would engage in armed combat or assassination of officials and they would not differentiate between the Sunnī Seljuqs, ʿAbbāsid caliphs or the Imāmī viziers. When it came to religious beliefs, Imāmī Shīʿas were in conflict with Ismāʿīlīs

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1008 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 221-222, 603. ʿAbd al-Jalīl describes a more detailed account of this incident in Rayy. He states: “When Sultan Masʿūd b. Muḥammad -may God inspire him with His proof- came to Rayy, during the time of the amīr ʿAbbās-God’s mercy upon him- Sunnī leaders and imāms who were legal scholars such as Bū Saʿd Wazzān, Būṣaʿdāʾ il Mashshāṭṭ and Bū Naṣr Hisinjānī [who was referred to as Sharaf al-aʾimmah means the most noble of imams], who make manifest the secrets of the Khājah’s [author of the BFR] creed for sultan, amīrs, viziers, masters and servants. They imprisoned those two famous persons in amīr ʿAbbās’s house. Subsequently, the Sunnīs and [especially] Ashʿarīs caused mayhem. In that event, two or three of the rioters and violaters were hanged. After 3 months of imprisonment and suffering and spending money in vain, the leader of the descendants of the Prophet and the Shīʿas sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn –God’s mercy upon him- attempted to help them and commiserated with them. The great chief judge Ḥasan Astarābādī -may God be pleased with him- was secluded. Finally, Bū Naṣr Hisinjānī came before the sultan, descendants of the Prophet, religious scholars, judges, masters and reliable persons. Some issues which were against the people of justice (Ahl ʿadl)’s beliefs (and these beliefs were unique to Ahl ʿadl) such as knowing of God by reasoning, infallibility of prophets, rejection of unbearable duties, reward for good deeds etc. were written and proposed to them. They converted and signed a statement rejecting their former beliefs.” (Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 155; See also 488-490.)


1010 Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl nasihat al-masdūr*, 318.

and this conflict began back to the second half of the 2nd/8th century. As a result, Imāmīs would try to join forces with the Sunnī Seljuq government to supress the Ismāʿīlīs. Some Imāmīs like Rustam b. ʿAlī b. Shahriyār of ʿTabaristān killed many Ismāʿīlīs.1012

Anūshīravān b. Khālid was one of the Imāmī officials who was mentioned previously during Muḥammad b. Malik-Shāh’s reign. In the year 521/1127, he was appointed as Sultan Maḥmūd’s vizier. Then towards the end of 526/1132, he became the vizier to the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Mustarshid and in the year 529/1135, he began his work as the vizier to Sultan Masʿūd1013 and both Shīʿas and Sunnīs agreed on his merits.1014 Furthermore, since he witnessed all the events of this period in his role as Dīwān sālār and vizier, he wrote a book of the Seljuq history entitled Naḍḥat al-maṣdūr fī ṣudūr zamān al-futūr wa futur zamān al-ṣudur, which covers events until the year 521/1127.1015

Abū al-Futūḥ wrote his commentary (or the most part of it) during the reign of Sanjar.1016 Sanjar’s reign in Seljuq history was the most flourishing time of Persian poetry in Seljuq dynasty to the extent that Shafīʿī kadkanī states, “In all Seljuq family, Sanjar was the most [and only] advocate of Persian poetry and literature.”1017 In his article, Ḥakīmī counted six poets who praised Sanjar: Sūzanī 3 poems, Ḥasan Ghaznavī 3 poems, Amīr Muʿizzī 59 poems, ʿAbd al-wāṣīʿ al-jabalī 22 poems, Anvarī 16 poems, and Adīb Ṣābir 12 poems. In addition to those poems, some books in Persian such as Naṣīḥat al-mulūk Ghazālī dedicated to Sanjar.1018 This acceptance of Persian by Sanjar was like announcing of Persian as the official language of the

1012 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 121. According to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, “twenty seven thousand noteworthy Mulḥid (Ismāʿīlīs) were killed by his blade.”

1013 Bundarī, Zubdat al-nuṣra, 139-140, 162-163, 169; Khaṭībī, “Anūshīravān ibn Khālid.”


1015 Abū Rajāʾ Qummī, Dhayl naṭḥat al-maṣdūr, 13; Khaṭībī, “Anūshīravān ibn Khālid.”

1016 Nizāmī Ṭughānī, Chahār maqāla, 69. Nizāmī Ṭughānī states that from all the Seljuq sultans, Ṭughānshāh (Malikshāh's brother) was fond of Persian poetry.

1017 Shafīʿī Kadkanī, Zamīneh, 266.

1018 Ḥakīmī, "Saljūqiyyān", 79-83.
state which encouraged Maybūdī and Abū al-Futūḥ to write their commentaries *Kashf al-asrār wa-ʿuddat al-abrār* and *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* in Persian. It is interesting that both authors named their commentaries in Arabic.

### 3.3.7 The reign of Muḥammad II b. Maḥmūd II b. Muḥammad I (Tapar) b. Malik-Shāh (r. 547-554/1153-1159)

Rayy came under the control of Ḥusām al-Dīn Sunqur Inānj-Beg in 548/1153-54. He was one of sultan Sanjar’s slaves and his amīr in Khurāsān who escaped to Rayy after the battle between Sanjar and the Ghuzz.\(^\text{1019}\) As I mentioned earlier, during this period an Ashʿarī scholar who accused Imāmīyya of blasphemy with his abusive language wrote his book BFR in Rayy. In this book he refers to his own time and states, “God be praised, the east and the west is full of the companions of Bū Ḥanīfah and Shāfiʿī; the caliph, Sultan, amīrs, judges, imāms, jurists, ascetics and Sufis from the people of the Sunna and the community”;\(^\text{1020}\) however, he repeatedly complains about the influence of the Imāmī Shīʿas during that time, and their unanimity. He states that “If something happens to a Rāfiḍī, they will come together to help him, but if something happens to a Ḥanafī or Shāfiʿī, everyone will come together and raid his house and take vengeance for his religion.”\(^\text{1021}\) He emphasises that the Imāmī Shīʿas have gained power and adds “nowadays, the Turks’ tribal leaders, chamberlains, doorkeepers, cooks and servants are all Rāfiḍīs and their scholars answered peoples’ religious questions based on the Imāmī school of thought, and they hold their ceremony without any fear or dissimulation.”\(^\text{1022}\) The author of the BFR repeats often that Imāmī Shīʿas expressed their beliefs freely without dissimulation and he states, “they [Imāmīs] have never been this fearless and powerful and they speak freely. The reason behind this is the fact that there is no place belonging to the Turks except there are ten or fifteen Rāfiḍīs in power, and the courts’ secretaries are all of their own

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\(^{1020}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 495.

\(^{1021}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 127.

\(^{1022}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 123.
This statement by the author of the BFR is not consistent with ʿAbd al-Jalīl’s method in writing his book the *Naqḍ*. ʿAbd al-Jalīl tries to show that the Seljuqs did not have any serious animosity towards the Imāmī Shīʿa and he often prays for Seljuqs both living and dead, and admires their management, wisdom, and power.\(^{1024}\)

It is clear that in this time the Imāmī Shīʿa of Rayy were not under pressure, like they were during the time of Ṭughril-Beg, Alp-Arsān and Malik-Shāh and thus they were not constrained in a way that they could not voice their concerns. However, in order to explicitly express their religious beliefs, it was still necessary to practice dissimulation. An example of the need for dissimulation in this period is Muntajab al-Dīn ʿAlī b. ʿUbaydallāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. Bābawayh al-Qummī (d. c. 600/1204), the author of *al-Fihrist*. He was born in Rayy, the same city as ʿAbd al-Jalīl and they lived in the same era. However, he taught in a way that ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Rāfīʿī, one of his Sunnī students in 585/1189, writes the following statement about him in his book entitled *al-Tadwīn fī akhbār al-Qazwīn*: “Ibn Bābawayh was attributed to Shīʿa Islam (*al-tashayyuʿ*) and that is the religion of his fathers, and their origin is from Qumm; however, I see shaykh [Muntajab al-Dīn] far from it (*al-tashayyuʿ*). He searched for the virtues of the companions, and he insisted on narrating their virtues. He even exaggerated in honouring the Righteous Caliphs.”\(^{1025}\) It is clear that Muntajab al-Dīn Rāzī, who was a student of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, belonged to a new generation of crypto-Imāmi Shīʿites practising *taqiyya*.

The fact that Imāmī Shīʿa as were able to freely hold mourning assemblies for Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī in Rayy is one of the indications that there was less political pressure on them during this period. The author of the BFR says the following in this regard: “this group (twelvers) grieves on the day of ʿĀshūrā, upholds the tradition of mourning, and renews the afflictions of the martyrs of Karbalāʾ on the pulpits. They tell a story and the scholars will uncover their head, the commoners will rip their clothes, and women will scratch their faces and weep.”\(^{1026}\) In this

\(^{1023}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 86.

\(^{1024}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 16, 43, 118.


\(^{1026}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 403.
period, Shāfiʿīs and Ḥanafīs would also hold mourning ceremonies in all the principal mosques on the day of ʿĀshūrā. It is important to note that in the 6th/12th century the congregational mosques in Rayy were: Old mosque, Rūdah mosque, Ṭughril mosque and Sarhang mosque. When talking about these mosques ʿAbd al-Jalīl states: “In all Muslim cities there are two or three congregational mosques. For example, one of the great cities in the world is Rayy, and in this city there is a congregational mosque in Rūdah for Shāfiʿīs. The Ṭughril mosque belongs to the pure Ḥanafīs without betraying [?], and the three old mosques built by the Shiʿī Daylamites. It is said that one of those three mosques belongs to a Ḥanafi sect called the Najjāriyya.” Therefore, the Najjāriyya maintained their position in Rayy though they apparently no longer produced distinguished theologians. They were still in control of the old congregational mosque built by al-Mahdī, while the other Ḥanafīs assembled in a newer mosque built by Ṭughril-Beg. It is interesting that the Ḥanafīs did not all pray in one location together. Al-Shahristānī (d. 548/1153) lived in this period and according to him, “Most Muʿtazilīs who lived in Rayy and its surrounding areas practiced the religion of the Najjāriyya even though they consist of different subgroups under this name.” It seems that those Ḥanafite in Rayy who believed in Muʿtazilī kalām were adherents of Najjāriyya.

The congregational mosques in Rayy were gathering places for different faith communities. With all sectarian dissociation, on the ʿĀshurā of 555/1160 after the prayer in the old mosque, Khwājah Tāj who was an Ashʿari Ḥanafi, mentioned the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥusayn with the permission of the judge of that time. The old mosque was the oldest congregational mosque in Rayy, and it was built in the year 158/775 as ordered by the ʿAbbāsid caliph al-Mahdī.

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1027 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 652.
1028 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 604.
1029 al-Shahristānī, al-Milal wa al-nihal, 37.
1030 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 604-605.
1031 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 406.
1032 al-Balādhurī, Futūḥ al-buldān, 311.
was still standing until the 6th/12th century, and Rayy’s judge, elites, and Amīrs would pray in it. The Ğughril mosque was also very vast and on a day of ṬāṬūr, the Ḥanafī judge ‘Umdah Sāwahī (d.567/1172) recited the maqtał of Imām al-Ḥusayn in front of twenty thousand people in a way that people became so emotional that they uncovered their heads and tore their garments. Sarhang mosque or New mosque was built in Rayy by the Seljuq officer Sāwutkīn during Malik-Shāh’s reign for the Sunnī traditionists (Aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth), because they did not have a mosque to hold their Friday prayers in. On the day of ṬāṬūr, Imām Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad b. Ḥafadah (d. 571 or 573/1175 or 1177) the great Shāfi‘ī scholar told the story of Karbalā and while doing so he favoured Imām Ḥusayn over ‘Uṭhmān, and called Mu’āwiyyah a tyrant.

As was mentioned, the Shī‘ as, Ḥanafīs and Shāfi‘īs held mourning ceremonies during Muharram in Rayy. One of the Shāfi‘īs ceremonies was held for the wives of the amīrs and it was performed by Shahāb Mashshāṭ. In this ceremony most of the audience was Sunnī, and therefore at the beginning of Muharram he would tell the story of ‘Uṭhmān’s killing, then ‘Alī’s, and then on the day of ṬāṬūr he would tell the story of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī’s martyrdom. Two years prior to ‘Abd al-Jafīl’s narration of this event (probably 554/1159), on the day of ṬāṬūr Mashshāṭ had narrated the passion of Ḥusayn in a way that the audience had torn their garments, spattered dirt, exposed their heads, and cried in a way that by some participants’ accounts the same ceremony could not have been found in Shī‘ī neighborhoods.

1033 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 405-406.
1034 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 40.
1036 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 405.
1037 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 406.
3.3.8 Conclusion

There is no doubt that as Tor concludes, the Great Seljuq sultans from Ṭughril-Beg (r. 434-455/1042-1063) to Sanjar (r. 511-552/117-1157) were genuinely Sunnīs who regained the lost political power of Sunnīs in general and ‘Abbāsīd caliphs in particular and their control of Iraq and western Iran.1038 Their policy in defending Ḥanafīs or Shāfiʿīs, from the time of Ṭughril-Beg to Sanjar’s era had caused a gap between these two faith communities, and the Shīʿas too. However, it is evident that in the second half of the 6th/12th century, during the decline of the Seljuqs, the urban boundaries between Shīʿa, Ḥanafī, and Shāfiʿīs had become less visible.1039

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī was born, lived and died during the Great Seljuq period and appears to have finished composing his commentary circa 540/1145 during the reign of the Sanjar in Rayy. These two factors, time and place, had a profound influence on shaping his commentary. Although sultan Sanjar attempted to regain the Great Seljuqs power, the eventual dissolution of their Empire was inevitable. Some important exegesis in Persian such as Rawḍ al-Jinān wa-rāwḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān of Abū al-Futūḥ or Kashf al-asrār wa-ʿuddat al-abrār of Maybudī were written in this period. It should be noted that during the sultan Sanjar’s reign even though Shīʿas were under less pressure compared to the early Seljuq Empire, the century-long constant pressure on this faith community, had its effect on Imāmis’ approach in writing the exegesis of the Qurʾān.

3.4 Naqībs and Twelvers in Seljuqid Rayy

Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), despite his hatred of Shīʿī Islam, as documented in his book Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawīyya, stated that: “There is no doubt in that Muḥammad’s Family (Āl Muḥammad) has a right on the Umma that no other people share with them and that they are entitled to an added love and affection to which no other branches of the Quraysh are

1038 Tor, “‘Sovereign and Pious’,” 54.
1039 For example, according to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, Ḥanafīs and Shāfiʿīs would also attend his sessions, which were held on Mondays and some would even take notes (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 115).
entitled." This view about the kinfolks of the Prophet was a common belief among all Islamic sects. Prophet’s family known as “Sayyid” (pl. sāda, sādāt) or “sharīf” (pl. ashrāf, shurafā), have formed and still form a distinct social category in many Muslim societies. One of these Sayyids or sharīfs used to hold the position of Naqīb al-ashrāf which was historically an official one. 

Naqīb al-ashrāf was the representative of this social category in interacting with government. Therefore, nuqabāʾ al-ashrāf were a part of the ruling class and of the religious-bureaucratic establishment. They benefited from their position and they were reluctant to be associated with any violent actions that threatened the public order. As Bernheimer remarks, Naqīb’s sectarian affiliation, his autonomy from the authorities, as well as his duties toward the Alids varied from place to place and over time.

The naqībs of the Ṭālibids in Rayy under the Seljuq rule were Twelver Shīʿas, and they played an essential role in protecting Twelver community from the potential clash with the ‘Abbāsids and Seljuqs. They were a link between Twelvers and two powerful Sunnī institutions: the ‘Abbāsid caliphate and the Seljuqid sultanate. Every major event in Twelver community of Rayy during the Seljuq period needs naqīb’s approval and support. For example, ‘Abd al-Jafīl Rāzī and Muntajab al-Dīn Rāzī wrote their books by the permission and recommendation of their time's naqīb. I will explain these two books later. Abū al-Futūḥ could not write his commentary without naqīb’s endorsement.

Naqībs of Rayy in Seljuq period held the title of al-Murtaḍā and they originally came from Qumm. They went to Rayy and held the office of niqāba of this city and its environs such as

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1040 Ibn Taymiyya, Minhāj al-sunna al-nabawiyya, 4:599.
1041 Bernheimer, “Genealogy”, 76.
1042 Belonging to a Ṭālibid lineage was not automatically an indication that a person was Shīʿite (Khāliqī, Dīvān-i niqābat, 196-199). It should be noted that ‘Abbāsid caliphs established Divān al-niqāba and assigned naqībs to be in charge of Hāshimites’ affairs in the first half of 3rd/9th century. This Divān was part of ‘Abbāsids socio-political organizations. (Khāliqī, Dīvān-i niqābat, 131-138). Hāshimites (Hāshimiyyūn or ashrāf) were divided into two groups: ‘Abbāsids (‘Abbāsiyyūn) and Ṭālibids or ‘Alīds (Ṭālibiyyūn or ‘Alawiyyūn). Each of these groups was represented by a naqīb of local origin, appointed by a caliph, sultan, vizier, governor or the naqīb al-nuqabāʾ (chief naqīb) (Khāliqī, Dīvān-i niqābat, 139-143). No historical or legal document has been found which demonstrates that being in charge of niqāba belonged to a particular denomination. Eminent individuals of ‘Alīds, Shīʿite or Sunni backgrounds, held this office (Khāliqī, Dīvān-i niqābat, 263).
Qumm and Jibāl (Irāq ʿajam). The crucial role of these naqībs in this period is because of their special political influence and prominent socio-religious status in Rayy. In terms of politics, these naqībs had a considerable influence on the Seljuq sultans because they were representative of the Sunnī ʿAbbāsid caliph in Ṭālibid’s affairs in addition to their family relationship with Seljuq sultans and viziers. In terms of socio-religion, these naqībs were ʿulamāʾ, the patrician religious intellectuals, who had close ties with Shiʿa and Sunnī religious scholars in Rayy. The first naqīb in the Seljuq period was al-Sayyid dhū al-Fakhrayn al-Murtaḍā al-Muṭahhar b. ʿAlī (d.492/1099), followed by al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar, al-Sayyid ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, and finally al-Sayyid ʿIzz al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad (d.592).

This section discusses the life of these naqībs and their active role in supporting Twelver community in Rayy focusing on two of them: al-Sayyid Murtaḍā and al-Sayyid Muḥammad b. ʿAlī.

Al-Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muṭahhar b. ʿAlī (d. 492/1099), known as al-Murtaḍā of Qumm (not sharīf al-Murtaḍā of Baghdad)1044, played an important role to save the Twelver community in the early Seljuq period.1045 His service was from the beginning of Ṭughril-Beg’s reign to the early time of Berk-Yāruq, when Seljuq’s restrictions on Shiʿa in Rayy was at its peak. For example, according to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, when al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar stayed at home in seclusion, Malik-Shāh went to his home and spoke to him affably.1046 Al-Muṭahhar’s decision to seclude himself was likely his protest against the Seljuqs’ strictness and their despising Twelver community of Rayy. This political protest of al-Muṭahhar apparently had a positive impact on the Twelver circumstances in Rayy. Another service of al-Muṭahhar was his attempt to keep Twelvers separate from other Shiʿī sects and to decrease Seljuqs political pressure on Twelvers. For this reason, he expressed his opposition to Zaydīs and likely Ismāʿīlīs even their ʿAlīds.

1044 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 100 no. 353.

1045 In his article entitled “The Naqīb of Rayy Alids and his support of scientists”, Manzoor al-Adjdad discussed al-sayyid al-Muṭahhar’s role in providing protection as well as support for scholars of his time. Although there is an overlap between my data on al-sayyid al-Muṭahhar’s biography and Manzoor al-Adjdad’s article, he has focused on secular knowledge rather than religious knowledge and our approaches to use this data differs as well.

1046 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 435.
example, according to al-Sam‘ānī (d.562/1166), Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Muqaddasī narrates “One day, I told al-Murtaḍā al-Muṭahhar b. Ṭāli al-ʿAlawī in Rayy: Zaydis are divided into two sects: al-Ṣālihiyya and al-Jārūdiyya. Which sect is better?” al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar replied “do not say which one is better. Say which one is worse.”

This statement indicates that al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar tried to keep Twelvers separate from other Shīʿī sects because according to extant niqāba statements, there is a clear recommendation from ʿAbbāsid caliphs or Seljuq sultans to naqībs to keep descendants of the Prophet away from straying sects, which do not have any obvious definition. It is probable that this ideological bias did not affect al-Muṭahhars’ duties as a naqīb because according to Khāliqī’s research, no evidence demonstrates that al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar or other naqībs neglected defending other ʿAlīds who do not have the same religious belief.

The socio-political influence of al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar in this period was because of several reasons: his position as naqīb al-nuqabā, his close relationship with the ʿAbbāsid caliph, his position as a religious scholar, his wealth and generosity, his lineage and personal characteristics. Al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar’s contemporary poet Muʿizzī (d. ca. 518/1124) in a long ode praises al-Muṭahhar and points out his socio-political-religious position. Regarding holding office of al-niqāba, when al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar went to Rayy he dismissed al-Sayyid Qāsim al-Ḥasanī from this position and became the Ṭālibid naqīb of Rayy, Qumm, Kāshān and Ābah. Afterwards, he chose a house as his Dār al-niqāba (House of niqāba) and selected one of his relations named al-Sayyid Ḥamza b. Abī Muḥammad b. Amīrkā b. al-Ḥasan al-ʿAzīzī, a descendant of ʿAbd Allah al-Bāhir as his vizier. In this tough time for Twelvers of Rayy, Bākhazrī (d.467/1075), an Iranian poet and scholar who himself had a high status in the Seljuqs’

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1047 al-Sam‘ānī, al-Ansāb, 8:258-259.
1048 Khāliqī, Dīvān-i niqābat, 264.
1049 Muʿizzī, Kullīyāt-i dīvān-i Muʿizzī, 45-47. This ode is composed of 47 lines.
1050 Abū al-Rajāʾ Qummī, Dhayl naṣīḥat al-maṣdūr, 148.
1051 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 37 no. 25; 79 n. 236. Dār al-niqāba was likely the administrative building of dīvān al-niqāba. This building was a residence of naqībs guests too.
1052 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Shajara al-mubāraka, 133.
court, met al-Muṭahhar in Rayy in 434/1043. Al-Muṭahhar’s popularity and status was such that after meeting with Bākharzī, the latter was so inspired by him that he composed some verses of poetry in his praise, indicating that al-Muṭahhar was well-known in Rayy in his youth.\footnote{Bākharzī, Dumyat al-qāyr, 1:484-485; Ibn Funduq, Lubāb al-’ansāb, 2:614. For further information regarding Bākharzī see Tunjī, “Bākharzī.”}

In terms of education, al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar started his religious training in Qumm and continued to learn ḥadīth and teach in Rayy. Since some Imāmī jurists such as al-Sayyid al-Ḩasan b. Muḥammad al-Mūsawī\footnote{Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fīhrīst, 49 no. 83.} and al-Sayyid Taqī b. Ṭāhir al-Ḩasanī\footnote{Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fīhrīst, 44 no. 62.} studied under him in Rayy, it is inferred that he used to teach in a small circle of Ḥāḍīths. It is probable that al-Muṭahhar entrusted part of his duties to his future student because Mantajab al-Dīn Ibn Bābwayh Rāzī gave him the title ‘al-naqīb al-Rāzī’. al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar also met al-Ṭūsī in Baghdad or Najaf on his pilgrimage to Mecca and studied ḥadīth under him (qara’a ʿalayh).\footnote{Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fīhrīst, 100 no. 353.}

He went to Nīshāpūr and studied Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muṣṭafīṣ al-Ḥusayn b. Abū al-Ḥusayn Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Sammān (d. 445/1053) and al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar learned from other Sunnī scholars too and returned to Rayy and stayed there to the end of his life.\footnote{al-Fārsī, al-Halqa al-ʿūlā min tārīkh Nīsābūr, 691 n.1541.} al-Muṭahhar’s direct quotation from his contemporary Mu’ tazīlī Imām of Rayy Abū Sa’d Iṣmā’īl b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sammān (d. 445/1053) indicates that he had a close relation with non-Twelver scholars in Rayy.\footnote{al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-Islām, 30:111.} This hard-working student became a skilled theologian (mutakallim), debater (munāẓir), writer and poet\footnote{Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Shajara al-mubāraka, 132. Abū al-Rajā’ Qummī quotes two lines of his poems to show how delightful it is. Abū al-Rajā’ Qummī, Dhayl naṭḥat al-maṣdūr, 150.} who wrote beautiful sermons and letters.\footnote{Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fīhrīst, 100 no. 353; Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 45-46.} His wealth was an important factor in his academic success in addition to his connection with ruling elites in politics and religion. ʿAbd al-Jalīl states that ‘‘Ulamā’ from both sects [Shīʾas and Sunnīs] went to greet Murtaḍā and receive gifts from
him every Friday. When he died, he left four hundred *khawḍa mufarradas* (approximately 1200 kg) of pearls. In terms of his personality, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī states that al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar was extremely good-tempered, wealthy and generous, and both Shī’ as and Sunnīs revered him. The aforementioned characteristics of al-Muṭahhar led the vizier Niẓām al-Mulk to cement his relationship with him. Of course, it was necessary for the Great Seljuq sultans and their viziers to build a relationship with influential families of different sects through marriage. Niẓām al-Mulk gave one of his daughters’ hands in marriage to al-Muṭahhar’s son, Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad. According to ‘Abd al-Jalīl, Niẓām al-Mulk was proud of having a relationship with al-Muṭahhar’s family and used to visit him several times every year.

Al-Sayyid al-Muṭahhar’s lineage was another reason for his socio-political influence. He was born circa 400/1009 in an ‘Alīd family of Qumm, descendants from ‘Abd Allah al-Bāhir, Imām zayn al-’Abidīn’s son. His father, al-Sayyid ‘Alī, who was given the title al-Zakiyy and was the Ṭālibid naqīb in Qumm, was learned, respected and wealthy. His ancestors were Ṭālibid

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1061 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 434.
1065 As another example, Niẓām al-Mulk wanted to marry his son ‘Umar, with Sharfshāh’s daughter (Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 282).
1068 This date is inferred from Abū al-Rajā’ Qummī’s statements that he died at the age of ninety on the 10th of Dhū al-hijja (the Festival of Sacrifices) of 492/1099. (Abū al-Rajā’ Qummī, *Dhayl naḥṭat al-maṣdūr*, 149). Regarding ‘Abd Allah al-Bāhir, it should be mentioned that he was the son of the fourth Imam of Shī’ its ‘Alī Zayn al-’Abidīn and brother of the fifth Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqīr. His mother was ‘Umm ‘Abd Allah, daughter of the second Imam al-Ḥasan al-Mujtabā. (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Shajara al-mubāraka*, 87; al-Marvazī al-Azvarqānī, *al-Fakhrī*, 33-34).
naqībs in Qumm as well.\(^{1070}\) Al-Muṭahhar’s mother was Sakīna [or Sukayna], a descendant of the seventh Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim.\(^{1071}\) This is likely the reason for his title *dhū al-Fakhrayn*.\(^{1072}\) It is probable that his father al-Sayyid ‘Alī al-Zakiyy undertook the niqāba of the Ṭālibids in Rayy during the reign of ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Muḥammad b. Rustam Dushmanzīyār of Kākūyids (r.421-433/1030-1042).\(^{1073}\) During the political imbroglio which lasted to the end of the year 433/1042 when Ibrahim Yīnāl conquered Rayy, the city did not have a stable government. Al-Sayyid ‘Alī al-Zakiyy died in this period and was buried in Qumm.\(^{1074}\) It is likely that his son al-Muṭahhar abandoned Qumm, where he grew up in, and resided in Rayy. This immigration to Rayy happened a short time before Ṭughril-Beg’s arrival in this city as his capital. Al-Muṭahhar’s reason for leaving Qumm and emigrating to Rayy during this socio-political unrest, according to Abū Rajāʾ’s statement, is that the Irāqī family of Qumm injured al-Muṭahhar.\(^{1075}\) This Irāqī family came to power in Qumm when the Ghaznavid sultan Masʿūd established his government in Ghazna in 421/1031. According to Bayhaqī, when sultan Masʿūd established his government in Ghazna, after consulting with his advisors, he sent Abū al-Ḥasan al-Irāqī (d.429/1038), known as Ṭāhir Dabīr, to Rayy as his high commissioner (*ʿamīd*).\(^{1076}\) It seems that Abū al-Ḥasan al-Irāqī and his family settled in Qumm and ruled this city and its


1075 Abū al-Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl naṣḥat al-maṣdūr*, 146. Another reason for his emigration to Rayy is his marriage to the daughter of Abū al-Fath Rāzī, a family from Rayy. (Abū al-Rajāʾ Qummī, *Dhayl naṣḥat al-maṣdūr*, 149). Abū al-Fath Rāzī had a position during the reign of ‘Alāʾ al-Dawla of Kākūyids in Īsfahān and during the reign of Ṭughril-Beg in Rayy. In this regard, Nakhjavānī states “at the beginning of [his] work, he was in service of ‘Alāʾ al-Dawla ibn Kākiyya the owner of Īsfahān, and afterwards accompanied his son Farāmarz and Farāmarz sent him to Ṭughril-Beg as an emissary. When Ṭughril-Beg met him, he liked him and asked him to stay in his court. Ṭughril-Beg gave him a robe of honour and vizierate.” (Nakhjavānī, *Tajāib al-salaf*, 260). Since no sources except *Tajāib al-salaf* mention Abū al-Fath Rāzī as Ṭughril-Beg’s vizier, it is most likely that he did not have this position.

environ such as Rayy as emirs. In that time, Būyids and their dependent powers were actively present in Qumm and ‘Alā’ al-Dawla had given the state land of Qumm to his son in law, son of Vīlkīn b. Vandrin a Daylamite commander. After a quarrel between Vīlkīn’s family and Irāqī family in Qumm, Surūsh, the other son of Vīlkīn b. Vandrin and son in law of Ishāq b. Kāmravā, the governor of Sāvih, killed a member of the Irāqī families named Faḍlawayh. The Irāqīs killed Surūsh in revenge, which ended with Ishāq b. Kāmravā marching his army to Qumm from Sāvih to kill Abū Naṣr al-Irāqī and Abū al-Faḍl al-Irāqī. Abū al-Faḍl al-Irāqī was esteemed by Ṭughril-Beg at the beginning of his reign and served the Twelver community in Qumm and Rayy. He ordered the building of the rampart of Rayy, the rampart of Qumm, the old mosque of Qumm which was out of the city and its minarets as well as the shrine and dome of Fāṭima, the daughter of the seventh Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim. These Irāqī families were vanquished by al-Muṭahhar’s family in the region gradually and their properties were inherited by descendants of al-Muṭahhar.

Al-Muṭahhar’s services to Twelver community of Rayy ended with his death while he was in his nineties on the 10th of Dhū al-hijja of 492/3rd Nov 1099. However, his family relationship with Seljuqs and their vizirs changed the relationship between Twelvers and the ruling power. Saljuqs and their vizirs integrated Naqībs into their ownpower structure while recognizing their power at a local level. Al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar who was married to Nizām al-Mulk’s daughter, became the naqib of Rayy after his father. Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar’s family made a family relationship with the Seljuq’s powerful sultan Alp Arslān. Al-Sayyid ‘Izz al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, son of al-Sayyid Muḥammad b. al-Muṭahhar and Nizām al-Mulk’s daughter, married the daughter of ‘Āyisha Khātūn, daughter of

1077 Abū al-Rajā‘ Qummī, Dhayl nafihat al-maṣdūr, 146.
1079 Abū al-Rajā‘ Qummī, Dhayl nafihat al-maṣdūr, 147.
1080 Rāżī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 210, 236.
1081 Abū al-Rajā‘ Qummī, Dhayl nafihat al-maṣdūr, 146.
1082 Abū al-Rajā‘ Qummī, Dhayl nafihat al-maṣdūr, 149.
Alp Arslān. This family relationship with Seljuq royal family, gave the son of this marriage, al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Din abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Ali b. Muḥammad b. Muṭahhar, a prominent position which lasted to the end of Sultan Sanjar’ reign.\(^{1083}\) He became the naqib of Ṭālibids and played an important role for Twelver community of Rayy in his life time.

The power struggle between the ‘Abbāsid caliphs and Seljuq sultans during the dissolution era of the Seljuqs prepared the ground for al-Sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī to revitalize the Twelvers in Rayy.\(^{1084}\) His presence in this city was so important that according to ‘Abd al-Jalīl, Imāmī schools in Rayy were able to work only because of this naqib’s blessing.\(^{1085}\) al-Sayyid Muḥammad also had a close cooperation with Twelver ‘Ulama of Rayy to defend their belief against non-Twelver accusations. For example, ‘Abd al-Jalīl started to write his book *Naqd* in 556/1161 at al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s request. The reason for writing this book was that the elite scholars (*Khawāṣṣ*) of Twelvers read *BFR* to al-Sayyid Muḥammad. Consequently, he said: “‘Abd al-Jalīl has to commence [writing a book] to respond to this book in the right manner as no one can deny it.’\(^{1086}\) ‘Abd al-Jalīl, who was al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s contemporary and townsman, mentioned him in *Naqd* admiringly and quoted Qawamī Rāzī’s couplet praising al-Sayyid Muḥammad:

“… until the Lord of the age takes care of the affairs of religion

the best person [for this work] is Sharaf al-Dīn Murtaḍā…\(^{1087}\)”

Although ‘Abd al-Jalīl, who was a zealous ‘Usūlī in *Naqd*, praised al-Sayyid Muḥammad b. ‘Alī in his book, it seems that al-Sayyid Muḥammad had Akhbarī tendencies and was not a proto-

\(^{1083}\) Ibn Funduq, *Lubāb al-ʾansāb*, 2:613. According to the published copy of *Lubāb al-ʾansāb*, ‘Āyisha Khātūn is the mother of al-sayyid Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad, which is not correct. It is possible that the word *bint* was missed.

\(^{1084}\) For the troubled relationship between the ‘Abbāsid caliphs and Seljuq sultans in this period see Tor, “A Tale of Two Murders.”

\(^{1085}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 41. This Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad established a large school in Qumm too. Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 210-211.

\(^{1086}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 8.

\(^{1087}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 241. This couplet is part of a long ode in 76 couplets (Qawamī Rāzī, *Dīwān*, 75).
ʾUsūlī Twelver. The reason for this assumption is that al-Sayyid Muḥammad used to narrate hadith a great deal and Muntajab al-Dīn Ibn Bābawayh Rāzī studied many Twelver hadith books with him.\textsuperscript{1088} In addition, no source indicates his interest in Usulayn, kalam and fiqh. According to Rāfīʿī, al-Sayyid Muḥammad went to Qazvīn in 559/1164 and learned hadith from Sunnī and Shiʿa ʿUlamāʿ and they learned hadith from him in return.\textsuperscript{1089} It should be noted that al-Sayyid Muḥammad was born in 504/1111\textsuperscript{1090} and was at school until he was twenty two years of age. After 526/1132, he was not able to study full time because he held the office of Ṭālibīd niqāba. From his youth, al-Sayyid Muḥammad had a prominent socio-political position in Rayy as the naqīb of the Ṭālibīds and according to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, he acted as an intermediary between senior officials such as qāḍī al-Ḥasan Astarabādi (d.541/1146) or qāḍī ʿImād al-Dīn Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm Wazzān (d.525/1132) and the government.\textsuperscript{1091} Twelver genealogist and traditionalist of Rayy of this period, al-Sayyid Majd al-Dīn Abū Ḥāshim al-Mujtabā b. Hamza – whose classes ibn Funduq (d.565/1170) attended in Rayy in 526/1133 - composed a long ode in praise of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad.\textsuperscript{1092} When he was in Rayy, Ibn Funduq used to go to Muḥammad’s home and use their large family library.\textsuperscript{1093} Ibn Funduq also wrote odes in praise of al-Sayyid Muḥammad, and a few of them are still in existence.\textsuperscript{1094}

al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s socio-political influence during the reign of sultan Sanjar was due to his unique position with this sultan and his governor of Rayy, Amīr ʿAbbās. This unique position was likely because of the close family relationship between al-Sayyid Muḥammad and sultan Sanjar. As it was mentioned earlier, al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s mother was the daughter of ʿĀyisha

\textsuperscript{1088} Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, \textit{al-Fihrist}, 100 no. 354.
\textsuperscript{1090} Ibn Funduq, \textit{Lubāb al-ʾansāb}, 2:613.
\textsuperscript{1091} Rāzī Qazwīnī, \textit{Naqḍ}, 435.
\textsuperscript{1093} Ibn Funduq, \textit{Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-ḥikma}, 17.
\textsuperscript{1094} Ibn Funduq, \textit{Lubāb al-ʾansāb}, 2:613-614.
Khātūn daughter of Alp Arslān. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, regarding the recommendation of ʿĀyisha Khātūn to Sanjar to respect her grandchild al-Sayyid Muḥammad, states: “I heard that sultan Sanjar went to his paternal aunt [ʿĀyisha Khātūn] and asked her to request something of Sanjar. His aunt said: ‘I had my daughter marry to ʿIzz al-Dīn al-ʿAlawī and those are my daughter’s children. I request you to attempt to esteem them.’ Consequently, sultan Sanjar gave priority to him [al-Sayyid Muḥammad] over other Seluqid children.”

al-Sayyid Muḥammad was honoured by Rayy’s governor in this period too. As mentioned earlier, the governor Amīr ʿAbbās, was famous for killing ʿIsmāʿīlīs in this city. An example of Amīr ʿAbbās’s respect for Al-Sayyid Muḥammad is exemplified in the statements of Abū Rajāʾ Qummī in the year 533/1138, when Kamāl Thābit Qummī rejected the vizierate of sultan Masʿūd (r. 529-546/1135-1152). Afterwards, Kamāl Thābit asked for permission to go to his city Qumm after receiving a letter from the sultan. He set out for Qumm and then Rayy. Al-Sayyid Muḥammad was informed that Kamāl Thābit started his journey to Qumm and Rayy. Since there was a dispute between al-Sayyid Muḥammad and Kamāl Thābit over some properties in Qumm, al-Sayyid Muḥammad told Amīr ʿAbbās that Kamāl Thābit has taken some money from the royal treasury and is fleeing. Based on al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s statement, Amīr ʿAbbās sent a person to prevent Kamāl Thābit from travelling. Kamāl Thābit gave sultan Masʿūd’s letter to Amīr ʿAbbās representative to show Amīr ʿAbbās. Subsequently, Amīr ʿAbbās apologized for his insult and let Kamāl Thābit to go. Kamāl Thābit went to Sāvih from Rayy but al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s old father, Sayyid ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAlī went to Sāvih to apologize for his son’s behavior. al-Sayyid Muḥammad’s position in Seljuq family was so strong that after this event, in the same year 533/1139 he entered Baghdad to go on pilgrimage. Sultan Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd went to meet him and accompanied al-Sayyid Muḥammad to Karkh, the Shīʿī quarter in Baghdad. al-Sayyid Muḥammad eventually died in Sāvih in 566/1170.

1096 Abū al-Rajāʾ Qummī, Dhayl nafihat al-maṣdūr, 144-146.
1097 Ibn al-Ṭaṭṭaqqī, al-ʿAṣīlī, 225.
This chapter reviewed the religious, political and social conditions of Abū al-Futūḥ's era. In the next chapter Abū al-Futūḥ’s life and works will be reviewed in detail. Moreover, his mystical and preaching approach which is echoed in Rawḍ al-jinān will be examined.
Chapter 4
Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī: Life, Works, and Mysticism

The aim in this chapter is first to mention the most important points of Abū al-Futūḥ’s life. After discussing about his biography, those scholars whom Abū al-Futūḥ acquired his education from and those scholars who studies under him are mentioned. Since Abū al-Futūḥ authored only two books, both of them will be discussed under his works. In addition, the veracity of Abū al-Futūḥ being described as a preacher is studied. Finally, an attempt is made to discover the connection between Abū al-Futūḥ and mysticism.

4 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī

4.1 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī: A Biography

What the disciples and contemporaries of Abū al-Futūḥ wrote about him are our primary sources concerning Abū al-Futūḥ’s biography and his works. The title and related data of all these sources available to us today including biographical or bio-bibliographical dictionaries are collected in a volume entitled Maʾkhadhshināsī Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī by Muḥammad Nūrī.\textsuperscript{1099} This volume is the product of a conference which was held in Iran in 1384 Sh./2005 to present different academic works on Abū al-Futūḥ and his commentary Rawḍ al-jinān. Studying this raw data gives us a sketch of Abū al-Futūḥ’s personal life and a few important relevant events. In Western academia, several scholars have presented some information on Abū al-Futūḥ’s life and works: Henry Massé,\textsuperscript{1100} Jane McAuliffe,\textsuperscript{1101} Martin McDermott,\textsuperscript{1102} and Robert Gleave.\textsuperscript{1103} A

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1099] See vol 15 of \textit{Majmūʿa āthār-i kungrih-i buzurgdāsht-i shaykh Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī}. (Qumm: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1384 Sh./2005).
\item[1101] McAuliffe, \textit{Qurʾānic Christians}, 54-57.
\item[1102] McDermott, “Abu’l-Futuh Razi.”
\item[1103] Gleave, “Abū ʿl-Futūḥ al-Rāzī.”
\end{footnotes}
detailed article on Abū al-Futūḥ is the entry in Encyclopaedia Islamica (EIS) which is the translation of the entry on him in Dāʾirat al-maʿārif-i buzurg-i Islāmī (DMBI). Travis Zadeh was the last person who meticulously wrote on Abū’l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī and breadth of scriptural knowledge in his book. This chapter sheds more light on the life and works of Abū al-Futūḥ. First the ancestors of Abū al-Futūḥ and their anti-Umayyad tendencies is studied. Second, his education and scholarly network of teachers and students are discussed. After that, works attributed to Abū al-Futūḥ are examined. Finally, Abū al-Futūḥ’s preaching style and mystical approach in Rawḍ al-jinān, which sets out a new course in Imāmī exegesis, is examined.

4.1.1 Abū al-Futūḥ’s lineage

Abū al-Futūḥ’s full name is al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, his kunya is Abū Futūḥ and his famous alqāb (honorific titles) are Turjumān kalām Allāh (translator/interpreter of the word of God) and Jamāl al-Dīn (beauty of Religion), his nisbas are al-Khuzāʿī al-Rāzī al-Nīsābūrī which are derived from the tribe al-Khuzāʿa and from the cities Rayy and Nīsābūr (Nīshāpūr). In three places in his commentary, Abū al-Futūḥ remarks that his lineage goes back to the companion of the Prophet, Budayl b. Warqāʾ al-Khuzāʿī (d. c. 10/631).

According to Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. after 600/1204) and al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348). Abū al-Futūḥ’s full lineage is al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Faḍl b. Shujāʾ b. Hāshim b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Budayl b. Warqāʾ. Abū al-Futūḥ seems to feel privileged to have Budayl b. Warqāʾ as his ancestor and points out that “when Banū Khuzāʿa were sent back to Mecca [by the Prophet], they went to Budayl’s house...”

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1105 Bakhsh-i fiqh, “Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī.”
1106 Zadeh, The Vernacular Qur’an, 448-456.
1107 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fīhrīst, 32 no. 1; 33 no. 5; 48 no. 78; 60-61 no. 148; 75 no. 219 and 220; 79 no. 233; 102 no. 360 and 361.
because he was chieftain (Sayyid) of the people.” Abū al-Futūḥ then adds, “He [Budayl b. Warqāʾ] is one of the ancestors of the author of this book [Rawḍ al-jinān].”

It seems the Prophet proclaimed that whoever entered Budayl’s house or Abū Sufyān’s house would be safe.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s family insist on keeping their nasab al-Khuzāʿī wherever they live in Nīshāpūr, Rayy, or Baghdad. Abū al-Futūḥ proudly commends the Banū Khuzāʿa stating that, “from the all inhabitants of Tahāma, the Banū Khuzāʿa were secret keepers (ʿaybat nuṣḥ) of the Messenger of the God.” The expression (ʿaybat nuṣḥ) indicates the close relationship between the Prophet and Banū Khuzāʿa. Elsewhere in his commentary, Abū al-Futūḥ refers to this virtue reported by early Muslim historians about Banū Khuzāʿa and states that “all Banū Khuzāʿa, including both their believers and disbelievers, were devotees of the Messenger and they had a covenant with him.”

Apparently, Budayl and his family did not have a good relationship with Abū Sufyān and his family.

The children of Budayl, especially ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and ‘Abd Allāh, were the enemies of the Umayyads and the supporters of ‘Alī from the very early period. The Banū Khuzāʿa were so hostile to the Umayyads that it is reported Muʿāwiya b. Abū Sufyān used to say: “If the women of Khuzāʿa could fight with me in addition to their men, they would have done so.” For this hostility between Banū Umayya and Banū Khuzāʿa, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Budayl and his brother ‘Abd Allāh b. Budayl were among those Khuzāʿīs who joined ‘Alī and fought on his side in the battle of Ṣiffīn (37/657). Both ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and ‘Abd Allāh were martyred in this Battle. The Banū Khuzāʿa were known for their hostility to the Umayyad and adherence to

1114 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, al-İstīʿāb, 3:873.
1115 Kister, “Khuzāʿa”; for a comprehensive study on the battle of Ṣiffīn see Hagler, “The Echoes of Fitna.”
1116 Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, al-İstīʿāb, 2:823; 3: 872; al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 70 no. 643.
ʿAli and his family in the 1st/7th century. Therefore, most likely at the end of the 1st/7th and the beginning of the 2nd/8th century, many of them migrated from Kūfa to the eastern cities such as Gurgān (today north of Iran), Marv and Nisāʾ (today in Turkmenistan) in the Great Khurāsān.1117 Even the Abbasid chief naqīb and dāʿī in Khurāsān, Sulaymān b. Kathir Khuzāʾī (d. 137/754), was from the tribe of Banū Khuzā, and he owned several villages in Khurāsān.1118 Moreover, after the revolution of Abū Muslim Khurāsānī (d. 137/755) one of the first groups to join him were people from Banū Khuzāʿa,1119 who paved the way for the ‘Abbāsids.1120 Therefore, based on their political and tribal affiliations, it can be inferred that Banū Khuzāʿa of Khurāsān were probably doctrinally inclined to the family of the Prophat from the very first century. The ancestors of Abū al-Futūḥ, who had Shīʿī and anti-Ummayd tendencies probably inhabited Nīshāpūr, and thus all were known as Nīsābūrī.1121 No information is available on Abū al-Futūḥ’s family in Nīshāpūr before his great-grandfather who migrated to Rayy and later Baghdad.

4.1.2 The dates of birth and death of Abū al-Futūḥ

Abū al-Futūḥ’s exact date of birth and death are not known; however, both of them to the best of our knowledge considering other data related to him are estimated. Abū al-Futūḥ was born in the second half of 5th/11th century in Rayy most likely during the reign of Malik-Shāh (r. 465-485/1072-1092). This estimate of his birth date comes from information concerning the death of his teacher al-Zamakhsharī and the birth of his disciple Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī. Since Abū al-Futūḥ refers to Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī who was born in 467/1074 as shaykh-i mā (our master) in Rawḍ al-jinān, and usually the teacher is older than the student, Abū al-Futūḥ’s

1118 al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh, 7:355; See also Agha, The Revolution, 11, 73–5.
1119 Akhbār al-dawla al-ʿAbbāsiyya, 274.
1120 Kister, “Khuzāʾa.”
1121 Nīshāpūr (Nīsābūr) is located in between Gurgān (Jurjān) and Marv, with a distance of about 500 kilometers from each city.
date of birth should be after 467/1074. On the other hand, Abū al-Futūḥ must have been born before 484/1091 because his disciple Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī was born in 504/1111 according to al-Rāfīʿī. This period was a difficult era for Imāmī Shīʿ as in Rayy during the Great Seljuq period as discussed in the third chapter.

Several pieces of evidence show that Abū al-Futūḥ was alive in 552/1157 and died in or after this year. Three dated ijāzas (a licence granting formal permission to teach or transmit a particular Islamic text issued by the master with whom one has studied) given by Abū al-Futūḥ are extant. The first ijāza is written on the back of the first page of a manuscript of Rawḍ al-jinān in Dhū al-Qaʿda 547/Feb 1153. The second ijāza is written by Abū al-Futūḥ for his son Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad on the back of the first page of a manuscript of Rijāl al-Najāshī. This ijāza is “This book has been studied under me by the reading of my son Tāj al-Dīn Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, may God perpetuate his success. I granted an ijāza to him to transmit this book from me and also to transmit whatever he knows from what I collected and heard (majmūʿātī wa masmūʿātī) on the condition of avoiding any error or any distortion. This ijāza is “written by al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Khuzāʾī with his handwriting in the month of Rabīʿ al-Awwal 551/May 1156, praising God exalted and blessing the Prophet and his family and greeting them.” Afandī (d. 1130/1621) mentions Rawḍ al-jinān as “a famous book in circulation (mutadāwal)” and adds that “I have seen the first quarter of this commentary in Iṣfahān, and the manuscript was very ancient and was written in his [Abū al-Futūḥ’s] time. On the back of the manuscript was his handwriting and his ijāza to some of his disciples, and the

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1122 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 16:170.


1124 The uncertainty about the exact date of Abū al-Futūḥ’s birth and death does not change the fact that he spent all his life at the time when the Great Seljuqs ruled over Iran. In particular, most of his life was contemporaneous with two of Seljuq rulers: Sultan Muhammad Tapar (1099 and 1104-1117) and Sultan Sanjar (1118-1157). As discussed in the first chapter, the reigns of these two Sultans were the time of dissolution of Great Seljuq Empire. See Başan, The Great Seljuqs, 112.


date of his *ijāza* was in the year 552/1157. From this dated *ijāza* we know that Abū al-Futūḥ was alive in 552/1157. Abū al-Futūḥ was buried in the Shrine of 'Abd al-'Azīm al-Ḥasanī (d. 252/868) in Rayy. Today, Abū al-Futūḥ’s grave is in the courtyard of Ḥamza b. Mūsā the son of the seventh Imam al-Kāẓim.

4.1.3 Abū al-Futūḥ as described by his disciples

In the previous chapter it was showed that Abū al-Futūḥ is placed in the third generation of Imāmī scholars influenced by the new tradition of Baghdadi rationalism stemming especially from al-Ṭūsī. Abū al-Futūḥ’s peak of intellectual activity was between 525/1130 to 555/1160 and three of the Imāmī scholars who were his disciples in Rayy provided some information about him include: 'Abd al-Jalīl b. Abū al-Ḥusayn Rāzī Qazwīnī (d. after 560/1164) in his book *Naqḍ*, Muḥammad b. 'Alī Ibn Shahrāshūb in his book *Maʿālim al-ʿulamāʾ*, and 'Alī b. 'Ubayd Allah Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī in his bio-bibliography *al-Fihrīst*. Other Imāmī scholars of the second half of the 6th/12th who mentioned Abū al-Futūḥ with an intermediary is Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kaydhūrī al-Bayhaqī (d. after 576/1180) in his work *Ḥadāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾiq fī sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*.

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1128 Gleave, “Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī.” After analyzing his teachers and students dates of death and some of certificate (*ijāza*) which he has given to his students on some old manuscripts of his commentary, Muḥammad Qazwīnī proposed the late seventies of the fifth Hijrī century as a possible date for his birth and circa 554/1159 as a possible date for his death.

1129 Contrary to Gleave's assertion, Abū l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī’s burial place is no longer in dispute (Gleave, “Abū l-Futūḥ al-Rāzī”). However, Nūr Allāh Shūshṭārī (d. 1019/1610) confused Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s burial place with that of the Shāfīʿī jurist and preacher Abū al-Futūḥ al-ʿIjlī (d. 600/1204) who died and was buried in Iṣfahān. (Shūshṭārī, *Mageš al-mu minīn*, 1:490; on him see Saffīm, “Abū al-Futūḥ al-ʿIjlī”). The source of this confusion is the 6th/12th century Imāmī scholar 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥamza al-Ṭūsī al-Mashhadī (d. after 600/1024) who met Abū l-Futūḥ Rāzī in Rayy when he was younger. (Pākatchī, “Ibn Ḥamza”). Ibn Ḥamza was a resident of Mashhad but he says that he was in Rayy at the time of Abū l-Futūḥ’s death. He must have meant Abū al-Futūḥ al-ʿIjlī not his teacher Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī because around 600/1024 Ibn Hamza went to Rayy and then left for Mecca. After his pilgrimage upon his return from Mecca, Ibn Ḥamza went to Iṣfahān the place where Abū al-Futūḥ al-ʿIjlī died and was buried a few months before Ibn Ḥamza’s arrival.

1130 Many tombs in Iran and other countries are attributed to Ḥamza b. Mūsā (See Rāzī, *Akhtarān-i furūzān-i Rayy wa Tihrān*, 58-59)
It is most likely that the entire twenty volumes of *Rawḍ al-jinān* were completed by 544/1149 when Ibn Shahrāshūb entered Rayy. Ibn Shahrāshūb probably stayed in Rayy for a short time, during his trips, and became a disciple of Abū al-Futūḥ. In his bio-bibliography, Ibn Shahrāshūb states that “my teacher (shaykhī) Abū al-Futūḥ b. Ḵalīl b. Ḥasan al-Rāzī was a scholar. He has *Rawḥ al-Jinān wa Rūḥ al-Janān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* in Persian which is wonderous (ʿajīb), and *Sharḥ al-Shihāb* (commentary on *al-Shihāb*).” In his other book *Manāqib āl Abī Ṭālib*, Ibn Shahrāshūb mentions Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī in his chain of narration of Imāmī books. Later he adds “Abū al-Futūḥ gave me *ijāza* to narrate *Rawḍ al-jinān wa Rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*.”

Although the exact date of the presence of Ibn Shahrāshūb in Rayy is not known, I estimate that he must have been in Rayy around 544/1149. Because Rayy was between Ḵurāsān and Jibāl and it was on Ibn Shahrāshūb’s way from Sabzivār to Hamadān (Sabzivār to Rayy: 560 km / Rayy to Hamadān: 280 km). In 536/1141 Ibn Shahrāshūb visited al-Ṭabrisī in Sabzivār, and in 547/1152 he visited Abū al-ʿAlāʾ Hamadāni in Hamadan. Since the distance between Rayy and Sabzivār is twice the distance between Rayy and Hamadan, Ibn Shahrāshūb likely was in Rayy around 544/1149. Probably Abū al-Futūḥ had finished writing his commentary prior to this year because it had a title from and Abū al-Futūḥ gave *ijāza* to Ibn Shahrāshūb to narrate it as I mentioned above. Another reason for this estimate is the manuscript of volume eleven of *Rawḍ al-jinān* in Muḥaddith Urmawī’s library which is written from the original manuscript and is dated 10 Ṣafar 533/24 October 1138.

Another student of Abū al-Futūḥ was Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī who probably was with his teacher to the end of his life. Muntajab al-Dīn gives the honorary titles *al-shaykh a-imām* to Abū al-Futūḥ and describes him as “scholar (ʿālim), preacher (wāʿīz), exegete (mufassir), and devout (dayyin).” Concerning Abū al-Futūḥ’s works Muntajab al-Dīn continues “he has some works

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1134 Pākatchī, “Ibn Shahrāshūb.”
including a commentary entitled Rawd al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān in twenty volumes and Rawḥ al-aḥbāb wa-rūḥ al-albāb fī sharḥ al-shihāb. I studied both of them under him.”

The honorary titles al-shaykh al-imām are general authentications and do not indicate that Abū al-Futūḥ was a mutakallim. Since Muntajab al-Dīn refers to Abū al-Futūḥ as an exegete and Ibn Shahrāshūb describes Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary as wonderous, apparently the most important intellectual aspect of Abū al-Futūḥ in his contemporaries, view was his exegesis and his most important work was Rawd al-jinān. This is reinforced by the fact that ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Kaydhrī al-Bayhaqī, two other contemporaries of Abū al-Futūḥ, emphasized the exegesis of Abū al-Futūḥ.1137

Since Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary was different from future Akhbari’s exegetes approach during the Safavid period, his honorary titles such as scholar, preacher, and exegete used by his students or contemporary scholars changed to jurisprudent, theologian, or litterateur (adīb) in this period. On the one hand, Safavid scholars did not refer to his commentary, and on the other hand, they add to his honorary titles as the earliest Imāmī scholar who wrote an exegesis in Persian.1138 For example, in the ijāza of Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Dīn (Ibn al-Shahīd al-Thānī) (d. 1011/1602)1139 to al-Sayyid Najm al-Dīn b. al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī, he has mentioned Abū al-Futūḥ as a jurist (faqīh).1140 Shūshtarī (d. 1019/1610) considered Abū al-Futūḥ as a scholar of exegesis, theology (kalām), and literature (adab)1141; however, in his contemporary sources Abū al-Futūḥ has not been mentioned as a theologian. Afandī (d. 1130/1621), the assistant of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī in the compilation of some volumes of Biḥār al-anwār, states that I have seen

1136 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrīst, 48 no. 78.
1139 On him and on his father al-Shahīd al-Thānī Zayn al-Dīn b. ʿAlī al-ʿĀmilī (d. 966/1558) see Kohlberg, “al-Shahīd al-Thānī.”
1140 al-Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 106:47.
1141 Shūshtarī, Majālis al-muʿminīn, 1:489.
the following honorary titles in praise of Abū al-Futūḥ as follows: “the pivot (quṭb) of Islam, the pride (fakhr) of scholars, the honor (sharaf) of the state, the sun of the Islamic law, and the mufti of Shi’a.” Such titles are not void of exaggeration and do not represent the specialty of Abū al-Futūḥ. However, in his introduction to Rawḍ al-jinān, Abū al-Futūḥ considers being an expert in the principles of jurisprudence and the principles of theology as the necessary qualifications to become an exegete. This implies that Abū al-Futūḥ himself, as an exegete, claims to be an expert in these two fields.

4.2 Abū al-Futūḥ’s Education

Primary sources provide very little information about Abū al-Futūḥ’s teachers and students. There are approximately six names, which have been mentioned in the sources, for Abū al-Futūḥ’s teachers or those whom he transmitted books or traditions from. In five cases, information is available about the area of studies in which they were specialized, while in the case of Abū al-Futūḥ’s father nothing was mentioned at all.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s first and most important teachers were his father ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzāʿī Rāzī and ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. ʿAlī al-Muqrī al-Rāzī respectively.

4.2.1 Abū al-Futūḥ’s teachers

ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzāʿī Rāzī

1142 Afandī ʿIsfahānī, Riyāḍ al-ʿulamā’, 2:156; 5:488. These honorary titles are seen on Rawḍ al-jinān’s surviving manuscripts from the Safavid period. (Yāḥaqqī and Nāṣiḥ, Introduction, 60).

1143 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:2.

1144 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī states that his teacher Abū al-Futūḥ informed them of a book (akhbaranā bi-hā). I assumed that Abū al-Futūḥ learned the book from its author and transmitted it to his disciples. According to ījājāt and asānīd of Ibn Shahrāshūb to transmit Imāmī early works, it is likely that al-Ṭūsī’s son Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad was one of the teachers of Abū al-Futūḥ (Ibn Shahrāshūb, Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib, 1:11-12) Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad was alive in 511/1117 in Najaf (In the chain of narrations of 57 traditions of his book Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, al-Ṭabarī indicates that Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī the son of al-Ṭūsī, has transmitted a tradition to him in Najaf in 511/1117. Ibn Ḥajar mentions that Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan died around 500/1106 which cannot be correct. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Lisān al-mīzān, 3:112 no. 2386). Apart from Ibn Shahrāshūb’s asānīd, there is no evidence that Abū al-Futūḥ went to Najaf or Abū ʿAlī went to Rayy to study or teach.
Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzāʿī Rāzī was one of his teachers. As I discussed in Chapter 3, Abū al-Futūḥ studied many Imāmī books under his father and transmitted them to his students.\(^{1145}\)

**Abū al-Wafā’ ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. ‘Alī al-Muqrī al-Rāzī**

Abū al-Wafā’ ʿAbd al-Jabbār, who was probably Abū al-Futūḥ’s most important Imami teacher, was introduced in the third chapter.

**Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī**

Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) was a Ḥanafī Muʿtazilī scholar who commenced writing his Qurʾān commentary entitled *al-Kashshāf ʿan haqāʾiq al-tanzīl wa ʿuyūn al-ghawāmiḍ fī wujūh al-taʾwīl upon his arrival in Mecca in 526/1132, and completed it in 528/1134.\(^{1146}\) Abū al-Futūḥ has not referred to *al-Kashshāf* in his commentary; however, he quoted al-Zamakhsharī three times in *Rawḍ al-jinān*.\(^{1147}\) The changes in the titles used by Abū al-Futūḥ for al-Zamakhsharī in these three cases could indicate that Abū al-Futūḥ has accepted his authority and gradually referred to him as his master. In the first case, Abū al-Futūḥ mentions al-Zamakhsharī with the title *shaykh* (teacher),\(^{1148}\) then later with the title *imam* (master/grand teacher),\(^{1149}\) and finally with the title *shaykh-i mā* (our teacher).\(^{1150}\) The title *shaykh-i mā* (our teacher) could be indicative of affection and respect for al-Zamakhsharī or even Muʿtazilī doctrine. Perhaps Abū al-Futūḥ was looking to bring in Muʿtazilī exegesis directly or affiliate himself to Muʿtazilī doctrine through an outstanding Muʿtazilī scholar. Nevertheless, it is likely

\(^{1145}\) Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Fihrist*, 32 no. 1; 60-61 no. 148; 79 no. 233; 102 no. 360 and 361.

\(^{1146}\) See Ullah, *Al-Kashshāf*, 1; Lane, *a Traditional Muʿtazilite Qurʾān Commentary*, 29.

\(^{1147}\) Henri Massé notes that the absence of reference to *al-Kashshāf* in Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary means either that *Rawḍ al-jinān* was finished before *al-Kashshāf* or, at least, before *al-Kashshāf* reached Iranian lands. (see Masse, “Le tafsīr,” 245). Since *al-Kashshāf* was completed in 528/1134, I believe that the second hypothesis, i.e. that *al-Kashshāf* had not reached Rayy before the completion of *Rawḍ al-jinān*, is correct.


that Abū al-Futūḥ was a disciple of al-Zamakhsharī. Probably Abū al-Futūḥ met al-Zamakhsharī in Rayy and studied poetry and exegesis under him. One of the reasons to believe al-Zamakhsharī was in Rayy is the report of the historian, al-Rāfiʿī (d. 623/1226). When al-Rāfiʿī was writing the biography of Abū Muḥammad Ṭāhir b. Aḥmad al-Qazwīnī known as al-Najjār (d. 575/1175), he reports that Ṭāhir b. Aḥmad stated: “I saw the most learned teacher (al-shaykh al-ʿallāma) Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī in Rayy. I benefited from him and studied with him some of his books.”

Since Ṭāhir b. Aḥmad studied some of al-Zamakhsharīs’ works in Rayy, it means that al-Zamakhsharī must have lived for some time in this city. Another reason to believe al-Zamakhsharī was in Rayy is that he transmitted hadith from Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. al-Muẓaffar al-Ḥamdūnī in this city.

Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥusaynī al-Fārsī al-Khuzāʿī

In interpreting [Q 17:71], Abū al-Futūḥ refers to Abū Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥusaynī al-Fārsī al-Khuzāʿī as shaykh-i mā (our teacher). It is likely that Abū al-Futūḥ is referring to his father’s uncle Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Ḫusayn b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī (d. 485/1092) whom I discussed in the previous chapter. It seems that Abū al-Futūḥ studied under him in his very young age and transmitted some of his works directly without the intermediary of his father.

The nisbas al-Fārsī al-Khuzāʿī, which are recorded by Abū al-Futūḥ in his commentary, are derived from the place Fārs (Persia) and the tribe al-Khuzāʿ. These nisbas are clearly an emphasis on the fact the he was an Iranian (not an Arab) al-Khuzāʿī who did not live only in Nīsābūr but in all over Iran from Nīsābūr to Baghdad and later in Rayy.

Al-Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Nāṣir b. al-Riḍā al-Ḥusaynī

1154 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 75 no. 219.
According to the historian al-Rāfiʿī, Abū al-Futūḥ transmitted biographical information concerning Ismāʿīl b. ʿAbbād (known as Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād) from al-Sayyid Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. al-Nāṣir b. al-Riḍā.1155 Al-Rāfīʾ’s teacher, Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī has recorded al-Sayyid ʿAlī b. al-Nāṣir b. al-Riḍā al-Ḥusaynī as an Imāmī jurist (faqīh) and eminent (fāḍil) scholar.1156 Therefore, it is likely that ʿAlī b. al-Nāṣir al-Ḥusaynī was one of the teachers of Abū al-Futūḥ in rijāl (studies of the authenticity of narrators of ḥadīth) and jurisprudence.

ʿImād al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Astarābādī (b. 455/1063 and d. 541/1147)

It is likely that Abū al-Futūḥ studied under Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Astarābādī the chief judge (qāḍī al-quḍāt) of Rayy with jurisdiction over Iraq-i Qustain.1157 Astarābādī went to Baghdad in 476/1083 and became a disciple of some Ḥanafī scholars such as Abū al-Maʿālī Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Qudāma al-Baghdadi (d. 486/1093).1158 In his thirties, during the era of Imāmī prevalence in Baghdad, Ibn Qudāma studied literature with al-Sharīf al-Murtadā (d. 436/1044) together with some of his books such as Ghurar al-fawāʾid wa durar al-qalāʾid (also known as Amālī al-Murtadā) in Baghdad.1159 Astarābādī studied the same book under Ibn Qudāma and although he was a great Ḥanafī scholar, he became a chain in the transmission of this book among Imāmī scholars. Astarābādī who was a Muʿtazilī, had a good relationship with Sayyids and shīʿas and he respected them.1160 He had several Imāmī friends and students such as Abū al-Futūḥ or his student Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī who transmitted proto-Imāmī traditions from him.1161 For

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1155 al-Rāfīʾ al-Qazwīnī, al-Tadwīn, 2:293.
1156 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 88 no. 283.
1157 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 612-613. Qustain is another word for Kūhistān (mountain lands) which was southeastern Khurasān in Medieval times. (See Bosworth “The Ismai'ilis of Qustain”).
1160 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 644
1161 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Arabāʾ īn ḥadīthan, 61.
example, Abū al-Futūḥ transmitted the first part of *Ghurar al-fawāʾid wa durar al-qalāʾid* of al-sharīf al-Murtaḍā from al-Astarābādī.\(^{1162}\)

4.2.2 Abū al-Futūḥ’s students

Abū al-Futūḥ had a small number of students who studied under and obtained knowledge from him. All sources identify eight names who were Abū al-Futūḥ’s students. In some cases they studied with or transmitted from Abū al-Futūḥ his commentary *Rawḍ al-jinān*. Apparently, Abū al-Futūḥ’s most distinguished students were Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn Shahrāshūb.

**Muntajab al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusain Ibn Bābawayh al-Rāzī\(^{1163}\)**

Muntajab al-Dīn was born in 504/1111 and died around 600/1204.\(^{1164}\) He studied with Abū al-Futūḥ two of his books: *Rawḍ al-Jinān* and *Rawḥ al-aḥbāb*.\(^{1165}\) He also studied *Rijāl al-Najāshī* with Abū al-Futūḥ and received an *ijāza* from him to transmit this book in 551/1156.\(^{1166}\)

**Muḥammad b. ʿAlī ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192)\(^{1167}\)**

Abū al-Futūḥ granted to Ibn Shahrāshūb *ijāza* to transmit his commentary *Rawḍ al-jinān*.\(^{1168}\)

**ʿImād al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj ʿAlī b. Quṭb al-Dīn Saʿīd b. Hibat Allāh al-Rāwandī**


\(^{1165}\) Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Fihrist*, 48 no. 78.

\(^{1166}\) Āghā Buzurg, *Ṭabaqāt aʿlām al-shīʿa*, 3:79.

\(^{1167}\) On him see Scarcia Amoretti, “Ibn Shahrāshūb”; Pākatchī, “Ibn Shahrāshūb.”

In the ijāza of Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Dīn it is recorded that Abū al-Faraj ʿAlī transmitted from Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī all of his books. He also transmitted all the works of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā from his father Quṭb al-Dīn Saʿīd al-Rāwandī. Abū al-Faraj ʿAlī was a jurist (faqīh) as is mentioned by Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

Naṣīr al-Dīn Abū Ṭālib ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza al-Ṭūsī al-Mashhadī

Since ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza transmitted a tradition concerning ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya from “al-shaykh al-imām Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī the author of the tafsīr,” he was probably a disciple of Abū al-Futūḥ. Al-Kaydhurī al-Bayhaqī (d. after 576/1180), who was a student of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza, describes his teacher as “al-shaykh al-imām al-ajall al-afḍal al-ʿallāma.” Al-Kaydhurī studied ḥadīth under Ibn Ḥamza in Sabziwār of Bayhaq in 573/1177. Muntajab al-Dīn and Ḥasan b. Zayn al-Dīn described him as a jurist (faqīh). In his book al-Thāqib fī al-manāqib, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza tells a story which happened in his life time during the reign of Sultān Sanjar b. Malik-Shāh (r. 511-552/1118-1157). Therefore, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥamza was an active uṣūlī jurist in Khurāsān influenced by his teacher Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī.

Al-Sayyid ʿIzz al-Dīn Sharafshāh b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn Zabāra al-Afṭasī al-Nīsābūrī

Al-Sayyid Sharafshāh b. Muḥammad was a member of Āl Zabāra in Nishāpūr. Like his teacher Abū al-Futūḥ he was a transmitter of Qummī traditionalists’ works such as ʿUyūn akhībār

1169 al-Majlisī, Bihār al-anwār, 106:22. 35.
1171 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 86 no. 275.
1172 al-Kaydhurī al-Bayhaqī, Ḥadāʾiq al-ḥaqāʾ, 2:412.
1175 On Āl Zabāra see Ibn Funduq Bayhaqī, Lubāb al-ʾansāb, 492-523.
al-Riḍā of Ibn Bābawayh\textsuperscript{1176} as well as Baghdādis’ books such as \textit{al-Irshād fī maʿrifat ḥujaj Allāh `alā al-ʿibād} of al-Mufīd,\textsuperscript{1177} the first part of \textit{Ghurar al-fawāʾid wa durar al-qalāʾid} of al-Murtaḍā,\textsuperscript{1178} \textit{al-Mufīd fī al-taklīf} of al-Buṣrawī (d. 443/1051),\textsuperscript{1179} and \textit{al-Nihāya} of al-Ṭūsī.\textsuperscript{1180} In some sources Sharafshāh b. Muḥammad is described as a jurist,\textsuperscript{1181} However, Muntajab al-Dīn emphasizes that he was a leading authority in literature. He remarks that Sharafshāh b. Muḥammad was an eminent scholar who wrote good poetry and elegant prose.\textsuperscript{1182} It is likely that he became a student of Abū al-Futūḥ in Rayy on his journey from Nishāpūr to Najaf because he was teaching in Najaf in Ramaḍān 573/March 1178\textsuperscript{1183} and later died and was buried in this city.\textsuperscript{1184} Therefore, Sharafshāh b. Muḥammad was most likely an \textit{uṣūlī} jurist who transmitted some works of al-Mufīd and al-Murtaḍā through Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī.\textsuperscript{1185} Sharafshāh was probably influenced by Abū al-Futūḥ in literature too.

\textbf{Ṣafī al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Abī Bakr b. Sayyār al-Ḥīrawī}

Al-Ḥīrawī studied \textit{Rijāl al-Najāshī} under Abū al-Futūḥ and received an \textit{ijāza} from him to transmit this book in 551/1156.\textsuperscript{1186}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1176}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 1:76.
\item \textsuperscript{1177}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 104:156.
\item \textsuperscript{1178}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 106:47.
\item \textsuperscript{1179}Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Buṣrawī (d. 443/1051) was a disciple of al-Murtaḍā in Baghdad. He wrote a complete list of al-Murtaḍā’s works. On him see Farhang Anšārī, “Buṣrawī.”
\item \textsuperscript{1180}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 104:158.
\item \textsuperscript{1181}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 1:76.
\item \textsuperscript{1182}Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, \textit{al-Fihrist}, 70 no. 194.
\item \textsuperscript{1183}al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 106:23.
\item \textsuperscript{1184}Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, \textit{al-Fihrist}, 70 no. 194; al-Majlisī, \textit{Biḥār al-anwār}, 1:76.
\item \textsuperscript{1185}This is contrary to what Pākatchī concludes concerning Sharafshāh as a member of Imāmī Akhbārī school in Khurāsān. See Pākatchī, \textit{Makātīb-i fiqh-i}, 224-227.
\item \textsuperscript{1186}Āghā Buzurg, \textit{Ṭabaqāt}, 3:79.
\end{itemize}
Two of Abū al-Futūḥ’s sons were named among the scholars of their age by Muntajab al-Dīn. These two scholars who were naturally their father’s students include:

Şadr al-Dīn ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī

Şadr al-Dīn ʿAlī was Abū al-Futūḥ’s son. Muntajab al-Dīn refers to Şadr al-Dīn ʿAlī as a ‘devout (dayyin) jurist (faqīh)’.¹¹⁸⁷

Tāj al-Dīn Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī

Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad was another son of Abū al-Futūḥ. Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī describes him as an eminent (fāḍil) pious (wariʿ) person.¹¹⁸⁸ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad studied Rijāl al-Najāshī with his father and received an ijāza from him to transmit it in 551/1156.¹¹⁸⁹ A copy of this ijāza is still available on the back of the first page of a Rijāl al-Najāshī’s manuscript transcribed in 982/1575. This ijāza was mentioned earlier in this chapter.

4.3 Abū al-Futūḥ’s Works

Abū al-Futūḥ’s student Muntajab al-dīn in his al-Fihrist states that “He [Abū al-Futūḥ] has some works. Some of them are the commentary named Rawḍ al-Jinān (wa Rawḥ al-Janān) fī Tafsīr al-Qurʿān in twenty volumes and Rawḥ al-aḥbāb wa Rūḥ al-albāb fī sharḥ al-Shihāb. I read and studied both of them under him.”¹¹⁹⁰ Abū al-Futūḥ’s other student Ibn Shahrāshūb (d.588/1192) in his bibliographical book Maʿālim al-Ulamāʾ mentions only the same two books for his teacher. Ibn Shahrāshūb states that “Rawḥ al-Jinān wa Rūḥ al-Janān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʿān is for him [Abū al-Futūḥ]. This commentary is in Persian and it is wondrous, [and] sharḥ al-Shihāb.”¹¹⁹¹ Moreover, in his other book, Ibn Shahrāshūb like his friend Muntajab al-dīn has

¹¹⁸⁷ Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 85 no. 269.
¹¹⁸⁸ Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 113 no. 424.
¹¹⁸⁹ Āghā Buzurg, Ṭabaqāt aʿlām al-shīʿa, 3:79.
¹¹⁹⁰ Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 48 no. 78.
¹¹⁹¹ Ibn Shahrāshūb, Maʿālim al-Ulamāʾ, 141 no. 987.
mentioned Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* and stated that Abū al-Futūḥ granted him *ijāza* to transmit/teach his commentary on the Qurʾān.\(^{1192}\) Abū al-Futūḥ’s contemporary Shiʿī scholar in Rayy, Qazvīnī Rāzī, refers only to these two books too.\(^{1193}\) Therefore, there is no doubt that *Rawḍ al-Jinān* and *sharḥ al-Shihāb* belong to Abū al-Futūḥ and there is no hard evidence to say that other books ascribed to him by Safavid scholars are written by him.\(^{1194}\) Therefore, the list of Abū al-Futūḥ’s books include:

1- *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*

Abū al-Futūḥ was most famous for his Persian commentary on the Qurʾān which is the subject of this dissertation. The title of this commentary was not the same in all its four prints. Although Abū al-Futūḥ’s students Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn Shahrāshūb titled this commentary *Rawḍ al-Jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*,\(^{1195}\) the editors/publishers of this commentary chose three different titles for it.

2- *Rawḥ al-aḥbāb wa-rūḥ al-albāb fī sharḥ al-Shihāb* (the Spirit of the Friends and the Rest of the Intellects in Explanation of *al-Shihāb*). Apparently, this is a lost work which must have been available in Medieval Islamic times, since it is mentioned by many Shiʿī scholars after him. The author of *Shihāb al-akhbār* was Abū Ṭāb Allāh Muḥammad b. Salāma al-Miṣrī al-Maghribī al-Shāfiʿī al-Quḍāʿī (d. 454/1062).\(^{1196}\)

According to the introduction to *Rawḍ al-Jinān*, Abū al-Futūḥ promised his friends and colleagues “to write two commentaries, one in Persian and the other in Arabic.” He continues, “However, the writing of the Persian one preceded that of the Arabic.”\(^{1197}\) This statement causes


\(^{1193}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 46, 228.

\(^{1194}\) The following books are attributed to Abū al-Futūḥ without evidence: *Risālah-ye Ḥusnīyah*, *Risālah-ye Yūḥannā*, *Tabṣirat al-ʿawāmm fī maʿrifat maqālāt al-ʿanām*. (See Bāhir, *Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī*, 44-49).


\(^{1196}\) On him see Brockelmann, *History of the Arabic*, 1:363.

some biographers to claim that Abū al-Futūḥ has written a commentary in Arabic\textsuperscript{1198} which cannot be true for two reasons: First, none of Abū al-Futūḥ’s students or contemporaries mentioned that Abū al-Futūḥ fulfilled his promise to write another commentary in Arabic. Second, no one has seen an Arabic commentary written by Abū al-Futūḥ. Ibn Yūsuf Shīrāzi remarked that he was informed that Āghā Buzurg Ṭihrānī obtained a copy of Abū al-Futūḥ’s [Arabic] commentary. He asked him to give him some information regarding that copy. Āghā Buzurg wrote to him that he has not obtained it yet. Āghā Buzurg added that an Indian in holy shrines informed him regarding the existence of that commentary in one of Indian libraries and promised him when he returned to India to make a copy and send it to Āghā Buzurg. However, that never happened.\textsuperscript{1199} Than Indian did not send it because Abū al-Futūḥ never wrote another commentary in Arabic.

4.3.1 The four prints of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Persian Commentary on the Qur’ān

*Rawḍ al-jinān* has been published four times in the following chronological order. Information about its date of publication, title, editor, number of volumes, and publisher is provided below:

First print: The first print was published in two separate periods: (1) 1323-1324[/1905-1906] / *Rūḥ al-jinān wa rūḥ al-jinān* / edited by Dāwūd Qāḍīzādih (also known as Mullā Bāshī) and Muḥammad Kāẓim Șabûrî (also known as Malik al-Shu’arā) / 2 vols (first two volumes) / Tehran: Chāpkhāneh-yi Majlis. (2) 1313-1315 Sh.[/1934-1936] / *Rūḥ al-jinān wa rūḥ al-jinān* / edited by Muḥammad Ṣādiq Sutūdih, Muḥammad Kāḍim Ṭabāṭabā’î Tabrîzī with an introduction by Muḥammad Qazvīnī / 3 vols (last three volumes) / Tehran: Chāpkhāneh-yi Majlis.


\textsuperscript{1198} Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-muʾminīn*, 1:489.

\textsuperscript{1199} Fihrist-i nuskhi-hāyi khaṭṭī kitābkhāni-yi Majlis, 3:26.
The first edition of the *Rawḍ al-jinān* was published at the end of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār (d. 1314/1896) under the orders of his brother Muḥammad Taqī Mīrzā Rukn al-Dawlah (d. 1318/1900). *Rawḍ al-jinān* was the first Persian commentary that was published. The reasons for the attention of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and his brother Rukn al-Dawlah of Qājār to *Rawḍ al-jinān* were the following: 1. *Rawḍ al-jinān* was a very old commentary from the 6th/12th century and part of the national heritage. 2. *Rawḍ al-jinān* is a Persian commentary, and no Qur’ān commentary has been published until the Qājār period. 3. The diversity of exegetical materials in *Rawḍ al-jinān*, especially including Sufi (*ahl al-ishāra*) interpretation, was of great interest to the Qājār, and distinguished it from other early Imāmī commentaries. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh was interested in these matters because he was inclined to Suffis and like his father Muḥammad shāh (d. 1227/1848) was anti-clerical. 1200

From the beginning of the Safavid period (907/1501) to the beginning of the Qājār period (1174/1785), for more than 250 years, Sufis of Iran were under political-religious pressure. After the victory of the Safavid Sufi-Shīʿī movement in the year 907/1501, their power was legitimized through a mix of Twelver Shīʿa doctrine and mystic Sufism. The continuing tension between the Sufi traditions (followers of the Safavid Sufi order) and the orthodox Imāmī Shīʿa of a new clerical establishment was finally resolved by Shāh ʿAbbās in favour of the Imāmī Shīʿa. 1201 The Safavid rulers moved away from their Sufi background and other Sufi orders. They declared Twelver Shīʿī Islam as the official religion of Iran and worked with the Twelver Shīʿa scholars to weaken the Sufi orders who were considered their rival in power. The result of this interaction between Safavid rulers and Shīʿa scholars led to the repression of Sufi Islam during the Safavid period. The pressure and repression of the Sufis in Iran continued during the Afsharid (1736-1796) and Zand period (1751-1794). During the Qājār period, the pressure on the Sufis was


reduced, and Muḥammad Shāh Qājār (d. 1264/1848) appointed a Niʿmatallāhī Sufi ʿAbbās Irravānī, known as Hājjī Mīrzā Āqāsī (d. 1265/1849) as his chancellor.1202 Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār was very tolerant and sympathetic towards Sufis. As a result, a group of lords and nobles, and even some courtiers, joined the Sufi orders.1203 It was in the last years of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh’s rule that his brother Muḥammad Taqī Mīrzā Rukn al-Dawlah attempted to revive Rawḍ al-jinān for three reasons mentioned above.

Muḥammad Taqī Mīrzā Rukn al-Dawlah was a trusted man by his brother Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, and for this reason he was sent to govern Khurāsān and Fārs.1204 Rukn al-Dawlah was appointed as the governor of Khurāsān three times as well as the person in charge (mutawallī) of Āstān Quds three times (1297/1880 to 1298/1881, 1301/1884, and 1306/1888 to 1308/1890) during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. At the last period of his trusteeship on the Āstān Quds, Rukn al-Dawlah asked Mīrzā Abū al-Qāsim Khushnivīs to make a copy from a very exquisite manuscript of the Rawḍ al-jinān in the library of Āstān Quds which attracted his attention. Moreover, Rukn al-Dawlah asked shaykh al-Raʾīs to edit Rawḍ al-jinān but he did not accept to do so. Following his rejection, Mīrzā Muḥammad Kāẓim Malik al-Shuʿarā Ṣabūrī (d. 1322/1904) took over the editing of Rawḍ al-jinān. However, it progressed slowly and Dāwūd Qāḍīzādih also known as Mullā bāshī (d. 1325/1907) is asked by Rukn al-Dawlah to complete this task. Dāwūd Mullā bāshī and Malik al-Shuʿarā Ṣabūrī from 1307/1889 to 1309/1891 worked on two manuscripts dated 949 and 947 AH in the Āstān Quds library and they started to provide an edited copy for the Royal Library, but the work remains incomplete.1205

In 1313/1896 Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh died and his son Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh succeeded to the throne. In the year 1318/1900, Rukn al-Dawlah (the uncle of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh) died, and his son, ʿAlī Naqī known as ʿAyn al-Mulk, succeeded him in his positions. ʿAyn al-Mulk took the uncompleted edition of Rawḍ al-jinān from Dāwūd Mullā bāshī and gave it as a present to

1202 On him see Amanat, “Āqāsī.”
1203 Isfandiyār, “Taṣawwuf: Iran.”
1204 Muʿayyir Al-Mamālik, Rijāl-i ‘aṣr-i Nāṣirī, 18.
Muṣaffar al-Dīn Shāh. In 1319/1901, on the order of Muṣaffar al-Dīn Shāh (d. 1324/1906), Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim b. Muḥammad Yūsuf Ṭabāṭabāʾī Tabrīzī gathered a group of scholars to edit the rest of the Rawḍ al-jinān. In the year 1323/1905 electrical printing was imported to Iran for publication of Rawḍ al-jinān. By the end of the life of Muṣaffar al-Dīn Shāh in 1324/1906, two volumes and 173 pages of the third volume (more than half of Rawḍ al-jinān) were published. But after the death of Muṣaffar al-Dīn Shāh, no one continued to publish the rest of this commentary, and it was postponed until the year 1352/1934. During these 27 years, what had been printed remained in the government storage. Until the year 1352/1934, Riḍā Shāh Pahlavī (d. 1944) was told that such a precious commentary which is a source of our national pride was forgotten. Riḍā Shāh was asked to order the publication to be completed. Therefore, Riḍā Shāh ordered ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat Shīrāzī (d. 1980), who was the Minister of culture and endowment, to complete its publication. Sayyid Naṣr Allāh Taqawī became responsible for completing the edition of the text, and ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat began publishing it with the same printing machine that was imported by Muṣaffar al-Dīn Shāh. The publication and binding of the last three volumes was done in less than three years from 1313 Sh./1934 to 1315 Sh./1936. After Rawḍ al-jinān, ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat started to edit Kashf al-asrār wa ʿuddat al-abrār of al-Maybūdī, the earliest and longest Sufi commentaries on the Qurʾān in the Persian language. Al-Maybūdī, who was a contemporary of Abū al-Futūḥ, began to compose Kashf al-asrār in 520/1126. Turning attention of the people to Persian literature and mystical topics vis-à-vis ḥadīth during the Qājār and Pahlavī periods is clearly apparent. So far I have mentioned the connection between Abū al-Futūḥ and mysticism. The rest of this chapter provides further information concerning ahl ishārāt (Sufis) and their exegesis in Rawḍ al-jinān.

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1207 See Keeler, Sufi Hermeneutics, 8.
4.4 Abū al-Futūḥ and Mysticism

Abū al-Futūḥ cites ahl ishārat’s exegesis forty eight times in Rawḍ al-jinān. These citations are often from al-Tha’labī’s al-Kashf; however, al-Tha’labī frequently cites Sufi’s quotations with the word ‘qīla’ without attributing it to anyone. The term ahl ishārat (Arabic: ahl al-ishārat) appears in as early as the 3rd/9th century Sufi literature. For example, in the Book of Light (Kitāb al-ḍiyāʾ), Abū Saʿīd al-Kharrāz (d. in or before 286/899) classifies people into seven groups. The first group is ahl al-ishārat. The word Ishāra (pl. ishārāt) is from the root sh-w-r which means sign, indication; hint, allusion. Therefore, the term ahl al-ishāra (the people of indication/allusion) is used by Sufis especially Sufi exegetes to refer to themselves from early Islamic centuries. For example, in the opening citation of his commentary Ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr, al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) attributes the following mystical indication to Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq: The Book of God has four things: literal expression (ʿibāra), allusion (ishāra), subtleties (laṭāʾif) and realities (ḥaqāʾiq). The Sufis used the term ishāra (allusion) for their method of interpretation or for their commentaries. They use the term tafsīr (interpretation) for the types

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1209 Al-Tha’labī always cite mystical interpretations after citing the traditional ones in his commentary al-Kash wa al-bayān. (See Saleh, The Formation, 151-161).

1210 Nwyia, Exégèse coranique, 234.

1211 Zammit, A Comparative, 246; Badawi, Arabic-English, 502; Sands, Sufi Commentaries, 146. Sands translates it into “Allusion; a silent signal or gesture.”

1212 Sands, Sufi Commentaries, 4.

1213 I used al-Sulamī’s Ziyādāt ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr, the “appendix” to his Qurʾān commentary, Ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr republished in Mayer, Spiritual Gems. A comparison between Imami and Sufi exegetical literature in 4th/11th century demonstrate that the literal expression (ʿibāra) is equivalent to (tanzīl) which is for the common people (ʿawāmm). The allusion (ishāra), subtleties (laṭāʾif) and realities (ḥaqāʾiq) are equivalent to three degrees of spiritual hermeneutics (taʾwil) which are for the people of distinction (khawāṣṣ), friends of God (awliyāʾ) and the prophets (anbiyāʾ) respectively.

1214 Sands, Sufi Commentaries, 67. As Sands notes, the Sufis sometimes use the term taʾwil (hermeneutics) for their commentaries.
of commentaries which have the three characteristics that Calder described in his article. These three characteristics are as follows: 1. It includes all parts of the text of the Qurʾān, in canonical order, with commentary 2. Citation of named authorities and consequent polyvalent reading of the text 3. The juxtaposition of the text of the Qurʾān against certain instrumental and ideological structures.\(^{1215}\) Suﬁ interpretations are more 

\textit{ishārāt} than \textit{tafāsīr}.\(^{1216}\) Some quotations attributed to \textit{ahl ishārat} in Rawḍ al-jīnān are not found in the mystical exegesis prior to him such as \textit{Tafsir al-Tustarī} of Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), \textit{Haqāʾiq al-tafsīr} of al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), or \textit{Laṭāʾif al-ishārāt} of Qushayrī (d. 465/1072).\(^{1217}\) Their only source is \textit{al-Kashf} of al-Thaʿlabī who incorporated these mystical traditions.

The demarcation of normative Sufi tradition’s boundaries during the second half of the 4\(^{th}\)/10\(^{th}\) up to the end of 5\(^{th}\)/11\(^{th}\) century is difficult to ascertain.\(^{1218}\) The Sufi literary tradition emerged in this period to delineate these boundaries and due to the emergence of Sufi literary tradition, Islamic mysticism spread to all levels of social and cultural life in both urban and rural environments.\(^{1219}\) One of the signs of the spread of Sufi tradition in this era is the introduction of Sufi literature into the mainstream Qurʾān commentary, in Arabic in the first half of the 5\(^{th}\)/11\(^{th}\) century, then in Persian in the second half of the same century. Al-Thaʿlabī, the \textit{Imam of aṣḥāb ḥadīth},\(^{1220}\) was the first mainstream Sunnī exegete who managed to incorporate mystical interpretations into his anthologically comprehensive commentary entitled \textit{al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān}.\(^{1221}\) In al-Thaʿlabī’s time, the line that separated Sufis from traditionalists

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Calder, “Tafsīr,” 101-103.
\item Sands, \textit{Suﬁ Commentaries}, 3.
\item In his commentary \textit{Laṭāʾif al-ishārāt} (Subtleties of [Mystical] Indications), Qushayrī discusses comprehensively the Qurʾān’s esoteric meanings that lay hidden from the view of the exoteric people but were perceptible to the spiritual elect. On Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī and his commentary \textit{Laṭāʾif al-ishārāt}, see Nguyen, \textit{Suﬁ Master}.
\item Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, 87.
\item Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, ix.
\item Saleh, \textit{The Formation}, 152.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
was not too rigid and the traditionalist views of Sufism were mostly positive.\textsuperscript{1222} Not only al-Thaʿlabī but also other traditionalists of the first half of 5\textsuperscript{th}/11\textsuperscript{th} century such as Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 430/1038) incorporated the Sufi traditions into their works and sometimes claim them for themselves.\textsuperscript{1223} In this period, in the eyes of many traditionalists, Sufism was part of the mainstream.\textsuperscript{1224}

In the genealogical tree of the Medieval Islamic Qurʾān exegetical tradition, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} could be considered an Īmāmī branch of \textit{al-Kashf} of al-Thaʿlabī. However, Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary is more comprehensive than al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary because contrary to al-Thaʿlabī who did not incorporate the Muʿtazilite interpretation in his work,\textsuperscript{1225} Abū al-Futūḥ has introduced the Muʿtazilite exegetical material into \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} through \textit{al-Tibyān} of al-Ṭūsī and the Muʿtazilite’s exegetical and theological heritage in Rayy.

From the earliest phase of Sufi history (3\textsuperscript{rd}/9\textsuperscript{th} to 6\textsuperscript{th}/12\textsuperscript{th} century)\textsuperscript{1226} there were a relationship between Shiʿī and Sufi thought, especially in their theory of divine alliance (\textit{walāya}) and their esoteric approaches to the Qurʾān interpretation.\textsuperscript{1227} But it was not al-Maghribī, al-Ṭūsī, or al-Ṭabrisī who were receptive of Sufi exegesis in their encyclopedic commentaries. The first Īmāmī exegete who integrated mystical interpretations into his commentary was Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī.\textsuperscript{1228} However, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} is not the first Persian commentary which integrated \textit{ahl ishārat}’s exegetical statements. Other early works of Persian \textit{tafsīr} such as \textit{Tāj al-tarājim} of Isfārāʾīnī (d.

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{1222}] Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, 103-104.
\item[\textsuperscript{1223}] Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, 90.
\item[\textsuperscript{1224}] Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, 93.
\item[\textsuperscript{1225}] Saleh, \textit{The Formation}, 49-50, 153.
\item[\textsuperscript{1226}] Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, viii.
\item[\textsuperscript{1227}] Karamustafa, \textit{Sufism}, x. \textit{Walāya} in Shiʿīsm has three main semantic levels: the imamate, the love of the Imam/\textit{walī} and the theology of the metaphysical Imam (as the manifestation of God). (See Amir-Moezzi, “The Tafsīr,” 131).
\item[\textsuperscript{1228}] See Jahānbakhs, “Kalām-i ‘ahl-i ishārat’ dar tafsīr-i Rawḍ al-jinān.”
\end{itemize}
471/1078) or *Kashf al-asrār* of al-Maybudī cited mystical exegesis regularly.\(^{1229}\) But they were Sunni exegetes and Abū al-Futūḥ is the first Shīʿa exegete who brought relationship between Shīʿī and Sufi traditions into the genre of Qurʾān exegesis.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s approach to mystical interpretations is very similar to al-Thaʿlabī’s. Like al-Thaʿlabī, he was very receptive of mystical exegesis to produce an anthologically comprehensive commentary which does not leave out any type of the exegetical traditions.\(^{1230}\) For this reason there is a serious argument as to whether or not al-Thaʿlabī or Abū al-Futūḥ were indeed Sufis. Al-Thaʿlabī cited mystical interpretations almost consistently\(^ {1231}\) after the traditional ones.\(^ {1232}\) This means that he engaged in a consistent manner with the esoteric meaning of the verses; however, as Saleh notes there is no indication that al-Thaʿlabī was a Sufi.\(^ {1233}\) Saleh does not consider mystical interpretations in *al-Kashf* which are not transmitted from any mystic al-Thaʿlabī’s original exegesis. He states that this kind of mystical interpretations is al-Thaʿlabī’s “mimicking of the process of mystical Qurʾānic interpretation.”\(^ {1234}\) For Saleh it is very possible that one can mimic Sufi language, but not really be a Sufi because the beauty of Sufi interpretations is not when they are written down but experienced. However, as Karamustafa suggests these mystical interpretations could be other Sufis’ exegetical statements which are incorporated into *al-Kashf* without mentioning their author. It seems that al-Thaʿlabī is a moderate exegete who stands between orthodox Sunni and orthodox Sufi exegetes. Despite the fact that al-Thaʿlabī has not been called a mystic by the sources or has not found in the Sufi biographical dictionaries,\(^ {1235}\) he was a new generation of Sunni scholars who were inclined

\(^{1229}\) For example, see Isfarāʾi, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 1:62, 66, 310; 3:1375; For Sufi exegesis in *Kashf al-asrār* of Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī see Keeler, *Sufi Hermeneutics*.


\(^{1231}\) Saleh, *The Formation*, 155.

\(^{1232}\) Saleh, *The Formation*, 156.

\(^{1233}\) Saleh, *The Formation*, 65.

\(^{1234}\) Saleh, *The Formation*, 160.

\(^{1235}\) Saleh, *The Formation*, 57.
toward mystical tradition and openly quoted Sufi and Imami statements. Similarly, Abū al-Futūḥ is a new generation of Imami scholars who are interested in esoteric Sufi exegesis and cited Sunni exegetical traditions regularly. Therefore, the study of how Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned mystics’ names and narrated their exegetical statements is of particular importance. His eloquent translation of these mystical interpretations in turn is worth examining, too. As it was mentioned earlier, my study of Rawḍ al-jinān shows that almost all the mystical interpretations in Rawḍ al-jinān are borrowed from al-Kashf without any criticism. However, sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ changes it subtly to make it compatible with Imami doctrine.

Al-Tha’labī and his contemporary al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī (d. 405/1014) were the most prominent Sunnī voices of ṭafsīr and hadīth, respectively, in the “Shīʿī century” in Nishapur. But both of them were accused of being weak transmitters of tradition or a hardline Shīʿite because of their inclusion of some pro-ʿAlī ḥadīths in their works.1236 Regarding al-Tha’labī, Ibn Taymiyya states that “he was good and faithful, but he was ḥāṭib al-layl1237 because he transmits whatever he found in the Qurʾān commentaries correct, weak or forged.”1238 Concerning al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, al-Dhahabī states that he was only a Shīʿī rather than Rāfiḍī.1239 Comparing the status of these scholars in Sunni society, Abū al-Futūḥ had a better status among Imami scholars. Although he incorporated Sufi and Sunni traditions into Imami exegesis, Rawḍ al-jinān has been always appreciated by Imami scholars because it was in Persian and considered to be written under the pressure of Seljuqs (taqiyya) which is discussed in the third chapter.

In general, Sufis statements in Rawḍ al-jinān may be divided into two categories: first, Abū al-Futūḥ ascribes the statement to the mystics (ahl ishārat); second, he brings the statement of one mystic or several mystics with their names and sometimes omits the name or changes it to (ahl ishārat). As mystical interpretations are admitted into al-Kashf and treated equally to other

1237 Ḥāṭib al-layl is a woodcutter who gathers both wet and dry firewood in the darkness. (al-Farḥīdī, Kitāb al-ʿayn, 3:174; Ibn durayd, Jamhara, 1:281). By this metaphor Ibn Taymiyya wants to state that what al-Tha’labī wrote in his commentary was both true and false.
1238 Ibn Taymiyya, Muqaddima, 76.
1239 Al-Dhahabī, Mizān, 6: 216.
exegetical traditions,\textsuperscript{1240} they are incorporated into \textit{Rawḍ al-jīnān} and treated equally. For example, Abū al-Futūḥ attributes the following interpretation of [Q 38:1] to \textit{Ahl ishārat} that “\textit{Ahl ishārat} said [Ṣād] is a past verb [Ṣāda] which means Muḥammad caught the hearts of mystics (ʿārifīn) with the Qurʾān.”\textsuperscript{1241} This quotation is taken from \textit{al-Kashf}, which al-Thaʿlabī states that “It is said regarding [of the letter] Ṣād, its meaning is Muḥammad caught the hearts of the creatures and won over them to till they believed in him.”\textsuperscript{1242} Comparison between these two texts demonstrates Abū al-Futūḥ’s manipulation of the original text. More important than the name is the content of the statement which may be changed to be in harmony with Shiʿī belief. It seems that Abū al-Futūḥ’s actions were important in terms of paving the ground for next generations of Shiʿī mystics. Sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ manipulates \textit{ahl ishārat}’s interpretation to be compatible with Imami doctrine. For example, he believes in the impossibility of seeing God. In interpreting of [Q 83:28] ‘a spring [where] those brought near [to Allah will] drink from it’ al-Thaʿlabī cites from two Baghdadi Sufis, Abū Muḥammad al-Jurayrī (d. 312/924) and Abu Bakr Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Wāsiṭī (d. c. 320/932) an interesting exegesis.\textsuperscript{1243} explaining this verse: “Those nearest to God will drink [from that spring], provide on the carpet of closeness in the gathering of intimacy and the gardens of holiness in the bowl of satisfaction observing al-Ḥaqq praised and elevated.” What is surprising is that at the end of this narration al-Thaʿlabī speaks of seeing God, which contrasts Abū al-Futūḥ’s doctrine discussed in verse 83:15. As a result Abū al-Futūḥ has changed the word “\textit{al-Ḥaqq subḥānahu wa taʿālā}” in this passage to “\textit{Muṣṭafā - ʿalayhi al-salām.”}\textsuperscript{1244} Another point about this verse is that Abū al-Futūḥ has omitted these two Sufis’ names and refers to them by “\textit{ahl ishārat}.”

\textsuperscript{1240} Saleh, \textit{The Formation}, 154.
\textsuperscript{1241} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jīnān}, 16:252.
\textsuperscript{1242} Al-Thaʿlabī, \textit{al-Kashf}, 8:176.
\textsuperscript{1243} On Abū Muḥammad al-Jurayrī see Knysh, \textit{Islamic Mysticism}, 56, 66, 84; on al-Wāsiṭī see the monograph Silvers, \textit{A Soaring Minaret};
\textsuperscript{1244} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jīnān}, 20:192.
4.5 Abū al-Futūḥ as a preacher

Apparently Abū al-Futūḥ used to give public lectures and sermons even as a young man and for this reason Muntajab al-Dīn describes him as a preacher (wāʿiẓ). During the Seljuq period people could not easily engage in a rigorous course of study of the Imāmī doctrine or jurisprudence in Rayy under the supervision of Imāmī scholars. In this period, Abū al-Futūḥ as a popular and considerate preacher became a channel of spreading Imāmī doctrine to the common people. An interesting story recorded in Rīyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ, confirms this function of Abū al-Futūḥ. According to this story which Afandī made available to us from Abū al-Futūḥ’s lost work Rawḥ al-aḥbāb wa Rūḥ al-albāb fī sharḥ al-Shihāb, Abū al-Futūḥ was a popular preacher in Rayy since he was young. In explaining the Prophetic tradition “God supports this religion with a sinner,” Abū al-Futūḥ states: “When I was young, I used to deliver public speeches in a caravanserai known as ʿAllān caravanserai in Rayy and I was warmly received [by people]. Some of my colleagues became jealous of me and slandered me to the governor. As a result, the governor barred me from [speaking in] that public gathering. I had a neighbor who was from the family of the sultan. This event was during the feast days and he intended to be busy with drinking because of his habit; when he heard what happened [to me] he left what he intended to do. He went and informed the governor that those people became jealous of me and lied about me. Then he came and brought me out of my home and returned me to the pulpit and sat in that gathering to the end.” Abū al-Futūḥ was not the only Shīʿa who was barred from preaching by secular or religious authorities during the Seljuq period. Another example is ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Ghaznawī (d. 551/1156) who was barred from preaching by the Seljuq Sultan Masʿūd because it was said that he began to incline toward Shīʿī Islam. Abū al-Futūḥ’s dedication to preaching and giving public sermons also influenced the style of his commentary. His interpretations are fine examples of expository preaching in which he gives

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1245 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 48 no. 78.
1246 This caravanserai was possibly connected to Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī’s uncle, who was called ʿAllān al-Kulaynī. (See al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 377 no. 1026).
1248 Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Muntaẓam, 10:166–68; See also Berkey, Popular Preaching, 65.
details of mystical concepts and moral lessons (*mawāʿiẓ*) frequently. Abū al-Futūḥ as a preacher tried to facilitate the transfer to the common people of Imāmī doctrine especially Imamate favoured by mystical themes or adorned by rhetorical devices. It seems that in the Seljuq period instead of giving doctrinal lectures in the religious schools (*madrasas*) as well as mosques, some Imāmī scholars in Rayy used caravanserais or Sufi lodges to preach to people. During the Great Seljuq period a relation of power attained between the Persian Sufis and Sultans. The prestige and status of the Persian Sufis were increasing and they were largely in a favourable position. Therefore, they began to cultivate a greater role in the political power. Seljuq Sultans or their viziers realized the popularity of the mystics and employed them for their own political benefit.¹²⁴⁹

The centrality of the Qurʾān and its exegesis to preaching is seen in many Medieval Muslim scholars such as Abū al-Futūḥ or Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201). The Qurʾān was important as a holy ground for preachers to deliver their extra-Qurʾānic material to spread their doctrine and legal school (Abū al-Futūḥ as an Imāmī Jaʿfarī or Ibn al-Jawzī as an Ashʿarī Ḥanbalī) in a form of supplementary to Qurʾānic teachings. In this regard, preachers and exegetes such as al-Thaʿlabī, Abū al-Futūḥ, or Ibn Kathīr also employed different tools such as stories of the pre-Islamic prophets in their commentaries or independent collections to create encyclopedic commentaries.¹²⁵⁰

The audience of Abū al-Futūḥ in his commentary include both the common people and the elite. He is fully aware of his important role in the transmission of Imāmī doctrine to the common people as well as the elite through exegesis of the Qurʾān. His informative style of preaching fulfilled this purpose and attracted Muslims from different faith communities.¹²⁵¹ As Ibn al-Jawzī notes that “the preacher should not speak on the principles [of doctrine],”¹²⁵² Abū al-Futūḥ

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¹²⁴⁹ Sultan Ťughril-Beg and a number of his viziers are reported to have been devotees of various Sufi masters. See Dabashi, “Historical Conditions,” 153.


¹²⁵¹ Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 46, 228.

as a preacher narrates emotional stories in support of the Imams or against their adversaries. This approach increases his audience as Ibn al-Jawzī notes that “The preacher brings to the gate of God a great number of people, while a jurist or a traditionist or a Qurʾān reciter cannot bring [to the gate of God] a hundredth of that number, because the preacher’s admonitions are addressed to both the common people and the elite, but especially the common people, who rarely meet a jurist to ask him questions.”  

In many cases as a preacher when there is a verse concerning salvation, Abū al-Futūḥ mentions the last hidden Imam “Ṣāḥib al-zamān.” In general the promise of salvation and ending of suffering were two of the central themes of the tradition of popular preaching in the medieval Islamic world.

An excellent example of Abū al-Futūḥ’s preaching style is his interpretation of the two short sentences in [Q 2:197] ‘and make provision (zad), but indeed the best provision is God-consciousness (taqwā)’ (wa tazawwadū fa-ınna khayra al-zād al-taqwā) which are revealed in the context of ḥajj. Since its previous sentence ‘whatever good you do, God knows it,’ is a general statement regarding pilgrims’ deeds, it is not clear whether the imperative verb ‘make provision’ (tazawwadū) implies that pilgrims should make provision of food for their ḥajj journey, or that they have to make provision for righteous deeds for their Hereafter journey. It seems that tazawwadū (form V of the root z-w-d) could be like a transition from ḥajj as a ritual to taqwā as a spiritual value. It is remarkable to note the evolution in the interpretation of these two sentences in three lines by Muqāṭil b. Sulaymān (d. c. 150/767) in the first half of the 2nd/8th century to an eight-page encyclopedic exegesis in a preaching style using flowery prose adorned with Arabic and Persian poems in Rawḍ al-jīnān in the first half of the 6th/12th century. Muqāṭil b. Sulaymān, the early exegete and Zaydī ascetic, mentioned a simple interpretation for these two sentences. He first gives an occasion of revelation (sabab al-nuzūl) for these two short

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1253 Ibn al-Jawzī, Kitāb al-qussās, 370; See also Berkey, Popular Preaching, 24.


1255 Berkey, Popular Preaching, 47.
sentences, stating that “Some people of Yemen and others were used to making the pilgrimage without provision and they used to afflict other people on their way unjustly. Therefore, God revealed for you to make provision from food what you can and turn your face away from people and [refrain from] asking them [for food].” After saying that they should bring food with them as their provision, God reminds the pilgrims that “even with this [material provision], taqwā is still a better provision overall. Do not be unjust to whoever you pass.”

The comparison here is invoked by the mention of provision (zād) and this simple interpretation includes a worldly as well as a spiritual message for Muslims. Therefore, after the occasion of revelation, Muqātil used another exegetical method, i.e. paraphrasing, to simplify the verse. He used two techniques, namely fragmentation and completion to convey the message of the verse to his reader. At the end Muqātil supported his interpretation by a Prophetic tradition very similar to his commentary.

In his commentary Jāmiʿ al-bayān, al-Ṭabarī narrates the same occasion of revelation and after that cites similar traditions from previous authorities. In his informative ‘scholastic’ commentary, al-Ṭabarī elaborates and summarizes all narrated traditions as the taʾwīl of the verse: “be supplied with provisions what you can; accomplish your Lord’s religious duty upon you in your hajj and your rites. Truly it is not a righteous act before God to abandon making provision for yourselves and asking people, and nor in wasting your food and corrupting it. But righteousness is to be conscious of your Lord by avoiding what He prohibited you to do on your journey to hajj and to do what He commanded you. This is the best provision.” Then al-Ṭabarī supports his taʾwīl by only one tradition narrated by al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim (d. 105/723) that al-

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1256 Muqātil extensively employs narratives about the occasions of revelation in his commentary (See Sinai, “The Qur’anic Commentary of Muqātil,” 117, 140 n.14).


1258 Tohe, “Muqatil Ibn Sulayman,” 74-75. For Tohe, “fragmentation technique” is to break up a verse into smaller meaningful parts, either in words or phrases and “completion technique” is completing each small Quranic statement with your own phrases with a pattern similar to the original.

1259 See the second of Calder’s three defining characteristics of tafsīr (Calder, “Tafsīr from Ṭabarī to Ibn Kathīr,” 103-104).
taqwā in this verse is “to act obediently to God.”

Although at the end of the 3rd/9th century the early mystic literature had taken its form, it is not present in Jāmiʿ al-bayān.

This balance between the literal and mystical interpretations changed in al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī (d. 427/1035) because he incorporated mystical interpretation in mainstream Sunni exegesis for the first time. Al-Tha’labī did not favour using exoteric interpretations of esoteric concepts in his commentary. He gives the exoteric interpretation under the authority of exegetes (mufassirūn) and supported it with a similar narration by Nāfi’, the mawlā of Ibn ʿUmar. In his second interpretation, al-Tha’labī mentioned what ahl al-ishāra state “God reminded them of the journey of the Hereafter and urged them to make provisions in the two worlds for taqwā is the provision of the Hereafter” and supported it by four poetry verses. Then he cited a mystical story from Mālik b. Dīnār al-Ṭabīrī (d. c. 130/748), an early Muslim ascetic and a role model for early Sufis, in addition to two more poetry verses. This change in mainstream Sunni exegesis approach from al-Ṭabarī to al-Tha’labī had its real impact on Imāmī exegesis in the 6th/12th century in the Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ not in al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī. Al-Ṭūsī reports two interpretations and a balance is seen between these two commentaries. For al-Ṭūsī this verse means the pilgrim should go on the hajj prepared materially and spiritually and taqwā as a provision for the Hereafter is likened to the provision one makes for the pilgrimage in this world. Abū al-Futūḥ changed this balance between exoteric and esoteric interpretation.

4.5.1 The Power of Rhetorical Figures of Speech Used in Rawḍ al-jinān

Abū al-Futūḥ used different rhetorical devices, in Persian, such as personification and polyptoton in his commentary of these two sentences of verse [Q 2:197] mentioned above. Abū al-Futūḥ

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1261 On Mālik b. Dīnār see Gramlich, Alte Vorbilder, 59–121.


1263 al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 2:165-166.
started his exegesis with the exoteric interpretation and translated the same occasion of revelation concerning Yemenis, borrowing from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī.\footnote{Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:111-112. (Compare with al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 2:107). In his translation, Abū al-Futūḥ gives two different statements said by Yemeni pilgrims which is not found in other commentaries. These are likely free translations or transmissions of other sources.} Interpreting the word zad, Abū al-Futūḥ mentions two types of zad, i.e., provision: exoteric provision (zād-i ḍāhir) and esoteric provision (zād-i bāṭin) and shifts from the former to the latter interpretation. The esoteric interpretation of ahl ishārat is cited from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī. Abū al-Futūḥ believes that this interpretation of ahl ishārat is an analogy (tamthīl), a comparison between the temporary journey to Mecca and the permanent journey to the Hereafter.

Abū al-Futūḥ explains the interpretation of ahl ishārat in a rhymed prose and compares the provision in this world with the provision in the Hereafter as two opposite types of zād. He compares the heavy load on the riding camel on the journey of ḥajj with the heavy burden of one’s deeds on the journey to the Hereafter to explain and promote a mystic tradition. He juxtaposes opposite words such as bāz āyī bāz nayāyī (to return/do not return) or girān bārīsabuk bār (heavy/light) to emphasize the importance of esoteric provision (zād-i bāṭin). In this regard, Abū al-Futūḥ cites the following verse from al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965) advising that if you do not have a riding camel, be satisfied with a shoe from goatskin.\footnote{al-Mutanabbī, Dīwān, 110.}

Abū al-Futūh’s writing features mixing Persian and Arabic not only for the verses of the Qur’ān and the traditions but also for his commentary. It is predominately Persian but Arabic phrases and sentences are frequent. In the middle of his Persian rhymed comparison, suddenly Abū al-Futūḥ switches to Arabic. In a pun (jinās nāqiṣ), Abū al-Futūḥ shows his mastery: “you with your [spiritual] traveling provision are better (aḥjā) than pilgrims (ḥājj) with their riding camels, you are better (aḥjā) if you use your intellect (ḥijā).”\footnote{And I am given instead of a hardworking camel a black shoe of goat skin so that I can walk like riding} From this point, Abū al-Futūḥ commenced to cite Sanāʾī’s (d. c. 525/1131) poems.

\begin{flushleft}
Wa ḥubītu min khūṣ al-rikāb bi-aswād\textsuperscript{a} min dārish\textsuperscript{a} fa-ghadawtu amshī rākib\textsuperscript{a}
And I am given instead of a hardworking camel a black shoe of goat skin so that I can walk like riding
\end{flushleft}

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\footnote{Anta bi-rāḥilatika aḥjā min al-ḥājj bi-rawāḥilihim, anta aḥjā law istaʿmalta al-ḥijā (Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:113).}
\end{flushright}
Abū al-Futūḥ intertwined mystical concepts in mystical poems with prophetic ḥadīth and other Qur’ānic verses in rhymed prose preaching style. He selected ten verses of Sanāʾī in groups of one, two or three in the interpretation of the Qur’ānic verse in question. These ten verses are some of Sanāʾī’s zuhdīyāt qaṣidas which became widely known soon after his death. In the 6th/12th century the art of ornamental expression in Persian reached its zenith in the panegyric odes (qaṣidas) of the Seljuq court. Persian zuhdīyāt qaṣidas were Arabic zuhdīyya in the new artistic Persian form. Arabic Ascetic poetry (zuhdīyya) originally was developed at the early ʿAbbāsīd period (late 2nd/8th-early 3rd/9th centuries). For example, in his Arabic Zuhdīyya, Abū al-ʿAtāhiya (d. 211/826), a major poet of the early ʿAbbāsīd period, alluded to the same verse in question [Q 2:197]. When Abū Nuwās (d. 199/814) exhorted tazawwud min shabābin laysa yabqā, “make provisions of youth, which does not last,” Abū al-ʿAtāhiya responds, laysa zādun siwā al-tuqā, “There is no provision except God-consciousness.” Zuhdīyya was later adapted to other uses such as religious or mystical poetry, and provided models for the various types of the later Persian ghazal.

It is evident that even during Sanāʾī’s lifetime, lines from his poems (especially his zuhdīyāt) were cited by several writers who were his contemporaries such as Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī and Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī. Sanāʾī is considered to be the founder of fully developed Persian ‘mystical’ poetry or more aptly Persian ‘homiletic’ poetry. The first two lines of Sanāʾī’s

1267 Sanāʾī Ghaznavī, Divān, 625-626.
1268 Bruijn, “Sanāʾī.”
1269 See Chalisova, “Rhetorical Figures.”
1270 “Poetry is the most significant artistic achievement of Persia, and, as an art with wide scope, sustained energy and universal appeal, provides the broadest stage for artistic and intellectual expression.” (Yarshater, “Some common characteristics of Persian Poetry and Art,” 61).
1271 Meisami, Structure and Meaning, 40.
1272 Meisami, Structure and Meaning, 30.
1273 Bruijn, Persian Sufi Poetry, 38, 41.
1274 Bruijn, Persian Sufi Poetry, 35.
qaṣīda quoted by Abū al-Futūḥ is the Sufi notion of non-being (Persian: nīstī, Arabic: ʿadam) as the provision for one’s journey. Sanāʾī says:

tu rā gar hamī rāhī ḥaqq jūyī avval  
If you are seeking the path of truth (rāhī ḥaqq) first

pas az nīstī zādī ān rāh sāzī  
So you have to make provision from non-being (nīstī) for that path

kujā bihtar az nīstī hast zādī  
Where is (hast) a better provision than non-being?

Here Abū al-Futūḥ alludes to the concept of non-being (nīstī) that “if you are walking on the path of God, be satisfied with non-being as a provision for this journey” because “if you make provision from non-being (nīstī) you can be nothing (nīst) and all being (hastī) is under that non-being.” In Sufi tradition non-being (ʿadam) is the positive sense of non-manifestation, of a principal state beyond existence/being (wujūd). Abū al-Futūḥ concludes that if you make provision from non-being for your ḥajj journey, you are ḥājī and ghāzī (warrior champion). He uses the same form of active participle to allude to two concepts of ḥajj and jihād (holy war). He encourages his reader to make jihād with his ego and cites a Prophetic tradition: “Your worst enemy is your self which is between your two sides.” This ḥadīth was first attributed to the Prophet in Sunni mystical books such as Laṭāʾif al-īsārāt of Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) or Kitāb al-Zuhd al-kabīr (the big book of ascetic tradition) of al-Bayhaqī (d. 458/1065) and found its way to Imāmī sources through Rawd al-jinān. Abū al-Futūḥ employs polyptoton and interplay between two words qātil (killer) and maqtūl (killed) derived from the same root q-t-l. He says


1276 al-Bayhaqī, Kitāb al-Zuhd, 156-157 no. 343; Qushayrī, Laṭāʾif al-īsārāt, 1:161, 292, 433; 2:8; 3:569. A similar Prophetic ḥadīth is transmitted in Imami sources that “the best jihād (striving) is to struggle with one’s self which lies in between his two sides.” (Ibn Bābawayh, al-Amālī, 467 no. 8). However, Abū al-Futūḥ cited this ḥadīth from mystical sources because he is the first Imami author who used the expression “your worst enemy” instead of “the best striving.”
“you have to be killed by yourself; you have to be qātil and maqtūl. By being qātil you will be a warrior and by being maqtūl you will be a martyr.”

Abū al-Futūḥ cited the following three more lines from Sanāʾī alluding to the story of the butterfly and the candle flame. In these three verses, Abū al-Futūḥ rewrites Sanāʾī’s verses and delete his pen name. He manipulates this poem in such a way that although it appears to be original, no one knows easily this is cited from Sanāʾī.

ṣalāḥī tu dar kushtan1 tust wa āngah  
Your good is to kill your self  
nabīnī ki parvānehiyī sham′ har gah  
Have you not seen a butterfly of a candle when

barī gardad az khwīsh wa bar šidq1 daʿvī  
It turned away from its self and truly


1278 Sanāʾī says: “barī gardad az khwīshhtan chun Sanāʾī kunad ū zi khwīshkhud infirādī.”

Abū al-Futūḥ deletes the pen name of Sanāʾī and instead of that says:

barī gardad az khwīsh wa bar šidq1 daʿwā  
kunad khwīshkhwīsh rā chun ramādī.

1279 Bruijn, “Bayān.”
verse “your life will end and nothing will happen to you except what is written for you.” then he cites [Q 9:51] “nothing befalls us except that which God has written for us. He is our master.” All this paragraph which decorated with figures of speech is an explanation of the following two verses of Sanāʾī:

ayā māndih bar mūjib har murādī
O you who is stuck in what you intended

na dar ḥaqq kh"ud mar tu rā inzī ājī
you do not make yourself discomfort

In the climax of his excitement, Abū al-Futūḥ gets closer to some Sufi idea to go beyond the [Divine] law (sharīʿa) and analytical reasoning (ʿaql) to access true reality (ḥaqīqa). However, even in this conditions, he plays with letters and words to beautify his writing. He says, “You have to be bī havas (without lust) with its letter misplaced, I mean bī hush (unconscious) and bī hushī (being unconscious) is madhūshī (being perplexed). You have to be dīvānih (crazy) of reason, bīgānih (stranger) to divine law.” After that he cites another line of Sanāʾī:

chu dīvānigān dāyim andar tafakkur like crazy men I am always thinking

Then he continues, “all this suffering (ranj) for place where one halts or rests for a few days (sipanj). He abandoned the eternal treasure (ganj) and chose the eternal suffering.” This saj’ (rhymed prose) completes with the last two lines cited from Sanāʾī:

zi bahri du rūzi maqāmi majāzī
for the untrue position of this temporary [world]

hamānā bi khāb andarī yā nadānī
you are in asleep or you do not know

Abū al-Futūḥ then cites another verse of al-Mutanabbi and comes back to the main topic which is the interpretation of the Qur’anic verse by employing personification to insist upon the necessity of making provision for the ensuing journey of the Hereafter. In this regard he cited two lines

from al-Jāḥīẓ (d. 255/868) to illustrate making provision by animals. In the following lines he attributes human qualities such as foresight and speaking to locusts in order to dispense advice. Abū al-Futūḥ says, “Although the following lines is an elegant speech (mulḥ), it is a useful lesson from a locust (malakh).” Than he cites the following verses in Arabic:

The locusts passed over my crops and I said to them
Keep away, do not be mad to corrupt
A speaker from them stood over the spike of grain [saying]
We are on a journey, it is necessary to make provision.  

Abū al-Futūḥ communicates well with his reader, and frequently admonish him. He employs another jinās “With your zād (provision) you (izdiyād) increased your sins” to transfer to another mystic’s poem. Abū al-Futūḥ is interested in early ascetics who play an important role as mystic archetypes in Arabic and Persian anecdotes and poems to illustrate his instructions and ideas. One of them is the famous female Baṣran mystic Rābiʿa al-ʿAdawīyya (d. 185/801) who is cited by Abū al-Futūḥ:

My provision is little I do not see it sufficient to get me to paradise
Do I cry for my provision or for the length of my journey?  

Abū al-Futūḥ employs a beautiful polyptoton to shift from zād (provision) to izdiyād (increase) to Āl Ziyād (family of Ziyād) to allude to dissociation (tabarrī) from the Imams adversaries. Dissociation from the opponents of the Family of the Prophet (tabarrī or barāʾa) along with alliance with and love for the imams (tawallī or walāya) are one of the principles of Imāmī doctrine. Love for the imams and friendship (tawallī) of the Imams can only be accepted when accompanied by dissociation from their enemies and enmity (tabarrī) towards their adversaries. This opposing concepts of friendship and enmity are at the core of the Shiʿi dualist vision of the world. Abū al-Futūḥ states “Know that friendship of Yazīd (Muʿāwiya’s

1281 al-Jāḥīẓ, *al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, 2:127. Al-Jāḥīẓ reported that “A Bedouin from Banū Ḥanīfa said and he was joking” then he cited two lines.


son) and Ziyād (Muʿāwiya’s viceroy in the East) does not elevate your status. Even if you increase your rank, that increase (ziyādat) is a decrease (muqṣān). If you think it is a gain, know that it is a loss.” He supported what he said by citing the first line (maṭlaʾ) of another zuhdīyya:

Increase of a person in this world is a decrease
And if his profit is not pure good it is a loss.1285

Next, Abū al-Futūḥ translated a story concerning taqwā by omitting the names of its characters. He narrated this story from “one of the eminent people (buzurgān)” because this eminent person is Kaʿb al-Aḥbār (d. between 32/652 and 35/655), a former Jewish scholar who was born in Yemen and apparently converted to Islam while ʿUmar reigned as caliph (r. 13-23/634-644).1286

In this story ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644) asked Kaʿb al-Aḥbār to tell him what taqwā is. Kaʿb al-Aḥbār said to him: “Have you taken a thorny road?” ʿUmar said: Yes. Kaʿb al-Aḥbār asked him: What did you do? ʿUmar said: I was way of going and turned my garment up. Kaʿb al-Aḥbār said: that is taqwā.”1287 Abū al-Futūḥ does not mention their names.1288 This practice of not referring to non-Shīʿa famous figures such as the first three caliphs and their proponents by their name is a characteristic of Rawḍ al-jinān. Abū al-Futūḥ then cites three lines of ibn al-Muʿtazz (d. 296/908) who wrote the same story as a poem.

For the first time in Imāmī exegesis, Abū al-Futūḥ integrated pro-Shīʿī compelling stories narrated by early ascetics or mystics to excite his audience to love the ahl al-bayt. He cited two stories, the first one concerning Imam ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn narrated on the authority of the Khurāsānian ascetic from Marw, ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797) and the second story concerning Shahda the granddaughter of Fiḍḍa, maidservant of Fāṭima on the authority of Mālik b. Dīnār (d. c. 130/748) another ascetic from Baṣra. Abū al-Futūḥ (and later his disciple Ibn Shahrāshūb) is the first person who incorporated early Sufi literature concerning virtues of ahl al-bayt and their servants under the authority of Sufis into Imāmī literature.

1285 al-Bustī, Dīwān Abī al-Fath al-Bustī, 186.
1286 Ibn Saʿd, al-Ṭabaqāt, 7:446; Ibn Ḥajar, al-Tahdhīb, 8:382–383.
1288 al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 1:142; It is interesting that al-Maybūdī and al-Ṭabrisī cited the same tradition and mentioned the name of ʿUmar and al-Khaṭṭāb and Kaʿb al-Aḥbār (al-Maybūdī, Kashf al-asrār, 1:56; al-Ṭabrisī, Majmaʿ al-bayān, 1:119).
In the first story, ʿAbd Allāh [b.] al-Mubārak narrates that:

One year I went on pilgrimage and I was lost. Therefore, I was going on trust [in God]. I saw in the desert a young boy and he was only seven or eight years old. He wore a short garment, covered his heard with a handkerchief, and a pair of sandals in his foot. He only had a stick of khayzurān. He did not have any zād (provision) or camel with him. I said: Glory to God! A dangerous desert and a small boy! I asked him: where do you come from? He said: from God! I asked him: where do you go? He answered: to God! I asked him: what do you seek? He said: the pleasure (riḍā) of God. I asked him: where is your zād (provision) and your camel? He answered: my provision is my taqwā and my camel is my legs and my intention is only my master God. I was surprised by his indifference to worldly things and his trust in God. I asked him: who are you? He responded: what do you want to do? Leave this question. Why do you want to know about our suffering? I said: who are you? He said: we are treded unjustly (maẓlūmūn). I said tell me more. He said: we are oppressed (maqhūrūn). I said tell me clearer. He said: we are exiled (maṭrūdūn). I said could not know who you are. He recited four lines of a poem and left. I did not see him until I met him again between the corner (rukn) of Kaʿba and maqam [of Araham]. People were gathered around him asking him their question of lawful, prohibited, and Islamic law and he answered. I asked people: who is this young person. They said: Zayn al-ʿAbīdīn ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn. I said: Glory to God! This asceticism and trust [in God]! This knowledge and elucidation. [Q 6:124] ‘God knows best where to place His message.’

This multipurpose story is perfect for Abū al-Futūḥ to deliver his Shīʿī messages through early ascetics’ tongues adorned by rhetorical devices. A similar story concerning Imam ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn’s pilgrimage is narrated by other ascetic or mystical authorities such as Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. c. 162/778) and Fatḥ al-Mawṣilī (d. 220/835) in medieval Imāmī sources. The connection between early ascetic tradition and Shīʿī tradition is obvious in these stories and their narrators.

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1289 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:117.

1290 Ibn Shahrāshūb, Manāqib, 4:137; al-Majlisī, Biḥār al-anwār, 46:38. Ibrāhīm b. Adham was an early ascetic (see Knysh, Islamic Mysticism, 21–22). Fatḥ al-Mawṣilī was an early Sufi of Baghdad and a companion of al-Sarī al-Saqāfī (see Knysh, Epistle, 382).
For transition from this story to the next story, Abū al-Futūḥ states that “Those servants of *ahl al-bayt* who had true intention in their service, even their descendants will receive the blessing of that service.”¹²⁹¹ Then as an example of the status of *ahl al-bayt*’s servants Abū al-Futūḥ cited the second story concerning the granddaughter of Fiḍḍa, maidservant of Fāṭima the daughter of the Prophet. Abū al-Futūḥ and his disciple Ibn Shahrāshūb are the only transmitters of this story and it is not found in any other book.¹²⁹² Interestingly Abū al-Futūḥ ascribed this story to Mālik b. Dīnār before translating what al-Thaʿlabī cited from Mālik b. Dīnār:

I was going on a pilgrimage a few years ago. I saw on my way to *ḥajj* a weak woman on a weak animal. People gathered around her and advised her to return because the journey was difficult and she was weak. She said I did not come to return! I told her to return too because it was not expedient to travel the desert without provision. She replied to me the same thing. We went and when we were in the middle of dessert she stayed because her animal was a weak donkey. People passed and left her alone. I wanted to leave but I remembered that the messenger [of God] said: ‘A believer is the brother of another believer [as if] from his own mother and father. If he is hungry, he feeds him; if he is naked, he clothes him; if he is afraid, he brings him safety; if he is sick, he visits him, and if he dies, he attends his funeral.’ I stayed and told her: Did not I say to you not to come because the path is difficult and your animal is weak! She did not listen to me and raised her head towards the sky and said: O my God, not in my house did You leave me and not to your house did You carry me. I swear by your majesty if someone else did this to me I did not complain except to You. Her speech was not completed when I saw a person with a camel coming from afar in the desert. He made the camel sit on his knees and asked her to sit on the camel. She sat on the camel and they left like the wind. I did not see her until I reached Mecca. I saw her and told her: By God who honoured you with this miracle I implore you to tell me who you are. She said: I am Shahda [or Shuhra] bint Muska bint

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Fiḍḍa, maidservant of Fāṭima. This is not my status, this is their status that because of that God the most Subtle did with me what you saw.  

This story is so compelling, inspirational and suitable for preaching that even today after about 887 years since Abū al-Futūḥ’s death when Imāmī scholars or preachers want to recall Fāṭima’s charisma and unique characteristics they use this tradition in their speech to show the status of Fāṭima.  

In his preaching style, sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ is not giving particular moral advice to his audience. For example, in this story there is no specific moral. It is a doctrinal lesson to show the high status of Fāṭima by showing the status of her maidservants. When Abū al-Futūḥ wants to cite a line of poetry, he makes a connection between that line and the Qur’ānic verse in question. He remarks that “in each station of the journey to the Hereafter, taqwā is helpful and the first station of the Hereafter is the grave (gūr).” Abū al-Futūḥ uses the following two lines as a transition to an Imāmī tradition to integrate Imāmī doctrinal material in his commentary. Interestingly, these two lines are ascribed to the well-known proto-Sufi ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797):

Death is a sea whose waves are dominant; the trick of the swimmer disappears in it except by taqwā and righteous deeds.  

Abū al-Futūḥ cited a related tradition ascribed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib to complete his preaching presentation of the concept of taqwā. According to this tradition while ʿAlī was returning from the battle of Ṣiffīn he saw graves in the periphery of Kūfa. Abū al-Futūḥ narrates that ʿAlī addressed the dead people and said, “Peace be upon you! O the people of graves! Your houses are inhabited [by others], your wealth divided, and your wives have married. This is our news, so

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1294 For Fāṭima’s status in early Shiʿī community see Dakake, The Charismatic Community, 215-216. For a comparison between Fāṭima and Mary in medieval Christianity and early Shiʿī a tradition see Thurlkill, Chosen among Women. For an example of an Imami grand āyatullāh quoting this story in his public speech see wahid Khorasani’s speech on 8 March 2016 (See appendix 2)

1295 Abū al-Futūḥ cited these two lines from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī (al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 2:107). Neither al-Tha’labī nor Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned the poet of these two lines. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) reported that these two lines were written on ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Mubārak’s grave. (See al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, al-Muntakhab min kitāb al-Zuhd wa al-raqāʿ iq, 88 no. 54).

1296 For the earliest, fully extant account of the Battle of Ṣiffīn see Waqʿat Ṣiffīn of Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, a late 2nd/8th century Shiʿī. 
what is your news? Then ʿAlī said if they were permitted to answer, they would say ‘make provision, truly the best provision is taqwā’.”1297 This indirect exegetical tradition has multiple functions in Rawḍ al-jīnān. In this tradition Abū al-Futūḥ showed the status of ʿAlī in that he talked to the dead and informed his audience of their expected answer. He also emphasizes the spiritual aspect of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib who reminded his soldiers of God-consciousness. Moreover, ʿAlī had this authority to contextualize the verse. Saleh termed this type of secondary interpretation “adjacent interpretation” and later Sinai called it “connective interpretation.”1298 These kinds of connective traditions are brought in to offer a more comprehensive picture of the concept in question. However, they could have other functions too. At the end of this ḥadīth, Abū al-Futūḥ cited another two lines attributed to al-Aʿshā (d. after 4/625) from his poem, praising the Prophet.1299

In practice, for Abū al-Futūḥ the ahl al-bayt do not have the exclusive authority to contextualize a verse. Even ahl al-ʾishāra has this right to use a verse in a new context rather than its occasion of revelation. In the last part of his exegesis, Abū al-Futūḥ cited a story from Mālik b. Dīnār concerning the passing of one of the ascetics of Baṣra.1300 When people were returning from his funeral, Saʿdūn Majnūn (d. 250/864) recites four lines of poetry to them and contextualizes the verse in question. This story which is a translation of al-Kashf is somewhat different in Rawḍ al-jīnān. In al-Kashf, Saʿdūn al-Majnūn calls out al-mutaṣawwifīn (Sufi practitioners) to recite his verses to them.1301 However, Abū al-Futūḥ deletes the word al-mutaṣawwifīn as he does not refer to ʾṣūfī or mutaṣawwif even once in all Rawḍ al-jīnān, whereas he mentions ahl ʾishārat frequently in his commentary.1302 It seems that the word ʾṣūfī or mutaṣawwif had a negative

1299 Abū al-Futūḥ cited these two lines from al-Kashf of al-Thaʾlabī (al-Thaʾlabī, al-Kashf, 2:107). For these two lines in their context see al-Aʾshā, Dīwān al-Aʾshā al-kabīr, 137.
1300 In al-Kashf the story is about a Qurʾān reciter (baʿḍ qurrāʾ) of Baṣra.
1302 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jīnān, 3:120.
connotation in Imāmī community of Rayy during the first half of the 6th/12th century. Even to this day the word Sufi has a negative connotation in most Shīʿa circles. Abū al-Futūḥ employs an oxymoron in his translation and refers to Saʿdūn Majnūn as one of the wise fools (ʿUqalā majānīn). This ostensible self-contradiction makes this story more absorbing for its audience. In total, Abū al-Futūḥ cited thirty one lines of Arabic and Persian poetry in interpretation of two statements of [Q 2:197]. This large amount of poems is not cited in any commentary before him.

In summary, information about Abū al-Futūḥ’s life and education presented in this chapter enables us to better study his encyclopedic commentary. It seems he was influenced by his teachers in the field of exegesis. He also was described by his students as a preacher and exegete. Thus, his preaching style was discussed in this chapter as evidence of his students’ observations vis-a-vis his preaching. Abū al-Futūḥ, who authored his commentary under political-religious pressure of Sunni Seljuqs, chose al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī, which incorporated mystical statements to mainstream Sunni exegesis, as his main source in writing Rawḍ al-jinān. As such, he is the first Shīʿī exegete who incorporated mystical interpretation into [Imami] Shīʿī exegesis. In the following chapter, Abū al-Futūḥ’s affiliation with Uṣūlī school of Baghdad will be investigated.

1303 For a list of wise fools and their stories see the book ʿUqalā al-majānīn of al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Nisābūrī (d. 406/1015). In interpreting [Q 24:37], al-Maybudī cites an interesting story concerning Saʿdūn Majnūn that Dhū al-Nūn Miṣrī (d. 245/859) said, “There was a time when rain did not come and the people were suffering terribly because of a famine. A group of people went outside [the city] to pray for rain, and I went along with them. I saw Saʿdūn Majnūn and told him, ‘All these people that you see gathered here and raised their hands towards Him. I wish you pray to Him/make an allusion.’” He turned his face to heaven and said these words: ‘By what transpired [between You and me] last night.’ He had still not finished the words when the rain began to fall.” Thus you come to know that the hinting/allusion by a friend is dear to the Friend (al-Maybudī, Kashf al-asrār, 6:548. For translation Chittick, The Unveiling of the Mysteries, 355 is consulted).
Chapter 5
Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī: Uṣūlī or Akhbārī?

Abū al-Futūḥ wrote his commentary in the Imāmī theological-jurisprudential-exegetical school of Rayy in the first half of the 6th/12th century. This school was significantly different from Imāmī school of Rayy in the mid 4th/10th century when traditionalists such as Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991–992) were active in this city. In early Shi‘ī School, up to the mid 4th/10th century, Imāmī Shi‘ū as maintained a radical view which changed later in the Būyid period to a more moderate view. Most of the Imāmī scholars of Rayy in the 6th/12th century such as Abū al-Futūḥ were influenced by Baghdadi Imāmī considerate rationalists such as al-Murtada (d. 436/1044) and al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) who promoted using Muʿtazilī discourse in the interpretation of doctrine and practice. The reason for this transformation was the rule of Buyids and the taking of political power and social influence by the Imāmī scholars for about a century, which gave a new form of content and method to their theology, jurisprudence and exegesis. This early traditionalist-rationalist conflict which was titled later the Akhbārī-Uṣūlī dispute has been the subject of a study by Gleave. Little is known about the presence of these two different approaches and their pre-Safavid developments in major cities such as Rayy. However, we know that the family of Abū al-Futūḥ contributed greatly to the transfer of the Uṣūlī approach from the Imāmī school of Baghdad to Rayy in the 5th/11th century. Therefore, in this chapter, I study the content and methodological developments of the Imāmī School from Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq to al-Ṭūsī to provide a background for a better understanding of the theological-jurisprudential-exegetical school of Imāmīs in Rayy after al-Ṭūsī until the death of Abū al-Futūḥ in mid-6th/12th century. In this regard, four generations of the family of Abū al-Futūḥ and their contemporary Imāmī scholars in Rayy are studied. The result of this study is the recognition of Abū al-Futūḥ’s world in which Rawḍ al-jinan was created. This background helps us to discover the boundaries and features of Abū al-Futūḥ’s exegesis, which are reflections of the characteristics of his world.

1304 Bar-Asher, Introduction, 85.
The restructuring process of Imāmī theology and legal theories, which reached its zenith in the first half of the 5th/11th century in Baghdad, almost stopped by arrival of Ṭughril-Beg in this city in 447/1055. The transition to the next phase of Imāmī theology’s development was postponed until the time of Khwāja Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1273) and Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī (d. 676/1277) in the 7th/13th century.1306 The reason for this postponement was the socio-political pressure of Seljuqs and their supporters, the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs, on the Imāmī community. Al-Ṭūsī’s house in the Shī‘ī quarter of Baghdad al-Karkh was looted in Ṣafar 449/April 1057 and lots of manuscripts were burned by extremists, which caused al-Ṭūsī to leave this city and emigrate to Najaf under this pressure.1307 The development of Imāmī theology and legal theories almost stopped for more than a century to an extent that Sadīd al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ḥummuṣī (or al-Ḥimmaṣī) al-Rāzī (d. after 583/1187), an Imāmī theologian, legal theorist and the author of al-Munqidh min al-taqlīd, states “for Imāmī Shī‘a Islam no scholar who issues verdicts based on research is left and all of Imāmī scholars repeat [al-Ṭūsī opinions].”1308 From this period of stagnation in Imāmī intellectual history only a few legal or theological books by Imāmī scholars are left.1309 Although the development of Imāmī theology and jurisprudence underwent a sharp decline in the 6th/12th century, the disciples of al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī, established an adaptable jurisprudential-theological-exegesis school, especially from Rayy to Nīshāpūr, with their opponents. Rawḍ al-jinān of Abū al-Futūḥ and Majma‘ al-bayān of al-Ṭabrisī, which are also theological and jurisprudential works, are products of this new school. In this chapter we study the formation of this new school of Rayy after the death of al-Ṭūsī up the death of Abū al-Futūḥ to explain the hermeneutical influences on the composition of Rawḍ al-jinān.

1306 Ansari and Schmidtke, “Al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī,” 481.
1309 It is likely that the Mongol invasion, and their mass destruction of Muslim libraries, is also an important event accounting for the the smaller number of pre-Mongol Imāmī works. Rayy was largely destroyed by two Mongol invasions in 617/1220 (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 12:373) and 621/1224 (Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil, 12:419) and most of the population especially Shī‘ as were massacred. See Clifford Edmund Bosworth, ed., Historic Cities of the Islamic World, 448-449.
5 Uṣūlī or Akhbārī?

5.1 Theology-jurisprudence-legal theory in Rayy after al-Ṭūsī to Abū al-Futūḥ

Historical reports indicate that after al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) until the death of Abū al-Futūḥ (d. c. 552/1157), the theology-jurisprudence-legal school of al-Murtaḍā and the school of al-Ṭūsī, along with the Akhbārī school of Qumm were present in Imāmī community of Rayy. Although the differences between al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī is not great in their principles or methods, the difference between these two with Akhbārīs are serious and its impact has remained until today in Imāmī schools of Qumm and Najaf. Abū al-Futūḥ studied in a diverse Imāmī community between traditionalism and rationalism, and his commentary Rawḍ al-jinān demonstrates that he was under the influence of both intellectual movements. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the most prominent Imāmī scholars of Rayy after al-Murtaḍā and their tendencies to rationalism or traditionalism. For this purpose, first the sources and data regarding these individuals, and second how to infer their scholarly tendencies from our data will be discussed. After that, I study these scholars in four generations. Abū al-Futūḥ, who is a member of the fourth generation, will be dealt with separately.

5.1.1 Resources and data about Imāmī Scholars of Rayy: 436-552/1044-1157

Among the works of this period, two bio-bibliographical dictionaries which are supplementary to Fihrist of al-Ṭūsī are useful for this study. These two dictionaries are Maʿālim al-ʿulamā by Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192), and Fihrist ʿulamāʾ al-Shīʿa wa muṣannafīhim by Muntajab al-Dīn ‘Alī b. ‘Ubayd Allāh Rāzī (d. after 600/1203). These two Imāmī scholars were Abū al-Futūḥ’s disciples in Rayy, who apparently wrote their books separately, without taking any information from each other.

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1310 Pākatchī, Makātib-i, 5-7.

1311 On theological points which al-Ṭūsī disagrees with al-Murtaḍā see Abdulsater, Shiʿi Doctrine, 214.

1312 The method of Ibn Shahrāshūb in the compilation of the book of Maʿālim al-ʿulamā is that he summarized the Fihrist of al-Ṭūsī then deleted 43 of its authors and added 143 new authors to it (Shubayrī Zanjānī, “Fiḥrist-i shaykh,” 36). Maʿālim al-ʿulamā was probably written in Ḥilla (Pākatchī, “Ibn Shahrāshūb,” 4:91) before 581/1185
5.1.2 Method of inferring the school orientation of Imāmī Scholars of Rayy: 436-552/1044-1157

In order to infer the rational or traditional orientation of these four generations of Imāmī scholars who formed the new Imāmī school of Rayy during the early Seljuq period, I have used the terminology of Muntajab al-Dīn in his Fihrist in addition to other key differences between these two orientations, such as the acceptance or rejection of “single-source tradition.” (khabar al-wāḥid). Muntajab al-Dīn has used al-Ṭūsī’s terms in his Fihrist to authenticate and accept a transmitter of hadīth. Since Muntajab al-Dīn has not criticized Imāmī scholars, al-Ṭūsī’s terminology in this regard is not helpful, but those terms that al-Ṭūsī has used to accept hadīth transmitters are beneficial to study these scholars and their intellectual orientations. For example, al-Ṭūsī describes Ibn Bābawayh with “He knew traditions by heart (ḥāfiẓ), possessed vast knowledge regarding transmitters (rijāl) and was a critic (nāqid) of traditions.”¹³¹³ In another entry of his Fihrist, al-Ṭūsī has described al-Mufīd as “one of the greatest Imāmī theologians (mutakallim) … advanced (muqaddam) in theology, and a jurist (faqīh) who was very advanced in jurisprudence.”¹³¹⁴ The three terms of ḥāfiẓ, mutakallim and faqīh which appeared in the

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¹³¹³ al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 442 no. 710.

¹³¹⁴ al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 445 no. 711.
descriptions of al-Ṭūsī, have also been used by Muntajab al-Dīn in his book. Muntajab al-Dīn used these terms carefully to describe the expertise of the Imāmī scholars which is one of my criteria to infer the tendency of these scholars. The following attributes used by Muntajab al-Dīn that indicate a scholar’s orientation are significant for my study: ḥāfiẓ (one who has memorized), rāwî (narrator), muḥaddith (transmitter), faqīḥ (jurist), mutakallim (theologian), munāẓir (debater), muqriʾ (reciter), and mufassir (exegete). For example, terms such as mutakallim (theologian) or munāẓir (debater) imply rational orientation and terms such ḥāfiẓ (one who has memorized), rāwî (narrator), or muḥaddith (transmitter/traditionist) imply traditional orientation of an Imāmī scholar in this period. Since almost all of these scholars’ works are lost, in most cases there is no a larger linguistic unit, e.g., a sentence or paragraph, to infer their orientation.

Another way of knowing the orientation of Imāmī scholars of Rayy in the second half of the 5th/11th and first half of the 6th/12th century is their approach to the usage of khabar al-wāḥid in legal argumentation or exegesis.1315 Although Ibn Bābawayh endorsed the use of khabar al-wāḥid as a valid basis for the law and exegesis,1316 his student al-Mufīd believed that khabar al-wāḥid does not bring knowledge into the realm of religious studies except when you have certainty regarding the truthfulness of its narrator1317 or it is supported by another proof such as a rational argument or a Qur’anic text.1318 After him, al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā regarded it as inadmissible even if it is supported by other proofs.1319 al-Mufīd and al-Murtaḍā’s most prominent student al-Ṭūsī in his early age, followed his teachers’ belief concerning khabar al-wāḥid but in the late years of his life after the death of al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) due to the need of the Imāmī community to develop sub-disciplines of jurisprudence accepted the reliability of it even without external evidence (under certain conditions, for example, it is narrated by just

1316 Ansari, L’Imamat, 85.
1317 Ḥājj Manūchehrī, “Khabar wāḥid,” 49.
Imāmī scholars or it does not have an opposite opponent tradition.\textsuperscript{1320} This belief had important consequences in his commentary and in the works of coming generations of Imāmī scholars in general and exegetes such as Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī in particular.

5.2 Four Generations of Imāmī Scholars of Rayy: 436-552/1044-1157

From bibliographical sources, I collected the name of Imāmī scholars who were active in Rayy during the Seljuqs period in this city (434/1042 to 590/1194) (Fig. 1). For my purpose, I studied four generations of these scholars from 436/1044 to 552/1157.\textsuperscript{1321} The first person of each generation is a member of the family of Abū al-Futūḥ who studied along with other prominent Imāmī scholars of Rayy in his respective generation. The first generation starts with Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad (d. ca. 465/1072), the second grandfather of Abū al-Futūḥ, and the last generation is Abū al-Futūḥ (d. ca. 552/1157). If we consider the beginning of the first generation’s activity in Rayy, almost from the death of al-Ṣarīf al-Murtuḍā (d. 436/1044), it will be 116 lunar years to the death of Abū al-Futūḥ (d. ca. 552/1157) and each generation’s period will be about 29 years. Therefore, I divided the period from 436/1044 up to 552/1157 into four periods, each period shows the peak of the scholarly activity of a member of Abū al-Futūḥ’s family in Rayy. The first generation from 436/1044 to 465/1073, the second generation from 466/1074 to 495/1102, the third generation from 496/1103 to 525/1131 and the fourth generation from 526/1132 to 555/1160.

\textsuperscript{1320} Ṭārumī, “Khabar wāḥid,” 163.

\textsuperscript{1321} Recently Ansari and Schmidtke mentioned some of the Imami theologians who were active in Rayy during the 6th/12th century (See Hassan Ansari and Sabine Schmidtke, “The Shīʿī Reception of Muʿtazilism (II): Twelver Shīʿīs,” 205-207).
Figure 10. Imāmī scholars of Rayy during 5th/11th and 6th/12th centuries
It is likely that in this period Imāmī scholars of Rayy have divided into three groups: 1. Imāmī muḥaddiths (traditionists): scholars who transmitted ḥadīths (the Prophet and Imams’ traditions) without investigating their authenticity. 2. Imāmī aṣḥāb/ahl al-ḥadīth (traditionists): scholars who collected ḥadīths thematically and investigated their authenticity by criticizing their texts and transmitters. They rely on ḥadīth as the only source of knowledge and resist employing kalām-style dialectic or Muʿtazilī reasoning. The term ahl akhbār or akhbārī is used in a derogatory manner by Imāmī Uṣulīs of 6th/12th century and onward to refer to these early Imāmī traditionalists. 3. Imāmī theologians/rationalists (aṣḥāb al-kalām): scholars who regard Muʿtazilī dialectical reasoning as the principal device to attain religious truths.

The first generation starts with Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī, one of the students of al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī in Baghdad. The second generation starts with Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn al-Nīsābūrī (Abū al-Futūḥ’s grandfather) who was an exegete. The third generation starts with the father of Abū al-Futūḥ ʿAli b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzāʿī Rāzī who lived in Rayy during the very hard times of Imāmīs under Seljuqs. Finally, in the coming chapter, we will look at the fourth generation, which is the age of Abū al-Futūḥ.

5.2.1 First generation: 436-465/1044-1072

The following leading scholars of this generation were al-Ṭūsī’s contemporaries who traveled to Baghdad and studied with al-Mufid, al-Murtada, and al-Ṭūsī. Afterwards, they returned home and spread new method of Baghdadi theologians in Rayy.

Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī (second grandfather of Abū al-Futūḥ)

The first person from Abū al-Futūḥ’s family who is mentioned as an Imāmī scholar is his second grandfather Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn. He was an Imāmī scholar in Nīshāpūr who went to Baghdad before 406/1016, where he was a student of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1016) and al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) and later, al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067). Muntajab al-Dīn has not

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1. Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, _al-Fihrist_, 32 no. 1. Since Muntajab al-Dīn regarded Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn as a student of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1016), it can be concluded that the presence of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḣusayn in Baghdad was before 406/1016.
mentioned al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) as his teacher. In addition, al-Ṭūsī and al-Najāshī did not mention his name in their bio-bibliographies. Since his son, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad (d. 485/1092), is also considered a student of Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, it is likely that Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn went to Baghdad in 406/1067 in his middle age and at the beginning of his son’s adolescence. He accompanied his son ʿAbd al-Raḥmān to al-Raḍī and al-Murtada to study as a teenager. This phase of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān’s learning continued until al-Mufīd’s death in 413/1022, and for this reason Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn was not able to be a disciple of al-Mufīd. Since Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn was a student of al-Raḍī, he was probably from al-Ṭūsī’s generation, and his learning from al-Ṭūsī was a kind of auditing and learning from his contemporaries. Muntajab al-Dīn ascribes the following four books to Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn: al-Amālī in four volumes, ʿUyūn al-ahādīth, al-Sunan, al-Manāsik, al-Rawda in jurisprudence, and finally al-Miftāḥ in uṣūl, legal theory. His book al-Miftāḥ, which according to Muntajab al-Dīn is in uṣūl, was probably written about legal theories of jurisprudence.¹³²³ Therefore, Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn, the second grandfather of Abū al-Futūh was one of the first Imāmī scholars who studied in the new school of Baghdad and went to Rayy to spread the Imāmī legal theory of Baghdadis in mid 5ᵗʰ/11ᵗʰ century. Regarding his residency in Rayy, it is likely that Aḥmad b. Ḵusayn did not move to Najaf along with Al-Ṭūsī after the Seljuqs’ invasion of Baghdad in 447/1055. Instead he decided to return to his native city of Nīshāpūr, but in the middle of the way, due to the bad situation of Shiʿas in different cities, it is likely that he settled in the Rayy near Qumm, the Imāmī Center of Iran.

Aḥmad’s brother, Abū al-faṭḥ Muḥsin b. Ḵusayn b. Aḥmad, who lived in Nīshāpūr, apparently did not go to Baghdad. Therefore, he was not introduced to new Imāmī legal theory of Baghdadis and his works are similar to pre-Buyid Imāmī works. Muntajab al-Dīn describes Abū al-faṭḥ Muḥsin b. Ḵusayn as a reliable person (thiqa), who had memorized a large amount of traditions (ḥāfīz) and was a preacher (wāʿiz). Muntajab al-Dīn also ascribes the following books to him: al-Amālī in ḥadīth, al-Siyar (most likely biographies of the Prophet and Imams), Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān (inimitability of the Qurʾā), and bayān man kuntu mawlāh (explanation of ‘whosoever I am his

¹³²³ In his article on Imami legal theories, Pākatchī considers the book al-Miftāḥ fī al-uṣūl in the subject of legal theories (See Pākatchī, “uṣūl fiqh,” GIE. 9: 300), while in his book which is published in the same year, he believes that al-Miftāḥ is more likely to be about principles of religion rather than legal theories (Pākatchī, Makāṭib-i fiqh-i, 178).
None of these two brothers’ books has reached us. The titles and themes of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḫusayn’s books, indicate that he was influence by Baghdadis’ legal theory and in addition to collecting and categorizing Imāmī ḥadīth, he paid special attention to Jurisprudence and legal theories. He was among the very first students of al-Murtaḍā who left Baghdad to live among traditionalists of Rayy. This combination (or dilemma) of kalāmī rationalism and traditionalism is not seen in his brother Abū al-faṭḥ Muḥsin b. Ḫusayn, who remained in Nīshāpūr. Muḥsin was a traditionist or a traditionalist who was not exposed to Baghdadi principles and methods.

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Duryastī (d. after 474/1081)

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Duryastī is one of the first generation of Imāmī scholars in Rayy who were educated in the school of Baghdad, and was influenced by the jurisprudence and doctrine of that school. He was born in 380/990. His last name is Duryastī because his family lived in a village near Rey called Duryast. He transmitted ḥadīth from his father Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abbās Duryastī (a disciple of Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq) and Muḥammad b. Bakrān b. ‘Imrān Rāzī (d. 402/1012). Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī went to Baghdad when he was about 20 years of age and participated in al-Mufīd’s courses from the year 401/1011. He wrote an interesting story, which he heard from his teacher al-Mufid, later in 473 in Persian (not in Arabic). However, the Arabic translation of that story is being narrated by Ibn Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 101-102 no. 360.

1324 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 101-102 no. 360.

1325 al-Fārisī, Tārīkh Nisābūr, 261 no. 464. Al-Fārisī quoted this date from the writing of a young person from a Nisabūrī family whose name was Şāliḥ b. Aḥmad al-Mu’ adhdhin (d. 474/1081), who died four years after his father. (al-Fārisī, Tārīkh Nisābūr, 404 no. 840). Al-Fārisī has mentioned the last name of Ja’far as al-Duwaysī attributed to the village of Duways in Bayhaq. However, the search for this name among the scholars of that time shows that most likely al-Duwaysī is a misreading of Duryastī.

1326 al-Hamawī, Mu’jam al-buldān, 2:484.


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Ḥamza (d. after 566/1170) in Kāshān in 560/1164. Writing in Persian by Duryastī in the second half of the 5th/11th century is one of the hallmarks of the general tendency of the people of the central regions of Iran, such as Rayy in this period to write in Persian especially on non-specialized issues. It seems that the reason was to reach a general (non-technical) audience as Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111), for example, did with Kīmīyā-yi saʾādat (Alchemy of Happiness).

Duryastī as a disciple of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1016) and his name appears as a transmitter in the chain of narration of Nahj al-balāgha, the famous collection of speeches and maxims attributed to ʿAlī. Ali b. Zayd al-Bayhaqī (d. 565/1170) in the introduction to his explanation of Nahj al-balāgha entitled Maʿārij Nahj al-balāgha, written in 552/1157, provides two chains of narration for Nahj al-balāgha, which in both chains of narration, Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī exists and Bayhaqī refers to him as an authority in ḥadīth (Muḥaddith) and jurist (faqīh). After al-Mufid, he became a disciple of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā and apparently returned to Rayy after the death of al-Murtaḍā in 436/1044 and settled there. Ostensibly, during hard times of Imāmī community under Seljuqs and ministry of Niẓām al-Mulk (455/1063-485/1092), Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī had a high position with Niẓām al-Mulk. According to ʿAbd al-Jalīl, when the minister Niẓām al-Mulk was in Rayy he used to go to Duryast every two weeks to hear ḥadīth from Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī.

al-Najāshī in his Rijāl and al-Ṭūsī in his Fihrist, have not mentioned Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī’s name and his works, which is probably due to their contemporaneity; however, al-Ṭūsī has mentioned Duryastī in his Rijāl and described him as a reliable (thiqa) transmitter. Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī has been a medium of spreading al-Mufid, al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, and al-

1328 Ibn Ḥamzah al-Ṭūsī, al-Thāqib, 236-239.
1329 al-Majlisī, Bihār al-anwār, 104:49.
1330 al-Bayhaqī, Maʿārij Nahj al-balāgha, 2.
1331 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 157; He has also transmitted ḥadīth from other Imami scholars such as Ahmad b. Muḥammad known as Ibn Ḥammād b. Bashīr Dabīlī. On Ibn ʿAyyāsh see al-Najāshī, Rijāl, 85 no. 207; al-Ṭūsī, Fihrist, 79 no. 99; Ḥujjat Jalālī, “Ibn Ḥammād.”
1332 al-Ṭūsī, Rijāl, 419 no. 6051.
Sharīf al-Murtaḍā’s works among the Imāmī scholars in central Iran. Among his most prominent students in Rayy are ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. ʿAbd Allah Mufīd Rāzī (a teacher of Abu al-Futūh) and Sayyid Murtaḍā Ibn al-Dāʾī, who transmitted Baghdadi books through his teacher Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī. The works of Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī include: al-Ḵifāya fī al-ʿibādāt (enough in worship), ʿAmal yawm wa layla (the action of day and night), al-Iʿtiqād (doctrine), al-Ḥusnā (the best outcome), al-Radd ʿalā al-Zaydiyya (response to Zadiyya). Since among the students of qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār in Rayy were a number of Zaydī scholars, the last book could be a theological book in which he rejects the doctrines of Zaydī Muʿtazilīs in Imāmte or other subjects of doctrine.

According to his books, Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī is a traditionalist student of the school of Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq in Rayy who transmitted al-Ṣadūq’s works through his father. He also has been with al-Mufīd, al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, and al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā for more than 30 years learning their rationalist approach. Jaʿfar Duryastī may have heard some of al-Ṣadūq’s books revised by al-Mufīd and al-Murtaḍā’s harsh criticism. But apparently his tendency to traditionalism was more than Baghdadi rationalism and his name appears in the chain of

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1335 Āghā Buzurg in his bibliographical dictionary gives the title al-Iʿtiqādāt by Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad Duryastī, which is probably the same as al-Iʿtiqād. Āghā Buzurg adds that ʿAlī b. Muhammad ʿĀmilī (d. 1104/1692), a member of the family of Shahīd Thānī, wrote a treatise in rejection of Sufi tradition entitled al-Sahām al-māriqa ʿan aghrād al-zanādīqa, in which he mentions al-Iʿtiqādāt of Jaʿfar b. Muhammad Duryastī, as one of the early Imāmī works on the same subject. Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī, Al-Dharīʿa, 2:225.

1336 Ibn Ṭāwūs uses this book frequently and attributes it to Jaʿfar b. Muhammad Duryastī (Ibn Ṭāwūs, Iqbāl al-aʾmāl, 1:213, 241, 243; 2:634, 669, 670, 673, 674, 681, 682). The subject of all of these citations by Ibn Ṭāwūs are recommended prayers and supplications of Rajab and Ramaḍān.


narrations of *ahādīth* more than theological discussions. ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī, a well-known Imāmī theologian of Rayy in 6th/12th century describes Ja’far Duryastī as “writer of a great number of books and transmitter of many traditions.”

In sum, Ja’far Duryastī has not been mentioned as a theologian in bio-bibliographical works, and he has been considered a jurist and traditionalist. However, it seems that he was one of the first generations of new jurists in Rayy who was influenced by the Baghdadi rational legal theories and doctrine. However, when he left Baghdad after the death of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā in 436/1044, it was at the beginning of the flourishing and prevalence of rationalism in the Imāmī community of central to eastern Iran especially Rayy to Nīshāpūr.

5.2.2 Second generation: 466-495/1073-1102

During this period some Rāzī or Qummī disciples of al-Ṭūsī in Baghdad and later Najaf returned to their home and joined the Imāmī traditionalists who studied in those cities. Although some of these prominent scholars died after 495/1102, I mention them in this generation because the peak of their intellectual activity was between 466/1073 to 495/1102. The graduates of the school of Baghdad were the founders of the new Imāmī school of Rayy. However, due to the difficult socio-political conditions of Imāmī scholars during the Seljuq periods, their activities mostly tended towards asceticism or mysticism. For the first time in Imāmī history, some of these scholars such as Ḥasakā, a nephew of Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq, spent their life in a Sufi lodge (*khānaqāh*) instead of a school (*madrasa*) or mosque. During this period, the focus of the Imāmī scholars of Rayy had been on jurisprudence and legal theories because it was difficult to raise theological issues especially concerning Imamate. The difference between Baghdadi theological approach and Qummi traditionalistic approach is evident in the works of their disciples in the third and fourth generations, which will be discussed.

Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-Nīsābūrī (Abū al-Futūḥ’s grandfather)

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Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn was Abū al-Futūḥ’s grandfather. His birth should be around 405/1015 because at the beginning of his adolescence he heard and transmitted hadīth from Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAqīl b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 427/1035) in 426/1034 in Rayy.\(^{1341}\) He is described a reliable (thiqa), eminent (ʿayn), and a preserver of hadīth (ḥāfiz) by Muntajab al-Dīn.\(^{1342}\) ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī describes him as exegete (mufassir), transmitter (rāwī) of traditions, religious (mutadayyin), and scholar (ʿālim).\(^{1343}\) Describing him as an exegete indicates that writing exegesis has a history in Abū al-Futūḥ’s family. Abū al-Futūḥ has referred to his grandfather Abū Saʿīd when he is interpreting verse 3:42. In his exegesis Rawḍ al-jinān, Abū al-Futūḥ compares Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet, with Maryam, the daughter of ʿImrān, and narrates two traditions regarding the virtues of Fāṭimah. After that Abū al-Futūḥ states: “These two traditions were cited from the book that my grandfather Abū Saʿīd compiled entitled al-Rawḍat al-zahrāʾ fī manāqib Fāṭimat al-Zahrāʾ.”\(^{1344}\) The name of this book indicates that it was not an exegesis but a collection of traditions concerning the virtues of Fāṭimah. But the name of this book is slightly different in al-Fihrist of Muntajab al-Dīn. Its name is al-Rawḍat al-zahrāʾ fī tafsīr Fāṭimat al-Zahrāʾ. Although Abū Saʿīd was an exegete, it seems that this book could not be a collection of exegetical traditions concerning Fāṭimah.

Two of Abū Saʿīd’s students, ʿAli b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (his son and Abū al-Futūḥ’s father) and the jurist Abū al-Najm Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿĪsa Rāzī (d. after 510/1116), had transmitted all of his works to the next generation of Imāmī scholars in Rayy. According to Muntajab al-Dīn, the following books were written by Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad: al-Rawḍat al-zahrāʾ fī tafsīr Fāṭimat al-Zahrāʾ, al-Faq̲q̲ bāyn al-maqāmāyin wa tashbīh ʿAlī bi-Dhī

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\(^{1341}\) al-Ṭabarî, Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, 2:36. According to al-Fārisī (d. 529/1135), this transmission of hadīth could be during the residence of Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAqīl b. al-Ḥusayn on his way to pilgrimage in 426/1034 (al-Fārisī, Tārīkh Nīsābūr, 320-321 no. 2165). He was a transmitter of his uncle Abū al-fath Muḥsin b. Ḥusayn who was a resident of Nishapur (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 101-102 no. 360). In addition to that his last name is only al-Nīsābūrī (not Rāzī).

\(^{1342}\) Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 102 no. 361.

\(^{1343}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqūd, 156-157.

\(^{1344}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:319.
Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad b. Ḵūzā al-Khuzā’ī also known as al-Mufīd

Another scholar of Abū al-Futūḥ’s family in this generation is Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad also known as al-Mufīd. He is the uncle of Abū al-Futūḥ’s father, and Abū al-Futūḥ has cited from his book al-Amālī in Rawḍ al-jinān. In his adolescence, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān went to Baghdad along with his father Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Ḵūzān from Nīshāpūr before 406/1015. He studied with not only prominent Shi‘a scholars but also with great Sunnī scholars of that time in Baghdad. Some of his Imāmī teachers include: al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, al-Ṭūsī, al-Karājakī (d. 449/1057), Abū Ya’lā Sallār [Sālār] al-Daylamī (d. 448/1057 or 463/1070), and Ibn al-Barrāj al-Ṯarābulusī (d. 481/1088). Therefore, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān should be an Uṣūlī scholar.

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1346 Ibn Shahrāshūb, Maʿālim al-ʿulamā’, 116 no. 774.

1347 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqīb, 46.

From his Sunnī teachers the following scholars should be mentioned: Hannād b. Ibrāhīm al-Nasafī, Ibn al-Muhtadī billah, and Abū al-Ḥusayn b. al-Naqqūr.1349 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān traveled widely to Shām, Ḥijāz, and Khurāsān and eventually like his father went to Rayy and settled there in or before 476/1083 until his death in 485/1092.1350 His books include: Safīnat al-najāt concerning the virtues of Ahl al-bayt, Mukhtaṣarāt in admonitions (mawāʾīz), al-Amālī and ’Uyūn al-akhbār in ḥadīth. The titles of his books indicate that he was interested in collecting and categorizing ḥadīth from Shīʿī and Sunnī sources on themes such as virtues of Ahl al-Bayt, proving Imāmī’s beliefs, and preaching.

‘Abd al-Raḥmān was a jurist (faqīh), preserver of ḥadīth (ḥāfiẓ), and preacher (wāʿiẓ).1351 He had a great mosque with large classes and thousands of students in Rayy. In 476/1083 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān dictated the famous ḥadīth attributed to ‘Alī concerning al-qāḍāʾ (divine decree) and al-qadar (divine pre-ordination) in his mosque, and his student Abū al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Jāsbī (d. in or after 518/1124) transcribed it.1352 Even non-Imāmī students used to attend his classes and “different Muslim schools paid attention to his works.”1353 One of the non-Imāmī scholars who studied some of ‘Abd al-Raḥmāns’ books is Ibn al-Samʿānī (d. c. 617/1220). Ibn al-Samʿānī, who was a Shāfīʿī scholar, reports that: “I read some sections of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s book al-Amālī in Rayy. I saw a session of the book on the topic of the beliefs of Abū Ṭālib.1354 He had cited a great number of ḥadīth and was very familiar with traditions.”1355 Al-Dhahabī also quotes from Yahyā b Ḥamīd, known as Ibn Abī Ṭayy (d. 630/1233), the Imāmī historian and litterateur, who states that “’Abd al-Raḥmān al-Khuzaʿī was one the most knowledgeable

1349 For his Shi’a teacher see (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrīṣt, 75 no. 219) and for his Sunni teacher see (al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-Islām, 33:151).
1350 al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-Islām, 33:151.
1351 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrīṣt, 75 no. 219.
1352 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 540-541.
1353 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 157.
1354 We mentioned that his brother Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn had also a book entitled Munā al-ṭālib fī īmān Abī Ṭālib on the same topic.
1355 al-Dhahabī, Tārīkh al-Islām, 33:150.
scholars of and discerning about hadīth and its transmitters.” Ibn Abī Ṭayy was a student of Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192) in jurisprudence. He notes that “our teacher Rashīd al-Dīn [Ibn Shahrāshūb] narrated from his father [ʿAlī Ibn Shahrāshūb] that: “I attended the imam ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Khuzaʿī’s religious session (majlis), where more than three thousands inkwells were ready to write down what he dictates.” This reflects the influence of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān on Imāmī scholars in Rayy after al-Ṭūsī. It seems that despite being a student of major theologians of Baghdad in 5th/11th century, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was an uṣūlī jurist whose interest was Imamate and Imāmī beliefs not in a theological sense but in compilation and criticizing Shiʿī and Sunnī traditions.

**Shams al-Islām al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Mūsā b. Bābawayh known as Ḥasakā**

Ḥasakā was a nephew of Ḥasan b. Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq and a Qumm scholar who went to Baghdad to study and later resided in Rayy. In Baghdad he became a disciple of al-Ṭūsī, Sallār [Sālār] al-Daylamī, Ibn al-Barrāj al-Ṭarābulusī, and al-Sayyid Ḥamzah. Ḥasakā studied all his teachers’ books with them and in particular he studied all al-Ṭūsī’s books under him in Najaf between 449/1057 to 460/1067. When he returned to Rayy (probably after the death al-Ṭūsī), Ḥasakā began to build a school for Imāmīs during the reign of Malik-Shāh (r. 465-485/1072-1092). But as it is mentioned earlier due to difficulties that the Imāmī community encountered at the end of Malik-Shāh’s period, it was postponed until the time of Muḥammad (Tapar) (r. 498-511/1105-1118). Although Ḥasakā’s school was active in organizing prayer for the congregation, recitation of the Qurʿān, teaching basic Islam to children, setting up preaching and issuing not-controversial verdicts, it never succeeded in the teaching and training of the next generation of Imāmī theologians and jurists. Eventually Ḥasakā’s school turned into a place like a lodge

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1357 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 46-47 no. 72. Ṭuğhril-Beg captured Baghdad in 447/1055 and al-Ṭūsī was forced to leave Baghdad to Najaf in 449/1057.

1358 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 40.
(khānaqāh) to only perform rituals and for spiritual retreat. After his father and uncle, Ḥasakā was the most prominent jurist of the Bābawayh family in the second half of the 5th/11th century. He had a long life and apparently after being humiliated by Seljuqs he spent his life like a mystic in a khānaqāh.1359 ʿImād al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī met Ḥasakā in his khānaqāh in Rayy and heard and transcribed ḥadīth from him in 510/1116.1360 This means that some Imāmī scholars were receptive to formal Sufi tradition. This phenomenon can be linked to the political oppression by Sunnī Seljuqs and the spiritual readiness of the Imāmī community for the reception of Sufi tradition in the absence of their Saviour al-Mahdi.

Abū al-Wafā’ ʿAbd al-Jabbār [b.ʿAbd Allāh] b.ʿAlī known as Mufīd Rāzī

Abū al-Wafā’ ʿAbd al-Jabbār was one of the classmates of Ḥasakā Ibn Bābawayh in Baghdad. These two scholars could be considered as the most important connecting link between the Imāmī school of Baghdad/Najaf in the first half of the 5th/11th century with the Imāmī school of Rayy and the surrounding area in the second half of that century. ʿAbd al-Jabbār was a jurist (faqīh) and a professional reciter (muqriʾ).1361 Like his friend Ḥasakā, ʿAbd al-Jabbār studied all al-Ṭūsī’s books under him. He was also a student of Sallār [Sālār] al-Daylamī and Ibn al-Barrāj al-Ṭarābulusī.1362 He was one of the most prominent Imāmī jurists and theologians of Rayy during the last quarter of the 5th/11th century.1363 Most of the Ijāzāt (authorization to transmit a work) of Imāmī scholars in Rayy to transmit al-Ṭūsī’s works include him. ʿAbd al-Jabbār’s name is often beside the name of al-Ṭūsī’s son Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad (d. after 511/1117) in Imāmī chains of transmission of al-Ṭūsī’s works. This means that ʿAbd al-Jabbār spread jurisprudence, legal theory, theology, and apparently the hermeneutical approach of al-Ṭūsī in

1359 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 156.
1360 al-Ṭabarī, Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, 2:40, 46, 124, 125, 128, 129, 136.
1361 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 41, 46, 226, 313.
1362 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 75 no. 220.
1363 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 46, 226, 654. The author of BFR calls him chahār-dīhī (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 654) which indicates that he was originally from the village chahār-dīh. Probably Abū al-Wafā’ ʿAbd al-Jabbār went to Baghdad and when he returned to Iran he settled in Rayy not in his hometown.
Rayy (central Iran) as al-Ṭūsī’s son continued his legacy in Najaf (Iraq). The reputation of 'Abd al-Jabbār’s work during his time is such that the author of BFR, who was anti-Shīʿa, cites his works for early Imāmī historical accounts.

It is likely that 'Abd al-Jabbār returned to Rayy after the humiliation of Imāmī scholars in Rayy by the Seljuqs. It is reported that at the very end of the Malik-Shāh (465-485/1072-1092) and the beginning of Berk-Yāruq (485-498/1093-1104) reigns in Rayy, he built a school in this city which played an important role in the Imāmī’s history of this period. According to 'Abd al-Jalīl “four hundred jurists (faqīḥ) and theologians (mutakallim) were studying in his school.” One of his prominent disciples in jurisprudence, legal theory, and theology was Abū Saʿīd 'Abd al-Jalīl b. ‘Īsā who will be referred to in the next section. As mentioned Abū al-Wafā ‘Abd al-Jabbār was a professional reciter (muqriʾ) and interested in exegesis. Among the books of al-Ṭūsī, which 'Abd al-Jabbār studied under him, is his commentary al-Tībyān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān. His son Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Jabbār has studied the volume seven of al-Tībyān under his father and another student Abū al-Faḍl Dāʾī b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī has heard it. When Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī was very young, he was a disciple of 'Abd al-Jabbār. He transmitted all 'Abd al-Jabbār’s books and al-Ṭūsī’s book (with 'Abd al-Jabbār’s mediation) to the next generation.

According to Muntajab al-Dīn, 'Abd al-Jabbār had written some of his jurisprudential books in Persian. The writing of specialized religious books in Persian was not limited to 'Abd al-Jabbār at his time. Some other Rāzī disciples of al-Ṭūsī such as Ismāʿīl and Ishāq sons of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn b. Bābawayh, also wrote some detailed and short books concerning Imāmī

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1364 Ibn Shahrāshūb, Manāqib, 1:12.
1365 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 312.
1366 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 41, 226.
1367 Afandī, Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ, 3:66.
1368 Afandī, Riyāḍ al-ʿulamāʾ, 4:85.
1369 Ibn Shahrāshūb, Manāqib, 1:11-12; Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 75 no. 220.
Writing specialized religious books in Persian in the 5th/11th century is a response to the strong demand of the Iranian people (specifically in central Iran such as Rayy) in this period. This phenomenon has spread in the 6th/12th century so far that even specialized books such as *al-Nihāya* of al-Ṭūsī, which lays out the basis of Imāmī legal procedure, was translated into Persian.\textsuperscript{1371} Apparently, most of the Iranian people of central regions such as Rayy and Maybūd in this period wanted to learn Qur’ānic interpretation in Persian, and the Arabic language was considered as the language of specialized religious subjects in the schools. This public demand made it possible for Abū al-Futūḥ or Maybūdī to write their voluminous commentaries in Persian. In his introduction to *Rawḍ al-jinān*, Abū al-Futūḥ points out that

\begin{quote}
“a group of [my] friends and some dignitaries from amongst the people of [sacred] science and religion suggested compiling a book in this regard, because our religious Companions (*aṣḥāb mā*) do not have a commentary that includes all these various sciences. Furthermore, I saw it necessary to accept their request and promised them two commentaries: one in Persian and the other in Arabic; However the Persian one was given priority over the Arabic because those requesting it were greater in number and the benefits for the public more.”\end{quote}

A number of Imāmī scholars were active in Rayy during this second generation. Mention should be made in particular of Al-Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-

\textsuperscript{1370} Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Fihrist*, 33 no. 3 and 4.

\textsuperscript{1371} See Sabzivārī, Muḥammad Bāqir, ed. *Tarjumih al-Nihāya fī mujarrad al-fiqh wa al-fatāwā*. 2 vols. Tehran: Dānishgāh Tehran, 1333-1334 [/1954-1955]. Although the translator’s name of this book and the date on which he lived is not exactly clear, according to the editor of it, the language, words and phrases of this translation strongly suggests that the translator lived in the 6th/12th century.

\textsuperscript{1372} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, *Rawḍ al-jinān*, 1:2.
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during the reign of Malik-Shāh’s sons in Rayy, Berk-Yāruq (r. 485-498/1093-1104), Muḥammad Tapar (r. 498-511/1105-1118), and Sanjar (r. 511-552/1118-1157) the pressure of the Seljuqs on Imāmī Shi‘a as relieved over time. Some prominent Imāmī scholars of the third generation who played an important role in spreading new jurisprudence, legal theories, and exegesis of the Baghdadi in Rayy include:

‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzā‘ī Rāzī (Abū al-Futūḥ’s Father)

‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Khuzā‘ī Rāzī is the father and first teacher of Abū al-Futūḥ. Abū al-Futūḥ studied many Imāmī books under his father and transmitted them after him.1376 Abū al-Futūḥ’s father was known as ‘Alī ‘ālim (‘Alī the scholar) in Rayy among Sunnīs and Shi‘as.1377 ‘Alī ‘ālim is the first in the list of the members of the council of Imāmī scholars in Rayy which includes: ‘Alī ‘ālim, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Imāmatī, Shams al-Islām Ḥasakā [Bābawayh], Abū Ṭālib Bābawayh, Sayyid Muḥammad Kīskī, and Sayyid Mānagdīm Raḍī. This council issued a verdict that Imāmī Shi‘as do not name their children after the first three Caliphs.1378 Most of these Imāmī scholars including ‘Alī ‘ālim were humiliated and tortured at the end of the Malik-Shāh’s reign in Rayy as mentioned above.1379

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1373 Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Kīskī was a jurist and poet (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 103 no. 365) who had a school in Rayy in the neighborhood of Kulāh-dūzān (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 39-40).

1374 Al-Sayyid Raḍī al-Dīn Mānagdīm was another jurist and a member of Imami council of fatwa in Rayy (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 102 no. 362; Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 441).

1375 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 33 no. 4.

1376 Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 32 no. 1; 60-61 no. 148; 79 no. 233; 102 no. 360 and 361.

1377 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 303.

1378 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 440-441.

ʿAlī ʿālim was in his middle age when the Seljuqs humiliated him and since then, there is no mention of his name in the Imāmī works. Apparently, after this bad occurrence, ʿAlī ʿālim stayed at home and could not continue his religious activity or died after a few years because no activity is recorded from him in Rayy. Even Muntajb al-Dīn has not mentioned ʿAlī ʿālim’s name in his book. His name does not appear in Imāmī Ijāzāt, and no book has been attributed to him. Since ʿAlī ʿālim has been mentioned only as a student of his father and perhaps his uncle, ʿAlī ʿālim must be a traditionalist jurist familiar with Baghdadi theology and legal theory in Rayy of that time.

Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. ʿĪsā b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Rāzī

Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. ʿĪsā b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Rāzī was a theologian and jurist who has several unspecified doctrinal writings to his credit (lahu taṣānīf uṣūliyya). While otherwise nothing is known about him, he was the teacher of Abū l-Makārim Saʿd b. Abī Ṭālib b. ʿĪsā al-mutakallim al-Rāzī. A number of Imāmī scholars of this generation who were active in Rayy include: Abū al-Najm Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿĪsā al-Sammān Rāzī (d. after 510/1116), Abū al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan al-Jāsbī (d. in or after 518/1124).

5.2.4 Fourth generation: 525-555/1130-1160

In this generation, due to better socio-political conditions of the Imāmī community in Rayy, the number of their theologians (mutakallim) and debaters (munāẓir) increased. Although Abū l-

\textsuperscript{1380} See George Vajda, “Idjaza,” EI\textsuperscript{2}, 3:1020.

\textsuperscript{1381} Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 77 no. 227.

\textsuperscript{1382} He was a jurist and a student of Abū al-Futūh’s grandfather Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Nisābūrī (Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Al-Fihrist, 104 no. 375). Al-Ṭabarī heard and transcribed some traditions from him in Rayy in 510/1116 (al-Ṭabarī, Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, 2:4, 8, 13, 15, 20, 24, 43, 47, 51, 63, 67, 73, 87).

\textsuperscript{1383} He was a student of Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (d. 485/1092) (Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqīd, 540-541). He went to Najaf and became a disciple of al-Ṭūsī’s son Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad (d. after 511/1117) and returned to Rayy and studied with Ḥasakā Ibn Bābawayh (d. in or after 510/1116). Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Al-Fihrist, 79 no. 234. Al-Ṭabarī heard and transcribed a tradition from him in 518/1124 in Rayy (al-Ṭabarī, Bishārat al-Muṣṭafā, 2:60).

\textsuperscript{1384} Muntajab al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fihrist, 69 no. 187.
Futūḥ was not mentioned by his contemporaries as a theologian or debater because of him being busy writing his voluminous commentary, many theological topics and even debates are recorded throughout his commentary.

**Abū al-Futūḥ Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī Rāzī (d. c. 552/1157)**

Detailed information regarding life and works of Abū l-Futūḥ will be provided in the next chapter. Ansari noted that during the time of Abū l-Futūḥ the refutation of Bahshamiyya theology was very popular among Imami scholars of Rayy. For this reason, throughout his commentary *Rawd el-jinān*, Abū l-Futūḥ regularly discussed Bahshamiyya theological questions. I will address this point later. The following prominent Imami theologians of this generation were active in Rayy. They also had discussed Bahshamiyya questions in their works.

**Rashīd al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. Abī l-Fatḥ Masʿūd b. ʿĪsā al-Rāzī**

Rashīd al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. Abī l-Fatḥ Masʿūd b. ʿĪsā al-Rāzī was a well known Imami theologian (*mutakallim*). He was a disciple of Amīrkā al-Qazwīnī (d. 514/1120). Rashīd al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Jalīl composed the book *Naqḍ Kitāb al-Taṣaffuḥ li-ʿAbī al-Ḥusayn*, a (lost) refutation of Abū Ḥusayn’s doctrinal views as laid down in his *Taṣaffuḥ al-adilla* as it seems. Ansari and Schmidtke note that the title of his lost book *Masʿala fi l-maʿdūm* suggests that the author was an adherent of the Bahshamiyya and he dealt in this work with the Bahshamiyya notion of *shayʿiyyat al-maʿdūm*. Rashīd al-Dīn also wrote refutations directed against the Ashʿarīs and the Zaydīs.1387

**Muʿīn al-Dīn Abū l-Makārim Saʿd b. Abī Ṭālib b. ʿĪsā al-Rāzī known as al-Najīb (d. 547/1152)**

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1385 Bahshamiyya are the followers of Abū Ḥāshim al-Jubbāʾī (d. 321/933). The Bahshamiyya was the last dominant Muʿtazilī school of thought in Baghdad. Renowned Muʿtazilī scholar Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025), al-Mufīd’s older contemporary, belonged to Bahshamiyya circle in Baghdad and later in Rayy. Madelung, “ʿAbd al-Jabbār.” On the Bahshamiyya see Heemskerk, *Suffering in the Muʿtazilite Theology*, 13-71.

1386 Ansari, “Chand pāra-i matn.”

Saʿd b. Abī Ṭālib was a disciple and nephew of Zayn al-Dīn Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. ʿĪsā b.ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Rāzī who was also a theologian (mutakallim). He was a student of Abū al-Najm Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿĪsā Rāzī (d. after 510/1116) and Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Jalīl b. ʿĪsā b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Rāzī. He is the author of Kitāb al-Mūjaz fī l-uṣūl, Kitāb ʿUlūm al-ʿaql, Masʿala fī l-ahwāl and Safīnat al-najāt fī takhtiʿat al-thiqāt (or al-nufāṭ). Ansari and Schmidtke believe that the latter two titles suggest that the Muʿīn al-Dīn Abū l-Makārim Saʿd was an adherent of the Bahshamiyya notion of the ‘states’ (ahwāl). 1388 This is corroborated by the fact that al-Ḥimmaṣī al-Rāzī, a follower of Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī’s doctrines, wrote Naqḍ al-Mūjaz, a refutation of the Kitāb al-Mūjaz. Abū l-Makārim also composed a book directed against the Ashʿarīs, i.e. Naqḍ Masʿalat al-ruʿya li-Abī al-Faḍāʾ il-Mashshāṭ. 1389

5.3 Imāmī Scholars During the Seljuq Period

In the second half of the 5th/11th and the beginning of the 6th/12th century, some Imāmī scholars of the school of Baghdad resided in Rayy and their new rational approach gradually prevailed over the traditional school of this city. I investigated the orientation of four generations of the active Imāmī scholars in this city (from 436-552/1044-1157) between Qummi traditionalism and Baghdadi rationalism. Abū al-Futūḥ, who is a member of the fourth generation, has received the legacy of three generations of scholars in his own family who were familiar with these two approaches from the beginning of their official divergence. In general, the traditionalist environment in Qumm and Rayy in the second half of the 5th/11th century and the first half of the 6th/12th century had found a strong tendency towards Baghdadi rationalism. As a result, a new thoughtful rationalist group of Imāmī scholars characterized with the combination of Baghdadi rationalism and Qummi traditionalism was forming in Rayy. The two most important points that were observed among the first three generations of Imāmī scholars in this city (436/1044 to 525/1129) were to write specialized topics such as jurisprudence in Persian, as well as the

1388 For the theory of states (ahwāl) see Thiele, “Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāʾī’s (d. 321/933) Theory of ‘States’ (ahwāl)”; Abdulsater, Shiʿi Doctrine, 62-79.

conversion of some of the Imāmī scholars to the lodge (khānaqāh). These two characteristics are directly reflected in Rawḍ al-jinān. This commentary is the first comprehensive exegesis, written in Persian, as well as the first Imāmī exegesis which uses words of Sufis (ahl ishārāt).

As Gleave remarks, the existence of a traditionalist trend vis-a-vis a rationalist trend in the Imāmī community of the 5th/11th century is undeniable.1390 He showed that three Sunnī and Shī‘ī sources of 6th/12th century used the term akhbāriyya and akhbāriyyūn (or akhbāriyān in Persian) apparently to refer to these traditionalists as a sub-group of the Imāmiyya.1391 I have to add Rawḍ al-jinān as a new source to his list because Abū al-Futūḥ mentions the opinion of some Imāmī traditionalists (muwāfiqān-[mā] az ahl-i akhbār) concerning the world of particles (ʿālam al-dharr).1392 At the end of his discussion to invalidate these traditionalists’ arguments, Abū al-Futūḥ refers to them as akhbāriyān.1393 This is the only case that Abū al-Futūḥ refers to them as akhbāriyān and in the rest of his twenty-volume commentary he always refers to them as ahl-i akhbār.1394 Sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ employs another word along with akhbār such as ahl-i akhbār wa aḥādīth,1395 or ahl-i akhbār wa asnād wa riwāyāt1396 which still indicates traditionalists. However, sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ cites ahl-i akhbār wa siyar which was a more frequent use of the term akhbārī or ahl akhbār and refers to early historians or transmitters of historical akhbārs (the reports of historical figures, rather than the Imams).1397

1390 Gleave, Scripturalist, 10, 30.
1391 These three sources include: Kūṭāb al-Mīlāl wa al-Nīḥal of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Kaʿīm al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) composed in 521 (Gleave, Scripturalist, 14-16), Kūṭāb Naqḍ of ʿAbd al-Jaʿīl Ṭūfī Qazwīnī (d. after 566/1170) which is an Imami source and has nine references (not eight references as Gleave counted) to the term akhbārī, akhbāriyya, and akhbāriyyūn (Gleave, Scripturalist, 16-25), and finally al-Maḥṣūl of Fākhr al-dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) who mentions the akhbārī Imamis once (Gleave, Scripturalist, 25-28).
1395 Abū al-Futūḥ Ṭūfī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:327.
1397 Gleave, Scripturalist, 14 n. 40.
Although Gleave believes that the usage of these terms was undefined and lacked consistency, I argue that this term is defined in contrast to *muḥaqqiqān Shīʿah yi Uṣūliyya* in the book *Naqḍ*. These early İmāmī *akhbārīs* collected *ḥadīths* of the Imams concerning theological doctrine without using any personal reasoning to present a Muʿtazilī *kalām*-style coherent doctrine and they assert the primacy of *ḥadīths* over reason. They did not use Muʿtazilī reasoning as a method to prove the basic elements of İmāmī doctrine and did not present their theology in Muʿtazilī *kalām*-style dialectic. These early İmāmī *akhbārīs* restricted their exegesis to the citation of relevant exegetical *ḥadīths*. Their only *ijtihad* was in deciding which *ḥadīths* were relevant. Early İmāmī traditionalists such as al-Kulaynī or al-Ṣadūq resisted employing Muʿtazilī rationalism. Although some early İmāmī theologians such as Banū Nawbakht began to apply the Muʿtazilī use of dialectic and rational methods, this reform in İmāmī theology, legal theory, jurisprudence, and exegesis was completed later by al-Mufīd and his prominent disciples in Baghdad, al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī, as we discussed in the previous chapter. It was al-Mufid who incorporated Muʿtazilī-inspired theology into İmāmī theology. However, much earlier than al-Mufid the İmāmī *ḥadīths* attributed to their Imams demonstrated the pivotal role of intellect (*ʿaql*) in early İmāmī doctrine.

The gradual divergence of İmāmī rationalism from traditionalism and their different response to anti-Shīʿī as is evident in writing of *mathālib al-nawāṣib* (defects of those who declare enmity on the Shiʿa Imams) by two İmāmī scholars of these two schools a century after al-Ṭūsī. As Pellat notes, in the first centuries of Islam, writing *mathālib* was in order to criticize other tribes, ethnic groups or even clans. As early as the 2nd/8th century, this genre was employed by the religio-political parties. For example, Hishām b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 204/819 or 206/821) in Kūfa used the same term *mathālib* to write a work entitled *Kitāb Mathālib al-Ṣaḥāba* containing...

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1398 *Naqḍ* is a refutation of *Baʿd faḍāʾiḥ al-rawāfiḍ*. The author of *Baʿd faḍāʾiḥ al-rawāfiḍ* is anonymous. Throughout his book he claims that he has converted from İmāmiyya to Sunnīsm. Ansari has suggested that this anonymous author was ʾDiyyāʾ al-Dīn, the father of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210). In his refutation, ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī, who is an adherent of *kalām*, regularly sides with the moderate rationalists repudiating the traditionists. In *Naqḍ*, he has demonstrated the doctrinal and cultural situation of İmāmīs during the Seljuq period in Iran.

a criticism of the first three caliphs. Writing *mathālib* was a kind of critique that emphasizes the weaknesses, shortcomings and defects of individuals or groups of opponents. As Dādāsh-nezhād has collected more than 40 books entitled *mathālib al-nawāṣib* were written by the end of the 6th/12th century. Two of these books, written in the second half of the 6th/12th century, include *Baʿḍ mathālib al-nawāṣib fī naqḍ* “ *Baʿḍ faḍāʾiḥ al-rawāfiḍ*” known as *Naqḍ* by ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī in Rayy (d. after 566/1170) and the book *mathālib al-nawāṣib* by Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192) in Ḥilla. After a comparative study of these two works, Dādāsh-nezhād concluded that these two Imāmī works and their authors belong to two different Imāmī intellectual schools. These two Imāmī schools of the 6th/12th century can be called ‘early Uṣūlī’ and ‘early Akhbārī’. ʿAbd al-Jalīl’s predilection for Baghdadi rationalist theology and legal theory which tries to minimize the differences between Sunnīs and Shiʿa as except in some principles is clear in his book *Naqḍ*. Contrary to this view, Ibn Shahrāshūb is in favor of a traditionalist approach which maximizes distinctions between Sunnīs and Shiʿa as. Abd al-Jalīl’s writing in his book is based on defence and persuasion, but the method of Ibn Shahrāshūb is based on polemics and making his opponent silent using antagonistic discourse.

ʿAbd al-Jalīl claims that in his time (mid 6th/12th century) only a few akhbārī Shiʿa were alive and if they live they hide their beliefs from uṣūlī Shiʿas. He also curses akhbārī Shiʿa as as he curses Ashʿarī Sunnīs. ʿAbd al-Jalīl never addressed an Imāmī akhbārī scholar explaining

1400 See Pellat, Ch., “Mathalib”, EI2
1402 Only a few articles have been published on *kitāb Naqḍ* in western languages. In 2006, Capezzone wrote an article in Italian concerning the scholars and books in Imami centers of Iran during the Seljuq period according to *kitāb Naqḍ*. (See Capezzone, “Maestri e testi.”) In 2007, Gleave wrote his monograph on the history and doctrines of the Akhbārī Shiʿī School and analyzed 8 cases which Rāzī Qazwīnī has mentioned concerning Akhbārīyān (Gleave, *Scripturalist Islam*, 16-25). In 2009, Capezzone wrote another article in French concerning Sunni madrasa versus Shiʿa dār al-ʿilm in *kitāb Naqḍ*. In this article, Capezzone studied the differences between cultural policies and historiographical images of the Buyid and Seljuk periods.

1404 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 625.
1405 Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 682. This extremism is likely a reflection of Baghdadī scholars such as al-Mufīd and al-Murtaḍā against the traditionists of Qum and Rayy which was mentioned earlier. It is also an example of what has
and refuting their beliefs. By not mentioning the name of akhbārī scholar in his entire work, ʿAbd al-Jalīl probably attempts to ascribe some Imāmī beliefs such as cursing some of the Prophet’s Companions to akhbārīs (traditionists), hashwīs (literalists)\(^{1406}\) or ghulāt (transgressive Shīʿīs) to alleviate the Seljuq pressure upon the majority Imāmī scholars including the second and third group.\(^{1407}\) It seems that the term Shīʿa-yī uṣūliyya in ʿAbd al-Jalīl’s discourse refers to the third above-mentioned groups of Imāmīs in Rayy; however, he never excludes the second group explicitly.\(^{1408}\) ʿAbd al-Jalīl considers himself an uṣūlī Shīʿa and was in contact with the Iranian students of the Baghdadi School in Rayy. He mentions that al-Murtaḍā and Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī are two distinguished scholars of the school of Baghdad and their rational school was the dominant and true path of Imāmī Shīʿa Islam.\(^{1409}\) As Girāmī argues, it is likely that the use of the terms akhbārī and uṣūlī in Naqḍ was strategic to protect the majority of Imāmī scholars and revive their lost socio-political position in this period.\(^{1410}\) Most of Imāmī scholars under the Seljuqs rule needed to dissimulate in theory and practice or to

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\(^{1407}\) ʿAbd al-Jalīl mentions many times the term Shīʿa-yī uṣūliyya vis-à-vis akhbārīs, hashwīs and ghulāt. Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 5, 253, 305, 498, 578, 625. He has employed the term Shīʿa uṣūliyya or uṣūliyyān in his book Naqḍ, however his specific reference of akhbārīs, hashwīs and ghulāt is not clear.

\(^{1408}\) The term Shīʿa-yī uṣūliyya, which is used by ʿAbd al-Jalīl to refer to the dominant group of Imāmī scholars of his time, is not seen in other Imāmī works of that period. A few years later, Fakhr Rāzī (d. 606/1209), who was an eminent Shāfiʿī scholar born in Rayy, has used the terms akhbārī and uṣūlī in his book al-Maḥṣūl fiʾl mūṣul al-fiqh indicating two main trends of his contemporary Imāmī scholars. Regarding akhbārīs, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī states “most of the early Shīʿa as were akhbārīs and they used to rely on their Imams traditions in their basic doctrine of the faith (uṣūl al-dīn) besides the branches of the faith (furūʿ al-dīn).” al-Rāzī, al-Maḥṣūl fiʾl mūṣul al-fiqh, 4:384.

\(^{1409}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 550.

\(^{1410}\) Girāmī, “Jāygāh-i istilāh-i ‘shīʿa-yī uṣūliyya’ dar guftimān-i kalāmīs-yi ʿAbd al-Jalīl Qazwīnī Rāzī.” Girāmī believes that the use of the term uṣūlī in Naqḍ was only strategic.
simulate Sufis and take refuge in khānaqāhs. Indications of this dissimulation or tendency to Sufi tradition is clear in many Imāmī surviving works of that period such as Naqḍ by ‘Abd al-Jalîl and Rawḍ al-jinān by Abū al-Futūḥ.

5.4 Characteristics of Uṣūlī Imāmiyya as Reflected in the book Naqḍ of Rāzī Qazwînî

As discussed earlier, the term Shī‘ah-yi Uṣūliyya vis-à-vis Akhbāriyya describes two real groups within the Imāmī community of the 6th/12th century, which had two different approaches in their jurisprudence, legal theory, theology and exegesis. Some significant characteristics of Uṣūlī Imāmiyya as reflected in the book Naqḍ of Rāzī Qazwînî are as follows:

In legal theory: 1. Denying the authoritativeness (ḥujjiyya) of single-source tradition (khabar al-wāḥid) 2. Accepting the authoritativeness (ḥujjiyya) of consensus (ijmāʿ) and intellect (ʻaql) along with the Qurʾān and Sunna 3. The authoritativeness of the apparent literal meaning (ẓawāhir) of the Qurʾān without the need for exegetical commentary.

In jurisprudence: 1. Denying the constant number in fasting.

In doctrine: 1. Denying falsification (taḥrīf) of the Qurʾān (neither addition nor deletion) 2. Accepting the status of ‘Alī lower than the prophets and above the angels 3. Rejecting Imams’ knowledge of the unseen (ʻilm al-ghayb) 4. Rejecting the world of particles (ʻālam al-dharr) 5. Tolerance in dissociation (tabarrī or barā’a) from the first three caliphs and other Companions of the Prophet 6. Belief in Abu Bakr’s merits and services 7. Not criticizing ‘Āyisha and Ḥafṣa

In relation to other legal schools: 1. Friendship with Mālikīs, Shāfi‘īs, Ḥanafīs, and Sufis 2. Being the opponent of Ḥanbalīs.1411

In all of the above cases, Abū al-Futūḥ has similar beliefs to Baghdadi theologians in the 5th/11th century specially al-Murtaḍā, and al-Ţūsī. The differences between Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary

1411 Girāmî, “Jâygh-i ištîlâh-i ‘shī‘a-yi uṣûliyya” 374-381.
with *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī is that Abū al-Futūḥ has used more poetry, Imāmī hadiths, and preaching statements by comparison and he emphasizes the topic of Imamate more than al-Ṭūsī.

5.5 *Uṣūlī* Imāmī Commentaries in the 6th/12th Century: Principles and Characteristics

There are two extant *Uṣūlī* Imāmī commentaries from the 5th/11th century *al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Maghribī and *al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Ṭūsī; and two from the 6th/12th century, *Majmaʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Ṭabrisī and *Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī. These four commentaries have some characteristics in common. For example, all these four *Imāmī Usūlī* commentaries omitted or abbreviated the chains of transmitters (isnāds) of their traditions. Some of these common characteristics will be discussed in this section. Fudge studied the *Majmaʿ al-bayān* of al-Ṭabrisī, but reduced its value to almost a copy of *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī. In comparing *Rawḍ al-jinān* of Abū al-Futūḥ and *Majmaʿ al-bayān* of al-Ṭabrisī with the preceding *Imāmī* commentaries, three points must be kept in mind: first, Abū al-Futūḥ has mentioned al-Thaʿlabī by name or the title *Imām aṣḥāb ḥadīth* more than any other exegetes in *Rawḍ al-jinān*, as al-Ṭabrisī in his introduction to *Majmaʿ al-bayān* has mentioned the importance of al-Tibyān and its difference from *Majmaʿ al-bayān*. That is, Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī have indirectly referred to their main source for writing their commentaries. Second, the method of writing a commentary like *Rawḍ al-jinān* and the *Majmaʿ al-bayān* was not considered plagiarism in the mediaeval times, since the method of quoting and mentioning the source in that period was different in most cases from what we know today. Few commentaries such as *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī from the mediaeval times can be found which have mentioned their sources, his teachers, and chain of narrations of its aḥādīth. Third, the comparison between *Rawḍ al-jinān* and *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī, as well as *al-Tibyān* shows that about forty percent of the content of the *Rawḍ al-jinān* is different from these two commentaries. This forty percent of the new lexical, theological, or jurisprudential topics of Abū al-Futūḥ, either is taken from other sources or it is Abū al-Futūḥ’s original work which will be seen in

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1412 See Fudge, *Qurʾānic hermeneutics*, 38-50.
coming chapter. Below, four characteristics of the *Rawḍ al-jinān* as an Imāmī Commentary belonging to Uṣūlis in the 6th/12th will be discussed:

5.5.1 Maximizing the use of the Sunnī Commentaries (Muʿtazilīs or Ashʿarīs)

The expression of the exegetical viewpoint of the companions (ṣaḥāba) and followers of companions (tābiʿīn) in *Rawḍ al-jinān* exceeded previous commentaries with regards to occasions of revelation, variant readings, and lexical interpretation in order to express other schools’ beliefs or jurisprudential views. Sometimes even Abū al-Futūḥ prefers non-Imāmī traditions over an Imāmī ḥadīth. For example, despite the availability of an apparently authentic Imāmī ḥadīth, Abū al-Futūḥ does not mention it in his commentary, and instead he only cites exegetical statements of the Companions or followers. Or Abū al-Futūḥ cites an Imāmī along with non-Imāmī sources without any preference. Below are two interesting examples, which show the difference between *Rawḍ al-jinān*, and early Imāmī Qur’ān commentaries.

Example 1: In interpreting the phrase of verse [Q 13:2] ‘God is the one Who raised the heavens without pillars that you see (bi-ghayr ṭʿamād tartawnahā),’ al-Ṭabarī mentions two different interpretations: some exegetes say that there are pillars [holding up the heavens] which cannot be seen, but others interpret this verse to mean that the heavens are not supported by pillars at all.1413 Abū al-Futūḥ first expresses both interpretations, then accept the second one. He states: “The interpretation of those who prove the existence of pillars and disprove seeing [it] is a very weak (rakīk) interpretation. The correct interpretation is that to say the meaning of disproving seeing pillars, is disproving [the existence of] pillars because if there was a pillar it could be seen.”1414 Al-Ṭabrisī, like Abū al-Futūḥ, opts for the second interpretation,1415 while this second interpretation is against the hadīth attributed to Imam Riḍā in early Imāmī commentaries such as *Tafsīr* of al-Qummī and *Tafsīr* of al-ʿAyyāshī in which the Imam stated “there are pillars

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but you cannot see them.”\textsuperscript{1416} Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī could cite this second interpretation even from non-Imāmī sources such as Jāmiʿ al-bayān of al-Ṭabarī, but they have preferred to choose the selected interpretation of al-Thaʿlabī and al-Ṭūsī (who has cited from al-Jubbāʾī) in their commentaries.\textsuperscript{1417}

Example 2: In interpreting the word sukārā of verse [Q 4:43] ‘O you who believe! Do not approach the prayer while you are intoxicated (sukārā).’ The question is concerning sukārā whether it is intoxication of wine (or other intoxicating drinks) or excessive sleepiness. The majority of early exegetes believed that the verse in question is one of the four verses, which address the gradual prohibition of intoxicating drinks. However, the minority exegetes preferred the meaning of sukārā to be excessive sleepiness that would impair believers’ ability to pray properly. It is interesting that according to an early Imāmī aḥādīth narrated in Tafsīr of al-Qummī, Tafsīr of al-ʿAyyāshī, and three of the four canonical books of Imāmīs, it seems that Imams interpret sukārā as excessive sleepiness not intoxication of wine.\textsuperscript{1418} Al-Ṭūsī expresses both interpretations without addressing any Imāmī tradition or any preference.\textsuperscript{1419} Abū al-Futūḥ first discusses the lexical and theological issues of the verse taken from al-Ṭūsī’s commentary and states that sukārā is intoxication of wine. After that he cites (and translates) some traditions from al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary indicating that sukārā is excessive sleepiness.\textsuperscript{1420} But Abū al-Futūḥ does not prefer these traditions because they are “opposed to the apparent literal meaning of the Qur’ān and interpreting as excessive sleepiness could be figurative/metaphorical.”\textsuperscript{1421} Interestingly, al-Ṭabrisī cites both possible interpretations and supports both interpretations by

\textsuperscript{1416} al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:328; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:203.
\textsuperscript{1417} al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 5:268; al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 6:213.
\textsuperscript{1418} al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:139; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 1:242 #134, 137; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 3:299 no. 1; 3:371 no. 15; Ibn Bābawayh, Man lā yahḍūruh, 1:480 no. 1386; Ḳīl al-sharāyiʿ, 2:358 no. 1; al-Ṭūsī, Tahdhīb, 3:258 no. 42.
\textsuperscript{1419} al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan. al-Tibyān, 3:205-206.
\textsuperscript{1420} al-Thaʿlabī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad. al-Kashf, 3:312.
\textsuperscript{1421} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jīnān, 5:371-372.
Imāmī *ahādīth*.\(^{1422}\) Accepting the interpretation of the majority of Muslims to interpret *sukārā* as intoxication of wine remained as the dominant interpretation in Imāmī commentaries until the Safavid period and the partial reconstruction of the traditionalism of Imāmī Shīʿa Islam. Some of Safavid exegetes interpreted *sukārā* again as excessive sleepiness and asserted that interpretation of *sukārā* to intoxication of wine should only be predicated on dissimulation (*taqīyya*) because this interpretation is in line with Sunnī (*ʿāmma*) interpretation.\(^{1423}\) However, in the time of Abū al-Futūḥ, it could be argued that he actually did prefer non-Imāmī interpretations in some cases.

### 5.5.2 Minimum use of the Early Imāmī Commentaries

The Uṣūlī Imāmī exegetes used early Imāmī commentaries rarely or without mentioning their names. In many cases they have cited early Imāmī commentaries and mentioned Imams’ traditions in the same way as the other Companions of the Prophet. Apparently, the Uṣūlī exegetes did not accept many of the traditions of early Imāmī commentaries as reliable, or did not use them due to dissimulation (*taqīyya*) or proximity to non-Shīʿas. An Uṣūlī Shīʿa of the 6\(^{th}/12\)th century such as ‘Abd al-Jalīl, has divided the Shīʿa exegetes into two groups: early Shīʿa exegetes such as ‘Abd Allāh ʿAbbās, Daḥḥāk, Mujāhid, Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Imam Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī; and late Imāmī exegetes such as al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad b. Muʾmin al-Shīrāzī, Muḥammad al-Fattāl al-Nīsābūrī, al-Ṭabrisī and Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī.\(^{1424}\) But ‘Abd al-Jalīl does mention *Tafsīr* of al-Qummī, *Tafsīr* of Furāt al-Kūfī, or even *Tafsīr* of al-ʿAyyāshī in his book *Naqḍ*. Once in the course of his description of ‘the eighty-seven disgrace’ of the *Rawāfiḍ*, the author of BFR in interpreting the verse [Q 41:29] reports that “‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Ḥāshim, who was one of the early *Rawāfiḍ*, in interpreting this verse states that: these two people of Hell from the nation of Muḥammad who are being addressed in this verse are Abū Bakr and ‘Umar who founded an unjust caliphate.”\(^{1425}\) This tradition still exists in ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm’s commentary,

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\(^{1425}\) Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqḍ*, 282.
which he narrated without a chain of transmission, narrating that “Iblīs came after the death of the Messenger of God to fulānun (Abū Bakr) to pledge allegiance to him, and from humans fulānun (ʿUmar) [to pledge allegiance to him].” Nevertheless, ʿAbd al-Jalīl does not mention ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm or his commentary and denies this kind of exegetical traditions. He states, “it is a mistake to interpret this verse in such a way in the name of Imāmī Shīʿa.” It was by ignoring these controversial exegetical traditions and employing minimum pre-Buyid Imāmī commentaries that post-Buyid Imāmī Commentaries of Uṣūlīs could emerge and survive for centuries.

It seems that ʿAbd al-Jalīl and most of his contemporary Uṣūlī Imāmī scholars did not want to consider early Imāmī commentaries such as Ṭafsīr of al-Qummī, Ṭafsīr of Furāt al-Kūfī, or Ṭafsīr of al-ʿAyyāshī as well-known and reliable exegetical works. ʿAbd al-Jalīl simply ignored these commentaries and after criticizing the statement made by the author of BFR he adds that: “Whatever is in the commentaries of Muḥammad Bāqir, commentary of al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī, commentary of Shaykh Bū Jaʿfar Ṭūsī, Muḥammad Fattāl Nīshābūrī, Abū ʿAli Ṭabrisī, and Khwajah Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī is proof (ḥujja) for Shīʿa. These exegetes are well-known, reliable, and trusted.” The proof (ḥujja) in Imāmī discourse has been changed dramatically. In his discussion concerning consensus (ijmāʿ), al-Mufīd states that “ijmāʿ is a proof (ḥujja) among Imāmīs because it includes the statement of the Imam (al-Hujja).” But ʿAbd al-Jalīl tries to demonstrate that apart from a few early commentaries and all late Uṣūlī commentaries that he mentioned, the rest are not proof (ḥujja). He has expressed this statement elsewhere in this book except he has added that “all these exegetes are religious and knowledgeable. The first few [Imams] infallible, and the last of them are faithful, trustworthy, and trusted. None of them are

1426 al-Qummī, Ṭafsīr, 2:265 no. 7. Although in his Ṭafsīr, al-Qummī cites this tradition without a chain of narration, his student al-Kulaynī has quoted two traditions from Imam al-Ṣādiq with two different chains of narrations in this regard (see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 8:334 no. 523, 524).
1427 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 283.
1428 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqḍ, 283-284.
1429 al-Mufīd, Awā il, 137-138.
determinist (*mujbir*),\textsuperscript{1430} anthropomorphist (*mushabbih*), transgressive Shīʿī (*ghālī*), traditionalist (*akhbārī*), or literalists (*hashwi*).\textsuperscript{1431} Perhaps ʿAbd al-Jalīl, who considered himself an Uṣūlī Imāmī Shīʿa and frequently put the Usili Imāmīs opposite to the transgressive Shīʿī (*ghālī*), traditionalist (*akhbārī*), or literalists (*hashwi*) in his book *Naqd*,\textsuperscript{1432} indirectly attributes to those early Imāmī exegetes such as ʿAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Quminī qualities of exaggeration, transgression, or literalism and this can be inferred from the term non reliable and unknown (*nā muʿtabar nā maʿrūf*).\textsuperscript{1433}

The approach of Uṣūlī Imāmīs of Baghdad and later Rayy or Nīshābūr is respectably moderate, such that later Sunnī scholars, who have studied their commentaries, accepted their balanced view. For example, the professor of Qurʿānic studies at Azhar University, Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī (d. 1397/1977), comments on al-Ṭabrisī and his commentary *Majmaʿ al-bayān*: “He is not transgressive in Shīʿī Islam and he is not radical in his beliefs.”\textsuperscript{1434} After repeating the same statement elsewhere he adds: “We did not see in his commentary to excommunicate one of the Companions or to criticize them as he questions the justice and religion of the Companions.”\textsuperscript{1435} If al-Dhahabī or any other Sunnī scholar studies the *Rawḍ al-jinān*, he will probably come to the same conclusion concerning it because Abū al-Futūḥ has the same approach to the Sunnī traditions or Companions with regards to the sensitive issues or characters which classically differentiate Shīʿa and Sunnīs. Abū al-Futūḥ has a close view to Sunnīs regarding Companions and wives of the Prophet in his commentary as does not blame them explicitly. Or he is simply aware of the reactions of the Sunnī audience who may read his work. Since *Rawḍ al-jinān* is in Persian, it was less studied by non-Iranian scholars. However, it is likely that if Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) had studied *Rawḍ al-jinān*, he would have rejected it as

\textsuperscript{1430} *Mujbir* is a believer in the doctrine of ijbār (human agency is impossible and we are all compelled to perform actions by God. (See Gleave, *Scripturalist Islam*, 19 no. 64).

\textsuperscript{1431} Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 309.

\textsuperscript{1432} Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 253, 305, 309.

\textsuperscript{1433} Rāzī Qazwīnī, *Naqd*, 309.

\textsuperscript{1434} al-Dhahabī, *al-tafsīr wa al-mufassirūn*, 2:78.

\textsuperscript{1435} al-Dhahabī, *al-tafsīr wa al-mufassirūn*, 1:106.
a mainstream exegesis due to the Abū al-Futūḥ’s emphasis on the subject of Imamate and merits of ahl al-bayt, as Ibn Taymiyya did to *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī.

5.5.3 Avoiding esoteric hermeneutics and emphasizing the apparent literal meaning of the Qur’ān

Uṣūlī Imāmī commentators represented a new considerate Imāmī Shīʿī exegesis. They were cautious in their approach to Prophetic Sunnī traditions in general and to the exegetical statements of the Companions of the Prophet in particular. One of the characteristics of the Uṣūlī Imāmī exegesis was to give a marginal position to *ḥadīths* in general and to avoid esoteric hermeneutics in particular. This characteristic contrasts with the central position of *ḥadīths* in Pre-Buyid Imāmī commentaries. In early Imāmī commentaries exegetical traditions concerning the Imams or their adversaries constitute a large portion of the work. But Uṣūlī Imāmī exeges such al-Maghribī and al-Ṭūsī’s cited minimum hermeneutical traditions concerning Imams or their adversaries because most of these esoteric exegetical traditions were not accepted outside the Imāmī community. This, of course, does not mean that al-Ṭūsī has not cited any esoteric exegetical tradition. For example, this statement of [Q 9:105] “Say perform your deeds, God will see your deeds, as will His messenger and the believers” is understood by the majority of early Sunnī exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī as being related to the second half of the verse [Q 9:94] to mean that God, His messenger, and believers will see people’s deeds in this world naturally when they are alive.1436 In early Imāmī commentaries such as *Tafsīr* of al-Qummī and *Tafsīr* of al-ʿAyyāshī, the word ‘believers: *al-muʾminūn*’ has been interpreted as the Imams whose peoples’ actions will be presented to them.1437 Since this interpretation was very common in early Imāmī exegetical traditions and the status of Imams as observers of all human beings’ actions was part of Imāmī esoteric literature,1438 al-Ṭūsī could not refrain from mentioning this exegesis. In his exegesis of this verse, al-Ṭūsī states “it is narrated in *ḥadīth* that the actions of people (*al-ʿibād*)

1436 al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 11:16. A few Sunnī exegetes interpret this verse to mean that they will see it on the Day of Judgment.


are presented to the Prophet every Monday and Thursday and he knows them. [The actions of people] are also presented to the Imams and they know them too. Imams are signified by the word believers ‘al-muʾminūn’ in this verse.\textsuperscript{1439} Although Abū al-Futūḥ proposes two interpretations for the verse in question, he chooses this esoteric Imāmī interpretation and tries to support it by citing other verses of the Qurʾān such as Q 5:55, 66:4, and 4:59 and emphasizes that there are so many similar verses to support this Imāmī interpretation.\textsuperscript{1440}

For early Imami traditionalists it was not difficult to accept that the Prophet and the Imams were not only a warner or guides in this world but judges of actions on the Day of Judgement. Early Shīʿas and Sunnīs had narrated that, when the verse [Q 13:7] ‘you are only a warner and for every people there is a guide’ was revealed, the Prophet told ʿAlī “I am the warner (mundhir) and you, O ʿAlī, are the guide (hādī).”\textsuperscript{1441} Imami traditions extended this position (being a guide) to all their Imams. But this virtue of ʿAlī and other Imams to be a guide was not their only virtue. On the Day of Judgement, the Imams will be witness for humankind as the Prophet will be a witness for them\textsuperscript{1442} and they will be fair scales (al-mawāzīn al-qīṣṭ) to take account of peoples’ actions.\textsuperscript{1443} The Prophet will take account of the actions of the Imams and the Imams will take account of the actions of the people.\textsuperscript{1444} To be a witness means that the Prophet or an Imam has a consequential role in the judging of a matter through his knowledge of that matter. Therefore, the Prophet and Imams have to know the actions of people. For non-Shīʿa as this sounds like polytheism because only God has exclusive sovereignty and knowledge to judge. They see no need to delegate any authority from an absolute, timeless and all merciful God to a human, even the perfect human (al-insān al-kāmil in later Imami literature). For them Shīʿa as cover their

\textsuperscript{1439} al-Ṭūsī, al-Tībīyān, 5:295.

\textsuperscript{1440} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 10:31-32.


\textsuperscript{1443} For the meaning of al-mawāzīn al-qīṣṭ in the verse [Q 21:47] see al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:419 no. 36; Ibn Bābawayh, Maʿānī al-akhbār, 31-32.

\textsuperscript{1444} Ibn Bābawayh, al-Iʿtiqādāt, 73-74.
tendency to polytheism in the language of religion and there is a propensity to consolidate power and authority usurped from God. Abū al-Futūḥ avoids using any tradition which is not accepted out of the inner circle of Shiʿa.

In Rawḍ al-jīnān of Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī’s exegetical statements of the Companions and exegetical traditions of the Imams have a central position. Despite Abū al-Futūḥ being an Uṣūlī exegete, he has cited some hermeneutical traditions of early Imāmī commentaries although it is far from the apparent literal meaning (ẓāhir) of the verse. By carefully using al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī as his main source to write Rawḍ al-jīnān, Abū al-Futūḥ tried to bring back all those virtues and merits of the Imams which are narrated in Sunnī traditions, to Imāmī exegesis. So, it is not the case that, as Lawson claimed, after being ignored or putting aside for nearly six centuries, many of the traditions of earliest proto-Imāmī commentaries were used in the Akhbārī era of the Safavid period.1445 Only after a century, Abū al-Futūḥ used many of those traditions in his commentary. These exegetical traditions are sometimes concerning the occasion of revelation of a verse about ʿAlī; however, sometimes it goes beyond that. For example, in interpreting the phrase al-baḥrayn (two seas) in [Q 55:19-22] Abū al-Futūḥ states that “in the interpretation of the family of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt) is said that: this is a reference to ʿAlī and Fāṭimah. One of them is the sea of knowledge, forbearance, and bravery. The other the sea of purity, diffidence (ḥayāʾ), and royalty.”1446 Then, in order not to be criticized by non-Imāmīs in this interpretation he continues: “this interpretation that we cited from the family of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt) is cited by al-Thaʿlabī in his commentary with different chains of narrations, from Sufyān Thawrī and Saʿīd Jubayr.”1447 This esoteric interpretation has not been mentioned in al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī1448 perhaps because it was not defendable for al-Ṭūsī, but it has been cited in al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī and Shawāhid al-tanzīl of al-Ḥaskānī.1449
In this and all other cases similar to it, Abū al-Futūḥ refers to his source in order to prevent any accusations by his non-Shīʿa reader. Interestingly, al-Ṭabrisī has interpreted al-bahrāyin (two seas) to signify ʿAlī and Fāṭimah, too. He also adds “It is not surprising that those two [ʿAlī and Fāṭimah] are two seas because of their virtue and abundance of good; that is why a sea is called a sea because of its abundance/wideness.” It is clear that al-Ṭabrisī like Abū al-Futūḥ tries to avoid any interpretation that is indefensible against his non-Imāmī critics in the Seljuq period. This is the same method of al-Ṭūsī against Sunnīs especially Muʿtazilīs, with the difference being that al-Ṭūsī removed many of the Imāmī hermeneutical traditions from Imāmī exegesis because it was indefensible without accepting the principles of Imāmī Shiʿa Islam. Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī attempted to bring some of these Imāmī traditions back into their exegesis, and succeeded despite the socio-political problems of the Seljuq era. This is what has been neglected in the study by Fudge in his book on Majmaʿ al-bayān.

5.5.4 Minimum criticism of the first three Caliphs and other Companions

Pre-Buyid early Imāmī commentaries include some harsh criticisms against the first three Caliphs and some Companions of the Prophet. But Uṣūlī Imāmī commentators wanted to avoid this direct criticism of the caliphs and Companions of the Prophet. They were careful not to denigrate or belittle the first three caliphs explicitly in the manner of the pre-Buyid Imāmī exegetes. Instead of focusing on Qurʾānic expressions such al-fahshāʾ wa al-munkar wa al-baghy (indecency and wrong and rebelliousness) to refer to Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān in [Q 16:90], post-Buyid exegetes focused on the expression dhī al-qurbā (kinsfolk) to bring back Imams’ virtues and merits to Imāmī exegesis. Both Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī use the

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1450 al-Ṭabrisī, Majmaʿ al-bayān, 9:305.
1451 See Fudge, Qurʾānic hermeneutics.
1452 Bar-Asher, Scripture and exegetics, 83-84; 113-120.
1453 al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 1:388; al-ʿAyyāshī, Tafsīr, 2:268 no. 62. In al-Qummī’s commentary the first three caliphs are mentioned by “fulānun wa fulānun wa fulānun.” In al-ʿAyyāshī’s commentary they are mentioned by “al-awwal wa al-thānī wa al-thālith.” Another example is the Quranic expressions al-kafr wa al-fusūq wa al-ʾisyān (disbelief and iniquity and disobedience) in [Q 49:7] are interpreted to signify Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān. (See al-Qummī, Tafsīr, 2:319; al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 1:426). Again, in both sources the first three caliphs are not mentioned by name. Al-Qummī refers to them by “fulānun wa fulānun wa fulānun” al-Kulaynī refers to them by “al-awwal wa al-thānī wa al-thālith.”
verse of *Khums* [Q 8:41] to support their argument that kinsfolks in [Q 16:90] refers to the *ahl al-bayt*.\(^\text{1454}\) Abū al-Futūḥ and al-Ṭabrisī restored the virtues and merits of *ahl al-bayt* to the Imāmī exegesis and combined the Uṣūlī Imāmī exegesis with early Imāmī exegetical traditions to revive both with a balanced Imāmī identity under the rule of Sunnī Seljuqs.

Both titles of *al-ṣiddīq* and *al-fārūq* are used in *Rawḍ al-jinān* with reference to ʿAlī as is expected.\(^\text{1455}\) However, contrary to what Bar-asher who states that “the first caliphs, as well as other Companions of the Prophet, are never mentioned” by Shīʿas “with the honorary titles accorded to them by Sunnī traditions,”\(^\text{1456}\) Abū al-Futūḥ not only did not criticize the Caliphs, but also, in some cases, mentions them with the honorary titles such as *al-ṣiddīq* (title of Abu Bakr).\(^\text{1457}\) Al-Ṭūsī did not face this problem to have to praise the first caliphs or mention them with their honorary titles. As long as al-Ṭūsī was in Baghdad, neither Seljuqs nor ʿAbbāsī caliphs had power and later in Najaf Sunnīs did not present. Hence, although al-Ṭūsī deeply reduced Imāmī esoteric exegetical traditions he did not mention any virtue or honorary titles of the first three caliphs.

Abū al-Futūḥ not only does not point to Abū Bakr’s purported vices, but also translates what al-Thaʿlabī has cited in his commentary interpreting the verse of the cave [Q 9:40], which implies Abū Bakr’s virtues.\(^\text{1458}\) This is in contrast to what al-Ṭūsī expresses to strip Abū Bakr of all the qualities attributed to him in Sunni exegesis under this verse.\(^\text{1459}\) Abū al-Futūḥ expresses the virtues of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, all of which are translations from *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī\(^\text{1460}\) and yet expressing the virtues of the Caliphs was not acceptable during the Buyid period, and only


\(^\text{1456}\) Bar-Asher, *Scripture and exegesis*, 84.


\(^\text{1459}\) Bar-Asher, *Scripture and exegesis*, 85.

expressing their purported vices was accepted. For example, al-Qummî in interpreting the same verse of cave [Q 9:40] cites a tradition which implies Abū Bakr’s lack of belief in the truth of the Prophet, but his belief in the Prophet to be a sorcerer.\textsuperscript{1461} Therefore, Abū al-Futūḥ by choosing \textit{al-Kashf} of al-Tha’labī caused the virtues of some Companions, especially the Caliphs, to enter Imāmī exegesis. However, he does not share most of the virtues of `Alî with Abū Bakr. The study of the verses 5:67, 5:55, and 4:59 in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} indicates that Abū al-Futūḥ believes in the Imams to be \textit{mansūṣ} (being appointed by God), \textit{maʿṣūm} (infallible), and \textit{aʿlam} (the most knowledgeable).\textsuperscript{1462}

The comparison between \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} and the principles of Uṣūlī Imāmīs demonstrates that on one hand Abū al-Futūḥ was an Uṣūlī Imāmī Shi‘a and one of the exegetes of this school who prefers al-Murtaḍā’s view in conflicts between al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsî. On the other hand, the number of \textit{ahṭādīth} which Abū al-Futūḥ cited in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} compared to Imāmī \textit{ahṭādīth} cited in \textit{al-Tibyān} of al-Ṭūsî is more because Abū al-Futūḥ has chosen \textit{al-Kashf} of al-Tha’labī, \textit{Imam aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth}, as his main source.\textsuperscript{1463} This has made the commentary of Abū al-Futūḥ the culmination of decades of translating Baghdadi Imāmī theology and Nishaburi Sunni pro-Alid traditions to create a fluent but influential text for the public in Persian. In this regard, he combined the traditional inheritance of the Sunnis in the virtues of the \textit{ahl al-bayt} with the theological inheritance of the Uṣūlī Imāmīs through the Qur’ān. Through \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, he emphasized the subject of Imamate to prove the authority of the \textit{ahl al-bayt} as the only divine leaders and exegetes. Like other post-Buyid commentators he also employed lexical-theological-legal discussions. In the next chapter, Abū al-Futūḥ’s method and sources in writing his commentary will be discussed. Moreover, his hermeneutical approach will be studied in more depth.

\textsuperscript{1461} al-Qummî, \textit{Tafsīr}, 1:290.

\textsuperscript{1462} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 7:25, 79; 5:408.

\textsuperscript{1463} Saleh, \textit{The Formation}, 191-198.
Chapter 6
Rawḍ al-jinān and Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī

Having done an examination of Abū al-Futūḥ’s life, works, and academic approach in previous Chapters, I will first look at the date of Rawḍ al-jinān’s composition, its structure and sources in Chapter 6. Next, Abū al-Futūḥ’s language and writing style is discussed. It will be shown how Abū al-Futūḥ’s language and writing style differ from his contemporaries’ religious prose writings in Persian. Finally, Abū al-Futūḥ’s theoretical hermeneutics, as expressed in the introduction to his commentary will be compared with his actual practice of interpretation in the body of Rawḍ al-jinān.

6 Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān

6.1 The date of Rawḍ al-jinān’s composition

The date of composition of Rawḍ al-jinān is uncertain; however, the available evidence helps us to estimate it. After a detailed discussion, Qazvīnī, a modern Iranian scholar, concluded that Rawḍ al-jinān’s composition date should be between 510/1117 and 556/1161. 1464 Another modern Iranian scholar Nafīsī narrowed Rawḍ al-jinān’s completion date based on one of Abū al-Futūḥ’s ijāza to a scholar who transmitted the whole commentary from the begging to the end written in Dhu al-Qaʿda 547/ Feb. 1153. 1465 Yāḥaqqī and Nāṣiḥ found an old manuscript of the eleventh volume of Rawḍ al-jinān in Muḥaddith Urmāvī’s collection which may shed light on its composition date. The last page of this manuscript ends referring to two dates “Volume eleven completed and Sūrah al-Naḥl will follow it in volume twelve. It came to an end on the 10th of Ṣafar 533/24th Oct. 1138, and God’s help is being sought on its completion and may he award [us] His beneficence. And it was finished on Thursday 2nd of Ṣafar 579/3rd June 1183. And this is handwriting of the poorest slaves of God, al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. Ibrāhīm b.

According to these very last sentences of this manuscript, this volume was transcribed by al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad from another manuscript which came to an end on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of Ṣafar 533/24\textsuperscript{th} Oct. 1138. This date implies that the first eleven volumes of \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} were completed in 533/1138 and it can be concluded that Abū al-Futūḥ commenced writing his commentary around 522/1127, one year for each volume.

6.2 Sources of Rawḍ al-Jinān

Abū al-Futūḥ does not provide a description of the sources for his commentary. His work implies that he had access to the work of early commentators, as did al-Ṭabarī, al-Thaʿlabī and al-Ṭūsī. However, a closer look at the \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} leaves no doubt that Abū al-Futūḥ was relying directly on some of the preceding commentaries. This section is devoted to finding the sources Abū al-Futūḥ used to compose his commentary and to analyze them to show the significance of his choices and the implication of the survival of \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} for the history of Qurʾānic exegesis written in Persian. The close study of the sources of \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} also casts light on the provenance of this commentary and answers such questions as how much of \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} is original.

In his preface to \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, Abū al-Futūḥ declares that interpretation (\textit{tafsīr}), explanation (\textit{sharḥ}), and elucidation (\textit{bayān}) of the Qurʾān is only permitted by employing traditions (\textit{āthār wa-akhbār}) of the Prophet and the rightful Shīʿī Imāms. He maintains that one is not allowed to depend upon his personal opinion (\textit{raʾy}) in interpreting the Qurʾān.\textsuperscript{1467} Therefore, theoretically Abū al-Futūḥ is supposed to create a \textit{tafsīr bi-l-maʿthūr} (exegesis based on transmitted traditions) and use only early Imāmī books of ḥadīth to write his commentary. However, in practice he departed from this statement and used different types of books in addition to a few oral sources. The only time that Abū al-Futūḥ mentions clearly that he heard an exegetical

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statement from his master (shaykh) is in interpreting [Q 17:71]. He says, “Our master (shaykh-i mā) I mean al-shaykh Abū Muḥammad b. Ṭāb al-Raḥmān [b.] al-Ḥusaynī al-Fārsī al-Khuzā’ī said: a group of scholars believed this verse is a promise (waʿd). However, it is the opposite and it is a threat (waʿīd).”\textsuperscript{1468} Since the number of Abū al-Futūḥ’s masters (mashāyikh) were very few, his limited use of oral transmission of exegetical statements is not surprising.

The most frequently cited of the books in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} can be divided into several categories: Early Qur’ānic commentaries, works of hadīth, books of Islamic law (fiqh), works of theology, works of variant Qur’ānic readings, books of Arabic grammar and lexicon, works of preaching, and books of poetry. These sources include both Shi‘ī and Sunni works. For this dissertation, I did a close reading of \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} to examine its primary sources and ascertain the extent to which Abū al-Futūḥ borrowed and adapted from these sources, with or without acknowledging them. The books that Abū al-Futūḥ referred to by name in his \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} are as follows:

1- Early Qur’ānic commentaries that are mentioned in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} include both Shi‘ī and Sunni commentaries. Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned two early Imāmī Shi‘ī commentaries: \textit{Tafsīr} of Muḥammad b. Maṣ‘ūd al-ʿAyyāshī,\footnote{Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 12:254.} and \textit{Tafsīr} of ʿAlī b. Ḥabrāhīm al-Qumī.\footnote{Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 6:244.} Sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ refers to these early Imāmī commentaries as “the commentary of our companions (aṣḥābān-i mā).”\footnote{Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 6:183, 190.} However, Abū al-Futūḥ dropped the isnād of all exegetical traditions cited from these two sources. \textit{Al-Tibyān} of al-Ṭūsī is another source of Abū al-Futūḥ although he did not refer to this important Imāmī commentary in the entire \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} by name. However, Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned al-Ṭūsī’s name twice in \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}.\footnote{Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 3:241; 8:168.} My close comparison

\textsuperscript{1469} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 6:244.
\textsuperscript{1472} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān}, 3:241; 8:168. The fact that Abū al-Futūḥ neglects to mention al-Ṭūsī as a pioneer in this genre among Imāmī exegetes could suggest that most of the people in Central Iran in the 6th/12th century were unaware of al-Ṭūsī’s work, or were unable to read Arabic. Several recent studies have found that \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} resembles \textit{al-Tibyān} of al-Ṭūsī. For instance, in a comparative study, Islāmiyya shows that the \textit{Rawḍ al-jinān} had been influenced by al-Ṭūsī’s work. Islāmiyya argues that \textit{al-Tibyān}, itself, is one of Abū al-Futūḥ’s
between *Rawḍ al-jinān* and *al-Tibyān* shows that a small proportion (between four to five percent) of Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary is a word for word translation of al-Ṭūsī’s commentary. Moreover, Abū al-Futūḥ is very much influenced by al-Ṭūsī’s structure and approach.

From early Sunni commentaries, Abū al-Futūḥ used *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fi tafsīr al-Qurʾān* also known as *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*.1473 Al-Ṭabarī’s commentary is not the main Sunni source for Abū al-Futūḥ. Interestingly, the most frequently used commentaries by Abū al-Futūḥ is *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Thaʿlabī.1474 According to my close comparative study of *Rawḍ al-jinān* and *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī, at least fifty five percent of *Rawḍ al-jinān* is a word-for-word translation of al-Thaʿlabī’s work. One of the reasons for Abū al-Futūḥ’s excessive use of this commentary is presumably that al-Thaʿlabī cited pro-Shīʿī traditions frequently.1475 Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned al-Thaʿlabī by name and epithet “imām of the people of tradition” (imām ahl al-ḥadīth) 29 times;1476 however, these numbers do not indicate the full extent of Abū al-Futūḥ’s transmission from al-Thaʿlabī. Abū al-Futūḥ translated almost the entire *al-Kashf* into Persian which shows the importance of al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary as his primary source. Since al-Thaʿlabī was a Shāfiʿī scholar, Abū al-Futūḥ’s frequent use of his commentary demonstrates the fluid religious environment in Iran during the first half of the 6th/12th century. Since Walid Saleh sources in writing *Rawḍ al-jinān* and, in some cases, it is a word by word translation of *al-Tibyān* (See Islāmiyyah, “Barrisī-yi taṭbīqī-yi tafsīr-i Tibyān va tafsīr-i Rawḍ al-jinān”).


1474 In a very brief comparative study, Ustādī states that after *al-Tibyān*, the commentary which has been most frequently used by Abū al-Futūḥ is al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary *al-Kashf* (See Ustādī, “Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī va tafsīr-i Thaʿlabī labī Nīshābūrī”). It is the opposite and the most frequently used commentary by Abū al-Futūḥ is *al-Kashf*.

1475 See ‘Ādil al-Kaʿbī, *Ahl al-bayt fī tafsīr al-Thaʿlabī*: Mā ruwiya ‘anhum wa mā ruwiya fīhim. Al-Thaʿlabī was so moderate that even though Majlisī II (d.1111/1700) names his books among Shīʿa opponents’ books (Kutub al-mukhālifīn) in the first volume of his voluminous collection of ḥadīth, *Bihār al-anwār* (Ocean of lights), he does claim that al-Thaʿlabī is a Shīʿī or a non-fanatical Sunni. Majlisī adds that al-Thaʿlabī cites a large number of our traditions, “Therefore, we referred to his two books more than other books [of our opponents].” Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, 1:24.

devoted a chapter of his book to al-Tha’labī’s oral and written sources, I discuss other sources of Rawḍ al-jinān in the rest of this chapter.¹⁴⁷⁷

As mentioned above, in his commentary Rawḍ al-jinān, Abū al-Futūḥ translated the interpretation of at least 55 percent of the Qurʾānic verses from al-Tha’labī and about 5 percent from al-Ṭūsī word-for-word or with a variant of a few words, without naming them. We know that al-Tha’labī and al-Ṭūsī’s commentaries themselves are not completely original. They borrowed most of their materials from their predecessors’ commentaries. In medieval Arabo-Persian literary theory, the question of borrowing unattributed to source (or the modern concept of plagiarism) only related to poetry. As for prose, the medieval authors did not follow today’s conventions of academic integrity. Unattributed borrowing was a common practice in early and mid Islamic inter-textuality. Given the cumulative nature of Qurʾān commentary, and the idea that exegetes built on the works of their predecessors, we cannot accuse them of borrowing unattributed to source. It seems that in the medieval period, if an author took the original work of another author and improved upon it, that would not be considered plagiarism.

Abū al-Futūḥ was the first Shīʿī scholar who used al-Kashf in his work and not Ibn Biṭrīq (d. 600/1023) as Saleh stated.¹⁴⁷⁸ The reason Abū al-Futūḥ employed al-Tha’labī’s commentary regularly was to support his claims in controversial topics between Shīʿī and Sunni polemics. He was the first Imāmī scholar to discover this excellent source of pro-ahl al-bayt traditions in a Sunni commentary and made it available for Shīʿas. Saleh aptly noted that al-Tha’labī’s commentary “was a crucial link in the development of medieval Qurʾānic exegesis.”¹⁴⁷⁹ This statement is at least true for Shīʿas up to the present day and that is why al-Kashf for the first time was edited and published by a Shīʿī imām (Muslim cleric), Ibn ʿĀshūr, in Beirut.¹⁴⁸⁰

¹⁴⁷⁹ Saleh, The Formation, 223.
¹⁴⁸⁰ Saleh, The Formation, 229-230.
Abū al-Futūḥ also alluded to a number of early commentaries and cited from them in Rawḍ al-jinān. However, these cited traditions are not direct citations from the original sources; they are borrowed from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī. For example, in commenting on [Q 11:41], Abū al-Futūḥ quoted a statement from Tafsīr of Mālik b. Sulaymān and in interpretation of [Q 7:46] he cited Tafsīr of Manjūbī.

2- The second category of Abū al-Futūḥ’s sources is works of ḥadīth. Since he cited a great number of “adjacent traditions” to interpret a Qur’ānic verse, Abū al-Futūḥ consulted a great number of early collections of ḥadīth. From Shī‘ī works of ḥadīth, three of these works belong to Abū Ja‘far Ibn Bābawayh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381/991) which are among Abū al-Futūḥ’s sources for Imāmī ḥadīth: Kitāb al-ghayba (the book of Occultation), Kitāb al-nubuwwa (the Book of prophethood), and Ma‘ānī al-akhbār (the meanings of the traditions). From Qummī scholars, Abū al-Futūḥ also cited Bayān radd al-shams ‘alā Amīr al-mu’minīn (returning of the Sun for Amīr al-mu’minīn [ʿAlī]) of Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. Shādhān al-Qummī (d. in or after 412/1021). Ibn Shādhān al-Qummī was a teacher of Baghdādī scholars such as al-Najāshī (d. 450/1058) and al-Karājakī (d. 449/1057).

1481 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 10:271. This is taken from al-Kashf (al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 5:170). In the published edition of al-Tha’labī’s commentary, the same quotation is cited from tafsīr of Mālik b. Ibrāhīm al-Harawi.

1482 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 8:203. This is taken from al-Kashf (al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 4:236). In the published edition of al-Kashf it is written tafsīr al-Manjūnī.

1483 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 5:414. This book is also known as Kitāb kamāl al-dīn wa-tamām al-ni’ ma fi ithbūt al-ghayba wa-kashf al-hayru.


1486 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:327.

1487 Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Karājakī studied this book under its author in Mecca in 412/1021 (Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī, Ṭabaqāt, 2:150; MṬF, 5:267-268 no. 1951). Ibn Shādhān al-Qummī wrote several books concerning the virtues of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭalib including Manāqib Amīr al-mu’minīn (also known as al-Manāqib or Mi’at manqaba).
Abū al-Futūḥ cited a few traditions from his grandfather and his uncle’s book to introduce them to his reader and record their works. He narrated two traditions regarding virtues of Fāṭima, the Prophet’s daughter from his grandfather Abū Saʿīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī’s book entitled al-Rawḍa al-zahrā’ fī manāqib Fāṭima al-Zahrā’. He also cited a tradition from the book Amālī of his Uncle Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī. Another book which is among Abū al-Futūḥ’s sources is Kitāb faṣīḥ al-khuṭab. This book was apparently a collection of eloquent sermons of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib translated into Persian.

From Sunni hadīth collections, Abū al-Futūḥ used Kitāb al-Faḍā’il of Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. Mardawayh (d. 410/1020), a leader of Aṣḥāb al-hadīth. This book is concerned with the virtues of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and should be the same as Kitāb manāqin ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. Another book of Aṣḥāb al-hadīth’s work which was a source for Abū al-Futūḥ is Kitāb al-ʿarāʾis fī al-majālis yawāqūt al-tījān fī qīṣāṣ al-Qurʾān of al-Tha’labī. This book which also known as Qīṣāṣ al-anbiyāʾ (tales of the prophets) contains the most widespread stories of the the Judeo-Christian prophets. Abū al-Futūḥ also referred to Tafsīr gharīb al-hadīth in his commentary. However, this particular citation is retrieved from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī

1491 Āghā Buzurg al-Ṭihrānī, al-Dharīʿa, 16:247. Āghā Buzurg states that this book is in Persian which is cited word for word in al-Fawḍ al-ʿaẓīm.
1493 Anṣārī, “Ibn Mardawayh.”
1494 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 8:382. On
1495
1496 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 14:287.
1497 al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 7:151.
who transmitted it from one of his teachers, Ibn Fanjawayh (d. 414/1023). Therefore, *Tafsīr gharīb al-ḥadīth* was not a direct source for Abū al-Futūḥ.

The book *Masāʾ il of ῥ Abd Allāh b. Salām* (d. 43/663) was a source for Abū al-Futūḥ to cite a Prophetic tradition regarding *sidrat al-muntahā* (the Lote tree marking the end of the road). It seems that a recension of this popular “question-and-answer” booklet was available to Abū al-Futūḥ. Abū al-Futūḥ also cited from the book *Yawāqīt al-ḥikma* a statement regarding ten honors that God gives to one who fasts the first ten days of Dhū al-Ḥajj. Abū al-Futūḥ has not attributed this statement to the Prophet or an Imām. Abū al-Futūḥ also cited Prophetic traditions from the books in other genres such as administration. For example, regarding the merits of the night of 'Arafa (9th Dhū al-Ḥajj) he cited a Prophetic tradition from *Kitāb al-wuzarā’* (The Book of Viziers) of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī (d. 335/946). Al-Ṣūlī was not a religious scholar but he was an eminent author, collector and editor of poetry, man of letters, court companion of several caliphs, and an expert player of chess.

3- Books of Islamic law (*fiqh*): In Islamic jurisprudence, Abū al-Futūḥ used *Kitāb al-Intiṣār* (the Vindication) and *Masāʾ il mufrad/mufradāt* (unconnected questions) of Sharīf al-Murtada. *Kitāb al-Intiṣār* of al-Murtada is the first extant comparative study of Imāmī Shīʿī and Sunni legal issues which contains 319 differences.

1500 For more information on *Masāʾ il of ῥ Abd Allāh b. Salām* see Wasserstrom, “‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām.”
1501 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, *Rawḍ al-jinān*, 20:254. This statement is quoted in commenting on [Q 89:10] ‘by the ten nights.’
1503 Abū al-Futūḥ also mentions *Masāʾ il al-khilāf* (disputed questions) as one of al-Murtada’s work. This book should be al-Ṭūsī’s work *Kitāb al-khilāf* also known as *al-khilāf fī al-ahkām* which is in comparative Islamic jurisprudence.
4- Books of theology: In theological discussions, Abū al-Futūḥ refers to the books of theology in general; however, most of them in Rawḍ al-jinān are taken from al-Tibyān. In addition to al-Ṭūsī’s work, in some theological examinations Abū al-Futūḥ is influenced by al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā and cited his books such as Tanzīh al-anbiyā’. This book is one of the earliest works which argue for infallibility of prophets. Abū al-Futūḥ also mentioned the Muʿtazilī theologian Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓām (d. ca. 221/836) and his book Kitāb al-Nukat several times in Rawḍ al-jinān. However, this is not a direct citation and it is taken from al-Tibyān.

5- Books of variant readings of the Qurʾān: Variant readings in most cases are taken from al-Tibyān or al-Kashf. However, in some cases it seems that it is cited from an early book on the subject directly. For example, one of Abū al-Futūḥ’s sources is al-Ḥujjah lil-qurrāʾ al-sabʿah of Abū ʿAlī al-Ḥasan b. ʿAhmad b. Fārsī (d. 377/987).

6- Books of Arabic linguistics and lexicon: In the field of Arabic grammar Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned al-Kitāb of Sībawayh (d. ca. 180/796) by name. He also used the book al-Faṣīḥ of Baghdādī grammarian and philologist Abū al-ʿAbbās ʿAḥmad b. Yahyā al-Shaybānī (d. 291/904) also known as Thaʿlab. From early Arabic lexicons, Abū al-Futūḥ employed Kitāb al-ʿAyn of al-Khalīl b. ʿAḥmad al-Fārsī (d. 175/791, or 170/786, or 160/776).

1505 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 16:222.
1507 On Tanzīh al-anbiyāʾ see Abdulsater, Shiʿi Doctrine, 27.
1508 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 5:272. See also Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:163
1509 See al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 3:130.
1510 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 10:343.
1511 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 7:305.
7- Works of preaching: The expository preaching style of Abū al-Futūḥ caused him to produce many preaching passages in his commentary. In this regard he employed a number works of preaching written prior to him. For example, he used the book Sūq al-ʿarūs wa-uns al-nufūs (The bride’s market and peoples’ friendship) of Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Dāmghānī (d. 478/1085) which is in the genre of preaching.\textsuperscript{1514} Al-Dāmghānī was a preacher and a Ḥanafī jurist who was interested in the genre of al-wujūh wa al-naẓāʾir (the phenomenon of polysemy in the Qurʾān).\textsuperscript{1515} In interpreting [Q 33:33] Abū al-Futūḥ cited a prophetic ḥadīth and nine lines of poetry from Sūq al-ʿarūs to show the virtue of ahl al-bayt. Another book in this genre is Ḥikāyat al-ṣāliḥīn which is one of the sources of Abū al-Futūḥ.\textsuperscript{1516} Stories cited from this work in Rawḍ al-jinān indicate that it should be a collection of Ṣūfī tales for preaching and encouragement for asceticism. In some cases, Abū al-Futūḥ narrates one or two stories from this work; then he quotes a ḥadīth regarding the piety of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib which conveys a similar message.\textsuperscript{1517} Abū al-Futūḥ also refers to the books of principles of jurisprudence (uṣūl al-fiqh)\textsuperscript{1518} and the books of military campaigns (al-maghāzī).\textsuperscript{1519} However, he does not mention a specific book in these genres.

8- Books of poetry: Since Abū al-Futūḥ cited Arabic and Persian poems which cannot be found in other commentaries prior to Rawḍ al-jinān, the collections of Arabic and Persian poems should be used directly. For example, for Persian poetry he cited sixteen lines of Sanāʿī’s poems which is discussed in chapter four. All these lines belong to Dīvān of Sanāʿī Ghaznavī (d. c. 525/1131) which is extant.

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\textsuperscript{1514} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 15:420.
\textsuperscript{1515} Saʿīdī, “Dāmghānī, Ḥusayn.”
\textsuperscript{1516} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 2:93, 322; 6:249; 19:125.
\textsuperscript{1517} See Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 2:322-323; 19:126.
\textsuperscript{1519} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 5:51, 52.
The abovementioned works show that Abū al-Futūḥ used very diverse categories of written sources to create his encyclopedic commentary.\(^{1520}\)

### 6.3 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī as a Persian Commentator and translator

There are some early surviving manuscripts of different volumes of *Rawḍ al-jinān* that are dated between 556/1161 and 557/1162, which indicates that this commentary has characteristics that helped it survive in sectarian or socio-political conflicts.\(^{1521}\) As it is mentioned in the second chapter, some of *Rawḍ al-jinān*’s features which caused its survival are its pro-Imāmī traditions which are borrowed from a Sunni commentary in addition to its clear and lucid style of writing. These two characteristics caused *Rawḍ al-jinān* to be a popular commentary among Persian-speaking Muslims, such that ‘Abd al-Jalīl Rāzī, Abū al-Futūḥ’s contemporary stated that “the noble imām Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī who wrote a twenty-volume commentary on the Qurʾān […] is popular amongst the imāms and religious scholars of all schools.”\(^{1522}\)

By the time of Abū al-Futūḥ, the use of a language other than Arabic to interpret the Qurʾān was generally accepted and there is no evidence in *Rawḍ al-jinān* that using Persian to interpret the scripture might raise any doctrinal issues. For Abū al-Futūḥ, language is to some extent a neutral tool to encode and decode messages and to express meanings without distortion.\(^{1523}\) There is no indication that Abū al-Futūḥ believes Arabic is a sacred language chosen by God, except for one tradition cited from *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī, which claims the superiority of Arabic language over other languages. In interpreting [Q 55:4] ‘God taught him [Adam] speech,’ Abū al-Futūḥ

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1520 As Saleh notes, Qurʾānic commentaries are in two general categories: encyclopedic commentaries and college (*madrasa*) commentaries (Saleh, *The Formation*, 198-199). *Rawḍ al-jinān* is an encyclopedic commentary in twenty volumes.

1521 These manuscripts are extant in Āstān quds Rażavī’s library. The first manuscript is no. 1336 dated Rabīʿ I 556/March 1161 and the second manuscript is no. 1338 dated Jumādī II/June 1162.


1523 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, *Rawḍ al-jinān*, 11:10, 220. Abū al-Futūḥ frequently speaks about different languages that creatures and angels glorify God in, which is about metaphysical reality not materially coded message.
states “It is said that He taught Adam all languages. It is in a tradition (khabar) that Adam spoke seven hundred thousand languages. Arabic was the best of all.”

6.3.1 Why in Persian?

Rawḍ al-jinān was not the first Qurʾānic commentary in Persian. It is predated by several survived translation and commentary in Persian such as the translation of Tafsīr Ṭabarī, Tāj al-tarājim fī tafsīr li-al-aʿājim of Shāhfūr Isfarāʾīnī, and Tafsīr Sūrābādī of Abū Bakr Ṭātīq b. Muḥammad Sūrābādī (d. 494/1100), which was dedicated to the Seljūq Alp Arslan (r. 455-465/1063-1073).

Abū al-Futūḥ composed Rawḍ al-jinān in Persian and it is very unlikely that he may have written another commentary in Arabic that has not survived because there is not even a single piece of evidence for its existence. However, in his introduction to Rawḍ al-jinān, Abū al-Futūḥ only expressed a desire to produce a commentary in Arabic. Rawḍ al-jinān has some marginally Arabic content in the form of untranslated ḥadīths or poems. The reason for writing this exegesis in Persian was mentioned by the author in his introduction. Abū al-Futūḥ states that “since a group of [my] friends and some dignitaries from amongst the people of [sacred] science and religion suggested compiling a book in this regard, because our religious companions (aṣḥāb-i mā) do not have a commentary that includes all these various sciences, I found it necessary to accept their request and promised them two commentaries: one in Persian and the other in Arabic; However the Persian one was given priority over the Arabic because those requesting it were greater in number and it will be of more general benefit to the public.”

The language of the population of Iran from Āzerbayjān to Khurāsān in the second half of the 4th/10th century was Persian. The Arab geographer of that period, Ibn Ḥawqal (d. after

1524 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 18:245. It is a translation of al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 9:177. One may argue that this tradition does not make sense because languages evolve over time and take on meaning based on context.

1525 The translation of Tafsīr-i Ṭabarī is the earliest survived dated of Persian translation and commentary (Zadeh, The Vernacular Qurʾan, 303) On Tāj al-tarājim see Zadeh, The Vernacular Qurʾan, 368-

1526 ???
regarding the western part of Iran states that “the language of the population of Azerbaycan and the majority of inhabitants of Arminia is Persian; However, Arabic is [also] used among them.” He then adds, “it is very rare that merchants or landowners [who] speak Persian cannot understand and speak Arabic fluently.”

He also states that “all the population of Qumm is Shi’a and most of them are Arabs but their language is Persian.” This statement supports our assumption that the spoken language of central Iran particularly Rayy in the 4th/10th century was Persian and most likely in the eastern part of Iran most of the inhabitants cannot speak Arabic.

The local vernacular in Rayy during the first half of the 6th/12th century was Persian and Shi‘as of Rayy preferred a detailed Qur‘an exegesis in Persian. Persian was always the language of the eastern Islamic world and it was the lingua franca in dealings with the Turkic peoples. Arabic was never a lingua franca in the east and it was a learned language. The common people of greater Iran did not speak Arabic and did not do business in Arabic.

Among all the commentaries of the Qur‘an written in the first half of the 6th/12th century, two were almost concurrently composed in Persian. The first, Rawḍ al-jinān wa-rawḥ al-janān by Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī (d. after 552/1157). The second, Kashf al-asrār wa-`uddat al-abrār (Unveiling of Mysteries and Provision of the Righteous) by Abū al-Faḍl Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudū (d. after 520/1126) which began in the year of 520/1126. Both authors have developed the content, language and style of their commentary in a way that is fitting to their work and for the audience they are aiming to reach. They also made an unprecedented use of not only the Arabic poems but the Persian poetry in their commentaries.

1527 On Ibn Ḥawqal see Ducène, “Ibn Ḥawqal."
1528 Ibn Ḥawqal, Kitāb šūrat al-ard, 299.
1529 Ibn Ḥawqal, Kitāb šūrat al-ard, 315.
1530 al-Maybudū, Kashf al-asrār, 1:1. For a detailed analysis of the doctrines of the Kashf al-asrār see Annabel Keeler, Sufi Hermeneutics: the Qur’an Commentary of Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudū.
1531 The first half of the 6th/12th century witnessed the composition of two comprehensive Shi‘ī and two Sunni commentaries on the Qur‘an. The Shi‘ī commentaries: the Arabic Majm‘ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur‘ān of al-Ṭabrīsī
6.4 Abū al-Futūḥ as a writer: His language and writing style

In his intertextual analysis of Ḥamīdī’s Maqāmāt, Vahid Behmardi shows that Iran underwent a major transition from literary Arabism to literary performance in Persian during the Great Seljuq period.¹⁵³² The Seljuqs paved the way for this transition because they had to marginalize the ruling Abbasid Arabs and embrace the language and culture of the Iranian people who came under their rule. In this supportive environment for Persian fostered by the Seljuqs, Iranian scholars changed their language and styles depending on their context and audience.¹⁵³³ For example, Abū al-Futūḥ, who lived among bilingual elites in Rayy, composed his commentary Rawḍ al-jinān in Persian to reach a larger audience; however, it has some minimal Arabic content in the form of untranslated hadiths or poems.

All Pre-Abū al-Futūḥ commentaries in Persian were Sunni commentaries and written in the Eastern Part of Islamic world during the 4ᵗʰ/10ᵗʰ and 5ᵗʰ/11ᵗʰ centuries. The first commentary to emerge outside of this region was that of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Rawḍ al-jinān which emerged in Central Iran at the beginning of 6ᵗʰ/12ᵗʰ century. Therefore, Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary holds a special place among all early commentaries in Persian for two reasons: first, it was not from Khurāsān (i.e., Transoxiana); and second, it was the first comprehensive Shīʿī commentary in Persian. Persian (and other Iranian languages) was always the language of the central and eastern part of Iran and it was the lingua franca in dealings with the Turkic peoples.

Rawḍ al-Jinān is a commentary written in Rāzī dialect, the Iranian dialect of Rayy in the Islamic period. This dialect, was likely to have been the natural continuation of Middle Median. As Baghbidi says, the earliest Rāzī texts available in Rāzī dialect are a small number of poems by

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¹⁵³² See Behmardi, “Arabic and Persian Intertextuality.”

¹⁵³³ This premise is based on a theory developed by Allan Bell which argues that speakers change styles in response to their audience. On this issue see Allan Bell, “Language style as audience design.”
Bundār (d. 401/1010-1011), a Shīʿī poet at the court of Majd al-Dawla, the Buwayhid ruler of Rayy. Rawḍ al-Jinān is the most voluminous classical Islamic source written in Rayy by a Rāzī-speaking writer which contains characteristics of the Rāzī dialect.1534

6.5 Abū al-Futūḥ as a translator

Regardless of the issue of compilation of the Qurʾān and its variant readings, which is a type of interpretation, the majority of Muslims consider the Qurʾān as God’s word, which is not constrained by time and place, revealed to the prophet Muḥammad. The translation of the Qurʾān is a human production influenced by social and cultural situations and the translator is a mediator who systematizes and generalizes the process of transferring information and ideas from a culture to another culture.

Abū al-Futūḥ as a translator and interpreter, has divided all verses of each Sūrah into groups in accordance with the meaning relations which he sees among the verses. This is part of his hermeneutics. For each group of verses, he gives an interlinear translation of the verses which is supplemented and expanded by a developed commentary. The first part, the interlinear translation, is an independent translation, deviated from the syntax rules in Persian and is indeed no more than locating equivalents in Persian. Notwithstanding the printed version of Rawd al-jinan, in all manuscripts the translation of each word is written under the Arabic word. However, in the printed version, this interlinear gloss is written immediately after the verse in Arabic. This part is exactly like Tarjumah-i tafsīr-i Ṭabarī; however, it is not the same translation and seemingly Abū al-Futūḥ translated it himself. In the second part, the fully developed interpretation, Abū al-Futūḥ mentions some aspects of the science of Qurʾān such as variant readings, linguistic and stylistic points of each word and sentence at the level of syntax and morphology, and etymology of a word.

In the process of translation from *al-Kashf* of al-Tha’labī, sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ modified the original tradition to adapt it to be acceptable for his Shī‘ī audience. For example, at the beginning of *al-Kashf*, when al-Tha’labī discusses *bism Allah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* he narrates the following tradition on the authority of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā from his father [Mūsā al-Kāzim] from Ja’far b. Muḥammad that stating, “All the family of the Prophet (Āl Muḥammad) agreed on reciting loudly *bism Allah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* [in prayers] …and to say the best saying (*aḥsan al-qawl*) about Abu Bakr and ‘Umar and their followers.”1535 Abū al-Futūḥ is an adherent of Imāmī theologians and exegetes of Baghdād especially al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī in his doctrine and like them he believes that the first three caliphs were not legitimate.1536 Nevertheless, in *Rawḍ al-jinān* especially at the beginning of writing his commentary circa 520/1126, Abū al-Futūḥ was under the socio-political pressure of Sunni Seljuqs to practice *taqiyya*. Therefore, he translated this kind of traditions because he likes the chain of narration and part of its content. However, he changed the last part of it out of *taqiyya*. Abū al-Futūḥ uses the word ‘companions’ instead of ‘Abu Bakr and Umar’ and ‘their followers.’ He states that “There is a consensus (*ijmāʿ* instead of *ijtimāʿ*) among all the family of the Prophet (Āl Muḥammad) on reciting loudly *bism Allah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* [in prayers] … and concerning the companions of the Prophet, may God be pleased with them, should say good things.”1537 This view of the Companions of the Prophet did not exist among the earlier Imāmī scholars and commentators.

6.6 Abū al-Futūḥ’s Hermeneutics

Abū al-Futūḥ’s hermeneutic could be discussed in two stages: first, his theoretical hermeneutics which is mentioned in the introduction of *Rawḍ al-Jinān*; and, second, an overall examination of his theory in practice in his twenty-volume commentary.

6.6.1 Abū al-Futūḥ’s Introduction to Rawḍ al-jinān

In her study of introductions to classical works of *tafsīr*, Karen Bauer did not mention Abū al-Futūḥ’s Introduction alongside his contemporaries Maybuḍī (fl. 520/1126) and al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153). However, Abū al-Futūḥ has discussed his theory and method of interpretation in his introduction to *Rawḍ al-jinān*. He noted that how to understand the Qurʾān as a text depends on one’s interpretation and one’s interpretation depends on his presuppositions. Therefore, in his introduction, Abū al-Futūḥ attempted to define his presuppositions and hermeneutics in three sections: a preamble, seven chapters and a section on *al-istiʿādha* (seeking refuge with God).

6.6.1.1 Preamble

In the short preamble of his introduction, Abū al-Futūḥ’s tendency towards Shiʿī Islam and his temperate perspective of the first three caliphs is apparent. Abū al-Futūḥ first discussed the most important element of the Shiʿī belief i.e. Imamate and he praised God the Possessor of the “prophets and Imāms” and regarded the household and family of the Prophet as the “stars of earth and leaders of the religion.” After greeting the messenger, Abū al-Futūḥ greeted “his great and chosen companions from immigrants and helpers.” Even though greeting the great Immigrants and Helpers was necessary during the Sunni environment of the Seljuqs’ reign, Abū al-Futūḥ explicitly states that not only one should not say bad things about the prophet’s companions, rather one should “say good (things) about them.”

Looking at the extant commentaries written by Imāmī exegetes before *Rawḍ al-Jinān* shows that this moderate approach towards the companions and the elimination of traditions of censure of the first three caliphs had apparently been established by al-Ṭūsī among the Imāmīs and it continued until the Safavid period which brought the re-appearance of tradition-based commentaries. The

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1541 Before al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī two Imami commentators *Ḥaqāʾiq al-taʾwīl* of al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015) and *al-Maṣābīḥ* of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī (d. 418/1028) had the same feature; however, they were not used as a template/model in the history of Imami exegesis.
content of Rawḍ al-Jınān does not raise the disagreement between Shīʿas and Sunnis. Instead of openly speaking ill of some of the companions, especially the first three caliphs, Abū al-Futūḥ mostly uses a beautiful, eloquent and fluent language to prove the superiority of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and his designation as the prophet’s successor, thereby accentuating the positive. Probably one of the reasons for the prevalence of Rawḍ al-Jınān among Persian speaking Muslims of the 6th/12th century, and the fact that so many manuscripts of Rawḍ al-Jınān have remained from that time, is due to the fact that Abū al-Futūḥ did not curse or speak ill of the companions especially the first three caliphs. This feature of Rawḍ al-Jınān has been pointed out by ʿAbd al-Jalīl Rāzī Qazwīnī and he emphasizes the point that the Persian speaking Muslim scholars of the 6th/12th century were interested in copying from Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary.1542

In his preamble, Abū al-Futūḥ articulates his belief that Arabic is superior to all other languages.1543 This idea and the necessity of expressing it was a popular notion among medieval Muslim scholars in different fields. One of the extra-linguistic social factors which motivated these authors to assert the preeminence of Arabic was the appearance of the shuʿūbiyya tendencies (anti-Arab sentiments) in the Islamic world.1544 In response to this movement, some Arab scholars invoked the concept of the superiority of Arabic over all other languages as evidence of the preeminence of the Arabs over all other nations. This connection is made explicitly by the renowned philologist Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002) in his opus called al-Khaṣāʾiṣ, the lexicologist al-Thaʿālibī (d. 430/1038) in his book Fiqh al-lugha wa-asrār al-ʿarabiyya, and the rhetorician Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī (d. 466/1073) in his book Sirr al-faṣāḥa.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s reason for writing his commentary is similar to al-Thaʿlabī’s reasoning. It seems that he used the same “old trick,” as Saleh mentions, to justify the importance of his work.1545 Abū al-Futūḥ in the preamble of his introduction to his commentary mentions the request of “a

1542 Rāzī Qazwīnī, Naqd, 212.
1543 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jınān, 1:1. Also see Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jınān, 18:245.
1544 On shuʿūbiyya see ???
1545 Saleh, The Formation, 68.
group of [my] friends and some dignitaries from among the people of [sacred] knowledge and religion” as a reason for writing his commentary. However, around a century before him, al-Ṭūsī, who was a Twelver Shīʿa, wrote a comprehensive commentary to remedy this defect in Shīʿī Islam. In the introduction to his commentary, al-Ṭūsī states that “I did not find any of our colleagues (aṣḥābunā), old and new/early and late, who wrote a book which includes the entire Qurʾān and its various meaning.” Although Abū al-Futūḥ is aware of al-Ṭūsī’s work, he claims that “our colleagues (aṣḥāb-i mā) do not have a commentary that includes all these various [meaning].” It is likely that Abū al-Futūḥ meant that Imāmī Shīʿas do not have a commentary with this characteristics in Persian.

6.6.1.2 Seven chapters

After his short preamble, Abū al-Futūḥ has written seven chapters in his introduction. He mentions that these seven chapters are necessary introductions that every exegete “should know before engaging in writing an exegesis.” A comparison between Abū al-Futūḥ’s introduction with al-Thaʿlabī and al-Ṭūsī’s introductions to their commentaries demonstrates that two chapters (6, and 7) seem to be extracted from al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī and three chapters (1, 2, and 4) from al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī.

Chapter one of Abū al-Futūḥ’s introduction is entitled “On different types of meaning and elucidating their interpretation (dar aqsām-i maʾānī wa bayān-i tafāsīr-i ū).” About 80 percent of this chapter is translated from al-Tibyān. In terms of the meaning, Abū al-Futūḥ classified Qurʾānic verses into four types: 1- those verses whose meaning no one knows except God, 2- general summary (mujmal) of detailed verses, 3- clear (muḥkam), and 4- ambiguous/obscure

1546 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:2.
1547 al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 1:1.
1548 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:2.
(mutashābih).\textsuperscript{1551} Abū al-Futūḥ’s interpretation is done based on this classification. He explained these four types of verses as follows:

1- Those verses that only God knows and He did not intend to explain. For example, the further information concerning al-Rūḥ (Spirit) in [Q 17:85] or al-sāʿa (Hour) in [Q 7:187] is not given in the Qurʾān. 2- mujmal (opposite to mufaṣṣal: detailed) is a synopsis of the idea whose detailed meaning intended by God is not known for the audience. For example, all verses concerning rituals such as praying, fasting, pilgrimage, paying alms, Jihād,\textsuperscript{1552} or retributions (qiṣāṣ)\textsuperscript{1553} are mujmal to Abū al-Futūḥ. He states that “we are not permitted to delve into them except through a revelation from God to the Legislator (shāriʿ).”\textsuperscript{1554} Therefore, Abū al-Futūḥ maintains that explaining mujmal verses are only possible in two ways: 1-to refer to detailed verses which elucidate the subject of a mujmal verse. For example, [Q 4:11] which contains details of [Q 4:7].\textsuperscript{1555} Or 2- to refer to detailed exegetical traditions of the Prophet or the Imāms. For example, [Q 5:38] ‘[As for] the thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands’ “whose details about the theft or his hand are mentioned in Prophetic tradition (sunna) and Divine Law (sharīʿa).”\textsuperscript{1556} Abū al-Futūḥ says that “God made His messenger clarify details of mujmal verses and said, ‘whatever the Messenger has given you take it; and whatever he has forbidden you refrain from.’”\textsuperscript{1557}

\textsuperscript{1551} On Muḥkam and Mutashābih see Kinberg, “Muḥkamāt and Mutashābihāt”; Syamsuddin, “Muḥkam and Mutashābih”; Wild, “The Self-Referentiality of the Qurʾān”; and Sinai, “Qurʾānic Self-Referentiality.”

\textsuperscript{1552} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:189.

\textsuperscript{1553} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 2:331.

\textsuperscript{1554} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:4.

\textsuperscript{1555} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 5:260. Another example is [Q 5:1] that Abū al-Futūḥ declares as a mujmal verse. The details of part of it is mentioned in [Q 6:143].

\textsuperscript{1556} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:370.

\textsuperscript{1557} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 7:284.
3- For Abū al-Futūḥ, a *muhkam* verse is a verse whose “intended meaning by God (*murād*) is understood from its literal meaning (*zāhir*).“\(^{1558}\) Abū al-Futūḥ states that most of the verses of the Qurʾān are perfectly clear (*muhkam*).\(^{1559}\) He maintains that the determinists (*mujbirān*) and a group of literalists (*Ḥashwiyān*) believed that “the meaning of the Qurʾān cannot be understood except through sayings of the Messenger.” He explains that the invalidity of this claim is one of the principles of Imāmī school of thought because God encourages people to reflect upon the Qurʾān in [Q 4:82] and this is only possible if we can understand something through reflecting.\(^{1560}\) He emphasizes that *muhkam* verses are called *umm al-kitāb* (literally, the mother or archetype of the book) because *mutashābih* (ambiguous) verses should be understood by referring to *muhkam*.\(^{1561}\)

4- *Mutashābih* for Abū al-Futūḥ is a verse whose “meaning is confusing and hidden.”\(^{1562}\) He also adds that a *mutashābih* verse has a *mushtarak* (homonyms) word or expression. The intended meaning of a *mutashābih* verses is not clear and it cannot be known from its literal meaning.\(^{1563}\) In his method to interpret a *mutashābih* verse, Abū al-Futūḥ followed the footsteps of al-Ṭūsī and said, “a *mutashābih* verse should be understood on its possible meaning, every meaning which is possible in the language and no reason prevents us from understanding it [based] on that meaning. However, one cannot be sure about the intended meaning of a *mutashābih* except through an authoritative tradition (*naṣṣ*) from the Prophet or the Imāms because what they say is proof (*ḥujjat*) in religion. If there is a [*mutashābih*] verse which is possible to carry two meanings and there is a reason that one of those meanings is not acceptable,  

one can conclude that the other meaning is intended by God.”

Therefore, in *mutashābih* verses Abū al-Futūḥ determined whether there is an authoritative tradition that reveals the only interpretation of the verse and if there is no authoritative tradition to clarify its meaning, all possible meanings should be considered. However, those meanings which are not compatible with *muhkam* verses or *naṣṣ* traditions should be rejected.

Abū al-Futūḥ maintains that the Prophet and the Shīʿī Imāms are those individuals who know the meaning of *mutashābih* verses. He states that “the elucidation (bayān) of *mutashābih* verses is delegated to those who are firmly rooted in knowledge and only they know it.” For this reason, in interpreting [Q 3:7] Abū al-Futūḥ states clearly that “it is in the interpretation of [the meaning of] *ahl al-bayt* [which suggests that] those who are firmly rooted are *ahl al-bayt* themselves.” He then added that “I am shocked by those who accept that Jews know the meaning of *mutashābih* verses but the family of the Messenger (*ahl al-bayt rasūl*) do not know it! It is nothing except malice.”

The theoretical hermeneutics of Abū al-Futūḥ which is proposed in his introduction, is similar to al-Ṭūsī’s theoretical hermeneutics explained in his introduction to *al-Tibyān*. At the end of the first chapter of his introduction, Abū al-Futūḥ states, “according to sound traditions the interpretation (*tafsīr*) of the Qurʾān and its elucidation (bayān) and explanation (*sharḥ*) is only permitted through traditions of the Prophet and the Imāms whose sayings are ascribed to the Prophet. It is not permitted to interpret the Qurʾān according to one’s opinion. Shīʿī and Sunnī scholars transmitted the *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet said, “whoever interprets the Qurʾān according to his opinion (*raʾy*) even if he makes the right interpretation he is wrong.” Abū al-Futūḥ differentiates between *tafsīr* and *taʾwīl* as al-Ṭūsī and al-Thaʾlabī did. Interestingly Abū al-

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Futūḥ took his definition of these two terms and the difference between them from al-Tha‘labī not al-Ṭūsī.

Chapter Two of Abū al-Futūḥ’s introduction is entitled “different types of Qur’ānic verses” and according to my word for word comparison about 62 percent of it is taken from al-Tībān. In this chapter he discusses different types of verses in three groups: muḥkam (perfectly clear) and mutashābih (confusingly obscure), nāsikh (abrogating) and mansūkh (abrogated), and khāṣṣ (particular) and ʿāmm (general). In his discussion about abrogation, Abū al-Futūḥ points to the topic of badā’ (manifestation of God’s ordinance) and says that “badā’ is not permitted to [attribute to] God.”¹⁵⁶⁸ at the end of this chapter Abū al-Futūḥ cites al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā’s definition of ʿāmm and khāṣṣ because al-Ṭūsī did not explain these two terms.

Chapters Three and Four of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Introduction are an extended edition of one chapter in al-Ṭūsī’s introduction which is entitled “A Chapter in Mentioning the Names of the Qurʾān, the Names of its Chapters (sūra) and Verses.” The third chapter of Abū al-Futūḥ’s introduction is entitled “names of the Qurʾān and their meanings” which is taken from al-Tībān. However, al-Ṭūsī mentioned only four names for the Qurʾān, whereas Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned forty one names. Abū al-Futūḥ also cites a verse for thirty nine names of them. The title of the fourth chapter of Abū al-Futūḥ’s Introduction is “the meaning of chapter (sūrat), verse (āyat), word (kalimat), and letter (ḥarf).” About 8 percent of this chapter is taken from al-Tībān.¹⁵⁶⁹ What is new in this chapter is his second meaning for āyat in addition to the meaning of kalimat and harf which is missing in al-Tībān.

The title of Chapter Five is “rewards of the reciter of the Qurʾān.” From traditions cited in this chapter, three of them are taken from al-Kaṣḥf. The rest of traditions in this chapter are found in the book Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān wa tilāwatih wa khaṣṣa’īṣ tulātih wa ḥamalatih of Abū al-Faḍl ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥasan al-Rāzī (d. 454/1062).¹⁵⁷⁰ None of the traditions in this chapter is cited

¹⁵⁷⁰ For example, see al-Rāzī, Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān, 70-71 no. 27; 120-121 no. 87; 73 no. 30.
from early Imāmī sources. Even the tradition related from Ḥārith al-Aʿwar al-Ḥamdānī (d. 65/685)\textsuperscript{1571} who was a prominent Kūfan Shīʿa was cited from al-\textit{Kashf}\textsuperscript{1572} or \textit{Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān}.

The sixth chapter is entitled “the merit of the science of the Qurʾān and wanting [to learn] it.” This entire chapter is taken from al-\textit{Kashf};\textsuperscript{1574} however, one sentence exists in al-Thaʿlabī’s introduction which is missing in Rawḍ al-jinān. al-Thaʿlabī quoted from al-Ḥasan al-Ḵaṣrī who said, “only males (\textit{dhukūr}) from men (\textit{rijāl}) learn the science of the Qurʾān.”\textsuperscript{1575} This sentence which is recorded in published copies and manuscripts of al-\textit{Kashf} is probably deleted by Abū al-Futūḥ because he disagreed in the exclusion of women from studying science of the Qurʾān.

Abū al-Futūḥ concluded the Introduction of his commentary with a chapter on the meaning of \textit{tafṣīr} and \textit{taʾwīl} (\textit{dar maʿnā tafsīr wa taʾwīl}).\textsuperscript{1576} This chapter is 87 percent taken from al-\textit{Kashf} of al-Thaʿlabī.\textsuperscript{1577} The function of \textit{tafṣīr} is to know the cause of the revelation of a verse and to know its intended meaning by God (\textit{murād}). Abū al-Futūḥ continues to explain that “\textit{tafṣīr} could not be understood from the utterance of a verse. It should be engaged in by hearing (\textit{samāʿ}) [ḥadīth] and traditions (\textit{āthār}).”\textsuperscript{1578} It is not only his introduction, but also in the last volume of Rawḍ al-jinān, in which Abū al-Futūḥ states the same method of interpretation. In interpreting [Q 75:19] ‘Then upon Us is its elucidation (\textit{bayān})’ Abū al-Futūḥ says, “There is evidence in this

\textsuperscript{1571} On Ḥārith al-Aʿwar see Modarressi, \textit{Tradition}, 45-59 no. 2.


\textsuperscript{1573} al-Rāzī, \textit{Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān}, 77-78 no. 35. Abū al-Futūḥ translated and incorporated theses traditions into Imami corpus. Later Imami scholars such as al-Nūrī al-Ṭabrisī (d. 1320/1903) cited this tradition in Arabic in his book \textit{Mustadrak al-wasāʾil wa mustanbiṭ al-masāʾil} from Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary Rawḍ al-jinān.


\textsuperscript{1575} al-Thaʿlabī, al-\textit{Kashf}, 1:86.


\textsuperscript{1577} al-Thaʿlabī, al-\textit{Kashf}, 1:86-87.

\textsuperscript{1578} al-Thaʿlabī, al-\textit{Kashf}, 1:24.
verse that it is not permitted to interpret (tafsīr) of the Qurʿān except through an authoritative tradition (naṣṣ) from the Prophet.”\textsuperscript{1579} Therefore, the only method for Abū al-Futūḥ to categorically interpret the mutashābih verses of the Qurʿān is to employ authentic exegetical traditions. However, taʿwil of a verse is not restricted to a naṣṣ from the Prophet or the Imāms. In this regard, Abū al-Futūḥ states, “Concerning taʿwil if someone knows the Arabic language and the science of the principles well, he is permitted to interpret a verse on its possible meaning because he may not be diverting from the principles and does not categorically explain the intended meaning of God except with evidence [from authoritative tradition].”\textsuperscript{1580} It seems that in tafsīr, Abū al-Futūḥ is God-centered and he is looking for the intended meaning of God which is not possible to be achieved except through authentic traditions from the Prophet or the Imāms. In taʿwil, he is text-centered and is searching for possible meaning without restricting the intended meaning of God to exegete’s understandings. After these seven chapters, Abū al-Futūḥ invoked seeking refuge with God, known as the al-istiʿādhah, prior to the interpretation of sūra al-Fātiḥa. In the following section, there will be a discussion of the ways in which Abū al-Futūḥ generally applied his hermeneutic theory in practice.

\section*{6.7 Poetry in Rawḍ al-jinān}

Abū al-Futūḥ cited more than five thousand lines of Arabic poetry in his commentary.\textsuperscript{1581} This amount of Arabic poetry has no precedent in any commentary prior to Rawḍ al-jinān.\textsuperscript{1582} In general, one of the common intertextual features in the Arabic and Persian texts of the Seljuq

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{1579} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 20:53-54.
\textsuperscript{1580} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:24.
\textsuperscript{1582} Zamānī nizhād and Mīr niʿmatī, Fihrist-i mujalladāt-i, 11,
\end{quote}
period is the excessive use of Arabic poetry quotations.\textsuperscript{1583} Imāmī exegetical works of this period such as Rawḍ al-jinān are no exception in this regard. Like most of exegetes before him, Abū al-Futūḥ cites Arabic poetry to support his explanation of words or phrases, or to draw his reader’s attention to elements of style or usage in the Qur’ānic text. He cites Arabic verses from the earlier commentaries such as Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān by al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922), al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ′an tafsīr al-Qurʾān by al-Thaʾlabī al-Nīshābūrī (d. 427/1035) and al-Tībīyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān by al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1068).

Not only did Abū al-Futūḥ employ Arabic poetry extensively, but for the first time he also used Persian poetry in his commentary. He quoted fifty-three couplets and four single verses of various Persian poets. Despite its limited citation, Persian poetry stands out owing to its maturity, rich meters, assonance and the relative simplicity of its language. It should be noted that a few of these poems have been survived only in this commentary.

Modern Iranian scholars such as Qazvīnī and Ḥuqūqī endeavored to explore the different literary perspectives employed in Rawḍ al-jinān, yet neither has researched the measure of influence Persian poets had on Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary. For instance, both scholars alluded to the fact that a series of couplets referenced in the interpretation of Qur’ānic verse 1:196 rhyme as if all are part of the same composition. However, their findings do not identify the poet, an important criterion in understanding the circumstances in which the poem was written.

The 6\textsuperscript{th}/12\textsuperscript{th} century witnessed an increased citation of Persian poetry to elucidate religious concepts and doctrine. Iranians started to compose religious poetry in Persian in the 4\textsuperscript{th}/10\textsuperscript{th} century which fully developed during the lifetime of the renowned Sufī poet Sanāʾī. His Dīwān Ḩadiqat al-Ḥaqīqa (the Garden of Truth) marked the beginning of a new era in mystical poetry. In his book, Sanāʾī accentuates the novelty and innovative style of his poems. Furthermore, he

\textsuperscript{1583} Fairclough draws a distinction between ‘constitutive intertextuality (interdiscursivity)’ and ‘manifest intertextuality.’ He ‘Constitutive intertextuality’ involves using structures from existing texts and ‘manifest intertextuality’ is the case where actual content from one text is overtly used within another text. (Fairclough, Discourse and Social Change, 117-118).
declares himself to be the first poet to create mystical Persian ode (qaṣīdah) derived from the ancient yet rich sources of prose and verse in Arabic and Persian literature. In this regard he says:

No one has brought such inscription to the world. If one claims so, ask him to present it.

All writings of this kind in the world, one or one thousand, are but mine.\(^{1584}\)

In his commentary, Abū al-Futūḥ does not mention the name of Persian poets in most cases. He often replaced the names of poets with phrases such as Shāʿir-i Pārsī (the Persian poet) or Shāʿir-i Pārsiyān (the poet of Persia). The only exception is the names of Unṣūrī (d. 431/1040), the Poet in the court of Qaznavids and Yūsuf ʿArūḍī (d. ca. 450/1058).\(^{1585}\) Having studied Rawḍ al-jinān thoroughly, I determined the following statistics with respect to the poetry borrowed from various poets. Out of fifty three rhymed couplets cited in Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary, sixteen are from Sanāʾī, three belong to Rūdakī (d. ca. 329/940), three were composed by Ferdowsī (d. 411/1020) and one is from the Qābūs Nāmih (the book of Qābūs written circa 473/1080). The above figures clearly illustrate Abū al-Futūḥ’s familiarity with the mystical school of thought of the 6th/12th century whose adherent were known as Ahl-i maʿānī (the people of meanings) and Ahl-i ʾishārāt (the people of allusions).

### 6.8 Persian and Arabic Proverbs in Rawḍ al-jinān

One of the features of Rawḍ al-jinān is that Abū al-Futūḥ employed a large number of Arabic and Persian proverbs in the interpretation of Qurʾānic verses. To him, proverbs are the collective wisdom of the people which helps them to understand the Qurʾān better. The main reason for the use of Persian and Arabic proverbs by Abū al-Futūḥ is possibly his preaching style. Abū al-Futūḥ
took a number of Arabic proverbs from *al-Kashf*\(^{1586}\) or *al-Tibyān*,\(^{1587}\) however, most of the Arabic proverbs cited in *Rawḍ al-jinān* are not found in commentaries prior to it.\(^{1588}\) Abū al-Futūḥ uses proverbial witnesses (*shawāhid*) to elucidate the meaning of a Qurʾānic word. For example, in explaining the meaning of the word *malakūt* and its form in [Q 6:75], Abū al-Futūḥ says that “its form is *faʿalūt* as it is seen in the proverb *rahabūt khayrun min raḥamūt* which means if people fear you, it is better than people having mercy on you.”\(^{1589}\) The genealogy of this proverb in early *tafsīrs* is interesting. Abū al-Futūḥ probably took this proverb from al-Ṭūsī,\(^{1590}\) al-Ṭūsī copied it from al-Ṭabarī,\(^{1591}\) and al-Ṭabarī extracted it from Abū ʿUbayda’s Majāz al-Qurʾān all in interpreting the verse in question in sūra *al-Anʾām*.\(^{1592}\)

In addition to Arabic proverbs, Abū al-Futūḥ used Persian proverbs in interpreting verses. He was likely the first commentator who introduced Persian proverbs into Persian exegesis. The use of Persian proverbs in addition to Arabic proverbs in *Rawḍ al-jinān* indicates Abū al-Futūḥ’s literary talent and his attention to Persian culture and language. For example, in commenting on [Q 39:29] Abū al-Futūḥ wants to explain the Qurʾānic analogy between the idolaters and the believers. He states that “a believer serves only God and an idolater serves many masters. When

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\(^{1588}\) For a list of Arabic and Persian proverbs see Irshād Sarābī and ʿAlīdūst, *Fihrist-hāyi mujalladāti bistgānīh-i*, 2:196-198.


the masters disagree with one another the servant becomes poor (bī barg) and helpless (bī navā).” He then refers to a Persian proverb that “it is said, a city with two leaders will be ruined.”

In addition to proverbs, Abū al-Futūḥ used Imām ʿAlī’s short sayings in his commentary to explain a verse. For example, according to [Q 12:54] the king of Egypt realized Joseph’s intelligence, wisdom, and virtues after speaking with him (fa-lammā kallamah). In interpreting this verse, Abū al-Futūḥ emphasizes the significance of language and states “one’s knowledge can be known by his language and one’s worth can be known by his knowledge.” He then cites a short saying of Imām ʿAlī in Arabic with its translation into Persian: “a Man is hidden under his tongue.” After that Abū al-Futūḥ cites another saying from Imām ʿAlī: “the tongue of a person is the interpreter of his intelligence.” Apparently, Nahj al-Balāghah is not Abū al-Futūḥ’s only source for citing short sayings of Imām ʿAlī. In interpreting the verse in question, he cites another saying of ʿAlī: “Do not look at who is saying, look at what is being said” which is not found in Nahj al-Balāghah. The combination of short sayings, Arabic poetry, and Persian poetry to interpret a word of the Qur’ān was unprecedented in Persian exegesis.

6.9 The structure of Rawḍ al-jinān

The study of Rawḍ al-jinān’s structure shows that the interpretation of each sūrah is divided into three main sections, which includes: 1- Information that Abū al-Futūḥ provides about each sūra. 2- The literal interlinear translation of all the sūrah (for small sūrahs from Qāf to al-Nās in

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1593 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 16:321.
1594 al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Nahj al-balāghah, 497 no. 148.
1595 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 11:99. For its original source see al-Ḥarrānī, Tuhaf al-ʿuqūl, 85. In some early sources instead of lisān (tongue) the word rasūl (messenger) is used and it is attributed to ʿAlī when he said, “the messenger (rasūl) of a person is the interpreter of his intelligence.” (al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, Nahj al-balāghah, 528 no. 307; Āmidī, Ghurar al-ḥikam, 389 no. 48).
1596 Āmidī, Ghurar al-ḥikam, 361 no. 11.
addition to al-Fāṭiḥa) or groups of verses (from al-Baqarah to al-Ḥujurāt). 3 – Interpretation of all verses of sūrahs (for small sūrahs from Qāf to al-Nāṣ) or groups of verses (from al-Baqarah to al-Ḥujurāt). Abū al-Futūḥ divided all verses of each sūrah into groups in accordance with how they fit into interlaced fields of meaning. To offer an example, in the rest of this section the information provided in each of the three sections mentioned will be discussed for sūrah al-‘lā (the most high) [Q 87:1-19]. This structure of Rawḍ al-jinān broadly follows that of al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī and al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī.

6.9.1 Information provided at the beginning of each sūrah

For all sūrahs before presenting the translation and interpretation, in a brief preamble Abū al-Futūḥ provides the readers with some information about the sūrah. The information provided in the preamble can often be grouped into three categories: 1- whether the sūrah is Maccan or Medinan, 2- some statistical information on the number of verses (āyat), words (kalimat), and letters (ḥurūf) of that sūrah, and 3- Traditions regarding the merits a believer receives for reciting that particular sūrah. In each section the information provided is retrieved from al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī. In his study of al-Kashf, Saleh noted that al-Thaʿlabī was the first exegete to incorporate this type of tradition into his commentary.1597

For example, at the beginning of sūrah al-‘lā, Abū al-Futūḥ states: “This sūrah is Maccan.” Then he says, “It has nineteen verses, and seventy-two words, two hundred and seventy-one letters.”1598 Lastly, he quotes four traditions about the rewards of reciting this sūrah, and how it should be recited. All three groups of information provided in the introduction of sūrah al-‘lā are retrieved from al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary al-Kashf. All these three groups of information are translations from al-Kashf. However, the third group of information is somewhat a free translation of what is cited in al-Kashf.1599

1597 Saleh, The Formation, 104.
The traditions mentioned at the beginning of the surahs about the rewards of reciting it are mostly narrated by Abū Umāmah Ṣudayy b. ʿAjlān b. Wahb al-Bāhilī (d. 86/704) or Zirr b. Ḥubaysh al-Asadī (d. 81/700) from Ubayy b. Kaʿb (d. between 19/640 and 35/656) from the Prophet. All these traditions mentioned in Rawḍ al-jinān are retrieved from al-Kashf and are possibly quoted from the book Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān attributed to Ubayy b. Kaʿb.1600

The comparison between Rawḍ al-jinān and al-Kashf demonstrates that in the documentation of the first two traditions Abū al-Futūḥ omitted all the names in the chain of transmission and he only indicates the last name in the chain before the Prophet. This manner of omitting names from the chain of narrators for traditions referenced from other commentaries is Abū al-Futūḥ’s style throughout Rawḍ al-jinān. In omitting the chain of transmission, Abū al-Futūḥ follows almost all early Persian commentators and al-Ṭūsī. As Zadeh remarks, genealogy and isnād were considered by classical sources to be an Arabic contribution to knowledge and Persian exegetical literature was not receptive to the genealogical sequencing of isnād transmissions.1601

The second difference between Rawḍ al-jinān and al-Kashf is that Abū al-Futūḥ in some cases omitted certain sentences in a tradition he quoted. For example, after stating a tradition al-Thaʿlabī states: “This is related from ʿAlī, ʿUbayy, Mūsā, Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās, Ibn al-Zubayr.”1602 However, in this section of Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary the names ʿUbayy and Mūsā are omitted. Omission of these two people’s names could be due to the fact that Abū al-Futūḥ did not value their importance to the narration as much as the other four people who narrated the tradition. It is also possible that these names did not exist in his copy of al-Kashf. Abū al-Futūḥ also did not mention Dhahḥāk’s exegesis. Overall, it seems that Abū al-Futūḥ put more effort in presenting narrations from the Prophet in Rawḍ al-jinān more than narrations from the Companions or Followers. The third difference in this section is that whenever Abū al-Futūḥ

1600 Ibn al-Nadīm, Kitāb al-fihrist, 55.
1601 Zadeh, The Vernacular Qurʾān, 389. Abū al-Futūḥ like al-Ṭūsī or Isfirāʾīnī usually cites early exegetical authorities directly by name or by a generic title, such as the Mufassirān (exegetes).
wants to name ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, he uses the title *Amīr al-muʾminīn* (the commander of the faithful) and so in this way he professes his commitment to Shīʿī Islam to his readers.

With regards to what Abū al-Futūḥ provided in the preamble of sūrah al-*ʿAʿlā*, it should be noted that he did not translat all al-Thaʿlabī’s statements from Arabic into Persian. Rather in some places he provided the actual Arabic verses or some key phrases of traditions without translating them. In some instances, he provided all or part of the actual Arabic text of the tradition and then he provided its translation. For example, when translating a Divine tradition (*ḥadīth qudsī*) in the preamble of sūrah al-*ʿAʿlā* Abū al-Futūḥ writes: “God says: My servant said it truthfully, *ana al-ʿaʿlā fawqa kulli shayʾ*,” he then translated as “I am above all.” It is possible that Abū al-Futūḥ cited only this Arabic text from the relatively long *ḥadīth qudsī* because it contains the phrase “*ana al-ʿaʿlā*,” and this phrase relates to the name and the first verse of this sūrah.

### 6.9.2 Literal interlinear translation of verses

After the preamble of *sūrah al-ʿAʿlā*, Abū al-Futūḥ provided a literal translation of the sūrah’s verses and then he addressed their interpretation. Since sūrah al-*ʿAʿlā* is short, Abū al-Futūḥ provided its translation all together. From the Qurʿān’s fiftieth sūrah *Qāf* until its last sūrah al-*Nas*, and also *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, Abū al-Futūḥ provided the sūrah’s translation all together at once and then addressed its interpretation. However, for *sūrah* before *Qāf* (al-Baqarah to the forty-ninth *sūrah al-Ḥujurāt*), Abū al-Futūḥ divided each *sūrah* to several sections based on the subject matter discussed in them. He translates several verses relating to the same topic together, and then addresses their interpretation; and thus, continues with the same method to the end of the sūrah.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s literal translation of the sūrah al-*ʿAʿlā* may not be eloquent and smooth in Persian because Abū al-Futūḥ paid attention to finding exact equivalents of words in Persian and he followed the order of words in Arabic, rendering a verbatim translation. He did not follow Persian grammar so as to not break the structure of the verse in Arabic, which could serve a useful pedagogical purpose for a Persian speaker who seeks to learn the meaning of each corresponding Arabic word in Persian. Abū al-Futūḥ’s literal translation of the Qurʿān’s text matches to the Qurʿānic text word for word and extra words are rarely used. For example, the only place an extra word is added to in the translation of sūrah al-*ʿAʿlā* is in the translation of the
last verse [Q 87:19] ‘ṣuḥuf Ibrāhīm⁰ wa Mūsā’ to which Abū al-Futūḥ added the two attributes of Prophets Ibrāhīm and Mūsā', i.e. khalīl (a close intimate friend) and kalīm (The one who talked to God frequently), and the phrase “ʿalayhi al-salām” to the verse. From the point of view of Persian word order, Abū al-Futūḥ’s literal translation does not follow the canonical word order in Persian. For example, the verbs are not at the end of sentences; rather, the verbs are placed wherever they appear in the verse in Arabic. This non-canonical word order, however, does not impair comprehension because Persian morphology is highly inflected and contains the grammatical information required for discourse processing, regardless of syntagmatic word order.

Regarding the words used in this literal translation, Abū al-Futūḥ translated all the words in the Qurʾān one by one, although he did not translate some particles such as fa, sa, qad, or inna. In Abū al-Futūḥ’s literal translation, different Qurʾānic words are not necessarily translated into different words. Sometimes he uses the same Persian word for translating two different words from Arabic. For example, the Arabic words Allāh and Rabb have different meanings in the Arabic language and the Qurʾān, and their translation should also be different. For this reason, in English the first is sometimes translated as “God” and the second as “Lord.” Yet in translation of verse 7 of sūrah al-ʿAʿlā Abū al-Futūḥ translates Allāh as, “Khodā,” which is the equivalent of “God” and in verses 1 and 15 of the same sūrah he also translates the word Rabb as “Khodā.” However, this does not mean that Abū al-Futūḥ is always inconsistent in his translation.

The study of Rawḍ al-jinān shows that Abū al-Futūḥ constantly uses the same translation or a synonymous term for a word or a sentence that appears in the different verses. In many instances, he translates two similar words or sentences in the Qurʾān with the same words or synonymous words. For example, in this sūrah Abū al-Futūḥ translates the sentence from verse 13 lā yamūt⁰ fīhā wa lā yaḥyā: namīrad dar ān jā va na zindih shaved (it will not die there nor will it become alive again). His translation of the same sentence in [Q 20:74] is very similar to it. Another example is khayru⁰ wa abqā (is) better and more lasting) from verse 17 where Abū al-Futūḥ

1603 See Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 20:233-234 verses 5, 6, 10, 14, and 18.
translates it as bihtar ast wa pāyandihtar, and he translates the same passage in [Q 20:73] and [Q 42:36] as bihtar ast wa bāqītar. The Persian word pāyandih is the best equivalent of the word bāqī, which is a loan word from Arabic into Persian, and Abū al-Futūḥ employed both in his translation.

In his literal translation, Abū al-Futūḥ has attempted to neither add anything extra to the Qur’ānic text nor take away anything from it. Therefore, he did not add information related to the interpretation of the verses in his literal translation. He did not even add what is elided in verses such as subject or object of the verb. For example, in the second verse of sūrah al-Aʿlā the two verbs khalaqa (created) and sawwā (fashioned) are transitive and they need an object, yet since in the Qur’ānic text their objects are not explicitly mentioned, Abū al-Futūḥ also elided it in his literal translation.

6.9.3 Interpretation of Verses

After providing a literal translation of a collection of verses, in the third section Abū al-Futūḥ provides the interpretation of the verses one by one. For example, in the case of sūrah al-Aʿlā through the word for word and sentence for sentence comparison performed by me between Rawḍ al-jinān and al-Kashf, I found that about 69 percent of the interpretation provided by Abū al-Futūḥ has been directly taken from al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary. The remaining 31 percent that is different from al-Kashf are important to study and will be addressed below.

The interpretation of the first verse was taken from al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary. In explaining what some of the Companions and Followers said in commenting on this verse, Abū al-Futūḥ uses the two words maʾnā (meaning) and murād (intended meaning), which can be interchangeable. Abū al-Futūḥ provides a free translation of quotations that al-Thaʿlabī provides in his commentary. He sometimes changes the order of information provided, or sometimes summarizes the information provided or adds to it. Abū al-Futūḥ cited a line of poetry by Labīd

1604 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 15:144.
(d. ca. 41/661) to explain this verse, which is taken from *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī.\textsuperscript{1606} In most cases, Abū al-Futūḥ first explains what al-Thaʿlabī provided in his interpretation for his Persian speaking readers and then he interprets the actual Arabic text of *al-Kashf*. For example, for the interpretation of [Q 87:1] he first explains what al-Thaʿlabī has quoted from the 2\textsuperscript{nd}/8\textsuperscript{th} century grammarian and commentator of the Qurʿān, al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), then he translates what al-Farrāʾ had said and finally he elucidates a quote attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās regarding the intended meaning of *tasbīḥ* as well. Abū al-Futūḥ follows the same method with regards to quotes from Ibn ʿAbbās. He first explains what Ibn ʿAbbās said and then he translates what al-Thaʿlabī quoted from him. These additional explanations are all by Abū al-Futūḥ himself so that the interpretation he provides has a better flow and is more useful for the reader.

In the interpretation section, Abū al-Futūḥ first presents an interpretational translation of the verse before his detailed interpretation. In his interpretational translation if anything was unclear, elided, or implied in his literal translation Abū al-Futūḥ makes it clear. For example, in his literal translation of the second verse of sūrah *al-Aʿlā* ‘al-ladī khalaq āfa-sawwā’ Abū al-Futūḥ states, “the one who created and fashioned.”\textsuperscript{1607} However, in his interpretational translation Abū al-Futūḥ says, “And God who created all of creation and fashioned it.”\textsuperscript{1608} The comparison of these two translations for the two above mentioned verses shows that whatever was unclear or elided in Abū al-Futūḥ’s literal translation, he made clear in his interpretational translation. For example, the word *al-ladī*, which is a relative pronoun has been translated to “the one who” has changed to “God who” in his interpretational translation. These clarifications and addition of elided or implied words to the verses are one of Abū al-Futūḥ’s methods in his hermeneutics.

When it comes to variant readings, in some cases Abū al-Futūḥ quotes al-Thaʿlabī and in some cases, he quotes al-Ṭūsī. For example, in interpreting [Q 87:3] *wa al-ladī qaddar āfa-hadā*, Abū al-Futūḥ points out variant readings in the word *qaddar* and says, “Kisāʾī recited *qadar* without

\begin{footnotes}
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shadda on dāl.” He based his literal translation as well as his interpretation on the recitation qaddara. Abū al-Futūḥ cited this variant reading from al-Tibyān not from al-Kashf.\textsuperscript{1609} However, in [Q 87:16], Abū al-Futūḥ follows al-Tha’labī in the variant reading of the word tuʿthirūn.\textsuperscript{1610} Therefore, Abū al-Futūḥ did not write his translation or interpretation based on the reading of Ḥafṣ from Ḥāṣim. He also did not follow only al-Tha’labī or al-Ṭūsī regarding the variant reading. Abū al-Futūḥ’s personal selection of a variant reading which has a direct impact on his translation and interpretation will be discussed later in this chapter.

What Abū al-Futūḥ provided in his interpretation of [Q 87:3] is borrowed from al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī, with three differences between these two commentaries. In some instances, Abū al-Futūḥ quoted something from al-Tha’labī while the text cannot be found in printed copies of al-Tha’labī’s work; for example, he says: “others say qaddara al-maqādīr.” Conversely, in some cases there are quotes in al-Tha’labī’s print copies that do not appear in Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary. For example, at the end of the interpretation for verse three, there are two quotes “qāla al-Wāsiṭī qaddar al-saʿāda” and “qīla qaddara al-dhunūb” which do not appear in Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary; this could have either been done intentionally or that Abū al-Futūḥ’s copy of al-Tha’labī’s commentary may not have had them. The third and more important difference is the additional explanation that Abū al-Futūḥ provided in translation of an exegetical statement in al-Kashf. al-Tha’labī stated, “It is said: He guided to His religion whoever He wishes from among His creation.”\textsuperscript{1611} However, translating al-Tha’labī, Abū al-Futūḥ wrote: “They said, guidance is in the right religion,” and then explained that “guidance” and “the right religion” mean “God’s graces (alṭāf), God’s help (tawfīq), God’s measures (aqdār), God’s enabling (tamkīn), removal of defect (izāḥat ʿillat), and providing the proofs (naṣb adillat).”\textsuperscript{1612} Abū al-Futūḥ’s emphasis on the two notions “guidance” and “the right religion” and his definition of

\textsuperscript{1609} Compare al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 10:328 with al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 10:183.


\textsuperscript{1611} al-Tha’labī, al-Kashf, 10:183.

them are his additions to al-Thaʿlabī, indicating his theological approach in interpreting the Qurʾān.

Abū al-Futūḥ uses explanatory transitional sentences, which point to the main subject of the verse that will follow, to create coherence in the course of the content of a surah. For example, before Abū al-Futūḥ interprets verse 6 he introduces the subject by stating that, “God promised that He would reveal [the Qurʾānic] verses to the messenger,” and then continues with the interpretation of the verse. He repeats the same rhetorical pattern, i.e. starting with a transitional sentence, before interpreting verses 9, 16, 18 and 19. Using these sentences helps with the flow of Abū al-Futūḥ’s commentary; Continuing with verse 6 “sa-nuqrīʿuka fa-lā tansā,” Abū al-Futūḥ’s contextualizes a morphological transformation from intransitive verb to causative verb, i.e. that from naqraʿu (form I) to nuqriʿu (form IV), by providing exemplar sentences in Arabic. In this regard, he explains in Arabic, “aqraʿtu huwā ghayrī means I made him a reader either by teaching him (taʿlīm) or by enabling him (tamkīn).” This shows that Abū al-Futūḥ was an expert in the field of Arabic morphology and lexicology. Verse 7 is taken from al-Thaʿlabī’s commentary and even his references to [Q 11:107-108] is similar to al-Thaʿlabī.

The differences between Abū al-Futūḥ’s interpretational translation and his literal translation is clear in the phrase ‘wa nuyassiruka’ in verse 8. Abū al-Futūḥ’s interpretational translation is “mā muyassar bikūnīm tu raʾ”, while his literal translation is “wa khār gardānīm tu raʾ.” Three points are noteworthy in these two translations: 1- In his interpretational translation Abū al-Futūḥ does not adhere to usage of wa to create coherence between verses and instead he uses the word “guft” meaning “said.” 2- In his interpretational translation Abū al-Futūḥ offers a free and fluent translation, without any consideration about the fact that the words are originally in Persian; however, in his literal translation he pays attention to the fact the words come from Persian roots, and that the words are matching word for word, and follow the same order in the Arabic.

In most cases such as verse 8, when Abū al-Futūḥ refers to mufassirān (commentators) he means al-Thaʿlabī. The reason for this is that the three probable interpretations that he quotes are from

al-Tha’labi’s *al-Kashf*, and they do not appear together in this format in any of the other commentaries that are available to us today. The only statement Abū al-Futūḥ has added to the end of this verse is that al-Tha’labī has said, “*al-sharīʿa al-yusrā* (the easy religion) is *al-ḥanafīyyah al-samḥa* (the true and tolerant religion) without providing any reference or explanation for this phrase. However, Abū al-Futūḥ noted that this narration is a Prophetic tradition\(^{1614}\) which is cited in early Shīʿī and Sunni sources.\(^{1615}\)

One of the features of Abū al-Futūḥ’s interpretation is that he explains the lexical, morphological, and grammatical points of verses in detail. For example, at the end of verse 9 Abū al-Futūḥ notes that *dhikrā* and *tadhkīr* are both infinitive and they both convey the same meaning. Furthermore, in verse 10 he explains in detail that *yadhakkaru* was originally *yatadhakkaru* and mentions the difference between Baṣran and Kūfan grammarians in this regard. Abū al-Futūḥ’s detailed explanation of linguistic points and the differences between two schools of grammar in *Rawḍ al-jinān* shows that his target audience was Persian speaking readers who are interested in Arabic linguistics. The Persian equivalents used by Abū al-Futūḥ in his commentary showcase his wealth of vocabulary in the 6\(^{th}/12\(^{th}\) century. For example, both al-Tha’labī and al-Ṭūsī interpreted the word *yadhdhakkaru* (to take heed) as *yattaʿiẓu* (to heed a warning),\(^{1616}\) while Abū al-Futūḥ interpreted this word as “recalls and ponders.” He shows that in the word *yadhdhakkaru* both notions of recalling (*yād dārad*) and pondering (*andīshih kunad*) exist.

Sometimes Abū al-Futūḥ benefited from the Qur’ānic cross references (*tafsīr al-Qur’ān bi-l-Qur’ān*) in *Rawḍ al-jinān*. For example, in interpreting *al-ashqā* in [Q 87:11] he utilizes the verses [Q 92:15-16] and says, “*al-ashqā* is the one who calls the word of God and his prophet a lie and turns away and deviates from it.” This definition of *ashqā* which is taken from [Q 92:15-16] is not seen in *al-Kashf* or *al-Tibyān*. Some of *tafsīr al-Qur’ān bi-l-Qur’ān* in *Rawḍ al-jinān*


is unique to Abū al-Futūḥ himself. Continuing on, Abū al-Futūḥ tackles the interpretation of *al-nār al-kubrā* (the big fire) in verse 12 and he points out al-Farrā’’s interpretation which is taken from *al-Tibyān*.

One of Abū al-Futūḥ’s rules of interpretation is that “it is better to hold to the general meaning of a verse until there is evidence that shows otherwise.” For example, the interpretation of verses 13 to 19 are taken from al-Tha’labī’s *al-Kashf*. Except in verses 14 and 15, while discussing the meaning of *tazakkā* (to seek purity/pay *zakāt*) and *ṣallā* (to pray/perform one of prescribed daily prayers), Abū al-Futūḥ narrated some traditions which interpret the verse in question in a very specific manner. He expresses his assumption explicitly and says that it is better to stay with the general meaning of a Qur’ānic statement until there is evidence (*dalīl*) which makes it more specific.

Although Abū al-Futūḥ mentions variant readings in his commentary, he chooses the “*qirāʾat mashhūr*” or “*qirāʾat ʿāmmah*” for his translation and interpretation. For example, in verse 16 of sūrah *al-Aʿlā* Abū al-Futūḥ points out that Abū ʿAmr (d. 154/770) recited *yuʾthirūn*; however, in his literal translation and interpretation he rendered it as “you preferred it” which is the translation of *tuʾthirūn* consistent with the recitation of the majority. Therefore, Abū al-Futūḥ does not follow the recitation of Abū ʿAmr but follows the recitation of *qirāʾat ʿāmmah*. The *muṣḥaf* and *qirāʾa* which is chosen by Abū al-Futūḥ will be discussed later in this chapter. The interpretation of verses 17 and 18 are also merely translations from *al-Kashf*.

Abū al-Futūḥ mentioned the origin of some Shīʿī traditions which were incorporated for the first time in Sunni exegesis by al-Tha’labī without acknowledging its source. For example, in interpreting [Q 87:19] Abū al-Futūḫ quotes the following tradition in Arabic and translates it into Persian: “it is written in scrolls (*ṣuḥuf*) of Ibrāhīm that a right-minded person (ʿāqil) should keep

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his tongue, know his time, and be busy with his affairs.”

This tradition which is cited as an “adjacent” tradition by al-Tha‘labī in his commentary is most likely taken from an Imāmī tradition in al-Kāfī of al-Kulaynī. This difference in the origin of this statement is observed among the classical Shi‘ī and Sunni commentaries of the 6th/12th century. For example, in Majma‘ al-bayān al-Ṭabrisī employed the same tradition in commenting on this verse mentioning that it is a hadīth. However, some other Sunni exegetes such as Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), Maybudī (d. after 520/1126), and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 606/1210) cited the same tradition with “it is said (qīla)” in their commentaries.

6.10 Prophetic traditions in Rawḍ al-jinān

The way Abū al-Futūḥ links the Qurʾānic text with prophetic tradition is what Saleh termed “adjacent interpretation” and Sinai called “connective interpretation.” Abū al-Futūḥ employed early Shi‘ī and Sunni hadīth to address Imām ‘Ali’s high status. For example, in commenting on [Q 5:20-26] when he relates different stories about Prophet Moses and his successor Yūsha‘ b. Nūn (Biblical Joshua), Abū al-Futūḥ cited the hadīth about the returning of the sun for Yūsha‘. He then continued by stating that the same incident occurred to “Amīr al-mu‘minīn [ʿAli], the heir of the Messenger and the people of tradition (ahl akhbār wa aḥādīth) from all schools have consensus about it.” He then gives several pages of hadīth and 29 lines of poetry from 7 different early poets to show the prevalence of this story among early

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1620 al-Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, 2:116 no. 20.
1621 al-Ṭabrisī, Majma‘, 10:722.
1623 Saleh, The Formation, 195; Sinai, Fortschreibung, 19-21, 231-232. In his book, Saleh also called this type of Prophetic traditions as “tangential interpretation” or “peripheral interpretation” (see Saleh, The Formation, 211).
1624 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:327.
traditionists.\textsuperscript{1625} Incorporation of ḥadīth to emphasize Imami doctrine is a key element of Abū al-Futūḥ’s hermeneutics.

If a tradition is not in agreement with Abū al-Futūḥ’s theological principles or belief system, he rejects it. His theological thought is influenced by Baghdādī Imāmī theologians such as al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī which is different from Qummī traditionalists such as Ibn Bābawayh’s system. Abū al-Futūḥ was not an uncritical reporter of Imami school of thought. In several cases, he used rational reasoning to criticize Imāmī traditions. He interprets metaphorically or rejects those traditions which contradict his rational principles. He maintains two independent roles for reason (ʿaql) and tradition (naql) which may contradict in some cases. In most cases, they support each other. In other cases where they contradict each other, Abū al-Futūḥ prioritizes theological reasoning. However, in few cases such as belief in return (rajʿa) even if it is a strange notion rationally, he accepts it because of authentic traditions.\textsuperscript{1626} If a tradition is not compatible with his theological principles, Abū al-Futūḥ does not include it in his commentary. For example, he rejected the idea of the world of particles (ʿālam al-dharr)\textsuperscript{1627} and the manifestation of God’s ordinance (badāʾ) as well. Although he is acquainted with traditions concerning these two subjects, Abū al-Futūḥ asserts that all the traditions concerning the world of particles attributed to the Imāms in interpreting [Q 4:172] contradict reason and the exoteric meaning (zāhir) of the Qurʿān. He states that the traditions regarding the world of particles are transmitted by Akhbārī Shīʿas (ahl-i akhbār/akhbāriyān).\textsuperscript{1628} In this regard, he is influenced by al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī\textsuperscript{1629} and their teacher al-Mufīd.\textsuperscript{1630} Abū al-Futūḥ like Baghdādī theologians such as

\textsuperscript{1625} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:327-331.

\textsuperscript{1626} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:355, 357; 12:298; 13:280; 15:77. As al-Mufīd noted, all Imāmī Shīʿ as agreed that upon rajʿa regardless of their theological approach (al-Mufīd, Avāʿil, 46).

\textsuperscript{1627} Although the idea of ʿālam al-dharr is arguably supported by independent rational thought, e.g., Platonic philosophy, Baghdādī theologians rejected it.

\textsuperscript{1628} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 9:7-8. Also see Abū al-Futūḥ Rāżī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 10:115; 15:139.

\textsuperscript{1629} al-Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān, 5:27-30.

\textsuperscript{1630} al-Mufīd, al-Masāʿ il al-sarawiyya, 39-40; 44-49.
al-Mufīd and his students, studied Imāmī traditions and theology first in mutual discourse with Sunni traditions and Muʿtazilī speculative theology. If a concept did not fit Baghdādis’ theological framework, they rejected it or interpreted it metaphorically. Their method was different from that of Kūfan or Qummī scholars’ who attempted to accept as many traditions as possible attributed to the Imāms and interpret them literally.

Al-Mufīd was the first Imāmī scholar who rejected the traditions regarding the world of particles. He asserted that the chains of transmission and the content of these traditions are not reliable. He also criticized the traditions of the world of particles rationally and attributed them to the companions of reincarnation (aṣḥāb al-tanāsukh) and the literalist traditionists (ḥashwīya) among the Shiʿa.\textsuperscript{1631} Al-Mufīd’s belief concerning the world of particles is seen in all 5\textsuperscript{th}/11\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th}/12\textsuperscript{th} centuries Imāmī commentaries such as al-Tibyān, Majmaʿ al-bayān, and Rawḍ al-jinān. Prior to al-Mufīd, a great number of Imāmī scholars from Kūfa and Qumm transmitted traditions about the world of particles and it seems that this notion was accepted in both schools of Kūfa and Qumm. Apparently, al-Mufīd rejected the idea of the world of particles because it did not fit in his Muʿtazilized rational system of belief. In the same way, Abū al-Futūḥ rejected the notion of \textit{badāʾ} (for God) because he said it is not compatible with the all-encompassing knowledge of God about the consequences of affairs and their interests/benefits (maṣāliḥ) and evils/harms (mafāsid).\textsuperscript{1632}

Traditions employed by Abū al-Futūḥ concerning the Imamate and the characteristics of the Imāms outnumber traditions on the same topic in other Imāmī commentaries of the 5\textsuperscript{th}/11\textsuperscript{th} and 6\textsuperscript{th}/12\textsuperscript{th} centuries such as al-Maṣābīḥ, al-Tibyān, and Majmaʿ al-bayān. By incorporating these Imāmī traditions among other exegetical materials taken from al-Thaʿlabī, Abū al-Futūḥ could present the Shiʿī concept of Imamate to the Persian-reader. He defended the Imamate and caliphate of ʿAlī as a Divinely ordained position under a great number of verses.\textsuperscript{1633} He pointed

\textsuperscript{1631} al-Mufīd, \textit{Taṣḥīḥ iʿtiqādāt}, 81.


to the virtues of `Alî under a large number of Qur`ânic verses which were revealed in the Qur`ân concerning `Alî according to early Imâmî traditions.\textsuperscript{1634} He states that for salvation everyone should find the truth and the Prophet said that the truth is always with `Alî.\textsuperscript{1635} He maintained that `Alî was a silent (ṣâmit) Imâm during the lifetime of the Prophet.\textsuperscript{1636}

Not only did Abû al-Futûh emphasize the Imamate and walâya of `Alî, but he also focused on Fâṭîma as the best of women in the world. He narrated that the Prophet said, “Four women are the best of all women: Åsiyah (the wife of Pharaoh), Mary (the daughter of `Imrân), Khâdiyah (the daughter of Khuwaylid), and Fâṭîma.”\textsuperscript{1637} However, on commenting on [Q 3:42] Abû al-Futûh compared Mary and Fâṭîma and said, “The chosen among all women of the world is Fâṭîma.”\textsuperscript{1638}

In Rawd al-jinân, Abû al-Futûh also frequently employed early Imâmî traditions regarding the twelfth Imâm, al-Mahdî. Al-Maghribî, al-Ṭûsî, or al-Ṭâbrîsî did not discuss the subject of al-Mahdî as Abû al-Futûh did. It seems that, al-Ṭûsî did not discuss the subject of al-Mahdî and his occultation in al-Tibyân because he wrote, after his commentary, an independent book entitled al-Ghayba on this topic.\textsuperscript{1639} This book was one of a series of works such as al-Ghayba of al-Nu`mânî (d. ca. 360/971) and al-Ghayba of Ibn Bâbawayh (d. 381/991) which was written on the Occultation of the last Imâm. These al-Ghayba books played a significant role in the integration of the concept of Occultation of the last Imâm into the Imâmî belief system in an acceptable form and its presentation to the public during the first few centuries after the absence of the Imâm in the society. The author of these books replaced the topic of Occultation with the pre-

\textsuperscript{1634} For example, see Abû al-Futûh Râzî, Rawd al-jinân, 4:366; 7:83; 11:242.
\textsuperscript{1635} Abû al-Futûh Râzî, Rawd al-jinân, 4:463; 8:108-109.
\textsuperscript{1636} Abû al-Futûh Râzî, Rawd al-jinân, 7:34.
\textsuperscript{1639} Riḍâdâd and Țabâṭabâ`î. “Gâhshumârî-yi,” 66.
Occultation topics concerning the presence of the Imām as the leader of Imāmī community and the only authority to interpret the Qurʾān. They were able to engender social acceptability for the existence of a hidden Imām in Occultation, one who can be present in Imāmī shīʿas’ hearts. Their successful and convincing presentation kept the Twelver Shīʿī Imāmī school thriving without an Imām manifest to the eyes of people. Abū al-Futūḥ performed the same role for the Persian-speaking audience through the Qurʾānic exegesis in his commentary.

From the beginning of his commentary in interpreting [Q 2:3], Abū al-Futūḥ spoke about al-Mahdī as an example of the unseen (ghayb) and promised to cite traditions exhaustively (mustaqṣā) under any verse which is interpreted to refer to al-Mahdī in Imāmī traditions.\textsuperscript{1640} He fulfilled his promise in Rawḍ al-jinān and referred to al-Mahdī under a great number of verses.

He reasoned about the necessity of an Imām in every period.\textsuperscript{1641} In this regard, he transmitted the famous tradition the “If there were to remain only one day in the life of the world, God would prolong that day until He sends a man from my descendants. His name will be the same as my name and his kunya will be same as my kunya. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and injustice.”\textsuperscript{1642} In interpreting [Q 3:55] which is about Jesus, Abū al-Futūḥ cited a tradition from al-Kashf of al-Thaʿlabī where the Prophet stated, “How is it possible that a nation [Muslims] shall perishe when I am [led them] at the beginning (awwal), Jesus appears at the end (ākhir), and al-Mahdī is between (awsat) us.”\textsuperscript{1643} After quoting this tradition, Abū al-Futūḥ underscores its authenticity by emphasizing the high statuse of its transmitter al-Thaʿlabī.\textsuperscript{1644}

\textsuperscript{1640} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:104.
\textsuperscript{1641} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:172-173.
\textsuperscript{1642} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:104; 3:375; 5:96; 14:172; 17:43.
\textsuperscript{1643} al-Thaʿlabī, al-Kashf, 3:82.
\textsuperscript{1644} Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:353.
Abū al-Futūḥ states that al-Mahdī is an example of the unseen (al-ghayb) who will reappear at the end of the times (Ākhir al-zamān) before Gog and Magog appear. When he reappears, he will come with the Ark of the Covenant (tābūt) and cane of Moses. Al-Mahdī’s first companions are three hundred and thirteen persons and the people of the Cave (aṣḥāb al-kahf) are among them. One of the signs of his reappearance is khasf (the engulfing of sinners) in the east, in the west, and in Baydā between Mecca and Medina. In addition to these signs, prior to al-Mahdī’s rising, Sufyānī will rebel. Al-Mahdī’s rising is a great punishment for disbelievers mentioned in [Q 32:21]. He is the last Imām and the caliph of God on the earth. Jesus will come down from heaven to help him and will pray behind al-Mahdī. Jesus will be in the front of al-Mahdī’s army and they will fight against

1645 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 1:104.
1648 On the Ark of the Covenant (tābūt), or the sacred chest that for the Israelites, representing God’s presence among them see Newby, “Ark”; Fahd, “Sakīna.” This tābūt is mentioned only once in the Qurʾān in [Q 2:248].
1649 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 3:368.
1652 On these signs see Cook, “Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions,” 32.
1653 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 16:85.
1656 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 8:116-117.
1658 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 17:182.
1659 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 17:43.
1660 Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:286.
the eschatological Antichrist Dajjāl.\(^\text{1661}\) Eventually, al-Mahdī will slay the Dajjāl\(^\text{1662}\) and God will make al-Mahdī and his companions leaders of the people and they will inherit the earth as is promised in [Q 28:5].\(^\text{1663}\) In that time all Jews and Christians will accept Islam willingly or unwillingly\(^\text{1664}\) and Islam will replace all religions.\(^\text{1665}\) Jesus will die and al-Mahdī will pray on him and bury his body next to the Messenger of God Muḥammad.\(^\text{1666}\) The number of traditions transmitted by Abū al-Futūḥ regarding al-Mahdī and his rising which is mentioned here briefly, is not found in other post-Buyid Imāmī commentaries of the 5\(^{th}\)/11\(^{th}\) and 6\(^{th}\)/12\(^{th}\) century. Therefore, a great number of traditions in Rawḍ al-jinān are employed for explaining the different aspects of Imamate in the form of the interpretation of the Qurʾān.

In this chapter Abū al-Futūḥ’s hermeneutics were analyzed. Moreover, I sought to examine his commentary, especially his use of Persian poetry and proverbs. A comparison between Rawḍ al-jinān and two commentaries written before it al-Kashf of al-Tha’labī and al-Tibyān of al-Ṭūsī was also conducted. In the next chapter, all my significant findings will be summarized.

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\(^{1661}\) On the Dajjāl as a figure in the Islamic tradition, see Robinson, “Antichrist”; Abel, “Dadjdjāl”; Cook, “Dajjāl.”

\(^{1662}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:324.

\(^{1663}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 15:94-95.

\(^{1664}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 6:183; 9:226.


\(^{1666}\) Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī, Rawḍ al-jinān, 4:352-353.
Conclusion

Part of the complex history of Qurʾānic commentary could be examined by studying classical Imāmi Shīʿī exegesis. In this regard, the history of early Imāmi Shīʿī exegesis which is concerned with how exegetical views of Imāmi scholars developed through Islamic centuries is essential for this purpose. The data collected from earliest extant Shīʿī and Sunnī biographical and bibliographical works shows that early Imāmī exegesis was for the first two Islamic centuries a Kūfan phenomenon. During this period, the right to interpret the Qurʾān was considered exclusive to the the Shīʿī Imāms. During the first half of the 3rd/9th century the leading center of Imāmī tradition and exegesis gradually started to move from Kūfa to Qumm. The exegetical traditions attributed to the Imāms which are survived from this period are rich with esoteric tendencies. In this period, Imāms categorized the verses of the Qurʾān thematically and elucidated their interpretations without needing to resort to interpretive methodology or hermeneutics. This phase continued to 260/874 when the eleventh Imām al-Ḥasan b. Ṣafī al-ʿAskarī passed away in the ancient city of Sāmarrāʾ at the age of 27.

By the end of the presence of the Imāms, the need to address the question of the authority to interpret the Qurʾān and methods of interpretation was felt in the Imāmī community. Starting in about the mid 3rd/9th century a dispute arose over the acceptance of esoteric exegesis as the normative Imāmī interpretive approach in Qumm. Eventually, in the second half on the 3rd/9th century the intellectual esoterism was recognized as an original and valid exegetical approach. As a result, the earliest surviving Imāmī commentaries such as Tafsīr of Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-ʿAyyāshī and Tafsīr of Ṣafī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī were esoteric commentaries.

In the absence of the Imāms and the extensive presence of Muʿtazilīs in the 4th/10th century, Imāmī scholars such as Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī (d. 381/991) attempted to employ in a very limited manner linguistic tools to explain the meaning of some Qurʾānic expressions. His tradition-based doctrine and cautious exegetical approach which were not able to answer their opponents’ questions systematically, were criticized by his Baghdādi pupil al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) who began to reconstruct Shīʿī doctrine benefiting from systematic Muʿtazīle theology. As a result, at the beginning of the 5th/11th century a paradigm shift from
intellectual esoterism to rational exoterism in Imāmī school of thought occurred. This paradigm shift manifested itself in Imāmi exegesis with works such as *al-Maṣābīḥ fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Wazīr al-Maghribī (d. 418/1028) and fully developed later in *al-Ṭibyān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* of al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067). Al-Ṭūsī was the Imāmī exegete who fully forged the rational discourse in Imāmī exegesis.

Al-Ṭūsī moved to Najaf when the Shi‘ī Buyid dynasty declined in the middle of the 5th/11th century and the Sunni Seljuqs invaded Iran and Iraq. After decades of suppression of Imāmi scholars, two Imāmi commentaries emerged during the first half of the 6th/12th century: one in Persian entitled *Rawḍ al-jīnān wa-rāwḥ al-janān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* by Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī (d. in or after 552/1157), and the other in Arabic entitled *Majmʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* by al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1153). These two scholars were born, lived, and died during the Great Seljuq Period (434-552/1042-1157). Therefore, their approach to exegesis was to create commentaries which were accepted in a society that was dominated by Sunni traditionalists. They combined the rational approach of al-Ṭūsī with the normative Imāmi or pro-Shi‘ī traditions in order to write majority-friendly commentaries while expressing core concepts to Imāmi Shi‘ī identity.

Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī wrote the earliest surviving Imāmi *tafsīr* in Persian in twenty volumes. He and his encyclopedic Persian commentary *Rawḍ al-jīnān* are little-known in western and Arabo-Islamic academia because he was an Imāmī Shi‘a and his commentary was written in Persian. By writing *Rawḍ al-jīnān* in Persian, Abū al-Futūḥ intended to reach a new audience who apparently requested that he create a body of work in Imāmi exegesis, which can be characterized as a masterpiece. Based on the content of *Rawḍ al-jīnān*, the level of this new audience varied from scholarly to common Muslims interested in the Qurʾān. Three subjects regarding Abū al-Futūḥ Rāzī and his commentary were examined in this dissertation: 1- the environment around Abū al-Futūḥ as he composed his commentary, 2- Abū al-Futūḥ’s life as an Imāmi scholar and his intellectual tendencies, and 3- his voluminous commentary which contains his views on the Qurʾānic sciences and his hermeneutics.

Abū al-Futūḥ’s family who were originally Arabs had resided in Nishapur for a few centuries. At the beginning of the 5th/11th century his grand-grandfather emigrated to Rayy. Apparently, Abū al-Futūḥ spent all his life in Rayy and there is no evidence that he traveled to study under other
Shīʿī or Sunni scholars. His teachers and students all are from Rayy except al-Zamakhsharī who resided in Rayy on his way to Mecca. Abū al-Futūḥ’s time and place has a significant influence on his hermeneutics.

Abū al-Futūḥ lived in Rayy under the rule of the Great Seljuqs. The religio-socio-political conditions of Rayy during the rule of the Great Seljuqs in that region indicated difficult circumstances for the Imāmi scholars in general and for Abū al-Futūḥ in particular. Due to Sunni Seljuq restrictions, almost all Imāmi scholars of Rayy in this period practically were inactive in education and some of them turned to the Sufi tradition. In this period, Sunni traditionalists and Sufis were present in Rayy and were supported by Seljuqs. A great number of Twelver Shīʿī scholars of this city including Abū al-Futūḥ’s father were brutally suppressed. Therefore, many of Imāmī Shīʿa were spiritually inclined to Sufism and politically attempted to show themselves as a partner of the Seljuqs against a common enemy, Ismāʿīlīs.

Van Dijk makes a distinction between local and global contexts in which a text was created. According to him, global contexts are “defined by the social, political, cultural and historical structures” in which the text has generated. The global context of Rawḍ al-jinān which is studied in this work showed that Abū al-Futūḥ as a scholar of the Imāmi Shīʿī community in Rayy was affected by socio-political pressure from Sunni Seljuqs. The constant pressure of the Seljuqs on the Shīʿī community in Rayy caused Abū al-Futūḥ to change his approach in writing the exegesis of the Qurʾān. Instead of choosing Muʿtazilī commentaries as his principal source, Abū al-Futūḥ selected a pro-Shīʿī Sunni commentary widely accepted by Muslims at the end of the 4th/10th century in Iran. This commentary was al-Kashf wa-al-bayān ‘an tafsīr al-Qurʾān of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Thaʿlabī (d. 427/1035), Imām of Aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth (the adherents of Prophetic tradition).

A comparison of these two commentaries suggests that at least about fifty five percent of Rawḍ al-jinān (almost eleven volumes out of twenty) is a translation of al-Kashf. Abū al-Futūḥ is the

1667 Van Dijk, “Multidisciplinarity CDA,” 108. Van Dijk defined local context in terms of properties of the immediate, interactional situation in which a text was created or a communicative event took place. For example, author’s (or participants’) intentions, goals, knowledge, norms and other beliefs are part of local context.
first Shīʿī scholar who used *al-Kashf* in his work. However, only about five percent of *Rawd al-jinān* is rendered from *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī. Abū al-Futūḥ combined both *al-Kashf* and *al-Tibyān* to have access to the earlier exegetical material of orthodox Sunni, Muʿtazilī, and Imāmī Shīʿī sources. The translation of what Abū al-Futūḥ has taken from other commentaries such as *al-Kashf* of al-Thaʿlabī or *al-Tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī is a free translation. He sometimes omits something from the original text in his translation or at times add something extra that does not appear in the original text. However, these omissions or additions are not in a way that would affect the coherence of the original text and are not easily identifiable by the reader.

It is likely that Abū al-Futūḥ depended directly on *al-Kashf*, as the most renowned traditional Sunnī commentary in middle Islamic period, so that *Rawd al-Janān* would be accepted by the majority Sunnis Muslims in addition to the Shīʿī community. It also made his commentary the culmination of decades of translating Baghdādi Imāmī theology and Nishaburi Sunni pro-ʿAlid traditions to create a fluent and influential text for the public in Persian. In this regard, he combined the traditional inheritance of the Sunnis in the virtues of the *ahl al-bayt* with the theological inheritance of the Uṣūlī Imāmīs. Through *Rawd al-jinān*, he emphasized the subject of Imamate to establish the authority of the *ahl al-bayt* as the archetypal Divine leaders and exegetes. Like other post-Buyid commentators he also employed lexical-theological-legal discussions.

Abū al-Futūḥ, like many of his contemporary Imāmī scholars of Rayy, was influenced by Baghdādi Imāmī rationalists who utilized systematic Muʿtazilī theology in the interpretation of the Qurʾān. Apparently, he learned the most from his uncle ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Khuzāʿī who was a student of al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044) and al-Ṭūsī. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad alongside his friends ʿAbd al-Jabbār b. ʿAbd Allāh (known as Mufīd Rāzī) and al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusayn Ḥasakā all graduated from the rational school of Baghdād. These three Imāmī scholars contributed greatly to the transfer of the Uṣūlī approach from the Imāmī school of Baghdād to Rayy in the second half of the 5th/11th century. Abū al-Futūḥ became an

\[1668\] Abū al-Futūḥ was the initiator of translating and reworking *al-Kashf* into newly authored commentaries. However, Saleh introduced Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī (d. 606/1210) as the initiator of these trend in Qurʾānic exegesis (See Saleh, *The Formation*, 206).
Uṣūlī Imāmī exegete who preferred al-Murtaḍā’s view in disagreements between al-Murtaḍā and al-Ṭūsī. Like other Imāmī Uṣūlī, Abū al-Futūḥ maximized the use of the Sunnī Commentaries (Muʿtazilīs and Ashʿarīs), used only those early Imāmī exegetical traditions which were accepted by Baghdādi theologians, emphasized exoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān, and minimized criticism of the first three Caliphs and other Companions. However, his use of Imāmi or pro-Imāmi traditions in Rawḥ al-Janān is more than al-Ṭūsī’s.

In his commentary Rawḥ al-Janān, Abū al-Futūḥ treats the Qurʾān as a whole. All suras and verses are subjected to exegetical commentary. It is not a commentary by traditions (al-tafsīr bi al-maʾthūr); However, he employed a great number of exegetical and adjacent traditions ascribed to the Prophet and the Imāms from Shīʿī and Sunnī sources. He emphasizes those verses best suited to received Shīʿī exegesis in the spheres of theology, jurisprudence, and history. He also interpretes most of the verses with reference to the ahl al-bayt (the family of the Prophet), their followers and their adversaries in early Imāmi exegetical traditions. Moreover, he was careful in his criticism of the first three caliphs and some of the Companions. Abū al-Futūḥ did not use those early Imāmi exegetical traditions that suggested that the ʿUthmānī codex of the Qurʾān was a censored, altered, or falsified version of the original revelation. He used variant readings and adhered to ten canonical readings. Rawḥ al-Janān is full of grammatical, lexicological, philological, or rhetorical exegesis some taken from earlier works and some added by Abū al-Futūḥ, himself. He also extensively utilized Arabic and Persian poetry and proverbs to help the reader better understand the meaning of a Qurʾānic expression or concept. He integrated Persian poetry and proverbs in Imāmī exegesis for the first time.

Also for the first time, Abū al-Futūḥ incorporated mystical interpretation and pro-Shīʿī stories narrated by early ascetics into Imāmī exegesis. His main source for these mystical exegetical statements of ahl ishārat was al-Kashf. In some cases, Abū al-Futūḥ adapted the original statement or tradition to be compatible with Imāmi Shīʿī doctrine and accepted by Shīʿī audiences, too. He also for the first time in Imāmī exegesis, used admonitory stories narrated by early ascetics or mystics to give moral lessons (mawāʿiẓ) to his audience. These extra-exegetical anecdotes are employed by him because he was a well-known preacher (wāʿiẓ) as described by his students. A great number of these stories which are neither interpretative statements nor Prophetic traditions are used in Rawḍ al-jinān because of Abū al-Futūḥ’s preaching style. Some
of these stories are like Imāmi folklore which were passed through the generations and could not be found in any early Imāmi works.

Abū al-Futūḥ was an expert translator and a talented writer in Persian whose commentary is embellished with a range of literary devices. The literary aspect of Rawd al-jinān is one of its most influential aspects for the reader. He translated the Qurʾān and a great number of exegetical books of previous centuries into the Persian language. It is evident that several later Imāmī exegetes such as Jurjānī (d. after 733/1332) the author of Tafsīr Gāzur: jalāʾ adhān wa-jalāʾ al-ahzān and Kāshānī (d. 988/1570) the author of Manhaj al-ṣādiqīn fī ilzām al-mukhālifīn were heavily influenced by him.
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Appendix 1

List of Terms

Listing in the glossary are selected Arabic terms and names except where designated. In this glossary the following abbreviated forms have been used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sing.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lit.</td>
<td>literally</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pers.</td>
<td>Persian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turk.</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
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<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adj.</td>
<td>adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q.v. (quod vide)</td>
<td>cross-reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attrib.</td>
<td>attributive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʿAbbāsids</td>
<td>descendants of the Prophet’s uncle al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib; the second major Islamic dynasty (132-656/750-1258), succeeding the Umayyad dynasty, based in Baghdad and, later, Cairo (659-923/1261-1517)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʿabd</td>
<td>(lit. ‘slave’, ‘servant’) it appears often in names, e.g. ʿAbd Allāh (lit. ‘servant of God’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abū/Abī, Bū</td>
<td>(lit. ‘father’) it appears often in construct in names, e.g. ʿAbū al-Futūḥ (lit. ‘Father of al-Futūḥ’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahl al-bayt</td>
<td>(lit. ‘people of the house’) often a designation for members of the household of the Prophet, including especially, besides Muḥammad, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and their progeny. The Prophet’s family is also designated as āl Muḥammad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahl al-sunna</td>
<td>(lit. ‘the people of the sunna’) Sunnī Muslims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akhbārī</td>
<td>Shīʿī theological school contrasted with Uṣūlī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>āl</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘clan’ or ‘house’)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Alids</td>
<td>descendants of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and also the fourth caliph and the first Shīʿī imam (q.v.). The Shīʿīs believed certain ‘Alids should be imams, and they acknowledged ‘Alī as the first amongst their imams. ‘Alī’s first spouse was Fāṭima, the Prophet’s daughter, and ‘Alī’s descendants by Fāṭima (the only descendants of the Prophet) are in particular called Fāṭimids (q.v.). Descendants of ‘Alī and Fāṭima through their sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, are also called Ḥasanids and Ḥusaynids. Descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are often also designated, respectively, as sharīfs and Sayyids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ʿālim</strong></td>
<td>(pl. ‘ulamāʾ) a learned religious scholar; one who possess ‘ilm (q.v.), in particular the guardians of legal and religious traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amīr</td>
<td>(pl. umarāʾ) military governor of a province; military commander of an expeditionary force; leader; prince; many independent rulers also held this title in the Islamic world. Anglicized as emir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ansār</td>
<td>(lit. ‘helpers’) name given collectively to those Medinese who supported the Prophet after his emigration (hijra) from Mecca to Medina, as distinct from the muhājirūn (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘aqīda</strong></td>
<td>creed, belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth</td>
<td>traditionists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashʿarī school of theology</td>
<td>[n.] is a school of theology named after Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī (d.324/935), which emphasized a rationalist defense of traditional Islam and came to represent the mainstream of Sunnī theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Šūrā</td>
<td>the tenth day of the first month of the Muslim calendar, Muḥarram, when Shiʿa Muslims commemorate the martyrdom of the third imam Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī at Karbalāʾ in 61/680</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>atabeg (Turk.)</td>
<td>(lit. ‘father of the prince’) a Turkish title given to tutors or guardians of a Seljuq prince and other Turkish rulers; The atabegs became powerful officers of state and some of them founded independent dynasties in Islamic lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bāṭin</td>
<td>(lit. ‘inward’) hidden or esoteric meaning behind the literal wording of sacred texts and religious prescriptions, notably the Qurʾān and the shariʿa (q.v.), as distinct from the ẓāhir (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bāṭinīs, Bāṭiniyya</td>
<td>the Esotericists, the groups associated with Bāṭin (q.v.). A designation coined for the Ismāʿīlīs by their opponents who accused them of dispensing with the ẓāhir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beg (Turk.)</td>
<td>prince, chieftain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Būyids</td>
<td>(or Buwayhids) Shiʿī Persian dynasty of Deylamite origin that flourished in Iran and Iraq (320-454/932-1062), and coexisted with the ʿAbbāsid caliphs in Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caliph</td>
<td>Arabic: khalīfa (lit. ‘successor’ or ‘deputy’) this Qurʾānic term adopted by ʿAbd al-Malik (reg.685-705) as alternative title for the leader of the Islamic community; khalīfat Allah: deputy of God; khalīfat Rasūl Allah: successor to the Messenger of God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dāʿī</td>
<td>(pl. duʿāt; lit. ‘caller’, ‘propagandist’, ‘summoner’) a religious propagandist or missionary of various Muslim groups, especially amongst the Ismāʿīlīs; a high rank in the daʿwa (q.v.) hierarchy of the Ismāʿīlīs. The term dāʿī came to be used generically from early on by the Ismāʿīlīs in reference to any authorized representative of their daʿwa; a propagandist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daʿwa</td>
<td>(lit. ‘call’, ‘propaganda’, ‘summon’) in the religio-political sense, <em>daʿwa</em> is the invitation or call to adopt the cause of an individual or family claiming the right to the imamate, especially amongst the Ismāʿīlīs. The Ismāʿīlīs often referred to their movement simply as <em>al-daʿwa</em>, or more formally as <em>al-daʿwa al-ḥādiya</em>, ‘the rightly guiding mission’; missionary movement; propagation; proselytization; a summon to allegiance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dinār</td>
<td>gold coin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dīwān</td>
<td>a public financial register; administrative bureau; chancellery; the collected works of a poet (the shared idea being that a <em>dīwān</em> constitutes a listing or compilation of something)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faḍāʿīl</td>
<td>(sing. <em>faḍīla</em>) merits; moral excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faqīh</td>
<td>an exponent of <em>fiqh</em> (q.v.); a specialist in Islamic jurisprudence; a Muslim jurist; a Muslim legal scholar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fāṭimids</td>
<td>descendants of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and Fāṭima, the Prophet’s daughter, corresponding to Fāṭimid ʿAlids (q.v.); Ismāʿīlī dynasty of caliph-imams, claiming Fāṭimid descent, that flourished in North Africa (from 297/909) and Egypt (358/969) until overthrown by Saladin in 567/1171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatwā</td>
<td>(pl. <em>fatāwā</em>) a legal decision, issued by a legal scholar (<em>muftī</em>) in response to a question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fidāʾī</td>
<td>one who offers his life for a cause; a term used for special devotees in several religio-political Muslim groups; particularly those Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs of Persia and Syria who, during the Alamūt period, risked their lives in the service of their community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>fiqh</strong></td>
<td>(pl. <em>fuqahā</em>; lit. ‘understanding’) Islamic jurisprudence; the science of law in Islam; the discipline of elucidating the <em>sharīʿa</em> (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ghayba</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘absence’) the condition of anyone who has been withdrawn by God from the eyes of men and whose life during that period of occultation (called his <em>ghayba</em>) may be miraculously prolonged. In this sense, a number of Shīʿī groups have recognized the <em>ghayba</em> of one or another imam (q.v.), with the implication that no further imam was to succeed him and he was to return at a foreordained time before the Day of Resurrection, <em>qiyāma</em> (q.v.), as Mahdī (q.v.); occultation of the twelfth Shīʿī imam, who disappeared in 260/874; <em>al-ghayba al-kubrā</em> greater occultation; <em>al-ghayba al-ṣughrā</em> lesser occultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ghāzī</strong></td>
<td>Muslim warrior, typically against non-Muslim on the frontier; fighter in the holy war or jihad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ghulāt</strong></td>
<td>(sing. <em>ghālī</em>; lit. ‘exaggerator’, ‘extremist’) a polemical term for individuals and groups accused of exaggeration (<em>ghuluww</em>) in religion and in respect to the imams (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ḥadīth</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘speech’) a Prophetic Tradition; a statement attributed to the Prophet, or a report about his action, prefaced by a chain of transmitting authorities; <em>ḥadīth</em> constitutes one of the major sources of Islamic law, second in importance only to the Qurʾān. For the Shīʿī communities, it generally also refers to the actions and sayings of their imams (q.v.). The Shīʿīs accepted those <em>ḥadīths</em> related from the Prophet which had been handed down or sanctioned by their imams in conjunction with those <em>ḥadīths</em> related from the imams recognized by them. The Shīʿīs also use the terms <em>riwāyāt</em> and <em>akhbār</em> as synonyms of <em>ḥadīth</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ḥājib</strong></td>
<td>chamberlain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḥashwī</td>
<td>Literalist traditionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥanafī</td>
<td>[attrib. or as adj.] pertaining to Ḥanafī schools of jurisprudence, [n.] adherent of Ḥanafī schools of jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence</td>
<td>one of the four main Sunnī schools of jurisprudence (<em>madhāhib</em>), named after Abū Ḥanīfa (d.150/767), most popular in Turkey, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥanbalī</td>
<td>[attrib. or as adj.] pertaining to Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence, [n.] adherent of Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence</td>
<td>one of the four main Sunnī schools of law (<em>madhāhib</em>), named after Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d.241/855), it is the <em>madḥhab</em> to which the founder of Wahhabism belonged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hasanids</td>
<td>see ʿAlids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husaynids</td>
<td>see ʿAlids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>son; e.g. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh (Muḥammad, son of ʿAbd Allāh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ijāza</em></td>
<td>a licence granting formal permission to teach or transmit a particular Islamic text issued by the master with whom one had studied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ijtihād</em></td>
<td>(lit. ‘personal effort’) the use of individual reasoning in interpreting Islamic law in order to make a decision on a point of law not explicitly covered by the Qur’ān or the <em>sunna</em>; renewal in legal development; Contrasted with <em>taqlīd</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ilḥād</em></td>
<td>deviation from the right religious path; heresy in religion. The Ismāʿīlīs were often accused of <em>ilḥād</em> by their opponents: Sunnī Muslims and Twelvers. A person accused of <em>ilḥād</em> called <em>mulḥid</em> (pl. <em>malāḥida</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>'ilm</strong></td>
<td>(pl. 'ulūm) knowledge, more specifically religious knowledge. Amongst the Shīʿīs, it was held that every imam (q.v.) possessed a special secret knowledge, 'ilm, which was divinely inspired and transmitted through the nasṣ (q.v.) of the preceding imam.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>imām</strong></td>
<td>(pl. a'immə; lit. ‘one who stands in front’, ‘model’) it can refer to a) the prayer leader b) the founders of the Sunnī schools of law-Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik b. Anas, al-Shāfī‘ī and B. Ḥanbal- and other significant religious figure such as imām al-Ghazālī; Anglicized as imam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imām</strong></td>
<td>In Shīʿī Islam, the infallible spiritual and political leader of the Shīʿī Muslim community, ‘Alī and his descendants through Fāṭima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imamate</strong></td>
<td>the office of religious leadership in Shīʿī Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imāmī</strong></td>
<td>a Shīʿa of the Twelver persuasion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iraction ʿajam</strong></td>
<td>Persian Iraq. This term, spread by Khurāsānī authors after the Saljuq conquest, conveys in some degree the overall unity of an ‘Irāqī’ region straddling the Mesopotamian plain and the Iranian plateau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ismāʿīlīs</strong></td>
<td>also Seveners; member of a branch of Shīʿī Islam founded in 148/765, which split off from what was to become the Twelvers. They emphasize on esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān, influenced by Neoplatonism and with a belief in a cyclical theory of history centered on the number seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>isnād</strong></td>
<td>(pl. asānīd; lit. ‘support’) the chain of authorities transmitting a ḥadīth (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ithnā ʿAsharīs</strong></td>
<td>also Twelvers or Imāmīs; majority branch of the Shīʿás, who acknowledge twelve Imāms after the death of the Prophet, and believe that the twelfth Imām went into occultation and will return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>kalām</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘speech’) Islamic scholastic theology; dialectic; dogmatic theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khabar al-wāḥid</strong></td>
<td>Single-source tradition</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khānqāh</strong> (Pers.)</td>
<td>Sufi monastery, convent or lodge; building for Sufi gatherings mainly in areas of Persian influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khuṭba</strong></td>
<td>A sermon delivered (by a khaṭīb) at the Friday midday public prayers in the mosque; since it includes a prayer for the ruler, mention in the khuṭba is a mark of sovereignty in Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khwāja</strong></td>
<td>Master; a title used in different senses in Islamic lands; it was frequently accorded to scholars, teachers, merchants, and wazīrs (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laqab</strong></td>
<td>(pl. alqāb) nickname, sobriquet, honorific title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Madhhab</strong></td>
<td>(pl. madhāhib; lit. ‘movement’) legal school. In Sunnī Islam, there are four main systems of fiqh (q.v.): Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfiʿī and Ḥanbalī, named after the jurists who founded them. The vast majority of Shīʿa as follow a fifth school, called Jaʿfarī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Madrasa</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘place of study’) an Islamic school or college, frequently attached to a mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mahdī</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘the rightly guided one’) a name applied to the restorer of true religion and justice who, according to a widely held Muslim belief, will appear and rule before the end of the world. This name with its various messianic connotations has been applied to different individuals by Shīʿīs and Sunnīs in the course of the centuries. Belief in the coming of the Mahdī of the family of the Prophet, the ahl al-bayt (q.v.), became a central aspect of the faith in Shīʿī Islam in contrast to Sunnī Islam. Also distinctively Shīʿī was the common belief in a temporary absence or occultation, ghayba (q.v.), of the Mahdī and his eventual return, rajʿa (q.v.), in glory. In Shīʿī epithet al-qāʿim (q.v.), ‘riser’, also called qaʿim āl Muḥammad, denoting a member of the Prophet’s family who would rise and restore justice on earth. Various</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
early Shīʿī groups expected the return of the last imam (q.v.) recognized by them in the role of the qāʾīm. In Imāmī and Ismāʿīlī usage, the term qāʾīm widely replaced that of Mahdī

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>majlis</strong></th>
<th>(pl. majālīs) gathering, session, council, meeting, assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mālikī</strong></td>
<td>[attrib. or as adj.] pertaining to Mālik, [n.] adherent of Mālikī school of jurisprudence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mālikī school of jurisprudence</strong></td>
<td>one of the four main Sunnī schools of jurisprudence (madhāhib), named after Mālik b. Anas (d.179/795)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>manāqib</strong></td>
<td>(sing. manqaba) virtues, outstanding traits; moral excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>masjid</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘place of prostration’) mosque; masjid jāmi‘, congregational mosque where the Friday prayer is performed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>minbar</strong></td>
<td>The raised pulpit in a mosque from which the imam delivers the khuṭba (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>muʿadhdhin</strong></td>
<td>one who calls Muslims to prayer from a mosque. Anglicized as muezzin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>muftī</strong></td>
<td>a specialist in Islamic jurisprudence, qualified to issue legal decisions upon questions of law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>muhājirūn</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘emigrants’) name given collectively to those Meccan followers of the Prophet who accompanied him in his emigration (hijra) from Mecca to Medina, as distinct from the ansār (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mulḥid</strong></td>
<td>(pl. malāḥida) see ilḥād</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mushabbihī</strong></td>
<td>anthropomorphist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mutakallim</strong></td>
<td>(pl. mutakallimūn) practitioner of kalām (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muʿtazilī school of theology</td>
<td><em>(n.)</em> early rationalist theological school in Islam characterized by belief in human free will, the justice of God and the createdness of the Qurʾān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muʿtazilī</td>
<td>a) <em>[n.]</em> (lit. ‘those who stand aloof’) an adherent of Muʿtazilī school of theology. b) <em>[attrib. or as adj.]</em> relating to Muʿtazilī school of theology. In Arabic Muʿtazilī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>naqīb</em></td>
<td>(lit. ‘head’, ‘chief’) a lieutenant or representative of a particular sectarian group who is answerable for the actions of his group to the rulers of the city. A chief <em>naqīb</em> was referred to as <em>naqīb al-nuqabā</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Naṣb</em></td>
<td>the enmity towards ʿAlī and his family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nāṣibī</em></td>
<td><em>(pl. Nawāṣib)</em> a Muslim who go to extreme in his/her dislike of ʿAlī or his family; he is the counterpart of the <em>Rāfiḍī</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nizārīds</td>
<td>descendants of Nizār b. al-Mustanṣir, the nineteenth imam of the Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs, to whom the subsequent Nizārī imams traced their descent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>qāḍī</em></td>
<td><em>(pl. quḍāt)</em> a judge who rules according to Islamic law. The <em>qāḍī al-quḍāt</em> (chief judge) was appointed to oversee a number of other judges in a particular city or region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>qāʾim</em></td>
<td>(lit. ‘riser’) the eschatological Mahdī (q.v.). In pre-Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī Islam, the terms Mahdī and <em>qāʾim</em> were both used, as in ʿImāmī Shīʿī Islam, for the expected messianic imam. After the rise of the Fāṭimids, the name al-Mahdī was reserved for the first Fāṭimid caliph-imam, while the eschatological imam and seventh <em>nāṭiq</em> (q.v.) still expected for the future was called the <em>qāʾim</em> by the Ismāʿīlīs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>qiyyāma</em></td>
<td>the Resurrection; the Last Day when mankind will be judged and committed forever to either Paradise or Hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qurʾān (Koran)</strong></td>
<td>the holy scripture of Muslims, believed by them to have been revealed to the prophet Muḥammad (d.632) by God. Often abbreviated as “Q” in this dissertation</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rafḍ</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘to reject’, ‘to dismiss’) the enmity towards the first three caliphs and the rejection of their legitimacy in favor of the caliphate of `Alī b. Abī Ṭālib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rāfiḍa</strong></td>
<td>(pl. Rawāfid; lit. ‘rejectors’) a term of abuse given by the Sunnīs to the Shīʿas because they rejected the legitimacy of the first three caliphs in favor of the caliphate of `Alī b. Abī Ṭālib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>raʾīs</strong></td>
<td>headman, leader, chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>rajʿa</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘return’) the return or reappearance of a messianic personality, specifically one considered as the Mahdī (q.v.). A number of early Shīʿī groups awaited the return of one or another imam as the Mahdī, often together with many of his supporters, from the dead or from occultation, ghayba (q.v.), before the Day of Resurrection, qiyāma (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ṣaḥāba</strong></td>
<td>(sing. ṣāḥib; lit. ‘companion’) the Companions of the Prophet, including the muhājirūn (q.v.) and the anṣār (q.v.), amongst other categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ṣayyid</strong></td>
<td>(pl. sādāt; lit. ‘master’) descendant of the Prophet, particularly in the Ḥusaynid line; an honorific appellation for men of authority; see ʿAlids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seljūqs</strong></td>
<td>Turkish dynasty (429-590/1038-1194) that established itself in Iran in the 5th/11th century and extended its rule westward to Iraq, Syria and Anatolia. Anglicized as Seljuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shāfiʿī</strong></td>
<td>[attrib. or as adj.] pertaining to Shāfiʿī schools of jurisprudence, [n.] adherent of Shāfiʿī schools of jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shāfiʿī schools of jurisprudence</strong></td>
<td>[n.] one of the four main Sunnī schools of jurisprudence (<em>madhāhib</em>), named after Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī (d.204/820) which became popular in Lower Egypt, Syria, East Africa, southern Arabia and South-East Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shāh</strong></td>
<td>an Iranian royal title denoting a king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sharīʿa</strong></td>
<td>Islamic law, interpreted by the <em>fuqahāʿ</em> (q.v.); The provisions of the <em>sharīʿa</em> are worked out through the discipline of <em>figh</em> (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sharīf</strong></td>
<td>(pl. <em>ashrāf</em>, lit. ‘noble’) in Umayyad times used generally of the leading Arab families, then more particularly of the descendants of the Prophet, particularly in the Ḥsanid line; see ‘Alids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shaykh</strong></td>
<td>(lit. ‘elder’) spiritual master, teacher; religious dignity; mystical guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shīʿa</strong></td>
<td>(<em>n.</em> or <em>adj.</em>) (lit. ‘party’, ‘follower’, from <em>shīʿat ʿAlī</em> ‘the party of ʿAlī’) the second and smaller of the two main branches of Islam, the other being the Sunnī; Those who follow ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the prophet Muḥammad’s cousin and son-in-law, in particular, and assert his imamate and caliphate by appointment (<em>waṣiyya</em>) and delegation (<em>naṣṣ</em>) made either openly or secretly. They backed ʿAlī during the First Civil War (656–661 C.E.). After ʿAlī, they held that the imams were to be drawn from his descendants, eventually organized into three branches: Zaydí, Ismāʿīlīs (Seveners) and Imāmīs (Twelvers or Ithnā ʿAsharīs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shihna</strong></td>
<td>military governor; police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shīʿī</strong></td>
<td>[attrib. or as <em>adj.</em>] pertaining to Shīʿī school of jurisprudence/theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shīʿī Islam</strong></td>
<td>[n.] The doctrines or principles of the Shīʿas. Contrasted with Sunnī Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shīʿa</strong></td>
<td>[n.] adherent of Shīʿī school of jurisprudence/theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sufi</td>
<td>a Muslim mystic, follower of Sufi tradition in Islam, a member of an organized Sufi order, ṭarīqa (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufi tradition</td>
<td>Islamic mysticism; there are many Sufi orders all over the Muslim world, with a variety of beliefs and practices; in Arabic taṣawwuf'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sultan</td>
<td>(lit. ‘power’, ‘authority’) title used by the supreme political and military ruler in a Muslim state, Seljuq period and after, as distinct from the khalīfa; a Muslim term for sovereign. Anglicized as sultan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni</td>
<td>a) [n.] the larger of the two main branches of Islam, the other being the Shī‘a. b) [n.] adherent of Sunni Islam. c) [attrib. or as adj.] pertaining Sunni Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni Islam</td>
<td>[n.] The doctrines or principles of the Sunnīs. Contrasted with Shī‘ī Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tafsir</td>
<td>(lit. ‘explanation’) the commentary on the Qur’ān; the external, philological exegesis of the Qur’ān, in distinction from taʾwīl (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ṭālibids</td>
<td>descendants of Abū Ṭālib b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, the father of ʿAlī and full-brother of the Prophet’s father ʿAbd Allā; including particularly the ʿAlids (q.v.) and the descendants of ʿAlī’s brother Jaʿfar al-Ṭayyār</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taqiyya</td>
<td>precautionary dissimulation of one’s true religious belief and practice in time of danger, especially among the Twelver (Ithnāʾ ʿasharī) and Ismāʿīlī Shī‘as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taqlīd</td>
<td>(lit. ‘imitation’) dependence on the views of earlier legal authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭarīqa</td>
<td>(lit. ‘way’, ‘path’) the mystical spiritual path followed by Sufis (q.v.); any one of the organized Sufi orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taʾwīl</td>
<td>the educing of the inner meaning from the literal wording or apparent meaning of a text or a ritual, religious prescription; as a technical term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
among the Shīʿīs, it denotes the method of educing the *bāṭin* (q.v.) from the *ẓāhir* (q.v.); as such it was extensively used by the Shīʿīs for allegorical, symbolic or esoteric interpretation of the Qurʾān. Translated also as hermeneutic exegesis, *taʿwīl* may be distinguished from *tafsīr* (q.v.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Umayyads</th>
<th>the first Islamic dynasty of caliphs (41-132/661-750), established after the death of ʿAlī, which ruled until the Ābbāsid revolution; a branch of the family also ruled in al-Andalus (138-422/756-1031)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>uṣūl al-dīn</em></td>
<td>principles of religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>uṣūl al-fiqh</em></td>
<td>principles of Islamic jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>uṣūl</em></td>
<td>(lit. ‘roots’) legal methodology; foundations; principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uṣūlī</td>
<td>Shīʿī theological school which favoured the use of <em>ijtihād</em>. Contrasted with Akhbarī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wālī</em></td>
<td>governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>wazīr</em></td>
<td>chief minister. The power and status of the office of <em>wazīr</em>, called <em>wizāra</em> (Anglicized as vizierate), varied greatly in different periods and under different Muslim dynasties; Anglicized as vizier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ẓāhir</em></td>
<td>(lit. ‘outward’) literal or exoteric meaning of sacred texts and religious prescriptions, notably the Qurʾān and the <em>sharīʿa</em> (q.v.), as distinct from the <em>bāṭin</em> (q.v.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaydīs</td>
<td>also Fivers; a branch of Shīʿī Islam, following imams of ʿAlid descent, based mainly in northern Iran and Yemen, characterized by Muʿtazilī beliefs and the willingness to participate in armed rebellions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>