

HISTORY OF THE SHI'A IN THE TIME OF IMAM BAQIR

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ABSTRACT: Imam Baqir's Imamate began one century after the dawn of Islam, during the rule of Mu'awiya and the Umayyads. Given the oppressive rule of the Umayyads in their thirst for power through seeking conquests, dividing the Islamic community, promoting pre-Islamic traditions, and boycotting the Shi'a and the 'Alawites, Imam Baqir made efforts to spread the Islamic culture promoting the teachings of the school of Ahlul Bayt by establishing an Islamic educational institution. The following article offers a brief biography of the Imam, including his intellectual and political accomplishments. Some of Imam Baqir's endeavours include solidifying the religious beliefs of the community, spreading a jurisprudential-religious culture, training students so as to become Islamically proficient, and protecting Shi'a organizations from collapsing in the hands of the Umayyads.

¹ This paper is a translation of Chapter Eight of *The History of Shi'ism*, vol. 1: The Period of Shi'a Imam's Presence, Qum: 2005, Hawzah wa Daneshgah and Samt Publishers.

A brief biography of Imam Baqir

Imam Muhammad ibn Ali Baqir ibn Husayn is the fifth Imam of the Twelver Shi'a, his patronymic (*kunya*) being Abu Ja'far. He was nicknamed Bāqir, Hādi, Shākir, Amin, Sābir, and Shabih,² and was the first Imam whose lineage reached Prophet Muhammad from both his maternal and paternal sides.³ His mother, Fāṭima, was a distinguished woman whom Imam Ṣādiq said she was matchless among the descendants of Hasan.⁴ There are disagreements about the date of his birth and martyrdom. According to the most well-known accounts, Imam Baqir was born on Friday, the 1st of Rajab, 57 AH in the city of Medina, and was martyred on the 7th of Dhil Hijjah, 114 AH at the age of 57.

Imam Bāqir lived during the last four years during the Imamate of his grandfather, Imam Husayn ibn Ali, and during about thirty-seven years of the period of the Imamate of his father Imam al-Sajjād. His life coincided with the rule of ten Umayyad caliphs. The Imamate of Imam Bāqir lasted nineteen years and coincided with five Umayyad caliphs, from al-Walid I to Hishām.

The Imam lived in Medina his entire life with the exception of one journey to Damascus, Syria explained in the following.

1 *Kashf a-Ghummeḥ*, vol. 2, p. 329, the nickname of Shabih is because of his resemblance to the Holy Prophet (s)

2 Khārazmy, Mowaffaq Ibn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Mallky, *Al-Manaqib*, vol. 4, p. 208.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 469.

4 Ibid; *Kashf al-Ghummeḥ*, vol. 2, p. 329, *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 158; Ibn khalkan, Ahmad Ibn Muhammad, *Wafiat al-A'yaan*, vol. 3, p. 314. Also it is said in 56 A.H. : Ibn 'imād, *Shadharat al-Dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 149; *History of Islam and Wafayat Al-Mashāhir and Al-'Aalam*. vol. 4, p. 401; Ṣafḍary, Khalil Ibn Iback, *Al-Wafa Bi al-Wafiyāt*, vol. 4, p. 102.

Political, social, and cultural conditions

The anti-Alawite and anti-Islamic policies of the Umayyads intensified after their establishment. Their approach was based on conquest and expansionism; the Umayyad caliph Walid ibn 'abd al-Malik⁵ promoted victory, wealth, and convenience⁶ and managed to improve, repair, and develop roads and construct buildings. Later eastern conquests halted at the time of Sulayman ibn Abdul-Malik, another Umayyad caliph. Thus, Khurāsān⁷ was where Arabs and Khorasanians disputed, and this paved the way for the Abbasids. The conquests in the western front proceeded toward Constantinople. During the end of Abdul-Malik's term, Rome dominated.⁸ The victories halted during the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz.⁹ Since he had been the governor of Medina for six years during the time of previous caliphs, he formed a shelter for people who were prosecuted and tortured by the cruel agents of caliph. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz adopted the approach of the first caliphs (*The Rashedin*, or “*The Guided Ones*”) during his caliphate. In order to decrease the hostility of Shi'a and Khārijis towards the Umayyads, he provided relative freedom for groups and was lenient toward the non-Muslims. He attempted to invite them to Islam and exercised relative freedom of religion. He also adopted reformist methods in the administrative and governmental system, and forbade vilifying and cursing Imam Ali to continue implementing detente

⁵ 86-96 AH/705-715

⁶ Taqqush, Muhammad Suhei, *The History of the Umayyad Rule*, translator, Hujjatullah Judaki, p. 112.

⁷ Mashhad, Iran

⁸ Ibid, pp. 118-142.

⁹ 101-99AH

policies.¹⁰ Moreover, by taking a courageous measure, he lifted the ban of recording and narrating hadith an act implemented for one century. But after the death of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and other caliphs' reign, the Umayyad policies continued with the same oppressive, authoritarian approach. In particular, at the time of Hishām, more severe repressive policies, especially toward the Shi'a, ruled the society.

A conversation between the Imam and one of his own devotees portrays the social and political conditions of that time.¹¹ These types of exchanges depicted the intolerable political and social circumstances under which the Imams and the Shi'a lived.

3. Causes of the Umayyad downfall

The decline of the Umayyad government began after Hisham, and during the time of Imam Bāqir. The downfall of such governments occurs due to

¹⁰ Ibid; pp. 152-142.

¹¹ Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan, Amāli, p. 95; Greeting the Imam, that person asked him, "How are you?" Imam Bāqir, who was very upset with the people of that time, sighed and told him: "Don't you ask me what is happening to us?!" Then he explained about oppression and enmities of oppressors and stated, "Among the Ummah, we are like Bani Isrāil (children of Israel), whose children they killed and whose women they kept alive, oh' they, rulers, kill our children and keep our women alive. Arabs think that they are superior to non-Arabs, and when non-Arabs ask about the reason for this, they say: Because Muhammad is from among us, and he was an Arab. And people accept this argument. The Quraishites supposed that they are superior to other tribes of Arab and in the response to those who ask about it, they used to say, "Because Muhammad is from among Quraish. "And people accepted this argument. If this is logical, then we are progeny of Muhammad and his household, and we have no equal in this virtue."

In that moment, the man swore by Allāh and said, "Truly I love your family." The Imam replied, "So, accept calamities. By Allāh! Difficulties and pains rush to us and our Shi'a faster than flood of valley. First, we face difficulties then you, as such if there is a comfort, it will be for us then for you."

the natural stages they experience of coming into existence, growth, strength, decline, and eventually, collapse.

3-1. Conflict within the Umayyad family

The policies of Mu'āwiyah¹² were as follows: 1) Demanding assistance from the elite Umayyads; 2) Preventing their power and influence from increasing; 3) Protecting the caliphate of the Umayyad family through the Yazid, the heir; 4) Creating unity within the Umayyads and preventing disagreements and conflicts.

With the decline of the Sufyanids, the Marwanids came to. It seems that there was a minor conflict between the family of Abi Sufyān and Abi al-'As, the father of Marwān. Marwān came to power after the death of Muāwiyah II. A contract was signed for the caliphate of Marwān on the condition that Khālid ibn Yazid and then Umar ibn Sa'id ibn 'As become caliph after him, though he disregarded the contract after a while and then secured allegiance to 'Abd al-Malik and then Abd al-'Aziz.¹³

After a while, 'Abd al-Malik killed his rival, 'Amr ibn Sa'id, and conflict intensified so much that, his brother, Yahya ibn Sa'id, confirmed ibn Zubayr's movement.¹⁴ After experiencing an array of obstacles, Abd al-Malik managed to reduce the clashes through creating unity.

There were disagreements over the election of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, but when Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik was elected as the heir, the disagreements decreased. Of course, Hishām was one of Umar's opponents. There were some from among the Umayyad family who opposed Umar ibn Abd al-

¹² The first Umayyad caliph

¹³ *Tārikh al-Tabari*, vol. 5, pp. 541, 611

¹⁴ *Ansāb Al-Ashraf*, vol. 4, section 4, p. 142.

Aziz's open policies. Therefore, with the death of 'Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz and the reign Yazid, the same past stifling policies were adopted. Hishām is the most political caliph of Umayyad; his period is considered the height of the Umayyad power. At that time, there appeared some opponents from among the Hishām family, and his heir-apparent led them. Finally, he escaped from Hishām and lived out of Damascus until the death of Hishām.

The period of weakness of the Umayyads started after the death of Hishām. Hishām's son, Walid II, was an unbeliever and heretic and a widespread revolt emerged against him.¹⁵ Disunity within the Umayyad family intensified, and Walid was killed by his kin. Under such circumstances, the power struggle intensified, and many caliphs came to power shortly one after another. This way, the Umayyad stability was undermined and they were buried under the dust of fire which they themselves had ignited.

3-2. Appointing two heirs

It seemed that the Umayyad family could resolve conflicts by appointing two heirs from both sides; this arrangement was made for the rule of Marvān in Jābīah, but he disregarded it and elected two heirs from among his sons.

'Abd al-Malak wanted to oust his brother and appointed his two sons as heirs, but 'Abd al-'Aziz died earlier and in any case, 'Abd al-Malak appointed his two sons as heirs. Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik overthrew his brother so that his son, 'Abd al-'Aziz, would become heir. At this chain of

¹⁵ *Tārikh al-Tabari*, vol. 7, p. 232.

successors, only 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz did not seek to overthrow Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik despite his conflict with Yazid. Likewise, Hishām was going to oust Walid, but he died. When Walid came to power, he decided to take revenge on followers of Hishām who plotted to overthrow his heir. There are some instances of vengeance of rulers and their successors which penetrated from the level of caliph to princes and commanders and caused a severe political turmoil.

Conflicts and disagreements between tribes

To the Umayyads, the caliphate was a new type of pagan tribal system. Bigotry and prejudice were the most important principles in protecting and managing tribes. By shattering the tribal system and removing bigotry and prejudice, Islam created a new plan in managing society and protecting the Islamic nation. The sources of pride, competitions, and conflicts were revived by the Umayyads' power and their paganism.

The Umayyads exercised authority through a) Opening immigrations of northern and southern (Yemeni) Arabs to Iraq (Jazirah), Shaam, and Iran, including their conquests and spoils, b) coexistence with non-Arabs, c) the presence of non-Arabs in the social, economic, and military arenas, d) boasting Arab superiority, and e) introducing a tribe to the government or vice versa. Sometimes Qaysies (Midrids) were luck and sometimes the Kalbies (Yemenis). Those who came to power retaliated against rivals, and the other sought to oppose and rebel against him. During his ruling, Hishām was once the ally of Qaysies and then the ally of Yemenis in two completely different cycles. In other words, when he felt threatened by one of them, he took the side of the other. The danger of these engaged tribes was so great that all Yemeni tribes of Iraq and Damascus rebelled against the caliph under the pretext of the murder of Khālid ibn 'Abd Allāh

Qasari. They killed Walid in 126 AH and pledged allegiance to Yazid. The Abbasids took advantage of the rivalry between the tribes and conquered the Umayyads.

Politico-religious disagreements

The various religious sects and the adherents of each claimed caliphate during that era are as follows:

A. The Umayyad followers, most of whom were Sunnis, confirmed and assisted the Umayyad caliphs.

B. The Shi'as and Alawis who regarded the caliphate as belonging only to the descendants of Imam Ali and constantly strived to restore this violated right, although they did not always succeed as their activities undermined the Umayyad government.

C. The Umayyads had extensive conflicts with the Khārijis, who considered the rule of tyrannical caliphs unlawful and struggled to destroy them.

G. The Abbasids were the most powerful opponent whom, during their secret struggle for 34 years, patiently propagated their ideas in the large political area from Khurāsān to Iraq. They also succeeded in attracting opposition groups towards themselves using the slogan "The appointed one from among the progeny of Prophet Muhammad." Finally, they conquered the Umayyad government by uprising of a group called the Ones with the Black Outfit.

The transition of government from the Umayyads to the Abbasids occurred with assistance of Iranians, Khurāsānids, and rebellious Umayyad forces, Shi'as and Alawids.

The prohibition of the writing of hadith was one of the important cultural issues during that time, an issue raised during the rule of the first caliphs with political motives and forcefully implemented under the pretext of religious motivation and sympathy toward the Qur'an in order to protect it from mixing with hadith. Because of the above-mentioned prohibition, the hadiths of the Prophet were gradually forgotten. The Prophet's companions each of which knew tens or perhaps hundreds of hadiths by heart were killed in the battles or died naturally without teaching them to others. Using their faulty memories, they could pass on just a few of hadiths to the next generation.

Because the hadiths of the Prophet were not accessible, by the order of the caliphs, hadith narrators and liars forged many hadiths and spread them with religious, personal, and political motivations.

It seems that the claim of caliph protecting the Qur'an from mixing with hadith was only related to the Prophet's hadiths, because the spread of Jewish Lore was not prohibited, and storytellers' practice was not banned. Islamic hadiths were replaced by this type of news and myths. The lack of hadith and Muslims' need for Islamic hadiths on the one hand and delivering Jewish Lore and spurious news to society on the other hand paved the way for accepting those news, and Jewish Lore became a part of Islamic culture and gained an important position in Islamic society.

Among the Muslims, the Shi'a strove to narrate and record hadiths of the Prophet from the very beginning. Imam Ali was the first who tried to protect the prophetic legacy by recording the hadiths of the Prophet. The book *Sahife* on blood-money and other kinds of financial compensation was written by Imam Ali, and it had been passed down to other members

of the Ahlul Bayt until it was received by Imam Bāqir, who showed it to some of his elite companions.

Imam Baqir had many students and taught a variety of subjects; he also emphasized on studying the Prophet's hadiths, especially during a time when the ban on the recording of hadiths was lifted. For this reason, his students published numerous works such as the prominent collection of *Usūl Arba'miah*,¹⁶ principles (*usūl*) on various topics of Islamic jurisprudence and sciences that later became an important source for hadith scholars on Shi'a history and jurisprudence.

4. Imam Bāqir's accomplishments

According to all Shi'a and Sunni scholars, because Imam Bāqir had considerable knowledge, Jābir Ibn 'abd Allah al-Ansāri narrated that the Prophet named him "Bāqir" and "Bāqir ul-Ulūm" because, as the Prophet said about him, Bāqir means one who "dissects sciences completely."¹⁷

This means that Imam had knowledge of the most delicate issues and was also able to bring out new ideas and sciences from the existing knowledge. In the Imam's biography, historians have accepted this reason, and for his vast knowledge, even Sunni historians considered him as one of the jurists

16 According to Shaykh Mufid: Imamiyyah wrote four hundred books called "*Asl*" from the time of Imām Ali until the time of Imām Askary and according to Muhaqiq Hilli, this number of four hundred indicates only principles (*Asl*) which have been compiled by four hundred students of Imām Ṣādiq. In fact, the total number of them is more than this. Like Allāmah Hilli, Ibn Shahr Ashūb, talked of seven hundred principles which has been written by the students of Imams cf Gulbarg, Etn, *Usūl Arba'miah*, the Sciences of Hadith Quarterly, issue 17.

17 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 536-537. *يبقر العلم بقرا*

of Medina.¹⁸ Great lexicographers such as Ibn Manzūr and Zubeydi referred to Imam Bāqir while explaining the meaning of the root *ba-qa-ra* and considered the reason for his naming a proof of meaning of this word. The name is also used in prayers and ziyarats as follows:

باقر العلم بعد النبي

The one who dissects the sciences after the Prophet

باقر علم النبيين

The one who dissects the sciences of the prophets

4-1. The cultural aspects of Imam Bāqir's accomplishments

A. Imam Bāqir in the era of Islamic jurisprudence

The scientific and cultural outcomes of the activities of Imam Sajjād helped establish the school of Ahlul Bayt at the time of Imam Bāqir, who was one of his father's students, and successor to his Imamate. This school influenced the jurists and many students were trained. The great number of scholars, students, and learners in that university as well as remarkable variety of taught sciences indicates significance and vastness of scientific and cultural dominance of the Imam.

Regarding the Imam's intellectual status and the scholars' regard for him, Sheikh Mufid wrote that the companions who survived as well as prominent successors and jurists narrated religious issues from the Imam.¹⁹ The Imam narrated information from the past peoples and prophets, and his society learned about the biography of the Prophet,

¹⁸ *Vafiyāt al-'Ayān*, vol. 3, p. 314. *Al-Vafiy bal-vafiyāt*, vol. 3, p. 102, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 149.

¹⁹ *Al-Irshād fī Ma'rifat Hujaj Allah ala al-Ibād*, vol. 2, p. 157

including his way of life and the military expeditions. They relied on Imam Baqir during the Hajj pilgrimage and wrote down his Qur'anic commentary. Both laymen and elites regarded his narrations as hadith and trusted and valued his statements.²⁰ These cases were so great in number that Imam became an epitome of virtue.²¹ According to Sheikh Tūsi, prominent students of Imam Bāqir were 466.²²

B. Struggle with the politico-religious thought of the Khārijis

The Khārijis raised the objection of accepting an arbiter in Islam. In response to them, the Imam referred to this verse:

فابعثوا حكماً من أهله و حكماً من أهلها ان يريدوا اصلاحاً يوفق الله بينهما

*Appoint [two] arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation.*²³

Sa'ad Ibn Ma'ādh acted as an arbiter in the battle of Bani Quraidah and this was another historic example which Imam pointed out.²⁴

C. The Issues of compulsion and volition

The Qadarites (Mu'tazilis) and Fatalists (Ash'arites) were two schools of thought that existed during this time. These groups argued for their own claim from some verses of the Qur'an:

كل حزب بما لديهم فرحون

20 Ibid., p. 163.

21 Ibid., p. 157.

22 *Rijal al-Tusi*, pp. 102-142.

23 *Sūrah al-Nisā* 35.

24 *Al-Ihtijāj 'alā Ahl al-Lijā'*, vol. 2, p. 344. Cited in "Imām Bāqir: The Manifestation of Imāmate in the Horizon of Knowledge." pp. 80- 81; There are other examples as well.

Every group is happy because of whatever they have.

These sects deviated due to separation from the Ahlul Bayt, intellectual poverty, and separating human intellect from the divine knowledge and revelation.

By rejecting both theory of absolutism in both compulsion and volition which went to extremes, Imam Bāqir established a moderate way, neither compulsion nor volition.

D. Confronting extremism

Some of the extremists believed in the divinity of Imam Ali and some of the Imams such as Imam Hasan, Imam Husayn, and Imam Bāqir. Like the Imams before and after himself, Imam Bāqir firmly opposed extremists. He began fierce and all-out combats by dissociating from them, explaining true and right beliefs, uncovering their conspiracies and in some cases ordered to execute them.

Extremists who labelled themselves Shi'a tarnished the reputation of the Shi'a society through their opinions and immodest actions. Disgracing the Shi'a in public caused the greatest damage to Islam and the Shi'a Imams. These extremists were usually permissive and immodest in their own deeds and behaviour.

Some of them believed Allah to be physical, with body parts such as having hands, feet, eyes, and ears as interpreted from the Qur'an. They also denied corporeal resurrection, the necessity of some religious obligations, propagating liberalism, permitting sinful acts, marrying those whom are forbidden to marry, and belief in reincarnation. Later a group called the Bāqiriah believed Imam Bāqir is the last Imam who never dies.

These beliefs were held to attack Islamic and Shi'a thoughts, and it was only the Imam who guarded and protected Islam and Shi'ism.

Imam Bāqir and his students were the pioneers who combated such intellectual–religious deviations. Discussions about divine unity (*tawhid*), the attributes of Allah, and an exegesis on some Quranic verses were the most significant accomplishments in clarifying and publicizing true Islam.

In this intellectual movement and cultural struggle, the Imam powerfully opposed the Jews and spread of Jewish Lore since it was one of the reasons for banning hadith documentation.

4-2. Political endeavors

Because little has been recorded on the life of Imam Bāqir, little is known about his political measures. Imam Bāqir practiced dissimulation (*taqiyyah*), and his political and cultural activities play a remarkable role in explaining the Shi'i point of view in various issues.

The calling people to the Imamate of the Ahlul Bayt, introducing the Imam, raising the issue of the scientific authority of Ahlul Bayt, proving of rightfulness of caliphate and Imamate of Ahlul Bayt and negating the legitimacy of Umayyad caliphate were cultural and political activities whose political message and effect indicates a widespread and undeniable movement.

Regarding his accomplishments, Imam Bāqir disclosed the Umayyads' plans: he knew the Umayyad rulers attempt to avert people from inclining to the Ahlul Bayt. He strived to prevent the forging and spreading false hadiths, campaigned against denying the Shi'as liberty and security, and confronted the maligning and belittling of the Shi'a Imams. All these undertakings, including his objection to Hisham, his teachings on the

right of the Ahlul Bayt in guiding people, and considering the Umayyad rule short-lived led to his imprisonment.²⁵

The Imam's support of his brother Zayd, preventing some Shi'as from accepting official positions since they were at risk for taking part in government crime, and expressing distrust in response to some from Iraq who had expressed their preparedness for obedience to the Imam all indicate his political shrewdness.²⁶

Another way in which the Imam protected Islam and Muslims against the Romans was his advice to engraving Islamic coins in place of the Roman coins with the motto of tawhid (unity of God) and prophethood.²⁷ His advice to rulers, especially to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al 'Aziz, as well as a letter he wrote to Umayyad rulers was noteworthy and enlightening.

25 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 8, p. 120; *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, pp. 163,164.

26 The Encyclopaedia of the Islamic World, the entry of "Al-Bāqir" p. 633, in addition to it. Of course, he used to guide rulers when it was necessary for protecting the honour of Islam and in Muslim's interests. It was reported that somebody had traded weapons before becoming Shi'a. He decided to give up his job after he had accepted Shi'ism and acquainted with political ideas of Shi'ism, and understood that selling weapons to the oppressive rule, the real enemies of God and Imāms of shiah, strengthened enemy, and asked Imām Bāqir about it. Imām Bāqir told him: "Sell your weapons to them, because God will repulse enemies (Romans) by them." Imām Bāqir : the Manifestation of Imāmate in the Horizon of knowledge, pp. 149, 150; Narrated from *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 112.

27 Ibid., pp. 151-153, with narrating difference of opinions about this issue. History of Islamic civilization (Tārikh tamaddun islāmi), p. 102, for more information cf: Thawāqib, Jahānbakhsh, "striking coins in Islamic caliphate" *Mishkat Magazine*, No. 68-69, p. 264.

a. Imam Bāqir and the heads of state

The rulers contemporary with Imam Bāqir were Walid ibn 'abd al-Malik,²⁸ Sulaymān ibn 'abd al-Malak,²⁹ 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz,³⁰ Yazid ibn 'abd al-Malak,³¹ and Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malak.³²

Soon after the start of the Imamate of Imam Bāqir,³³ Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik died in 96AH. There is no report about the interaction between Imam Bāqir and Walid. Suleymān's caliphate was short, though it was replete with injustice, oppression, extravagance, and tyranny.

Reported by Ya'qūbi, there was a letter exchange between Imam Bāqir and Suleymān, though there exists no report about its content and the reason behind its writing. When the cause of eulogistic address was asked, he said, "Suleymān was oppressor and tyrant; I wrote to him as is written for oppressors."³⁴

"Umar ibn 'Abd ul 'Aziz was heir to the caliphate in 96 AH. His conduct and behaviour were praised in Islamic historical sources as he was a protégé of companions and successors of Medina and attained the rank of "Hujjat" in science and knowledge.³⁵ In the short period of 'Umar ibn

²⁸ 86-96 A.H.

²⁹ 96-99 AH

³⁰ 99-101 AH

³¹ 101-105 AH

³² 105-125 AH

³³ 94-95 AH

³⁴ Tārikh Al- Ya'qūbi (the history of Ya'qūbi), vol. 2, p. 305.

³⁵ Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: "I don't accept the speech of any successor except Umr ibn 'Abd al 'Aziz." Taqqūsh, Muhammad Suhayl, "the History of Umayyad Caliphate", p. 142, the translated by Hujjat Allah Jūdaki, according to KhaTib Baqdādi : "The highest praise is to call somebody Hujjat.. "Hujjat" is applied to a person who is to a person who knows three hundred thousand

'Abd al 'Aziz's caliphate, his policies were different from all Umayyad's rulers. Once he praised Imam Sajjād after his demise by saying, "The light of the world was turned off and the beauty of Islam and the ornament of the worshippers demised."

The audience reminded him of Imam Bāqir. 'Umar wrote a letter to Imam Bāqir and the Imam responded positively with advice. 'Umar noticed the difference between the letter written to him and that of the Imam and Suleymān's, and the Imam responded by calling Suleymān an oppressor whereas 'Umar was worthy of that letter.³⁶ It is noteworthy that he returned Fadak to Imam Bāqir and the Ahlul Bayt. Imam Bāqir played such an important role in speaking with 'Umar and his advice was so effective that at that meeting, 'Umar immediately demanded paper and an inkpot to officially return the lost right to its owners.³⁷ The open-door policy, high opinion, and just performance of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al 'Aziz provided the opportunity for Shi'as to connect freely with their Imam and the Imam was also at liberty to teach Islam and Shi'ism.

After 'Umar, 25 year old Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik experienced a four-year caliphate and continued his fathers' policies in ruling the country, though he was immoral; he was notorious for being impulsive and hedonistic.³⁸ He was preoccupied with his mistress Hubaba while his agents were engaged in civil wars with Yazid ibn Muhallab and in war with Rome in

traditions. "Hujjat" is superior to trustworthy (Thiqah)." Ma'jam 'Ulūm Al-Hadith Al-Nabawi, pp. 89-90.

36 For more information cf (refer to): Fā'ūr, Ali, the Biography of Amr ibn 'Abd al Aziz.

37 For more information cf (refer to): Imām Bāqir - *Manifestation of the Truth in the Horizon of Knowledge*, pp. 180-182.

38 *Tārikh Al-Islam*, vol. 7, p. 279-281.

the Antākiah and Armanistān.³⁹ Their fixation on war led to a decrease in danger towards the Imam.

After Yazid, Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik, the tenth Umayyad caliph, became his successor; his caliphate lasted nineteen years and seven months. He was a tough, oppressive, hard-hearted, cruel, hot-tempered, miserly, and jealous.⁴⁰ Mas'ūdi narrated from Haytham ibn 'Uday, Madā'ini and others as follows:

The politicians of Umayyad were three: Mu'āwiyah, 'Abd al-Malik, and Hishām. Hishām was the last Umayyad politician. Mansūr Davāniqi considered himself the follower of Hishām's policy in many of affairs and strategies.⁴¹

The mentioned characteristics and the long period of his caliphate indicate the suffocating and stifling atmosphere during this period, as Mas'ūdi said, "The time of Hishām was the most difficult period in the history."⁴² Naturally, Shi'as were in more trouble. Hishām and his agents had controlled the Shi'ah's actions and immediately defeated any rebellion such as the event of the uprising of Zayd Ibn Ali in 122 AH.

At that time, dissimulation was the most basic policy of the Imam. Hishām recognized the status and position of the Imam and his effectiveness. On the other hand, the dissimulation of the Imam and his followers protected them from Hishām's harm and caused him to have no

39 *Tārīkh Y'aqūbi*, vol. 2, p. 313-315

40 *Ibid.*, P. 328, *Muravij al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, pp. 205-210.

41 *Murūj Al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 211.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 205.

excuse for bothering them. But Hishām did not find peace and desperately tried to find ways to prevent them from dissimulation. Hisham reported various actions held against the Imam:

1. Holding debates with Imam Bāqir

Hishām and others asked the Imam questions and raised misconceptions (*shubha*) hoping to find fault with the Imam's knowledge.⁴³ Their attempts were unsuccessful.

2. Competitions in archery

Hishām then decided to hold a competition of archery, a sport that needs a youth's strength, practice, and perseverance. Therefore, he held a meeting with the elders of tribe and invited Imam Bāqir and Imam Sādiq, his son, as well. During the event, he insisted that the Imam take part in the competition in hopes to expose the Imam's possible failure; however, when the Imam agreed to take part, the nine arrows he shot cracked each other and scored a bull's eye. Hisham was then obliged to confess to the Imam's victory.

Imam Bāqir took advantage of the event; after reciting the verse of *Ikmāl al-Din*,⁴⁴ said, "Allah has completed His blessing on the descendants of the Holy Prophet." Then Imam introduced himself as a hujjah of God that the earth will never be void of."

3. Humiliating the Imam

43 There are some examples in the following references: *Al-Ihtejāj ala Ahl al-Lijāj*, vol. 2, p. 323; *Kashf al-Ghummah*, vol. 2, p. 331.

44 Māidah, 3.

With the aim of humiliating and degrading the Imam in front of others, Hishām took any possible measure to isolate him, and his most impolite behaviour was calling the Imam “Baqarah” (cow).

4. Spreading rumours

Hishām wrote a letter to the governor of Madyan and informed him that the Imam would enter it very soon, saying, "Muhammad Ibn Ali had a conversation with Christian priests in Shām and has inclined toward Christianity. Do not allow him to enter to the city and do not trade with him."⁴⁵

5. Imprisoning Imam Bāqir

Hishām’s rancour and grudge against Imam Bāqir and the inferiority he felt by hearing the sermon of Imam Bāqir in Mecca drove him to invite the Imam to Shām. When he understood that all of his plots and tricks had been neutralized, he ordered his men to imprison the Imam. After a short time, the prison guard complained to the caliph about the presence of the Imam among prisoners and his effectiveness and influence over them. Therefore, Hishām was obliged to send the Imam from Shām to Medina.

5. The Martyrdom of Imam Bāqir

After a fruitful life and his persistent efforts to revive Islam and spread Islamic knowledge, and establish Shi’ism, Imam Bāqir was martyred⁴⁶ and poisoned by Ibrāhīm ibn Walid ibn 'abd al-Malik in on Dhul-al-Hajjeh 7th, 114 AH.⁴⁷ He was martyred in the time of Hishām as his vengeance and

45 Tabari, *Dala’el Al-Imāmat*, pp. 105-107.

46 *Al-fuṣūl al-Muhimmah*, p. 221. *Al-Ṣawaiq al-Muhriqah*, p. 210.46

47 The date of martyrdom of Imām Bāqir has been mentioned differently, in 111,113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118 AH, and more historians mentioned the 114 AH. Cf: Tabarsi, *I’lām al-Warā*, p.

enmity toward Imam Bāqir was undeniable, and thus there existed a strong motive for killing the Imam as the Umayyad's murdered. He was buried in Baqi' cemetery.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Imam Bāqir became an Imam one century after the dawn of Islam, roughly seventeen and eighteen years since the rule of Mu'awiya and the Umayyads. The method of Umayyads in the different periods of their own government was based on seeking more conquests, having social-political posts, promoting the culture of predestination, struggling against spreading Islamic justice, dividing and misleading the Islamic community, promoting pagan (pre-Islamic) traditions, destroying ideological bases of Muslims, threatening, boycotting and killing the Shi'a and the Alawites. Imam Bāqir made every effort to teach and train students, and to promote and spread the pure Islamic culture when he observed these deviations. By establishing an Islamic traditional school, he cleansed the Islamic belief of deviations and debated with masters of other sects and revealed invalidity of their beliefs. The cultural activities of the infallible, aware Imam in the arena of cultural struggle were a holy scientific movement that destroyed ignorance and revived Islam.

259 (he mentioned Rabi al Awwal instead of Dhul-Al-Hajjeh), *Tārikh al-Ya'qūbi*, vol. 2, p. 320; *Tadhkirat al-Khawāṣ*, p. 306; *Kashf al- Ghummah*, vol. 2, p. 322; Abu al-Fidā' Ismā'il ibn Ali , *Al-Mukhtaṣr fi Tārikh-al-Bashar*, vol. 1, p. 203; Yāfi'i, Abd Allah ibn Asad, *Mirāt al-Jinān*, vol.1, p. 247; *Kāmil fi Tārikh*, vol. 5, p. 180; *Al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 238; *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 372; *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 156; Abu Anbah, Aṣqar, *'Umdat al- Tālib*, p. 137. Cf: *Imām Bāqir: the Manifestation of Imāmate in the Horizon of Knowledge*, p. 23.

48 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2, p. 372; *Al-Irshād*, vol. 2, p. 156.

To succeed in this field, Imam Bāqir decided to use dissimulation in his political struggles so as to not damage this war. Some outcomes include:

1. Solidifying the ideological bases and religious beliefs of the Islamic community;
2. Spreading the jurisprudential-religious culture and explaining the legal injunctions;
3. Training students to be proficient so as to play a vital a role in jurisprudential, theological, ethical, social, and political arenas;
4. Protecting the Shi'a organizations from destruction by the Umayyads;
5. Rejecting the aberrant ideas and doubts that had entered minds of some Muslims;
6. Struggling with the wrong methods used to comprehend Islam in general and the Quran in particular on the basis of personal opinions, analogies, and baseless reasoning;
7. Setting an example for Muslims in worship, piety, science, and ethics;
8. Opposing a luxurious life;
9. Using advice to bring about reform.
10. Confronting innovation and innovators.