Ghadir, the Beginning of Imamat

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In 1978, a man named Michael Hart published a book titled *The Hundred*, in which he listed the greatest men who ever lived in the world and rated them according to how much each of them have influenced the course of human history. Michael Hart was raised as an American Catholic Christian. His findings are that the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (PBUH), deserves the top rating in the known human history. His reasons are that the Prophet is the only person who was simultaneously successful as a religious as well as a political leader, that he was an excellent teacher and social reformer and a very prudent and farsighted law-giver. If we agree with Mr. Hart's findings (and I don't see why not), then can any intelligent person imagine that such a prudent and farsighted leader would, after founding a state based on a well defined framework of law, and after having established a civilized society, fail to train and appoint a successor after him?

Well, that is what the great majority of Muslim historians, scholars and *fuqaha* (jurists) would have us believe. Let us read from a very recent work, *Islamic History, A New Interpretation* by Prof. M. A. Shaban of the University of Exeter in England. Describing the events immediately following the passing away of our prophet he writes:

At sixty-three, the Prophet was an old man, by the standards of time, and he knew that the end was near. Nevertheless he made no pronouncement on the question of how the *ummah* should continue after him. The famous *Shia* tradition that he designated his cousin Ali as his successor at Ghadir Khum should not be taken seriously. Such an event is inherently improbable considering the Arab's traditional reluctance to entrust young and untried men with great responsibility. Furthermore, at no point do our sources show the Medeni community behaving as if they had heard of

this designation.

This is, by far, typical of all historians Muslim or non-Muslim, save a few. So, what is Ghadir-e-Khum and why is there a concerted effort among our scholars to undermine such a significant event in the very formative period of our history?

It is recorded by a number of early historians that the Prophet went to his first Hajj after migrating to Medina in the 10th year AH. This was also his last Hajj and the last few days of his life. He delivered a long sermon in the Grand Mosque in which he completed those areas of the Islamic law which had required finishing touches, specifically rights of women over men. No mention was made of his succession at that point. Then on his way back from Mecca to Medina he ordered the caravan to stop at a place called Ghadir-e-Khum, an oasis situated a short distance away from Mecca. The significance of the location is that it was at this point that the caravans used to turn in various directions when leaving Mecca. It was mid-afternoon (so extremely hot in the desert sun). He ordered a makeshift dais (pulpit) to be erected. He mounted the pulpit and said "I am leaving in your midst two valuable things, the holy book, Qur'an and my Ahlul-Bayt. They will not separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond. So, if you attach yourselves to these two, you shall never go wrong after me." (bin-Hayyan, bk. 31, nom. 5920).

Then he asked the crowd (an estimated 120,000 Muslims) as to who was the supreme authority over them after Allah, to which the crowd replied in unison, "You of course, O Apostle of Allah."

Then he held Ali by the hand and raising it said: To whomever am I the *mawla* (supreme authority) so is this Ali the *mawla*.

This report does not appear in the first and foremost biography of our Prophet by Ibn Ishaq, neither is it reported by Ibn Sa'ad and Tabari, nor by any of the *hadith* collectors of the first three centuries of Hijra. The first report we find of this event is by: Ahmad B. Hanbal (d. 241 AH) In his *Musnad* and then the next report in chronological order is by Ahmad b. Shu'ayb An-Nisai (d. 303 AH) In his *Al-Khasaa'is*. Then we find this report in many other books, like

Sawa'iq-I-Muhriqa by Ibn Hajar Makki (10th c.Hijra), and Rawdhat-al-Ahbaab by Jamal-ud Din Ataullah (11th c.Hijra).

The Indian scholar Mawlana Hamid Husayn Moosawi compiled a book in 34 volumes titled *Abaqaat-Ul-Anwaar* which lists all the historians, scholars, commentators of Qur'an and jurists who have reported this tradition with the full chain of transmitters and their antecedents (*rijaal*). Other recent works are: Amini's *Al-Ghadir* in 38 volumes and *Taarikh ash-Shi'a* by Husayn 'Ali Mahfuz. This last work has enunciated that the tradition of Ghadir-e-Khum has been transmitted by at least 110 Companions of the Prophet, 84 *Taabioon* (those who were born after the Prophet but had met the Companions), 355 '*ulema*, 25 historians, 27 traditionalists, 11 commentators of Qur'an, 18 theologians and 5 philologists.(Jafri, p. 20)

The commentators of Qur'an who have mentioned this report, have associated it with the sending down of two specific verses; the first verse is:

O Prophet, declare what has been sent down to you from your lord, if you did not, it would be as if you did not fulfill your mission. Allah will protect you from people. (5:67)

According to these scholars the Prophet was asked by Allah through the revelation of this verse to announce what he did announce at Ghadir-e-Khum. The second verse in this series is as follows:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْنَةُ وَٱلدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَمَا أَهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ بِهِ وَٱلْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَٱلْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَٱلْمُتَرَدِّيةُ وَٱلنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكُلَ ٱلسَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى ٱلنُّصُب وَأَن تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِٱلْأَرْلَامِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ فِسْقُ ۗ اللَّيَوْمَ يَئِسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۗ ٱلْيَوْمَ أَكُمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ اللَّيُومَ يَئِسَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَٱخْشَوْنِ ۗ ٱللَّيَوْمَ أَكُمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِللَّهُ عَفُورٌ إِلَيْ اللَّهُ عَفُورٌ مِن يَعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ ٱلْإِسْلَلَمَ دِينَا اللَّهَ فَمَنِ ٱصْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفُ لِلْأَمْ لَا قَإِنَّ ٱلللَّهَ غَفُورٌ مِن اللَّهُ عَنُورَ مُتَجَانِفُ لِلْأَمْ لَا لَاللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَفُورٌ مِن اللَّهُ عَلَيْ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَفُورٌ مِن اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْ لَوْلَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْ لَا عَلْمُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْ لَاللَّهُ مِن اللَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْمُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللْمَالَةُ عَلَى اللَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللَّهُ عَلَى اللْمَالَةُ عَلَى اللْمَالِمَ اللْمَالِمُ اللْمُ الْمَرْعِينَ الْمُعْلِقُولُ الْمَالِمُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْعُلِمُ اللَّهُ عَلَى اللْمَعْمِ الْمُعْلِقُ الْمُعْمِ اللْمُلْلَقُولَ الْمَعْمِلَ الْمُعْلَى الْمَلْمُ اللْمُ الْمُؤْمِلُولَ اللَّهُ الْمُعْمَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى اللَّهُ الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْمَلِ الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْمِلِمُ الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْمِلِ الْمُعْلَى الْمُعْمُولِ

Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, and swine; what is slaughtered in the name

of any other than Allah; what is killed by strangling, beating, a fall, or by being gored to death; what is partly eaten by a predator unless you slaughter it; and what is sacrificed on altars. You are also forbidden to draw lots for decisions. This is all evil. Today the disbelievers have given up all hope of [undermining] your faith. So do not fear them; fear Me! Today I have perfected your faith for you, completed My favour upon you, and chosen Islam as your way. But whoever is compelled by extreme hunger—not intending to sin—then surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Quran 5:3)

Some others (e.g., Hafiz Ibn Mardwayh and Ibn Wadhih Ya'qoobi) have added that this above quoted verse was revealed after the announcement at Ghadir. By the consensus of a majority of Muslims scholars, this is the last verse of the Qur'an (in chronological order):

There are yet more reports describing the events following the Prophet's announcement at Ghadir; among them are:

- (i) Ibn Hanbal's report that Umar came and congratulated Ali on his appointment as the wali of all Muslims, and,
- (ii) Tha'albi's report that a man named Harith b. Noman Fahri approached the Prophet after the announcement and asked him whether he had appointed 'Ali out of his personal whim or on Allah's command, to which the Prophet reported to have replied that it was on Allah's command; and Harith then asked the Prophet to pray for *azaab* for him (that was the degree of hatred against Ali among some), the Prophet fulfilled his desire and a stone dropped from the skies which hit him over the head and passed through him, his saddle and his horse, killing him instantly. The revelation of the verse:

A questioner asked for the azab that was to come. (Q.70:1)

has been associated with this event.

In those days such important events were recorded by the poets in odes (qaseedah) which would be composed and recited on the spot and then would pass on from generation to

generation due to their excellent poetic quality and rhythm. Indeed we do find at least two such odes: one composed by the poet Kumayt (d. 129 Hijra) which has been studied by a number of German orientalists; and the other is that by the famous poet Hassaan b. Thabit, who is reported to have been present at Ghadir. (Jafri, p. 20)

Why then, in spite of such overwhelming evidence, do people like Prof. Shaban insist on ignoring the tradition of Ghadir? Of course, Prof. Shaban has given his reasons, but how valid are those reasons? Was Ali really an untried novice as he asserts? The fact of the matter is that Ali was at least 36 years old at the time. He had proven himself to be an able commander, a fearless soldier, a devout Muslim, a selfless worker and a capable diplomat (in the treaty of Yemen for example) at various occasions.

The answer, we believe, lies in two different things: the events following the Prophet's death and human psychology. Both common sense and historical evidence indicate that Ghadir must have happened. If we take the line of reasoning proposed by Michael Hart that Muhammad was simply an able, prudent and farsighted leader and statesman, it looks highly unlikely that he would not have considered the question of his succession and not done something about it. On the other hand, if we accept Muhammad to be an Apostle of Allah, a divinely guided leader, then we must also accept that Allah will continue this line of divine guidance in some form: if the Prophet was sent down by Allah then his successor should also be appointed on Allah's command (mansoos min Allah). Indeed this is our faith about the line of imamat and we believe that 'Ali was the first imam after the Prophet.

Let us read from another recent work, The New Encyclopedia of Islam published by Brille, Leiden in Holland, at this point. The article *Ghadir-E-Khum* by Prof. Veccia Vaglieri of the University of Milan, Italy, states very clearly that this event must have occurred as recorded in history with the said implications. Why then, Veccia Vaglieri reasons, is it not reported by some of the great early historians and biographers like Tabari, Ibn Saad and Ibn Hisham? She answers her own question by asserting that:

(they) evidently feared to attract the hostility of the Sunnis, who were in power,

by providing material for the polemic of the Shi'is, who used these words to support their thesis of 'Ali's right to the caliphate. Consequently, the Western biographers of Muhammad, whose work is based on these sources, equally make no reference to what happened at Ghadir Khum. It is, however, certain that Muhammad did speak in this place and utter the famous sentence, for the account of this event has been preserved, either in concise form or in detail, not only by Y'aqubi, whose sympathy for the 'Ali cause is well known, but also in the collections of traditions which are considered as canonical, especially in the *musnad* of Ibn Hanbal; and the *hadiths* are so numerous and so well attested by the different *isnads* (authorities) that it does not seem possible to reject them.

In fact there is another group of scholars who, although they do not reject this report outright like Prof. Shaban, do question the meanings and implications of the word *mawla*. Some have put forward a parallel report that actually some Muslims in the Prophet's entourage had clashed with Ali on some matter and there were hard feelings between the two. To diffuse the unpleasant situation the Prophet introduced Ali as everybody's *mawla* (meaning friend). Here is an example. This is quoted from Nomani.

Secondly, in some books of the Traditions of Ahl-e-Sunnat, too, the holy Prophet's sermon on the occasion of the Farewell Hajj is mentioned in which he had observed that "Ali is the *mawla* of whom I am the *mawla*." But it had nothing to do whatsoever with the question of Caliphate or Imamat. The fact of the matter is that even seven or eight months before the Last Pilgrimage, the sacred Prophet had sent Hazrat Ali with about 300 men to Yemen. They had come from Yemen to join the Prophet in the Farewell Hajj. During their stay in Yemen, some of Hazrat

Ali's companions had disagreed with him on certain matters. These persons also, had come with Hazrat Ali to take part in the Last Pilgrimage, and during the Haj they spoke about the differences they had with some of the steps taken by Hazrat Ali. It was, undoubtedly, a mistake on their part, and the Devil is always on the lookout for such an opportunity to sow the seeds of rancour and animosity in the hearts of men. When the holy Prophet came to know of it, he felt that circumstances demanded that he publicly declare what place of acceptance and liking Hazrat Ali did enjoy from the side of God. With that object, he gave the sermon in which he said,"Ali is the *mawla* of whom I am the *mawla*. O God! Have friendship towards those who have friendship for Ali, and have enmity towards those who have enmity for Ali." In Arabic the word *mawla* has a wide range of meanings. It denotes 'master,' 'slave,' 'emancipated slave,' 'helper,' 'friend,' and 'loved one.' (Nomani, p. 118-119)

If we accept this second line of reasoning then how can we explain the reports recorded by the commentators of the relevant Qur'anic verses as cited above?

We must therefore, conclude that Ghadir happened exactly as we have detailed above, that it was done by the Prophet to assert that both divine guidance as well as temporal authority¹ will remain within his closest family². As it happened, immediately after the death of the Prophet, the people of Medina behaved as if Ghadir was completely obliterated from their memories. Only moments after the Prophet had breathed his last, a meeting was held in the *saqifa* (a makeshift council hall) of Banu Sa'edah, where an oligarchy of the Makkan Quraysh prevailed over the majority of the Madinan Ansaar and

¹ For there is no separation between religion and politics in the Islamic philosophy, we have discussed this in some detail in the introduction (Section I).

² This principle of Divine guidance is also to be found in the Holy Qur'an. We suggest a reading of the excellent work titled *Succession to Muhammad* by Wilfred Madelung, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Abu Bakr was chosen/elected/appointed/pushed forward as the *khalifa* of the Muslims and the ruler of the Islamic state³. Why have I given different words for this event? Because, while the Apostolic edict of Ghadir-e-Khum was in effect, there was no need for an election, council or *shura* of any kind whatsoever. So, let the reader substitute the appropriate word depending upon his/her intelligence, leanings and prejudices. That is history. The irony of it all is that Ghadir-e-Khum has been side-tracked on the premise that the majority is always right; the event which actually brought this about, that is *saqifa*, was nothing but a confused and violent affair in which a very small minority of Quraysh aristocrats succeeded in overpowering the great majority of the Madinan Ansaar by playing tribal rivalries against each other. 'Umar, who was the driving force behind Abu Bakr's appointment as *khalifah*, was recorded as saying "Indeed Abu Bakr's *bay'a* was a hasty mistake (*falta*) but Allah averted its evil". (Jafri, p. 43)

When I was doing my master's course in Islamic Studies at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences in Virginia, I went through an interesting experience. During the hadith seminar, we came across the hadith of Ghadir-e-Khum in our discussions. We were given three books as class text. Each one of those books asserted that there were a lot of reports fabricated in the course of time. The first fabricated report is that of Ghadir-e-Khum and it was done by the Shia. I made photo-copies of the article on Ghadir-e-Khum in the New Encyclopedia of Islam published by Brille, and asked the seminar leader to distribute those copies in the class. The Seminar leader could not collect enough courage to do that.

Quite contrary to Prof. Shaban's claim, the Iranian author Ali Shariati in his book titled Fatima Is Fatima, has mentioned that both Ali and Fatima went round to every house in Medina after the event of saqifa (wherein Abu Bakr was appointed khalifa) reminding them of Ghadir-e-Khum and its implications. To that everyone had replied that although they remembered what the Prophet had said at Ghadir, it was too late in the game to do something about it.

As we said briefly, compounded with the fiasco of sagifa is the desire of every Muslim

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³ For fuller details of this event see: Ibn Is-haaq, Madelung, Tabari, etc. In fact, the Companions were in such a great hurry to hold that meeting that they completely forgot about the funeral of their beloved Prophet.

to convince himself/herself and to show to others that Islam is the best religion and whatever has been done by their leaders in the past was good. So, ignoring Ghadir-e-Khum and accepting Abu Bakr's appointment at Ali's expense must be good because the majority in Medina accepted that.

In effect, Islam became a religion of fait accompli. Muslims went into a syndrome of justifying the acts of their past leaders, right or wrong, by inventing theories in the philosophy of the religion to fit the events which had already taken place⁴. Not surprisingly, there sprang a school of thought among Muslims who disagreed with this, because they believed in the absolute truth, which is the actual basis of the Islamic religious philosophy. They refused to accept the acts of leaders as rightful if those acts did not conform to the commandments of Our'an, hadith and common sense ('aql). This school of thought disagreed with the majority opinion that our leaders are our heroes and therefore, their acts are the final word for us. This minority group maintained that heroism comes first. Qualities are determined first and then whoever fits those qualities becomes our hero. Fortunately, the Shi'a belong to that minority group among Muslims.

Of course, the Shi'a too believe that Islam is the best religion in the world and whatever was done by the leaders was good and right. But, which leaders? Those appointed by Allah or those who forced themselves on the community or forced others into the leadership to protect their own vested interests?

Ghadir-e-Khum happened on the 18th of Zul Hijjah in the 10th year AH. This is now 1441 AH. The Shi'a have been diligently preserving this philosophy of true Islam for the last fourteen centuries and will *insha'Allah*, continue to do so; because, irrespective of the majority opinion they believe in the absolute truth.

The apostolic declaration at Ghadir-e-Khum should have taken the Ummah to salvation. But, as we have seen, it became one of the saddest aspects of Muslim political history.

Muslims in the West have a special task before them. Most Western societies are built on

⁴ Orientalists like MacDonald have praised this kind of initiative and have thus derided the Shi'a philosophy. To them, the Shica faith is a heresy. MacDonald has called it 'the most modern politics' and 'respect for the accomplished fact.'

democratic principles. It is very difficult for anyone to convince the non-Muslim host society that Shi'a, who are in a minority, actually uphold the truth, and the mainstream Muslim thinking has gone adrift vis-a-vis the political philosophy.

Many of our Sunni friends have questioned the wisdom in publishing these events which occurred 1400 years ago and, in their opinion, telling these stories only creates sectarianism.

To answer this, we would quote from the illustrious author of the book *Al-Ghadir*, Allama Amini. This is the greatest and the most comprehensive book ever written on the topic of Ghadir-e-Khum. In its 28 volumes, Amini has collected all the reports about that hadith, as well as all the relevant poetry from the sources and a complete discussion on the life and times of Imam Ali. Similar objections were raised by the established Sunni institutions when the book first appeared. It is worth quoting Amini's own replies to some of those. We quote from Mutahhari's text.

'Allamah Amini, in the preface to volume 5, under title of "Nazariyah Karimah" on the occasion of a plaque of honor forwarded from Egypt for "al-Ghadir", clearly sets forth his view on this issue and leaves no room for any doubt. He remarks:

"People are free to express views and ideas on religion. These (views and ideas) will never tear apart the bond of Islamic brotherhood to which the holy Qur'an has referred by stating that 'surely the believers are brethren'; even though academic discussion and theological and religious debates reach a peak. This has been the style of the predecessors, and of the 'sahaba' and the 'tabi'un', at the head of them.

"Notwithstanding all the differences that we have in the primary and secondary principles, we, the compilers and writers in nooks and corners of the world of Islam, share a common point and that is belief in the Almighty and His Prophet. A single spirit and one (form of) sentiment exists in all our bodies, and that is the spirit of Islam and the term 'ikhlas,"

"We, the Muslim compilers, all live under the banner of truth and carry out our duties under the guidance of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Mission of the Holy Prophet (s). The message of all of us is 'Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam ... (3:18)' and the slogan of all of us is 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.' Indeed, we are (the members of) the party of Allah and the supporters of his religion.

In the preface to volume 8, under the title of "al-Ghadir Yowahhad al-Sufuf fil-Mila al-Islami", 'Allamah Amini directly makes researches into the role of "Al- Ghadir" in (the establishment of) Islamic unity. In this discussion, this great scholar categorically rejects the accusations leveled by those who said: 'Al-Ghadir' causes greater discord among the Muslims. He proves that, on the contrary, "Al-Ghadir" removes many misunderstandings and brings the Muslims closer to one another. Then he brings evidence by mentioning the confessions of the non-Shi'i Islamic scholars. At the close, he quotes the letter of Shaykh Muhammad Saeed Dahduh written in this connection.

The positive role of "al-Ghadir" is established by the facts that it firstly clarifies the proven logic of the Shias and proves that the inclination of Muslims to Shi'ism - notwithstanding the poisonous publicity of some people - is not due to political, ethnic, or other trends and considerations. It also verifies that a powerful logic based on the Qur'an and the "sunnah" has given rise to this tendency.

Secondly, it reflects that some accusations leveled on Shi'ism - which have made other Muslims distanced from the Shi'ah- are totally baseless and false. Examples of these

accusations are the notion that the Shias prefer the non-Muslims to the non-Shi'a Muslims, rejoice at the defeat of non-Shia Muslims at the hands of non-Muslims, and other accusations such as the idea that instead of going to hajj pilgrimage, the Shi'ahs go on pilgrimage to shrines of the Imams, or have particular rites in prayers and in temporary marriage.

Thirdly, it introduces to the world of Islam the eminent Commander of the faithful 'Ali (PBUH) who is the most oppressed and the least praised grand Islamic personality and who could be the leader of all Muslims, as well as his pure offspring.

At this point we would like to mention about the great book titled: *Al-Ghadir* compiled by Allama Amini. The following excerpt is from the late Ayatullah Murtaza Mutahhari's article *The Message Of Thaqalayn*, which is a commentary at the publication of Amini's book.

In the preface to volume I, he briefly mentions the role of "al-Ghadir" in the world of Islam. He states: "And we consider all this as service to religion, sublimation of the word of the truth, and restoration of the Islamic 'ummah' (community)."

In volume 3 (page 77), after quoting the fabrications of Ibn Taymiah, Alusi, and Qasimi to the effect that Shi'ism is hostile to some of the Ahl al-Bayt (the Household of the Prophet) such as Zayd bin 'Ali bin al-Husayn, he notes the following under the title of "Criticism and Correction": "These fabrications and accusations sow the seeds of corruption, stir hostilities among the 'ummah', create discord among the Islamic community, divide the 'ummah', and clash with the public interests of the Muslims.' (Amini, p. 77)

Again in volume 3 (page 268), he quotes the accusation leveled on the Shias by Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida to the effect that "Shias are pleased with any defeat incurred by Muslims, so much as they celebrated the victory of the Russians over the Muslims." Then he says:

"These falsehoods are fabricated by persons like Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida. The Shias of Iran and Iraq, against whom this accusation is leveled, as well as the orientalists, tourists, envoys of Islamic countries, and those who traveled and still travel to Iran and Iraq, have no information about this trend. Shias, without exception, respect the lives, blood, reputation, and property of the Muslims be they Shias or Sunnis. Whenever a calamity has befallen the Islamic community anywhere, in any region, and for any sects, the Shias have shared their sorrow. The Shias have never been confined to the Shi'ah world, the (concept of) Islamic brotherhood which has been set forth in the Qur'an and the 'sunnah' (the Prophet's sayings and actions), and in this respect, no discrimination has been made between the Shia and the Sunnis."

Also at the close of volume 3, he criticizes several books penned by the ancients such as *Iqd al-Farid* by Ibn Abd al-Rabbih, *al-Intisar* by Abu al-Husayn Khayyat al-Mu'tazili, *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* by Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi, *al-Fas*l by Ibn Hazm al-Andulusi, *al-Milal wa al-Nihal* by Muhammad ibn Abdul-Karim al-Shahristani *Minhaj al-Sunnah* by Ibn Taymiah and *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah* by Ibn Kathir and several by the later writers such as *Tarikh al-Umam al-Islamiyyah* by Shaykh Muhammad Khizri, *Fajr al Islam* by Ahmad Amin, *al-Jawlat fi Rubu al-Sharq al-Adna* by Muhammad Thabit al-Mesri, *al-Sira Bayn al-Islam wa al-Wathaniyah* by Qasimi, and *al-Washi'ah* by Musa Jarallah. Then he states the following:

"By quoting and criticizing these books, we aim at warning and awakening the Islamic 'ummah' (to the fact) that these books create the greatest danger for the Islamic community, they destabilize the Islamic unity and scatter the Muslim lines. In fact nothing can disrupt the ranks of the Muslims, destroy their unity, and tear their Islamic fraternity more severely than these books." (end quote)

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