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Overview of the New Yamani Claimant Movement (Ahmad al-Hassan)

Part 1

Ahmad Ismail Gata' al-Simri falsely claims to be the son and deputy of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) even though Imam Mahdi has not yet appeared. He claims to have risen and calls himself the first of the Mahdis.

Summary

Colonial powers use various methods to dominate Islamic countries, sometimes through physical presence and other times by exploiting the people's religious beliefs. In Iraq, they used the people's belief in the Mahdi to send a man named Ahmad al-Hassan to claim he is the Yamani.

In this article, after examining the hadiths about Yamani and reviewing Ahmad al-Hassan's claims and beliefs, the contradictions between his claims and the hadiths are discussed, and the fundamental flaws of his movement are explained. Finally, based on the hadiths, it is suggested that the best way to attain salvation during the occultation period is to refer to religious scholars.

Keywords: Yamani, Ahmad al-Hassan, Colonialism, Ba'athist, Signs.

Introduction

Colonialists, to expand their power in Islamic lands, have always seen Islam—especially Shia Islam—as a significant obstacle. Therefore, by creating heretical sects and fake religions against the authentic Shia culture, they have made efforts to promote and spread them as part of their sinister plans. The establishment of the Ahmadiyya in Pakistan, Babism and Baha'ism in Iran, and Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia are examples of such sects. The allegiance and subservience of these sects to the United States, Britain, and Zionists are now clear to everyone.

Recently, the colonial powers that have occupied Muslim countries like Afghanistan and Iraq under the pretext of fighting terrorism have put the project of establishing such sects and supporting them at the top of their agenda, particularly in Iraq. Following the occupation of Iraq, dozens of sects have emerged, such as:

- Jund al-Samaa led by Dia Abdul-Zahra Kazim al-Gur'awi;

- The Yamani movement;

- The movement of Sayyed Mahmoud Hassani Sarhi;

- The Imam Rabbani sect led by Sayyed Fazel Abdul-Hussein al-Husseini al-Hashimi;

- The Farqad al-Qazwini sect;

- The Suluki movement.

Most of these movements claim Mahdism or connection with Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance). The connection of most of them with Ba'athist elements and colonial intelligence agencies has been discovered and confirmed. The main goal of these sects is to fight the Shia seminary, religious authority, and clergy because, in the history of contemporary anti-colonial Islamic movements, it has been proven time and again that the only stronghold standing against colonialism and preventing their victory is the Shia clergy, religious authority, and seminaries.[1] Interestingly, these sects only speak and act against the clergy and have done nothing against the occupiers.

One of the topics in Mahdism is the examination of the signs and symbols of the appearance. Reviewing and recognizing these signs is crucial because, in Shia narrations, identifying the end-time symbols is emphasized, and a large volume of narrations about Mahdism discuss the signs of the appearance and the pioneers of the Mahdi's just government. One of these signs is the uprising of a person called "Yamani" near the appearance, mentioned several times in Shia narrations. This topic can be examined from various aspects, such as the time of Yamani's uprising, his personal characteristics, nationality, goals, and the features of his uprising.

Recently, some people have started promoting a movement claiming Mahdism under Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani in certain areas. Hence, questions arise among some believers about what this movement is, who Ahmad al-Hassan is, what his background is, what his claims are, what evidence he uses to support his claims, the validity of his evidence, where this movement is connected to, what actions this movement has taken so far, and finally, what the duty of believers is in the face of such movements. To understand this movement, Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani's claims must be presented first, then his situation must be compared with the narrations, and finally, the contradictions in his claims should be examined.

First Stage (Claims of Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani)

Given the emergence of false movements in Islamic societies, particularly in Iraq, and the involvement of the Ba'ath Party in their creation, attention to the Ba'athist roots of Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani and the Ba'ath Party itself is warranted.

Understanding the Ba'ath Party

The Ba'ath Party in Iraq was founded by a Christian Zionist named Michel Aflaq. This party was connected to British colonial powers and had inherent hostility toward Islam and Shia Islam. Their famous slogan upon taking power was: "I believe in Ba'ath as a god without a partner, and in Michel as a prophet without an equal." [2]

The record of the Ba'ath Party, especially during Saddam's thirty-year rule, is filled with fighting against Islam, killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people, destroying Iraq's economy, shutting down religious rituals, and martyring hundreds of scholars and thousands of students from seminaries. After the imposed war with Iran, the Ba'ath Party, instigated by the United States, invaded Kuwait in 1990 (1369 SH) to pave the way for American and allied presence in the Persian Gulf.

After the presence of the United States and its Western allies in the region under the pretext of expelling Saddam from Kuwait, the Muslim people of Iraq, under the leadership of the late Ayatollah Khoui, rose against the Ba'ath Party in the uprising known as Sha'baniyah[3] and were on the verge of victory. However, the United States, with the help of the hypocrites, suppressed the uprising and reinstated Saddam's power.

Change in the Ba'ath Party's Struggle

When the Ba'ath Party in Iraq saw that the Islamic spirit among the Iraqi Muslim population was not dead and could still incite them to revolt, it changed its tactics in the fight against Islam. Instead of showing a harsh face, it launched a "soft war" against Islam, the seminaries, and the oppressed Shia people under the name "Al-Hamla Al-Imaniyya" (the faith campaign). Essentially, this was a manipulative use of religion against religion. Saddam, in addition to pretending to pray and going on pilgrimages, carried out several sinister and dangerous actions in this faith campaign, including:

1. Infiltrating capable Ba'athist youths into religious seminaries so that they could study religious sciences and use them for anti-religious missions.

2. Allowing some clerics to act as religious authorities and suppressing other religious authorities to create division among them under ethnic and professional pretexts.

3. Permitting some clerics to hold Friday prayers and to control religious ceremonies.

However, when Saddam was hit hard by the activities of the martyred reference, Ayatollah Sayyed Mohammad Baqer Sadr, and saw that he had facilitated the presence of devout people on the scene, he martyred that great reference and practically shut down those programs.

4. Infiltrating some Ba'athist youths who appeared devout and were involved in magic and asceticism into prisons. This infiltration was aimed at deceiving political prisoners, and a notable example is Zia Abdul-Zahra al-Gur'awi, who was a Ba'athist officer.

Zia had been trained in asceticism in India and entered an Iraqi prison. With secret information from Ba'athist prison officers, he would foretell the release or execution of certain prisoners. Many prisoners were deceived by his claims, believing him to be a saint connected to the unseen world. After being released from prison and after the fall of Saddam in 2003, he formed a group called "Jund al-Samaa" and claimed to be the Qaim al-Muhammad. He was assigned to kill 1200 clerics from Najaf on the day of Ashura. However, Iraqi police discovered his forces in the al-Zarga camp near Najaf on the day of Tasu'a in 2005 and eliminated them. Zia al-Gur'awi and hundreds of his followers, including 200 so-called Yamani forces, were killed.[4]

Characteristics of the Yamani Claimant

This claimed movement was led by Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani, who considered himself the deputy, son, and messenger of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance), emerged in the final years of Saddam's rule. After the fall of Saddam, with the help of some remnants of the Ba'ath regime, he established extensive organizations in areas such as Najaf, Karbala, Nasiriyah, and Basra.

The founder of the movement, a person named Ahmad Ismail Gata' from the Sayyamar tribe, was born around 1973 in an area called "Huwayr" in the district of Zubair in Basra province. He graduated from the College of Engineering in Basra in 1999. He studied for a while at the seminary of the martyred Ayatollah Sayyed Mohammad Sadr in Najaf. Additionally, it is reliably reported that his brother was among the Ba'athist forces.[5]

Claims of Ahmad Hassan Yamani

Despite not being a Sayyid[6] and his well-known lineage from the "Sayyamar" tribe, he wore a black turban and appeared in public forums; for example, according to a video taken of him, he spoke from the pulpit in a mosque, dressed as a cleric in a black turban, and presented his contradictory claims.

He claims that he is a "mercy for Islam, indeed, for the people of the earth. Wherever I go, the family of the Prophet (peace be upon them) is always with me. I openly say that God has chosen me. The tranquil soul has connected to me, and I have become the owner of the tranquil soul. I want to unite the Shiites, from the scholars to the laymen, I am ready to clarify the truths for everyone and show them in black and white. God is light and His word is light. At the same time, I have no claims."[7]

Stages of Claim

Through a message on his website addressed to scholars and religious centers dated 27 Shawwal 1424 AH, he made claims that are outlined as follows:

In the first stage: He claims to have repeatedly seen Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) in his dreams at the shrine of Sayyed Mohammad, son of Imam Hadi (peace be upon him), who orders him to visit the Askariyyain. After that, he claims to have met His Holiness in wakefulness, who informs him of the practical and financial deviations in the seminaries, especially the Najaf seminary, and trains him specially.

In the second stage: He claims that Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) ordered him to enter the seminary and tasked him with raising the deviations there.

In the third stage: He claims that in the month of Sha'ban 1420 AH (coinciding with 1999 AD), he met Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) for the second time in wakefulness near the shrine of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) and was ordered by His Holiness to go to Najaf. He made his call public at this stage, where some denied him and accused him of sorcery, madness, and being possessed by jinn. Following this, Ahmad was returned to his hometown.[8]

Public Invitation

After the fall of Saddam in Jumada al-Thani 1424 AH, Ahmad Ismail Gata' publicly repeated his call, and some were deceived by his words. In the holy month of Ramadan that year, he claimed to have been commissioned by Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) to address all the people of the earth and invite them to rise for the truth and against the oppressors!

In that message, he emphasized that he does not expect support from religious scholars; because many of them will fight Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance) with words and actions; because with the appearance of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his reappearance), their religious authority will be dismantled. According to him, the idols and statues (idols) are the scholars.[9]

Arguments (Fallacies) of Ahmad al-Hassan

He uses several reasons to support his claim:

1. **First Reason:** Dreams that others have had about him, in addition to the dreams he himself has had.

2. **Second Reason:** Knowledge of future events such as the fall of Saddam.

3. **Third Reason:** His readiness for debate with scholars of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

4. **Fourth Reason:** His readiness for Mubahala (a form of mutual cursing) with Shia, Sunni, Jewish, and Christian scholars. It is clear that the above reasons are mere claims.

In a message addressed to the people of Iraq, he says: "My father, Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), has sent me to the people of Earth and I have started my mission among you. While Gabriel and Michael support and help me, I ask for your support. If you support me, good; otherwise, the history of your ancestors is clear. If you betray me, I will be patient as Muslim bin Aqeel was patient. I will soon leave you, O remnants of Hussein's killers! If I wanted, I could identify the Shemr and Shabath of this time."

"I will report your affairs to my father, Mohammad bin al-Hassan; in the future, I will return with him, who will bring nothing to you but the sword." He signs as Sayed Ahmad Hassan, the deputy and messenger of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), on his website "Ansar al-Mahdi"[10] on the date of 21 Rabi' al-Thani 1426 AH corresponding to March 9, 2005. In a question and answer format, he justifies his claim of being the son of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) and being Hashemite by stating: "Mecca is from Tihama, and Tihama is from Yemen; therefore, Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, peace be upon them, are all Yemeni."

According to one hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) introduces twelve infallible Imams to the Shia, and after mentioning Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), he says: "Then there will be after him twelve Mahdis; when death approaches him, he should hand it over to his son, the first of the Mahdis..." (Majlisi, 2004: Vol.53, p.148).[11] He claims to be the embodiment of that "first of the Mahdis" and the son of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return); although Imam Mahdi has not yet appeared and has not died.

In another message sent by his supporters under the signature "Ansar al-Mahdi" on 11th of Ramadan 1427 AH from Najaf to the Supreme Leader, they ask for the message to be read and responded to. In this message, they present the justifications for Ahmad bin Hassan's claims, including the same hadith about the will, the dreams, debates, and Mubahala mentioned earlier.[12]

Examination and Critique of the Hadiths Used as Evidence

Now it is necessary to examine each of the hadiths cited by Ahmad in terms of their chain of narration and implications, and ultimately, to uncover the relevance of the claimant's assertions with those hadiths.

1. Sheikh Saduq in his book "Kamal al-Din" writes:

Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Imran al-Daqqaq reported: Muhammad ibn Abi Abdullah al-Kufi said: Musa ibn Imran al-Nakhai reported from his uncle Hussein ibn Yazid al-Nawfali, from Ali ibn Abi Hamza, from Abi Basir who said: I asked Al-Sadiq Ja'far ibn Muhammad: O son of the Prophet! I heard from your father (peace be upon him) that he said, "After the Qa'im, there will be twelve Mahdis" He said: "He indeed said: twelve Mahdis and did not say: twelve Imams. But they are people from our Shia who call people to our allegiance and the recognition of our rights".[13] (Saduq, 1979: Vol.2, p.358)

Firstly, the above hadith is weak in terms of its chain of narration because:

- There is no authentication for Ali ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Imran al-Daqqaq among the scholars of Rijal. (Khui, 1999: Vol. 13, p. 169).

- Ali ibn Abi Hamza is described as a liar and suspect. He was a follower of the deviant Waqifi sect and, driven by worldly desires, denied the Imamate of Imam Reza and withdrew from religion, turning towards atheism.[14]

Secondly, in terms of implication, this hadith has no relation to the current era where Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) has not yet appeared.

2. Sheikh Tusi in his book "Al-Ghayba" writes: A group informed us from Abu Abdullah Hussein ibn Ali ibn Sufyan al-Bazufari, from Ali ibn Sinan al-Mosuli al-Adil, from Ali ibn Hussein, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalil, from Ja'far ibn Ahmad al-Masri, from his uncle Hasan ibn Ali, from his father, from Abu Abdullah Ja'far ibn Muhammad, from his father Hussein al-Zaki al-Shahid, from his father Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) on the night of his death to Ali (peace be upon him): "O Aba al-Hassan, bring a sheet and an inkpot." The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) dictated his will until he reached this point, then said: "O Ali! There will be after me twelve Imams and after them twelve Mahdis... he has three names, a name like my name, and his father's name is Abdullah and Ahmad, and the third name, the Mahdi, he is the first of the believers." (Tusi, 1369: p.107; Majlisi, 2004: Vol.36, p.261).

Firstly, this hadith is also weak in terms of its chain of narration; Ali ibn Sinan al-Mosuli al-Adil is not authenticated and is a layman (Khui 1999: Vol. 12, p. 46, No. 8180). Ali ibn Hussein is not well-known. Also, the late Khui about Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalil says: "Liar, fabricator of hadith, corrupt, very weak, not to be considered" (Khui 1999, Vol.2, p. 224 No. 782). Other narrators of this hadith are not known in the books of Rijal.

Secondly, in terms of implication, this hadith clearly indicates that after the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family), twelve infallible Imams will come, the first of whom is Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) and the last of whom is Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return). According to this narration, after the death of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), twelve guided individuals (Mahdis) will come, the first of whom (the first of the foremost) will be the son of Imam Mahdi. He will have three names; one being Ahmad (the name of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his family), another Abdullah (the name of the Prophet's father), and the third Mahdi.

This hadith, like the previous one, pertains to after the appearance of His Holiness Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), so it has no connection to the period of occultation. Additionally, this hadith contradicts the previous one in terms of the attribution of the Mahdis; because the hadith from Sheikh Saduq emphasizes that they are from our Shia, which appears to mean that they are not from the Ahl al-Bayt and their descendants; while the hadith from the book Al-Ghayba explicitly states that the first of them is the son of Imam Mahdi.

In any case, these two hadiths indicate that these twelve or eleven individuals will come after the martyrdom of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), not before that, and this has no relation to the claimants of our time.

3. Sheikh Tusi elsewhere in the book Al-Ghayba has brought: Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Ja'far al-Humayri from his father from Muhammad ibn Abdul Hamid and Muhammad ibn Isa, from Muhammad ibn al-Fazil, from Abi Hamza, from Abi Abdullah (peace be upon him) in a long hadith - that he said: "O Aba Hamza! Indeed from us after the Qa'im are eleven Mahdis from the descendants of Hussein" (Tusi, 1369: p.784).

Firstly, the above hadith is weak in terms of its chain of narration; because Muhammad ibn Abdul Hamid is unknown. Muhammad ibn Isa is ambiguous between trustworthy and unknown, which makes it difficult to distinguish the two. Muhammad ibn Fazil is also unknown, but Ibn Hamza Abu Hamza Thumali is trustworthy. (Shushtari, no date: Vol. 7, p. 268- 269, No. 4984)

Secondly, this hadith indicates that after Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), eleven guided individuals (Mahdis) will come, all of whom will be from the descendants of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). This hadith contradicts the two previous hadiths in terms of their number; because those two emphasize twelve individuals and this one emphasizes eleven individuals, and in any case, it does not relate to the current time; as it pertains to the period after the appearance and death of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return).

4. Sheikh Hassan ibn Sulaiman (died 802 AH) in the book Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-Darajat (by Sa'd ibn Abdullah Ash'ari) has brought: From what was narrated by Sayed Ali ibn Abdul Hamid with his chain of narration from Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him): "That from us after the Qa'im (may God hasten his return), there are twelve Mahdis from the descendants of Hussein (peace be upon him)".

Firstly, the chain of narration of this hadith is not known; because the author of Mukhtasar al-Basa'ir has narrated it from Sayed Ali ibn Abdul Hamid (died 760 AH) with a chain that that Sayed narrated, and we do not have access to that chain to know if all narrators are trustworthy or not; therefore, it is not possible to definitively speak about the chain of this hadith.

Secondly, in terms of implication, it is similar to the previous hadith, except that this hadith emphasizes twelve Mahdis, while the previous one emphasized eleven Mahdis.

General Critique of the Hadiths

Regardless of the status of the chains of narration of the hadiths, which are generally weak and unreliable, they are also considered implausible and unacceptable in terms of implication; because according to the confirmed Shia hadiths, after the martyrdom of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), the period of Raja'at (the return) begins. Therefore, some Shia scholars have interpreted these hadiths, assuming their authenticity, to refer to the period of Raja'at; hence the meaning of the twelve or eleven Mahdis are the same Imams of guidance (peace be upon them) who will rise for a short period (forty days) after the appearance of Imam Mahdi to take revenge on their killers.

Sheikh Mufid at the end of the book Al-Irshad, regarding the mentioned hadiths, states: "After the state of the Qa'im (may God hasten his return), no one else will have a state except what the narration has brought about the rise of his son, if God wills it, and it is not meant to be absolute and firm, and most narrations indicate that the Mahdi of the nation will not pass except forty days before the Day of Judgment during which the deliverance (and according to the narration in Bihar al-Anwar, turmoil)

occurs, and the signs of the emergence of the dead and the establishment of the Hour for accountability and recompense appear" (Mufid, 1412: p.336);

Allama Majlisi after quoting the mentioned news in Bihar al-Anwar, "Chapter of the Caliphs of the Mahdi and His Children", writes about the interpretation and explication of those hadiths:

These news contradict the well-known and there are two ways to interpret them; the first way is that the intended twelve Mahdis (guided ones) are the same Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) and the other Imams except Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return); meaning that their reign (during the time of Raja'at) will be after Imam Mahdi.

The second way is that those twelve Mahdis are the deputies of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return), the guides of creation during the times of the Imams (peace be upon them) at the time of their return; because the era cannot be devoid of a Hujjah (proof), even if the deputies of the Prophets (peace be upon them) are also Hujjahs, and God knows best (Majlisi, 2004: Vol.53, p.148).

Conclusion

The mentioned hadiths, whether they are authentic or weak, whether they are acceptable in implication or not, whether they are interpretable to Raja'at or not, have no relation to the claims of the Yamani current; because all those hadiths unanimously agree that the rise of the twelve or eleven Mahdis will be after the appearance and death of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) and none of the hadiths indicate that they or some of them will come before the appearance of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return).

Ahmad Ismail Gata' al-Saymari falsely claims to be a descendant and deputy of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) while Imam Mahdi has not yet appeared; however, he claims to have risen and names himself the first of the Mahdis. Therefore, his claim has no basis or documentation in terms of hadiths. Additionally, he who names himself a deputy should know that a "deputy" takes up the responsibility after the death of the testator, not before his death.

Overview of the New Yamani Claimant Movement (Ahmad al-Hassan)

Part 2

The claimant of the Yamani movement, in his propaganda, attacks religious scholars, seminaries, and religious authorities, clearly stating: "We have come to eliminate the intermediaries between people, religion, and God." However, this statement contradicts the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt.

What is the Star of David Symbol?

The symbol of the Yamani movement is an Israeli star known as David. This hexagonal star serves as the emblem alongside the signature of Ahmad al-Hassan al-Yamani. His signature on some declarations reads: "The remainder of the family of Muhammad, the strong pillar, Ahmad al-Hassan, the successor and messenger of Imam Mahdi to all people, supported by Gabriel, directed by Michael, victorious by Israfil, descendants one from another, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing."

This hexagonal star is called a "pentagram" in Latin. Zionists use it in their flag as a symbol of dominance over the world. Initially, the Yamani sect used this star as the emblem and symbol of their movement; however, they later removed this symbol from their promotions to avoid scandal and prove their non-affiliation with Zionism.

Activities of Ahmad al-Hassan's Movement

Alongside the leadership of the Yamani movement, which is under Ahmad Ismail Gatah known as Ahmad al-Hassan al-Mou'ood, there are also spiritual, military, and organizational leaders. Sheikh Kazem al-Aqili is responsible for the military branch, and Professor Abdul Rahim Abu Ma'adh is the spiritual guide and leader of the organization. The co-founder of this movement, a person named Sheikh Haider al-Munshidawi (son of Abu Feil) was a student of the martyr Sayyid Muhammad Sadr.

Al-Munshidawi came to Iran during Saddam's time and promoted this ideology; thus, he was arrested by the Iranian government and spent six months in prison. After Saddam's fall, he was returned to Iraq. He claimed to be the successor of Imam Zaman (Abdullah bin al-Hassan al-Qahtani) and knew everything people were unaware of, even the location of Lady Fatima's grave.

He opened an office in the old area of Najaf on the street of Al-Rasool and devoted himself to spreading his ideas. After these events, the founder of the movement issued a statement denouncing al-Munshidawi as a corrupt person;[15] thus, Qasim Abd Hassan from the former Ba'ath Party elements, Abbas Khalaf al-Jabnawi from the Badr Organization elements, Abbas Zouri Agla, and Hamel Muhyi Hamoud along with al-Munshidawi left this movement.

Sheikh Haider al-Munshidawi was later killed in Baghdad by an armed group. Among the Yamani supporters was a person from the Hamami family, named Sayyid Hassan al-Hamami — the son of the deceased Sayyid Muhammad Ali Hamami who died in 1998 and was among the famous scholars of Najaf. This person, who was connected to the Ba'ath regime, served as the senior clergyman of that group.

Propaganda Activity

The movement places great importance on propaganda activities, including publishing books. Ahmad Hassan, using these advertisements, indoctrinated some people who were ignorant of religious fundamentals, claiming that he is the Yamani, the deputy of Imam Zaman. He published books with attractive and deceptive titles such as "The Enlightened Response Across the Ether," "Advice to the Students of the Seminary," "The Sovereignty of God, Not the Sovereignty of the People," and "Miracles and Prophecies," as well as publications named "The Newspaper of al-Qaim, May God Hasten His Relief," "The Journal of Qamar Bani Hashim," and "The Followers of the Mahdi."

In issue 3 of the weekly "Qamar Bani Hashim," dated Friday, 14 Muharram 1425 AH, it stated: The battle of Imam Mahdi is flaring up in Egypt, America's war on Iraq, the beginning of the war against the awaited Mahdi. The evil scholars in the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt speak of the scientific rush among Shia jurists.

In the same article, a caricature of a bull with "The Science of Principles" written on its stomach was shown. In this article, the science of principles of jurisprudence was likened to the calf of Samiri, which will be destroyed by Imam Mahdi. The publication under the title "Prophecy" reported the imminent emergence of a pure soul in Najaf, which has not yet occurred.

Supporters of this movement distributed leaflets and brochures inviting all scholars of Iran and Iraq to a debate; notably, in 1382 AH after the fall of Saddam, simultaneously, small groups of deceived Iraqi youths who had illegally entered Iran stood in the Friday prayer rows of cities like Ahvaz, Qom, Karaj, Mashhad, and other places, announcing the emergence of the Yamani. In those cities, those individuals were arrested and returned to their country. In some cities like Qom and Ahvaz, the preachers of their creed engaged in propaganda, resulting in some cases in arrest and conviction.

Military Activity

The movement deemed military training necessary for its members, acquainting its elements in the "Al-Amara" gardens and the "Al-Fas" and "Al-Tira" areas with various types of weapons provided by their patrons. One of the trainings involved beheading people. The first military action after isolating some split elements like Haider al-Munshidawi was coordination with the Jund al-Samaa group led by Gura'awi on the day of Tasu'a in the year 1428 AH, in the Zarga area of Kufa. In that operation, about two hundred members of the Yamani group were killed. Interestingly, the leader of one of these two movements considered himself Qa'im Al Muhammad, and the second considered himself the son and successor of Imam Zaman.

They carried out a military activity against the Shia government of Iraq and the seminaries together in one operation and were suppressed. This indicates that both movements were managed behind the scenes by a unified leadership, and their ideological claims were not genuine. After the above incident, the Yamani movement continued its activities secretly.

With the suppression of the Gura'awi uprising in the Zarga area of Najaf, the Yamani decided to rise on Ashura of the year 1429 AH; however, a month before the scheduled time, with the arrest of forty of his followers in Najaf, his capabilities were reduced, and he was unable to take any action in Najaf and Karbala during the Ashura ceremonies. This group planned to rise on the day of Tasu'a and massacre the pilgrims of Imam Hussain and Hazrat Abbas's shrines, then occupy the two holy shrines. Subsequently,

under the leadership of a person with a Ba'athi background named "Sayyid Hassan al-Hamami," they would move towards Najaf and assassinate the religious authorities.[16] Then, they would pledge allegiance to a person named "Ibn Bethina" as Imam Mahdi, and their activities would extend towards Basra and Nasiriyah.

This group began their activity at 9:30 AM on Tasu'a by attacking mourning groups in Basra and managed to enter the headquarters of the Southern Oil Company. Also, in Nasiriyah, they began their activity by attacking the Rapid Reaction Division. Following that, Brigadier General Abul Qa'a al-Jabri, the commander of this division, and Colonel Abu Muhammad al-Rumaid, the intelligence officer of the division, were killed. The Najaf police arrested 45 armed elements of the Yamani group under the name "Ansar al-Mahdi," including 15 leaders and commanders of this group, among whom Hassan al-Hamami, the religious leader of this group, was among those arrested.

Hassan al-Hamami, after his arrest, confessed that his group members intended to target religious authorities and Hussaini assemblies on the day of Ashura. He stated in a press conference during his confessions: "This group has supporters, and its goal is to attack religious scholars and other religious scholars and disrupt the security situation in Iraq."

Al-Hamami continued in his confessions: "Several elements of this group were responsible for financial, promotional, and military affairs." He added: "Our expenses are provided by foreign countries, especially the UAE, and our slogan is the Star of David." A few days after the Yamani incident, the news site "Malaf Press," one of the reputable news agencies in Iraq, revealed in a report that Ahmad al-Hassan Yamani had fled to the United Arab Emirates after the incidents in Basra and Nasiriyah, and was residing in Dubai.[17]

Review of Yamani Traditions

1. The presence of positive traits in the personality of the Yamani and the honors and praises that religious leaders have given him could be an incentive for impostors and opportunists to use this to attract the emotions and feelings of religious people. Therefore, there has always been a possibility that individuals might present themselves as the Yamani to attract people's emotions and resources, and perhaps even advance to the point of establishing a government. Therefore, it is appropriate to identify the details of this incident based on scientific principles to be able to identify false claimants.

2. Another result of this discussion is the proof that the infallible Imams have endorsed reformist uprisings during the period of occultation. As will be discussed, the infallible leaders have sided with the Yamani and his movement. Therefore, it can be said that from the perspective of the infallible Imams during the period of occultation, there are also military movements that are endorsed. Based on this, the popular view that reform movements are doomed to failure during the period of occultation and contrary to the will and intentions of the religious leaders is not acceptable, and if there are traditions that support this idea, they should be interpreted in a way that can be reconciled with the traditions of the Yamani.

3. Among the collection of hadiths on the signs of the appearance, only about five phenomena are counted as independent signs of the appearance. The emphasis of the infallible leaders on these signs, which in some traditions are referred to as definite signs, and their separation from other

signs of appearance, indicates the importance of these signs, which require special attention. The Yamani is one of these signs and is usually counted among the mentioned five signs.

The Emergence of Yamani as a Sign of the Coming

We mention two hadiths on this topic:

1. Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: "Before the rise of the Qa'im, five signs will occur: the Yamani, the Sufyani, the call from the sky, the sinking in the land of Baida, and the killing of the pure soul." This implies that before the appearance of the Qa'im (the awaited savior), these five events will happen.

2. The late scholar Kulayni, with a reliable chain of narrators from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), has reported: "Before the rise of the Qa'im, five definite signs will occur: the Yamani, the Sufyani, the heavenly cry, the killing of the pure soul, and the sinking in Baida." Kulayni narrated this hadith through five intermediaries from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), all of whom are considered reliable by scholars of hadith.[18]

Genealogy, Name, Title, and Nationality of Yamani

Genealogy of Yamani: In the course of a lengthy hadith, Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) lists the signs of the coming and concludes: "…and the emergence of a man from my uncle Zaid's lineage in Yemen, and the looting of the Kaaba's curtain." If the person emerging from Yemen is meant to be the promised Yamani, the hadith specifies that his lineage goes back to Zaid bin Ali bin Al-Hussein.

Nationality of Yamani: Regarding the nationality of Yamani and where he comes from, the narrations state that he will emerge from the region of "Yemen," but whether this refers to the current country of Yemen or a broader region is debated. Given that the people of Yemen are highly regarded in the narratives for their significant role in facilitating the emergence and supporting the awaited savior, it is likely that he will be from the current Yemen. Additionally, there is no evidence to suggest that "Yemen" historically encompassed a larger area than it does today.

In the book "Bisharat al-Islam," a narration mentions Yamani named either "Hussein" or "Hasan." It states: "A ruler will emerge in Sana'a, Yemen, named Hussein or Hasan. Through his rise, which is noble and pure, strife will disappear, and truth, after being hidden, will become evident."

Another narration, also found in "Bisharat al-Islam" and "Nur al-Absar," from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), mentions: "The emergence of a man from my uncle Zaid's lineage in Yemen." This narration and another from later books refer to the genealogy or names related to Yamani.

Religion of Yamani

The narrations clearly indicate that he adheres to the faith of the Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) emphasized this, saying: "No, it is not so; Yamani follows Ali, whereas this man disavows him."

Concurrent Emergence of Khorasani, Yamani, and Sufyani

The emergence of Yamani is one of the definitive signs just before the appearance [of the awaited savior]. Just as no one can specify the exact time of the reappearance, the emergence of Yamani and Sufyani also cannot be precisely timed. It is clear that the emergence of Yamani will coincide with that of Sufyani, as stated in numerous narrations. Fadhl ibn Shadhan, with a reliable chain from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), reported in a lengthy narration that: "The emergence of Sufyani and Yamani from Yemen with white banners will occur on the same day, month, and year." Fadl ibn Shadhan has narrated this hadith with three intermediaries from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), all of whom are highly reliable. Therefore, it enjoys the highest level of authenticity.[19]

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has also said: "Yamani and Sufyani will arrive like two racing horses chasing each other." Muhammad ibn Muslim reports: "Before Sufyani, an Egyptian and Yamani will emerge."

Place of Emergence

In numerous narrations, it has been explicitly stated that Yamani will emerge from Yemen. Among them, Fadl ibn Shadhan narrates from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) with an authentic chain, stating in a lengthy hadith: "And the emergence of Sufyani from Sham, and Yamani from Yemen." Fadl ibn Shadhan narrated this hadith with only two intermediaries from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), both of whom are reliable.[20] There are other narrations on this subject as well, but for the sake of brevity, we refrain from mentioning them.[21]

Characteristics and Objectives of Yamani's Uprising

Among the personalities instrumental in preparing and uprising to defend and support the awaited savior, none is as celebrated and cared for in the narrations as Yamani and his uprising. Yamani's uprising is particularly acknowledged and honored by the Imams for its sacred purpose, pure motive, and call towards truth.

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) in describing Yamani's uprising said: "There is no banner more guided than Yamani's banner, which leads to truth." In a narration by Abu Basir from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), it is mentioned: "There is no banner more guided than the banner of Yamani; it is a banner of guidance because it calls to your master. When Yamani emerges, it will be forbidden to sell weapons to people and every Muslim. When Yamani emerges, rush to him because his banner is a banner of guidance and it is not permissible for a Muslim to turn away from him. Whoever does so is among the people of the fire because he calls to the truth and to a straight path."

These descriptions about Yamani, which present him as a person endorsed and necessarily followed, are placed alongside Sayyid Khorasani in the narrations, indicating that Yamani's uprising is mentioned concurrently with Khorasani's uprising. The passages in the narration praising his unique personality and fully endorsing his uprising are repeatedly emphasized, distinguishing Yamani's uprising for its pure motives and truthful objectives.

Contradictions in Ahmad al-Hassan's Movement

1. According to knowledgeable individuals, the claimant of the Yamani movement, a person named Ahmad Ismail Gatah Simri from the Siyamar tribe in the Zubair region, is not from the Banu Hashim; yet, he wears a black turban and uses the title "Sayyid Ahmad," presenting himself as a Sayyid from Banu Hashim. Surely, this act is religiously forbidden as it involves lying and deceiving others.

2. In a video, he says, "I am a simple villager with no claims;" however, he also claims, "God has chosen me, and the Imams are with me. I am the owner of the reassured soul, and light encompasses my existence, etc." Clearly, these grand claims contradict his professed humility.

3. In the same video, when he speaks in formal Arabic, there are many grammatical mistakes in his speech, indicating his lack of education. This reality does not align with his grand claims.

4. Ahmad Ismail Gatah claims to be the son of Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) and also claims to have seen Imam Mahdi for the first time in a dream and then in reality in Sha'ban 1420 AH (1999 AD) when he was over 25 years old. How is it possible that the son of Imam Mahdi had not seen his father until then?

5. Despite claiming to be the son of Imam Mahdi, he calls himself Ahmad bin al-Hassan; he should have named himself "Ahmad bin Muhammad" as the Imam's name is not Hasan; Hasan is the name of the Imam's father. It seems the saying "a liar needs a good memory" applies here.

6. He identifies himself as Yamani and applies the hadiths about the emergence of Yamani to himself; however, the hadiths state that the Yamani, Khorasani, and Sufyani will emerge in the same year, month, and day, and a few months later, in that same year, Imam Mahdi will rise. The claimant of being Yamani has emerged over ten years ago; yet, neither Khorasani has risen nor Sufyani, and Imam Mahdi has not yet risen.

7. While claiming to be the son of Imam Mahdi and a Sayyid Hashimi, he calls himself Yamani, a title that cannot logically apply to someone from Iraq. "Yamani" implies being from Yemen; however, he is Iraqi by birth. He seems to have realized this contradiction and thus justifies this title by arguing that since Mecca is from Tihama and Tihama is part of Yemen, then Muhammad and his family (peace be upon them) are all Yemeni.

This justification is fallacious because Tihama is a geographical region starting from the north of the Arabian Peninsula, above Mecca and Medina, and extending south to Yemen. Thus, while Mecca and Medina are part of Tihama, and Yemen is also part of Tihama, Tihama is not part of Yemen; Yemen is located in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula and does not include the northern and central parts.

Therefore, Muhammad and his family are from Hijaz and Tihama but are not Yemeni. Arabs are generally divided into Adnanites and Qahtanites. The Adnanites specifically include the Quraysh and the Banu Hashim; the Qahtanites include Arabs whose roots are from Yemen, and Adnanites, including the Banu Hashim, are never called Yemeni.

8. In a message to the people of Iraq, he claims to have come by the command of Imam Mahdi and with the support of Gabriel and Michael, which should ensure his victory; yet, he seeks help

from the people of Iraq, saying, "If you do not support me, you have a history of betraying Muslim bin Aqil," thus comparing himself to Muslim bin Aqil.

9. He refers to his own dreams and the dreams of others, although dreams hold no legitimacy or validity in religious and doctrinal matters for others. No prophet or divine proof has ever validated their truthfulness through dreams, especially since dreams are merely claims and could be falsely asserted by anyone.

10. His other reference to predicting future events, like the fall of Saddam, is laughable; any politically aware person could have predicted this, and it is not unique to him; especially since Imam Khomeini had already stated, "Saddam will go."

11. His readiness for debate and mubahala (a form of calling divine curse on liars in a debate) with Shia, Sunni, Jewish, and Christian scholars is just a claim and proves nothing. Yes, if a debate or mubahala actually occurs and the qualified opposing party is proven wrong or divine punishment befalls them, it could be credible; however, such events have not occurred for opponents of the Yamani movement.

12. Regarding the Yamani movement's reliance on hadiths, which was explained in detail before, the hadiths they claim do not relate to their claimant. The hadiths say, "Two Mahdis will come after the appearance and death of Imam Mahdi, not before him"; while the claimant of the Yamani movement says, "I am now the deputy of Imam Mahdi." It is clear that a deputy should come into action after the death of the testator, not during his life and before his death.

13. The claimant of the Yamani movement in his propaganda consistently insults religious scholars, seminaries, and religious authorities, explicitly stating, "We have come to eliminate the intermediation of scholars between people, religion, and God," while this statement contradicts the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt. In the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt, scholars are the intermediaries between people and the Ahl al-Bayt, and religious scholars are the people's religious references. Imam Hassan Askari (peace be upon him) says:

"As for those among the fuqaha who protect themselves, keep their religion, oppose their desires, and obey their master, then the laypeople should follow them;" (source 1403, vol. 18, p. 94). In a document attributed to Imam Mahdi, it is stated, "As for the events that occur, refer to the narrators of our hadiths, for they are my proof upon you, and I am God's proof;" (source 1379, vol. 2, p. 483; another source 1369, pp. 290 and 293).

14. The Yamani movement, in its antagonism towards scholars, has moved from past harmful propaganda to active and military phases; therefore, in the plot to assassinate scholars in Najaf planned by the "Jund al-Sama" movement in Ashura of 2006, 200 of them were killed. From this fact, it can be concluded that they are pawns of colonialism in the battle against the clergy, who are the primary bastion of Islamic resistance against colonialism.

15. The use of the Star of David, a symbol specifically associated with Zionists, is another sign of this movement's connection to colonialism.

16. The presence of individuals with Ba'athist backgrounds in the Yamani movement's organization, such as Salem Abd Hassan and Hassan al-Hamami (the religious leader of the group who has

been arrested), as well as the brother of Ahmad Ismail Gatah who was an officer in the Ba'ath Party, is another sign of the movement's connection to Saddam Hussein's "Al-Hamla Al-Imaniyya."

17. Recently, on a Salafi satellite program (Safa), an Egyptian non-cleric named Abdel Aal Saleem, falsely introduced as a Shia scholar, praised the Yamani movement and Ahmad al-Hassan as representing the Mahdi. This phenomenon shows that Salafi and Wahhabi currents are promoting the Yamani movement through their satellites. This is another indication of the movement's ties to global imperialism.[22]

Duty of the Awaiters in the Face of Such Movements

The colorful seditions orchestrated by devils and their allies to deceive and divert people from the straight path have always existed, especially in the end times as explicitly stated in the hadiths, where seditions become more frequent and the Antichrists appear in more complex forms. In the face of these seditions and Antichrists, there is no safe haven or guarantee of safety other than adhering to the Thaqalayn (the Quran and the Family of the Prophet). The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

"I leave among you two weighty things, the Book of Allah and my Family, the Ahl al-Bayt; if you cling to them, you will never go astray after me."[23] However, proper use of the Book and the Family is not possible without consulting experts in the field, i.e., the religious scholars. This is a rational and customary matter; to understand anything, one must refer to its specialist. We now draw your attention to the narrations from the Imams about the guidance of scholars and the following of the Islamic community in the age of occultation from them:

Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) said: "That is because the channels of matters and laws are in the hands of the scholars of Allah, the trustees of His lawful and unlawful matters;" (source 1383). Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) also said: "Scholars are the heirs of the prophets;" (source 1401, vol. 1, p. 32).

It is also narrated from Imam Hadi (peace be upon him): "If it were not for the scholars who guide people to him during the occultation... no one would remain except that he would apostatize from the religion of Allah... They (the scholars) are superior in the sight of Allah the Almighty;" (source 1384, vol. 2, p. 6).

Finally, Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his return) said: "As for the events that occur, refer to the narrators of our hadith, for they are my proof upon you, and I am God's proof;" (source 1369, pp. 290). Therefore, the most reliable and best way to recognize the truth of claimants, to distinguish the truthful from the liars, and to resolve religious doubts is to seek refuge in religious scholars. It is also incumbent upon religious scholars to clarify the truths and not remain silent in the face of heresies.[24]

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41. www.farsi.almahdyoon.org

42. www.rasanews.ir

43. www.youtube.com

Footnotes

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[1] Fatwa of Jihad against Colonialism in Modern History (Jihadieh Mirza Bozorg Farahani, Mohammad Ali Ashtiani), first published in Tabriz in 1233 AH and again in 1234 AH.

[2] This slogan was frequently heard from the spokesperson of the Ba'ath Party of Iraq in the early days of its establishment (Islamic Republic Newspaper, 06/03/81).

[3] Sha'banieh Uprising: (15 Sha'ban 1412 AH): This uprising was the result of oppression inflicted on the Iraqi people, taking advantage of the circumstances during the First Gulf War. When Saddam's regime was toppled, and his government was eliminated except in Baghdad, religious authorities should have taken leadership, but only Ayatollah Sabzevari and Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad Sadr stepped forward, issuing a fatwa for jihad. They led the people through organizing groups and meetings until differences created among these groups led to Baghdad falling completely back under Saddam's regime, ultimately causing the entire Iraq to come back under Saddam's control; homes were destroyed, people were oppressed, and Saddam's well-known atrocities, especially to Iranians, increased. After the suppression of the uprising, Ayatollah Sabzevari was sidelined due to old age, and Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad Sadr was imprisoned.

[4] www.rasanews.ir

[5] www.//farsi.almahdyoon.org

[6] These claims are based on www.youtube.com

[7] www.//farsi.almahdyoon.org

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] www.almahdyoon.org, www.youtube.com

[11] Meaning "After him [Imam Mahdi], twelve guided Mahdis will come, so when his death occurs, it should be passed to his son, who is the first of the Mahdis."

[12] www.almahdyoon.org

[13] Abu Basir says: I told Imam Sadiq, "O son of the Prophet! I heard from your father who said, 'After Imam Mahdi's uprising, twelve Mahdis will come,'" Imam replied: "Yes; but my father said: twelve Mahdis, not twelve Imams. Yes; they are a group from our Shia who will invite people to our allegiance and true knowledge"

[14] A sect of Shia that considers Imam Musa Kazim as the last Imam and believes that he is alive and the awaited Mahdi. Its founders were Ali ibn Abi Hamzeh Bata'ini, Ziyad bin Marwan Qandi, Uthman bin Isa Rawasi, and Ahmad bin Abi Bishr Sirraj (Qamus al-Rijal, vol. 7, pp. 268-269, no. 4984).

[15] www.rasanews.ir

[16] www.//farsi.almahdyoon.org

[17] Ibid.

[18] These five intermediaries are: Mohammad bin Yahya al-Attar, for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 353, no. 946; Ahmad bin Mohammad bin Isa, for his trustworthiness see: Sheikh Tusi, Al-Rijal, p. 366; Ali bin al-Hakam, for his trustworthiness see: Sheikh Tusi, Al-Fehrest, p. 151, no. 376; Abu Ayoub Khazzaz - Ibrahim bin Isa - for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 20, no. 25; Umar bin Hanzalah, for his trustworthiness see: Kulayni, Al-Kafi, vol. 3, p. 275.

[19] These three intermediaries are: Mohammad bin Abi Umayr, for his trustworthiness see: Sheikh Tusi, Al-Fehrest, p. 218, no. 617; Jamil bin Darraj, for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 126, no. 617; Zurarah bin A'yan, for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 175, no. 463.

[20] Those two intermediaries are: Safwan bin Yahya, for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 197, no. 524; Mohammad bin Humran, for his trustworthiness see: Najashi, Al-Rijal, p. 359, no. 965.

[21] Sheikh Saduq, Kamal al-Din, vol. 1, p. 331, chapter 32, hadith 16; Naim bin Hammad, Al-Fitan, p. 231, hadith 855; Sheikh Mufid, Al-Irshad, p. 339; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 52, p. 210; Nu'mani, Al-Ghayba, p. 255, chapter 14, hadith 13; Fadhl bin Shadhan, Ithbat al-Rij'a - manuscript -; Turathuna, issue 15, p. 215, hadith 16 and p. 276, hadith 17; Mir Luhi, Kifayah al-Muhtadi, p. 262; Khatoon Abadi, Keshf al-Haq, p. 169; Khatoon Abadi, Keshf al-Haq, p. 173, hadith 29.

[22] www.//farsi.almahdyoon.org

[23] A widely accepted hadith agreed upon by both Sunni and Shia sources.

[24] "When innovations appear, it is upon the scholar to show his knowledge or else be cursed by Allah." (Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 54, chapter on innovations and opinions, Ilal al-Shara'i, chapter on the reason for the continuation on Musa bin Jafar, p. 236; 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridha, vol. 1, p. 113).