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978-1-107-01071-0 - The Origins of the Shī'a: Identity, Ritual, and Sacred Space in Eighth-Century Kūfa

Najam Haider

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## The Origins of the Shī'a

The Sunnī-Shī'a schism is often framed as a dispute over the identity of the successor to Muḥammad. In reality, however, this fracture only materialized a century later in the important southern Iraqī city of Kūfa (present-day Najaf). This book explores the birth and development of Shī'ī identity. Through a critical analysis of legal texts, whose provenance has only recently been confirmed, the study shows how the early Shī'a carved out independent religious and social identities through specific ritual practices and within separate sacred spaces. In this way, the book addresses two seminal controversies pertaining to early Islam, namely the dating of Shī'ī identity, and the means by which the Shī'a differentiated themselves from mainstream Kūfan society. This is an important, original, and path-breaking book that marks a significant development in the study of the early Islamic world.

Najam Haider is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Barnard College in New York City.

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# The Origins of the Shī'a

*Identity, Ritual, and Sacred Space  
in Eighth-Century Kūfa*

NAJAM HAIDER

*Barnard College, Columbia University*



CAMBRIDGE  
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107010710](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107010710)

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First published 2011

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Haider, Najam Iftikhar, 1974–

The origins of the Shi'a : identity, ritual, and sacred space  
in eighth-century Kūfa / Najam Haider.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in Islamic civilization)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-01071-0 (hardback)

1. Shi'ah – Iraq – Kufah – History. 2. Kufah (Iraq) – Religion.

3. Shi'ah – History. I. Title. II. Series.

BP192.7.K75H35 2011

297.8'20956747-dc22 2011008815

ISBN 978-1-107-01071-0 Hardback

Additional resources for this publication at <http://www.cambridge.org/9781107010710>

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

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*To my parents,  
Hasan and Khurshid*

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## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank Michael Cook and Hossein Modarressi for their guidance and encouragement over the course of the last decade. I could not have asked for better teachers or mentors. Michael Cook was the advisor for my PhD dissertation, which was completed in the department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University and provides much of the material for the first part of this book. The word “advisor,” however, does not speak to the countless occasions on which he went beyond the call of duty in providing guidance, encouragement, and, when necessary, criticism. Many of the ideas in the final part of the book crystallized during a series of conversations with Hossein Modarressi, to whom I am greatly indebted for his advice, exceeding patience, and consistent support.

Much of the research for this book was conducted in Yemen. In this regard, I owe a significant debt to Bernard Haykel who, in the spring of 2003, was gracious enough to introduce me to the principles of Zaydī Shi‘ism and provided valuable contacts with Zaydī intellectual circles in Ṣan‘ā’. I am also grateful to him for serving as a primary reader and informal advisor for my PhD dissertation, as well as for his counsel and help throughout the years. Special mention must be made of Ahmad Ishaq and the Imam Zayd Bin Ali Cultural Foundation for their assistance in facilitating access to both sources and scholars. Their heroic efforts at preserving the Zaydī cultural and religious heritage in the face of relentless government pressure deserve far more attention than they have received to this point.

In the course of completing this book, I have benefited from interactions with a number of people. Among my teachers, I must thank Gene



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Garthwaite, Andras Hamori, Shaun Marmon, James Piscatori, Chase Robinson, and Avram Udovitch. I am indebted to Teresa Bernheimer, Tariq al-Jamil, Maher Jarrar, William McCants, David Powers, Intisar Rabb, Sayeed Rahman, Behnam Sadeghi, Justin Stearns, and Mairaj Syed for their feedback at various stages of this project. I have also profited from conversations with Paul Heck and Felicitas Opwis at Georgetown University as well as the jarring outside perspective of Janardhan Iyengar at Franklin and Marshall College. Many of the ideas in the latter part of the book were refined during an intensive seminar on 'Alids led by Kazuo Morimoto at Princeton University in the spring of 2010. I would like to give special thanks to Wilferd Madelung for his seminal work on the study of early Shī'ism, which has inspired a generation of scholars, and for his insightful comments on my dissertation that helped shape the structure and content of this book. I am also grateful to Andrew Newman for carefully reading through the entire manuscript, as well as the anonymous readers chosen by Cambridge University Press, whose suggestions undoubtedly strengthened the overall argument. Thanks as well to Marigold Acland and the editors at the Press for their support in the publication process.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the numerous traditional scholars in Yemen, Syria, and Iraq who took the time to sit down with a rather clueless graduate student from the United States and patiently explain the nuances of classical Arabic legal and historical texts. These centers of learning continue to preserve a long-standing tradition of scholarship that is too often underappreciated in the academy. Their generosity humbled me on a number of occasions and contributed significantly to the completion of this project.

I conclude as one often does in the course of acknowledgments by sincerely crediting my teachers, colleagues, and friends for the merits of this book while taking full and exclusive responsibility for any errors or misinterpretations.

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## Note on Transliteration and Dates

The system of transliteration employed in rendering Arabic names, technical terms, and other phrases into Latin characters is essentially the same as that utilized in most contemporaneous academic journals (e.g., *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* or *Islamic Law and Society*). The primary exceptions to this strict transliteration are certain well-established locations that are referred to by their common names. Most prominent among these are the cities of Mecca and Medina and the geographical regions of Syria, Yemen, Iraq, and Iran. The final *tā' marbuṭa* is only indicated in transliteration when in a conjunctive form where it is audibly pronounced. Thus, I use *basmla* instead of *basmlah* but write out *Ḥilyat al-'ulamā'*.

Dates are given according to the Hijrī and Gregorian calendar (e.g., 122/740). Death dates are provided at the first mention of each historical figure in the main text. Within the footnotes, death dates are offered in cases where they are relevant to the argument. For death dates of authors found exclusively in the footnotes, see the bibliography.

## Abbreviations

### HERESIOGRAPHIES

FBQ	Ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī, <i>al-Farq bayn al-firaq</i>
FQ	al-Nawbakhtī, <i>Firaq al-shī'a</i>
KM	al-Qummī, <i>Kitāb al-maqālāt</i>
MIm	al-Nāshī' al-Akbar, <i>Masā'il al-imāma</i>
MIš	al-Ash'arī, <i>Maqālāt al-islāmiyyīn</i>
MN	al-Shahristānī, <i>al-Milal wa'l-niḥal</i>

### LEGAL AND HISTORICAL WORKS

<i>Akhbār</i>	Aḥmad b. Sahl al-Rāzī, <i>Akhbār Fakhh</i>
<i>Débuts</i>	van Arendonk, <i>Les débuts de l'imāmat zaidite au Yémen</i>
DIQ	Madelung, <i>Der Imam al-Qāsim</i>
<i>Ifāda</i>	al-Nāṭiq bi'l-Ḥaqq, <i>al-Ifāda</i>
<i>Maqātil</i>	al-Iṣbahānī, <i>Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn</i>
<i>Maṣābiḥ I</i>	Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm, <i>al-Maṣābiḥ</i>
<i>Maṣābiḥ II</i>	'Alī b. Bilāl, <i>al-Maṣābiḥ</i>
<i>Mughnī I</i>	Ibn Qudāma, <i>al-Mughnī</i> (1986)
<i>Mughnī II</i>	Ibn Qudāma, <i>al-Mughnī</i> (1996)

### COLLECTIONS OF ḤADĪTH AND TRADITIONS

#### Sunnī

KAS I	al-Shaybānī, <i>Kitāb al-āthār</i> (1965)
KAS II	al-Shaybānī, <i>al-Āthār</i> (1998)

*Abbreviations*

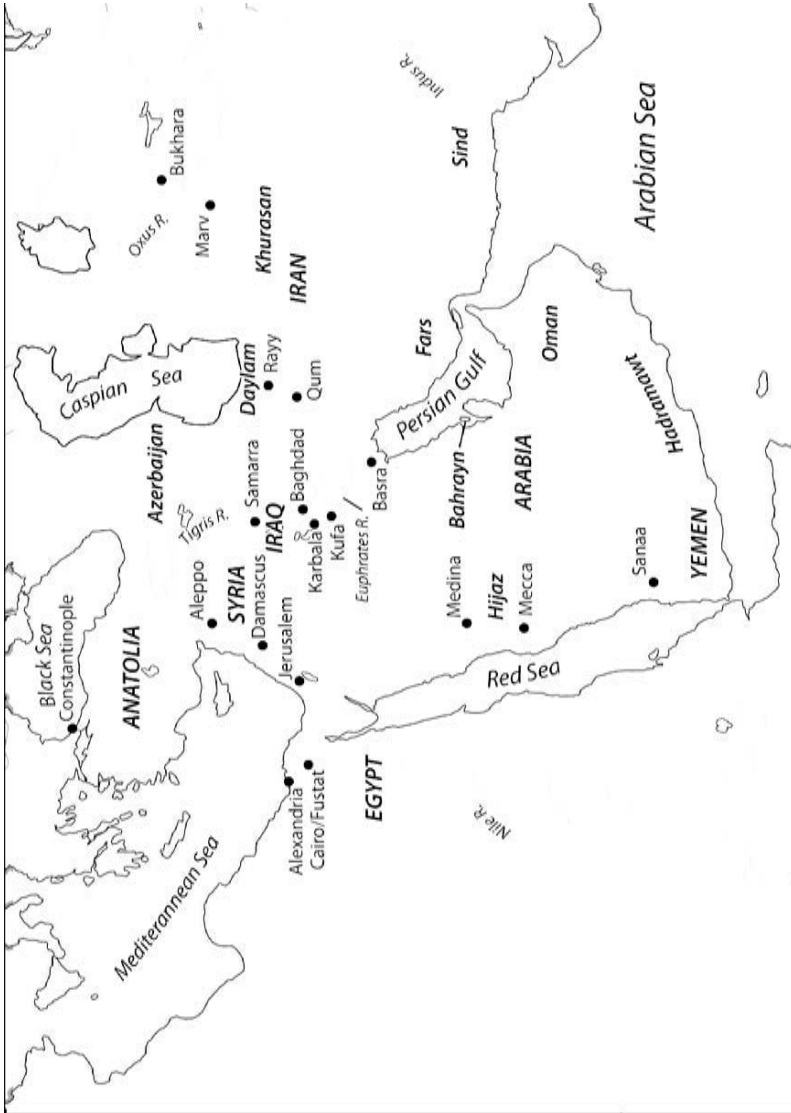
MAR	‘Abd al-Razzāq, <i>Muṣannaf fi’l-ḥadīth</i>
MIAS	Ibn Abī Shayba, <i>Muṣannaf</i>
SAD	Abū Dāwūd, <i>Sunan</i>
SB	al-Bukhārī, <i>Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ</i>
SIM	Ibn Māja, <i>Sunan</i>
SKB	al-Bayhaqī, <i>al-Sunan al-kubrā</i>
SM	Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, <i>Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ</i>
SN I	al-Nasā‘ī, <i>Sunan</i> (1930)
SN II	al-Nasā‘ī, <i>Sunan</i> (1991)
SN III	al-Nasā‘ī, <i>Sunan</i> (2001)
ST	al-Tirmidhī, <i>Sunan</i>

**Imāmī**

BM	al-Barqī, <i>al-Maḥāsin</i>
KK	al-Kulaynī, <i>al-Kāfī</i>
ṬI	al-Ṭūsī, <i>al-Istibṣār</i>
ṬT	al-Ṭūsī, <i>Tahdhīb al-aḥkām</i>
WS	al-Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, <i>Wasā’il al-shī‘a</i>

**Zaydi**

AA	Aḥmad b. ‘Īsā, <i>Amālī</i>
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MAP I. The Middle East in the early Muslim period.