

In the name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

**The Role of Iranians in
Najaf Ashraf from Its
Establishment to the 8th Century
AH (the 14th AD): A Historical
Analysis**

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The Role of Iranians in Najaf Ashraf from Its Establishment to the 8th Century AH/14th Century AD: A Historical Analysis

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Introduction

The holy city of Najaf was under the rule of several Iranian dynasties from the 3rd to the 8th century AH, most notably the Buyid dynasty. The Buyids ruled Iraq from the 4th century AH until the mid-5th century AH. Subsequently, the Seljuks governed Iraq from the mid-5th century AH until the year 590 AH. The fall of these dynasties marks one of the most significant events in Islamic history, particularly for the Shia community. What distinguished these dynasties was their simultaneous rule over Iran and Iraq, as their administrative centers were located in Iran. Among them, the Buyids were the only Shia dynasty, with their roots tracing back to northern Iran. Each of these dynasties played political, social, economic, cultural, and urban roles in Najaf, contributing significantly to the city and the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

Iranian religious scholars also served Shia teachings through their writings, which remain among the most important sources of Shia thought and are relied upon in the studies of the Najaf seminary. Highlighting the role of Iranians in Najaf is closely tied to Iranian identity. Clarifying the periods of Iranian rule over the holy shrines and the city of Najaf—from its establishment as an Islamic city after the discovery of Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) tomb in the 2nd century AH—is of great importance. Examining the political, social, cultural, and economic contributions of Iranians in Najaf, as well as the role of certain Iranian figures in its administration, holds particular significance.

This book consists of four chapters. The first chapter discusses the political role of Iranians in Najaf, covering the political history of the city during the Buyid, Seljuk, Ilkhanid, and Jalayirid periods.

The second chapter explores the social role of Iranians in Najaf, including their contributions to the development of the Imam Ali (peace be upon him) shrine and the city itself. It examines the social impact of Iranian dynasties—such as the Buyids, Seljuks, Ilkhanids, and Jalayirids—on Najaf's urbanization, royal pilgrimages to the shrine, Shia ceremonies, social classes, and the establishment of administrative positions.

The third chapter focuses on the cultural role of Iranian scholars in Najaf's educational institutions and the spread of Islamic sciences. It highlights Sheikh Tusi's leadership of the Shia community in Baghdad until the Seljuk invasion, his relocation to Najaf, and his influence there. The chapter also discusses Sheikh Tusi's works and those of his students, emphasizing the cultural contributions of Iranian scholars. Additionally, it examines the establishment of the Najaf seminary in the 6th and 7th centuries AH, the founding of public and private libraries during the Buyid period, and Sheikh Tusi's role in guiding the Shia community and his scholarly legacy in Najaf.

The fourth chapter addresses the economic role of Iranian dynasties in Najaf, including the Buyids, Seljuks, Ilkhanids, and Jalayirids. Topics such as economic and agricultural activities, trade, industry, economic crises, and their impact on Najaf's markets are analyzed. The monetary policies and coinage of these dynasties are also discussed.

Finally, the conclusion summarizes the findings of these four chapters.

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Chapter one

"The Political Role of Iranian Governments in Najaf Ashraf"

1-Introduction

The region of Iraq, both before and after Islam, was under the influence and control of several Iranian empires, including the Achaemenids, Parthians, and Sassanians. The Achaemenids, led by Cyrus, conquered Babylon, and Iraq remained under their rule until the empire's decline. The Parthians and Sassanians later established their capital in Ctesiphon, Iraq. The Sassanians undertook extensive construction projects in Iraq, erecting numerous buildings, palaces, and roads, particularly in Ctesiphon, where the iconic Arch of Ctesiphon (Taq Kasra) was constructed (Christensen, 1367: pp. 406-415).

The Abbasid Caliphate (132-656 AH) was established with significant support from Iranians, and Baghdad, its capital, was built by Iranian engineers like Nawbakht, Mashallah, and Khalid al-Barmaki (Ya'qubi, 1356: p. 9). During the Abbasid era, Iranian dynasties such as the Buyids and Seljuks ruled Iraq, each adopting different administrative approaches based on their religious affiliations. The Buyids, being Shia, held a special reverence for Najaf and played a key role in its governance, while the Seljuks, who were Sunni, implemented different policies, especially since they did not always receive support

from the Abbasids. Following the Mongol invasion led by Hulagu Khan in 656 AH, which resulted in the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, Iraq came under Mongol control until 736 AH. After the Mongol period, the Jalayirids briefly ruled over Iraq and Najaf.

2- The Political Role of the Buyids in Najaf

The Buyid dynasty, founded by three brothers—Ali, Hasan, and Ahmad—rose to power in the 10th century. They captured key regions like Isfahan, Khuzestan, Fars, and eventually Baghdad in 334 AH, bringing the Abbasid Caliphate under their control. Ahmad adopted the title "Mu'izz al-Dawla," while his brothers were titled "Imad al-Dawla" and "Rukn al-Dawla," respectively (Mas'udi, 1967: Vol. 4, p. 385). These titles reflected the Buyids' dominance and the declining authority of the Abbasid Caliphate. The Deylamites, due to their Shia beliefs, showed no respect for the Caliph and often humiliated him. For example, two Deylamite chiefs dragged Caliph Al-Mustakfi from his palace to Ahmad's residence (Miskawayh, 1914: Vol. 2, p. 87). Mu'izz al-Dawla deposed the Caliph, blinded him, and installed Al-Muti' as the new Caliph. He also ordered Al-Mustakfi's imprisonment and blinding.

The Buyids centralized power, reducing the Abbasid Caliph to a figurehead with only religious authority, while political and administrative control rested with the Buyids (Al-Biruni, 1923: p. 132). Consequently, the Abbasid Caliph lost his standing as the leader of the Sunni Muslim community, and all decisions made under Buyid rule favored the Buyids. The Abbasid Caliph also granted Mu'izz al-Dawla full political, military, and administrative authority, appointing him as the Amir al-Umara of the Caliphate (Ibn al-Taqaqi, 1962: p. 232).

Mu'izz al-Dawla initially considered replacing the Abbasid Caliph with an Alavid but decided against it to maintain

legitimacy among Sunni Muslims. The Buyids' harsh treatment of the Caliphs, such as blinding and deposing them, demonstrated their disregard for the Abbasid dynasty. For instance, Baha' al-Dawla, the son of 'Adud al-Dawla, deposed Caliph Al-Ta'i and installed Al-Qadir as the new Caliph (Jurfadhaqani, *Tarikh-i Yamini*, p. 29). When 'Adud al-Dawla entered Baghdad in 370 AH, he demanded that the Caliph meet him at the Nahrawan Bridge, a departure from the customary protocol where the Caliph would not go out to greet a Sultan (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, p. 477).

Historical sources, such as Ibn al-Athir (1963: Vol. 7, p. 4), indicate that the Buyids initially followed Zaydi Shia but after establishing themselves in Baghdad adopted Twelver Shia practices. In 351 AH, Mu'izz al-Dawla ordered inscriptions on mosque doors in Baghdad cursing those who forcibly took Fadak from Fatimah (peace be upon her), prevented Hasan (peace be upon him) from being buried near his grandfather, and exiled Abu Dharr. When Sunnis reacted negatively, the vizier, Abu Muhammad al-muhallabi-, modified the inscription to curse Mu'awiyah and oppressors of the Prophet's family (peace be upon him) (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 7, p. 4). This act indicated the Buyids' alignment with Twelver Shia beliefs, as Zaydi Shia did not engage in such practices, recognizing the first two Caliphs and viewing Ali's (peace be upon him) Imamate as based on merit rather than explicit designation (Nawbakhti, 1361: p. 19).

In 352 AH, Mu'izz al-Dawla closed Baghdad's markets on Ashura for mourning processions for Husayn ibn Ali (peace be upon him), and Ahmad decreed celebrations for Eid al-Ghadir. Sunni opposition was ineffective due to Buyid support, allowing Shia rituals to be practiced openly without taqiyya(dissimulation) (Ibn Kathir, 1966: Vol. 11, p. 262). These practices and ceremonies became Shia traditions during the

Buyid era, though they sometimes led to clashes between Shia and Sunnis, particularly around the Baratha Mosque (Ibn Kathir, 1966: Vol. 11, p. 26).

The Buyids also played a key role in establishing Shia schools, such as the Dar al-Ilm in Baghdad, and large libraries in cities like Rayy, Shiraz, and Isfahan (Claude Cahen, 1356: pp. 154-164). They restored holy shrines and supported Shia scholars, such as Ismail ibn 'Abbad, contributing to the intellectual and religious growth of Shia Islam (Ibn Mansur Abd al-Malik al-Tha'alibi al-Nishapuri, 1979: Vol. 3, p. 226).

the Buyids' significant efforts contributed to the spread of Shia Islam in Iran and Iraq, alongside other Shia governments like the Hamdanids in northern Iraq, the Fatimids in Egypt and North Africa, the Zaydis in Yemen, the Banu Mazyad in Hilla, and the Banu Shahin in Batihah,. These governments each held a special respect for the cities of Najaf and Karbala and carried out construction projects in these cities during their reigns. The Buyids' most notable achievement was allowing Shia to openly express their beliefs without the dissimulation (Taqiyya), leading to the widespread adoption of Twelver Shia Islam, though it did not become the official state religion (Kramer, 1375: p. 82).

After gaining control of Iraq, the Buyids focused on holy cities like Najaf, establishing administrative roles like the Naqib al-Ashraf to oversee shrines and allocate funds for their upkeep (Ibn al-Taqtqi, 1962: p. 282). The Naqibs, representing Sharia and the Ahl al-Bayt's (peace be upon them) sciences, contributed to Najaf's growth as a Shia pilgrimage center. Baghdad was the Buyids' main center, but they also attended to other Iraqi cities like Basra, Wasit, and Kufa, appointing officials to manage regional administration (Ibn Miskawayh, 1914: Vol. 5, p. 432).

The Buyids' interest was not limited to Najaf but also included the cities of Karbala, Kazimayn, and Samarra. They

divided Iraq into Sawad and Jazira, with six administrative units: Baghdad, Kufa, Basra, Samarra, Hulwan, and Wasit. Kufa, considered the heart of Najaf, was central to the Buyids' policies, benefiting Najaf economically and commercially. Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad were the primary focus of the Buyids' attention.

The Buyids honored Shia Imams by constructing domes and shrines over their tombs. 'Adud al-Dawla, the most famous Buyid Sultan, spent nearly a year in Najaf Ashraf with his army to expand the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and develop it (Mirkhwand, 1338: p. 156). What contributed to the advancement of Najaf was the political stability that emerged during the Buyid rule., Baghdad; however, experienced chaos due to uprisings by the "Ayyars" and riots between Sunnis and Shia, resulting in arson and killings (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: Vol. 14, p. 344).

The Buyids also supported scientific movements and scholars. They expanded Najaf's shrine, built city walls, and established a religious school, attracting students from across the Islamic world. The scientific movement between Najaf and Iran led to many scholars migrating to Najaf, including the most famous of them, Sheikh Tusi, who moved from Khorasan to Baghdad. After the persecution of Shia and Imami scholars by the Seljuks in 448 AH, he left Baghdad and headed to Najaf Ashraf.

The Buyids implemented a centralized administration, limiting local rulers' powers and appointing governors based on trust and experience, as well as the prohibition of holding the position for an extended period. (Ibn Miskawayh, 1914: Vol. 5, p. 432). Among the viziers appointed to administer the city of Kufa was Vizier Abu al-Fath Ahmad ibn Umar ibn Yahya al-Alawi in 396 AH (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 7, p. 238). This position was given to him due to his administrative experience, as he had

previously administered both Karbala and Najaf. Another Shia vizier was Abu Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Fadl ibn Sahlan, the vizier of 'Adud al-Dawla al-Daylami, as he was involved in the urban development of Najaf. He built a wall for the city of Najaf (Al-Kufi, 1952: p. 68). Hasan ibn Fadl ibn Sahlan was of Iranian origin and held an important political role in the Buyid government, too. These appointments demonstrate the extent of Iranian influence during the Buyid era in the cities of Iraq, including Najaf.

With the Buyids' control over Iraq, the Abbasid Caliphate weakened, and real power shifted to the Buyid Sultans. They consulted with the Talibids and appointed Husayn ibn Ahmad as Naqib, (Tabari, 1968: Vol. 9, p. 150). During their rule, the position of Naqib al-Ashraf was established (Murayti, 1386: p. 115). The Naqibs were "the guardians of the holy shrine and held authority over the entire country" (Al-Kufi, 1952: p. 66). The Naqibs initially held significant authority but later became more symbolic (Kammuna, 1968: Vol. 2, p. 33).

This means that the Naqib al-Ashraf, from an administrative perspective, represented the central authority. In 515 AH, during the rule of the Seljuks in Iraq, when the Bedouin tribe of Al-Nabhani attacked "Fayd" and broke the doors of the shrine of Ali (peace be upon him), Khatuni built new doors and transported them on twelve camels, and the Naqib of the upper courtyard oversaw this task (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: Vol. 9, p. 228). Thus, the Buyids administered the city of Najaf through the appointment of this position.

The Significant Political Responsibilities of the Naqib

Here, it is necessary to discuss the position of the Naqib to better understand the status of the Naqibs of Najaf. The Naqib was someone who was responsible for leading a specific group. During the early Abbasid Caliphate, someone was appointed to oversee the affairs of the Alids and Abbasids. The term Naqib

was used during the reign of Mahdi Abbasi in 163 AH to refer to the leader of a group of soldiers. During the reign of Musta'in Abbasi (279-289 AH), respect for the Alids became customary. Thus, for the first time, he ordered that a Naqib be selected from among the Alids for the Banu Hashim (Musawi, 1381: p. 145).

Following the death of Sayyid al-Radi in 406 AH, the Abbasid Caliph and the Buyid Amir appointed his brother, Sayyid Murtada, as the Naqib al-Nuqaba of the Banu Abi Talib. He held this position for thirty years, also serving as the head of the Diwan al-Mazalim and the Amir al-Hajj (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: Vol. 7, p. 276).

The Buyids established administrative departments (Diwans) based on the Abbasid system, which itself was influenced by the Sassanians. In 297 AH, the Diwans were unified under a system called Diwan al-Dar, divided into three sections: Mashriq Diwan, Maghrib Diwan, and

Sawad Diwan. These structures continued into the Buyid era, with some modifications (Miskawayh, 1914: Vol. 6, p. 413). When the Buyids took control of Iraq, there were two administrative systems: the Abbasid Caliphate's Diwan, responsible for managing the Caliphate's affairs and tax collection, and the Buyid Diwan, connected to the Buyid Sultan's administration and managed by his viziers. With the consolidation of Shia beliefs and the Buyids' interest in holy shrines, the sacred city of Najaf came under the authority of the Naqib al-Ashraf. This position, established during the Buyid era in Karbala and Kufa, combined social and political authority in managing Najaf and the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), serving the city and its Shia followers. Najaf's administration was directly under the Naqib al-Nuqaba's control until the Mongol era in the 8th century AH.

The Diwans of the Buyid Era

The Buyids established various administrative departments (Diwans) influenced by the Abbasid and Sassanian systems. Key Diwans included:

Diwan al-Barid (Postal Service): Managed news and information. Abu Marwan Abd al-Malik ibn Muhammad al-Ziyat al-Khara'iti was a notable figure in this role (Hilal al-Sabi, 1986: p. 34).

Diwan al-Khara'it: Handled tax transfers from Najaf and other cities.

Diwan al-Tawqi: Addressed public complaints.

.. ***Diwan al-Qada*** (Judiciary): Managed judicial matters, including marriage

Diwan al-'Ata' (Grants): Allocated financial grants to government employees. Al-Khwarizmi was among those who held this position (Al-Qifti, 1326: p. 284).

Diwan al-Kharaj (Taxation): Collected taxes from agricultural lands and non-Muslim subjects

. ***Diwan al-Mara'i*** (Pastures): Taxed the sale of animals

Diwan al-Mustaghallat: Regulated market movements and internal routes.

Diwan al-Khabar (Intelligence): Provided political, social, and economic intelligence.

Diwan al-Shurta (Police): Ensured city security

The Buyids placed significant emphasis on their administrative system, which helped maintain political stability in Najaf, unlike Baghdad, which experienced conflicts between the Abbasids and Buyids, as well as religious tensions between Sunnis and Shia. These conflicts stemmed from Sunni opposition to Shia rule in the name of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). At times, the Buyids exiled or imprisoned Shia

religious leaders, such as Sheikh al-Mufid (Kramer, 1375: p. 112).

3- The Political Role of the Seljuks in Najaf Ashraf (447–590 AH)

Unlike the Buyids, who supported Shiism, the Seljuks were backed by the Abbasid Caliphate and actively opposed Imami Shiism. Upon entering Baghdad, they persecuted Shiites, destroyed their libraries. The Seljuks even altered the call to prayer by replacing the phrase "Hayya 'ala Khayr al-'Amal" (Come to the best of deeds) with "Al-Salatu Khayrun min al-Nawm" (Prayer is better than sleep) (Al-Bundari, 1900: 13). Despite these efforts, Shiite beliefs persisted, and Najaf Ashraf became a center for Imami scholarship under Sheikh al-Tusi, who migrated from Baghdad to escape Seljuk persecution.

The Seljuks overthrew the Buyids in Iraq, capturing their last ruler, Malik al-Rahim, and weakening Buyid authority. The Abbasid Caliph, Al-Qa'im, sought Seljuk help to counter the growing power of the Buyid leader Basasiri (Al-Bundari, 1900: 7–11 ; Al-Zarkali, n.d.: Vol. 1, 278–288). Tughril Beg, the Seljuk leader, was recognized as Sultan by the Abbasids. The Seljuks aimed to end Buyid authority in Iraq, captured Malik al-Rahim, and sent him in chains to Sirwan and later to Rayy, where he died in 450 AH (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, 78). These events marked the beginning of Seljuk rule in Iraq, as Abbasid authority waned, leaving only the Caliph's name. With the Seljuks' entry into Baghdad, Najaf Ashraf remained relatively distant from the capital's political turmoil, allowing it to avoid internal conflicts. This is why Sheikh al-Tusi migrated from Baghdad to Najaf Ashraf, which became a center for scholarly services to Imami Shiism.

Najaf Ashraf had been prepared for this scholarly movement during the Buyid era under the authority of the Naqib al-Ashraf

(Chief of the Nobles). Thus, Najaf was spared from the Seljuks' brutal actions against Shiites, as Shiite beliefs remained strong. The Seljuks' failure to suppress Shiism was evident in the continued scholarly movement in Najaf, led by Sheikh al-Tusi. The schools in Najaf trained religious students to the same level as those in Baghdad. Sheikh al-Tusi implemented a strategic program to educate and empower students, producing numerous jurists under his guidance. Despite the Seljuks' hostility toward Shiism, they were unable to significantly alter the holy city of Najaf. They even played a social role in the city, as Seljuk Sultans frequently visited Najaf to pay respects at the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

The Seljuks provided minimal services to Shiites, and any positive actions, such as opening canals to provide water for residents, were motivated by financial benefits from religious tourism rather than a desire to preserve the holy shrines. Political events in Najaf included conflicts between the Seljuks and Shiite rulers, such as Dhibis bin Mazyad al-Asadi, who destroyed pulpits in Najaf and Karbala (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 207).

After the Abbasid Caliphs allowed the Seljuks to enter Baghdad to rid themselves of Buyid influence, relations between the Abbasids and the Seljuks became tense. The Seljuks came to power independently of the Abbasids, leading to disputes between the two. When the Abbasid Caliphs faced persecution by the Seljuks, they sought refuge in Najaf and Karbala to escape Seljuk influence. Thus, Najaf became a safe haven for leaders, commanders, and officials who feared the Seljuks. Seljuk ministers, such as Nizam al-Mulk al-Tusi, also visited Najaf and Karbala, staying there for extended periods (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 35).

The Seljuk rule differed from that of the Buyids, as Baghdad was the main center of Buyid rule, while the Seljuks' power base

was in Iran. Muhammad bin Malikshah, the first Seljuk Sultan of Iraq, ruled from Isfahan, making it his capital (Taqush, 2016: 206). Baghdad became the Seljuks' secondary capital in Iran. Since they did not reside in Baghdad, they created the position of "Amid al-Iraq" (Governor of Iraq), headquartered in Baghdad. The Amid al-Iraq and the "Shahna" (Military Governor) cooperated to maintain security in Iraqi cities, including Najaf Ashraf, with the Amid's authority exceeding that of the Shahna. The Amid oversaw all affairs in Iraq, while the Shahna supervised Iraqi cities, including Najaf (Amin, 1964: Vol. 1, 220). The Amid al-Iraq played a crucial role in maintaining security and overseeing pilgrim safety, as Najaf was a key stop for pilgrims traveling to Mecca.

During Seljuk rule, some Iraqi cities experienced sectarian conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites in Baghdad and Basra. Internal disputes between the Seljuks and the Abbasids worsened the situation. The Abbasids sought to regain their influence, as their authority had been weakened by the Seljuks. The Seljuk era was similar to the Buyid era in terms of Abbasid relations, as the Abbasids retained only symbolic authority. Efforts to regain influence began during Caliph Al-Mustaqfi Billah's reign in 550 AH. He sought to curb Seljuk ambitions in Iraq and, in 551 AH, ignited a conflict between Sultan Mahmud bin Mas'ud and the Seljuk princes. Al-Mustaqfi insisted that the Seljuk Sultan pledge obedience to the Abbasids in exchange for having his name mentioned in Baghdad's sermons (Al-Khazraji, 1975: 69–70). Al-Mustaqfi Billah managed to regain control over Al-Bata'ih and annex it to the Caliphate, bringing Iraqi cities from Kufa to Basra under Baghdad's control (Al-Husayni, 1933: 137–138). Thus, Iraqi cities, including Najaf, were not under Seljuk rule for long, leading to conflicts between the Abbasids and the Seljuks. The Abbasids made significant efforts

to regain influence in Iraq and, to some extent, succeeded in restoring their authority among the Seljuks.

Najaf, also, was not the center of political attention as it had been during the Buyid era, remaining distant from Baghdad's political turmoil. This distance spared Najaf from economic disruptions and price increases.

By the mid-6th century AH, the Abbasids regained some influence over Iraqi cities, including Najaf, as the Seljuks' control waned. From the 5th century AH until the Mongol invasion in 656 AH, Shiite influence grew in Najaf, attracting Shiites from across the Islamic world and even visits from Abbasid Caliphs. Despite the Seljuks' hostility, Najaf remained a center of Shiite learning and pilgrimage, largely untouched by the political upheavals of the time.

4- Najaf Ashraf During the Mongol Era (656–738 AH)

The Ilkhanate, a Mongol state ruling over Iraq and Iran, was predominantly Sunni. Hulagu Khan, after a 50-day siege, conquered Baghdad in 656 AH, overthrowing the Abbasid Caliphate. Despite promises to spare scholars, civilians and descendants of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), Hulagu's forces plundered Baghdad and killed the Caliph, once the caliph surrendered his treasury (Spuler, 1373 AH: 56).

The Ilkhanate then ruled Iraq until the 8th century AH, adopting a decentralized governance model where local governors had autonomy but were required to pay tribute and provide military support to the Mongols. However, the Mongols maintained oversight through emissaries and centralized certain administrative functions, such as financial management and judicial appointments, under the Sahib al-Diwan (Head of the Diwan). Other key positions included the Nazir (Supervisor) and Mushrif (Inspector), who oversaw financial and administrative reforms (Abdullah, 2014: 76).

Najaf Ashraf, though not a political center, retained its religious significance as a Shiite hub and the site of Imam Ali's shrine (peace be upon him) (Al-Makhzumi, 2021: 182). The city enjoyed a degree of autonomy due to its religious importance, and its residents paid taxes to the Mongols like other Iraqi cities. However, Najaf was largely spared from the Mongols' violent policies, thanks to the efforts of Shiite scholars from Hilla, who negotiated with the Mongols to protect the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. These scholars, including Sheikh Ibn Abi al-'Izz and Sayyid Majd al-Din bin Tawus, convinced the Mongols to secure the holy sites, ensuring that Najaf avoided the destruction faced by other cities (Al-Amin, 1965: Vol. 6, 30–31; Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 330).

The Mongols' conciliatory approach toward Najaf was further influenced by Shiite scholars who spread Shiism among Mongol leaders. For instance, Sayyid Majd al-Din presented Hulagu with the book "Basharat", which helped secure protection for Najaf and Karbala (Kamuna, 1968: Vol. 1, 199). Hulagu even sent troops to guard the shrine of Imam Ali (Al-Hamadani, n.d.: Vol. 2, 296). Additionally, Iranian Muslim ministers, such as "Ata-Malik Juvayni", played a significant role in developing Najaf by initiating irrigation projects that benefited agriculture and industry, contributing to the city's economic progress (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH: 117).

It is clear that political stability leads to economic progress, and this is precisely what happened in Najaf Ashraf thanks to the efforts of scholars and Shiites. The scholars who prevented the Mongols from advancing toward Najaf paved the way for agricultural, commercial, and industrial progress not only in Najaf but also in other Iraqi cities and neighboring regions. As a result, close trade relations were established between Najaf and other cities in Iraq and Iran during the 7th and 8th centuries AH. This was due to the political stability in Najaf Ashraf, in

which the role of Shiite scholars in Iraq was crucial (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH: 120).

Another factor that contributed to Najaf's progress during the Mongol era was the presence of Shiite tendencies among the Mongols. This was a result of the conciliatory policy pursued by Shiite scholars toward the invading Mongols upon their arrival in Baghdad. The Shiite scholars gained the favor of the Mongols, which was reflected in their interest in the holy city of Najaf..

The Mongol era saw frequent visits by Mongol leaders and their ministers to Najaf, aimed at gaining the trust of the Shiite population. Sultan Ghazan Khan, for example, showed special attention to the family of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) by building structures and allocating endowments for their benefit. Later, Sultan Oljeitu's conversion to Shiism further elevated Najaf's status, as he provided financial support to the city's residents and the custodians of Imam Ali's shrine (Bahr al-Ulum, 1354 AH: Vol. 1, 288).

Despite the political instability and frequent changes in governance across Iraq, Najaf remained relatively stable and prosperous. The rapid turnover of governors, such as Taj al-Din Ali bin al-Dawami and Amir Sunjaq, often led to insecurity and oppression in other regions. However, Najaf's religious and scholarly significance, combined with the efforts of Shiite scholars, ensured its protection and development. The city became a center of trade and cultural exchange, fostering close relations with other Iraqi and Iranian cities during the 7th and 8th centuries AH.

5- Najaf Ashraf During the Jalayirid Era (738–814 AH)

Following the death of Sultan Abu Sa'id Ilkhanid, the Ilkhanate territories fragmented, leading to a half-century interregnum before the Timurid period. During this time,

several states emerged, including the Salghurids, Muzaffarids, Sarbadars, and others. Among these, the Jalayirids and Chupanids were minor dynasties aligned with Mongol power, ruling over Azerbaijan and Baghdad. (Mazawi, 1363 AH: 43).

Among the Iranian states that ruled over both Iran and Iraq after the Mongol period were the Jalayirids. The Jalayirids, who held significant military and administrative roles during the Mongol era, established their dynasty in Mesopotamia under Taj al-Din Sheikh Hasan ibn Hussain, known as Hasan the Great (Spuler, 1372 AH: 352).

Their governance mirrored Mongol policies, offering little innovation and marked by administrative chaos, internal conflicts, and heavy taxation. Iraq, not their primary power center, suffered from instability, exacerbated by Timur's invasions and the Jalayirids' weak control.

The Jalayirids administered Iraqi cities through systems like "Iqta" (land grants) and tax farming, focusing on revenue collection rather than effective governance. Provinces were governed by appointed officials or tribal leaders, with cities and their suburbs referred to as "A'mal". Despite their decentralized rule, the Jalayirids struggled to maintain stability, especially as Iraq became a battleground for internal conflicts and Timur's invasions (Abdullah, 2014: 122).

Since the Jalayirids' rule was decentralized, their main center of power was in Iran. Therefore, the role of this institution in administering the holy city of Najaf was to maintain its security and stability, keeping it isolated from the political events that affected other Iraqi cities, particularly Baghdad. This isolation of Najaf from other Iraqi cities was not because it was outside the government's jurisdiction. Like other cities, its residents were subject to taxation. The Jalayirid rule did not last long, and their reign in Iraq was marked by internal turmoil.

Najaf Ashraf, however, retained its religious significance and autonomy under the "Naqib al-Nuqaba" (Chief of the Nobles), an Alid figure responsible for its administration. Unlike other Iraqi cities, Najaf remained relatively isolated from political turmoil, benefiting from its status as a Shiite religious center. The Jalayirids' rule, though marked by decline and instability in Iraq, did not significantly disrupt Najaf's religious and scholarly activities (Ibn Battuta, 1967: Vol. 1, 110–111).

Thus, Najaf's stability was not due to the role of the Mongol or Jalayirid governments but rather because the city was an important religious center with established Islamic seminaries and schools. Najaf was also under the authority of the Naqib al-Nuqaba', the Hajib (chamberlain), and the treasury. It can be said that Najaf remained free from the political crises that Baghdad witnessed. If we compare the condition of the holy city of Najaf during the Buyid era with other Iranian governments, it becomes clear that Najaf fared better under the Buyids due to their Shiite affiliation, which led them to pay special attention to the holy city.

In summary, while the Jalayirid era was characterized by weak governance and instability in Iraq, Najaf Ashraf maintained its religious prominence and autonomy. The city's stability was largely due to its religious significance and the efforts of local Shiite leaders, rather than the Jalayirid administration.

Summary

The Buyid dynasty, which ruled Iraq during the Abbasid Caliphate, played a crucial role in supporting Shiite beliefs and protecting holy shrines, particularly in Najaf. Their Shiite affiliation led to significant attention to Najaf, ensuring its stability and freedom from sectarian conflicts.

During the Mongol Ilkhanate, the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate benefited Shiites, as Mongol rulers like Ghazan Khan and Oljeitu showed Shiite tendencies, fostering the spread of Shiism in Iraq. Najaf, spared from Mongol destruction due to the efforts of local scholars, continued to thrive as a religious center.

The Jalayirid period saw little change in Najaf's status, with the city remaining relatively unaffected by the political instability that plagued other parts of Iraq. Iranian figures, such as Sheikh al-Tusi, played a significant role in Najaf's development, particularly in establishing its seminary, which became a major center of Shiite learning.

In conclusion, Iranian governments, particularly the Buyids and Ilkhanids, significantly influenced Najaf's political and religious landscape, ensuring its stability and growth as a Shiite center despite the broader instability in Iraq.

Chapter two

"The Social Role of Iranian Governments in Najaf Ashraf"

1- Introduction

After the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) in the year 40 AH at the hands of Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam, his body was buried in the land of Al-Ghari, in accordance with his will. The burial was carried out by his sons, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn (peace be upon them) (Ya'qubi, 1358 AH, vol. 2, p. 212). The location of his grave was concealed from the public, known only to the descendants, close followers, and devoted supporters of the Imams (peace be upon them).

The burial site remained hidden due to the hostility of the Umayyads and the Kharijites, who sought to desecrate the grave. During the reign of Hajjaj ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi, attempts were made to exhume the grave of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Kufa. Some historical accounts indicate that Hajjaj ordered the excavation of three thousand graves in Najaf but failed in his mission (Al-Khansari, vol. 2, p. 54).

The Formation of the Shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Al-Ghari

1-The Secret Visits of the Shia Imams: The Imams of the Shia secretly visited the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). For instance, Imam Zayn al-Abidin (peace be upon him) recited the supplication "Amin Allah," and Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) visited the shrine, as recorded in "Mafatih al-Jinan" by Sheikh Abbas Qummi (pp. 699, 703). Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) also visited the shrine, as narrated by Safwan al-Jammal, where he recited the supplication for Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) near the grave of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (ibid., p. 701). Additionally, Imam Sadiq visited the shrine on the 17th of Rabi' al-Awwal, as reported by his companion Muhammad ibn Muslim al-Thaqafi (ibid., p. 748). Imam Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi (peace be upon him) visited the shrine on Eid al-Ghadir while being summoned to Samarra by the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tasim, where he recited the famous supplication known as "Ziyarat al-Ghadiriyya" (ibid., p. 723). These visits serve as clear evidence of the Imams' recognition of the sacred shrine.

Some Imams, such as Imam Husayn (peace be upon him), revealed the location of the grave to their companions. Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) showed the grave to Jabir ibn Yazid al-Ju'fi (Al-Mufid, "Al-Irshad", vol. 1, p. 23). The location of the shrine was known to some Shia followers before the construction of the mausoleum by Harun al-Rashid. For example, an elderly Shia man from the Banu Asad tribe showed Harun the grave of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (Al-Mufid, "Al-Irshad", vol. 1, p. 23). Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) also revealed the shrine to Mufaddal ibn Umar, and he visited it multiple times with companions such as Aban ibn Taghlib (Ibn Qulawayh, "Kamil al-Ziyarat", pp. 31–35).

2-The Presence of the Imams' Companions: The companions of the Imams visited the shrine both with the Imams and independently. For instance, Safwan al-Jamal visited the shrine with Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) and later with a group of companions (ibid., p. 705).

3-Development Efforts by Rulers: In the second century AH, during the reign of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid (170–193 AH), Najaf became the official burial site of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). In 175 AH, the first structure of the sacred shrine was built under Harun's orders. He commanded the construction of a dome with four gates, and historical sources indicate that the shrine gained prominence during this period. Harun al-Rashid once visited Al-Ghari during a hunting trip and inquired about the site. Upon learning it was the grave of Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him), he performed ablution and prayed (Ibn Tawus, "Farhat al-Ghari", p. 101). Harun ordered the construction of a rose-colored dome, a white stone sarcophagus, and a surrounding wall with four gates (Al-Mahbuba, "Madi al-Najaf wa Hadiruha", vol. 1, p. 21). From that time, people began visiting the shrine, and the surrounding area became a burial ground (Ahmad ibn 'Anaba, "'Umdat al-Talib", p. 47). Thus, the shrine gradually gained religious and social significance, even during the reign of al-Mutawakkil.

The anti-Shia policies of al-Mutawakkil and the destruction of the shrine of Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) severely restricted Shia pilgrimages, including to Najaf. However, during her Hajj journey, al-Mutawakkil's mother, Umm Shuja', visited the shrine and distributed donations (Ibn Tabataba, "Al-Fakhri", p. 189).

After the decline during al-Mutawakkil's reign, the Alawid rulers of Tabaristan took significant interest in the shrine. For example, Muhammad ibn Zayd al-Alawi (d. 287 AH) sent Muhammad ibn Ward al-Qattan with 32,000 dinars to distribute

in Baghdad, Karbala, Kufa, and Najaf (Ibn al-Jawzi, "Al-Muntazam", vol. 5, p. 150). This funding facilitated the shrine's restoration and the construction of a protective wall (Ibn Isfandiyar, "Tarikh Tabaristan", p. 95).

Later, Abu al-Hijaj Abdallah ibn Hamdan built a fortified castle around the shrine in 283 AH (Ibn Hawqal, "Surat al-Ard", p. 215). He also constructed a dome with tall columns, adorned with fine curtains and valuable Samanid mats (Le Strange, 1954, p. 104).

4-Spiritual Significance: The sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) became a center for worship and refuge for those fleeing Abbasid oppression.

5-Strategic Location: Najaf's proximity to trade routes, Kufa, and the Euphrates cities made it an ideal location for the scholarly and cultural activities of the Shia. The city provided a peaceful environment for education, free from the sectarian conflicts prevalent in Baghdad (Al-Hakim, "Al-Sheikh al-Tusi", p. 49).

2- The Status of Najaf in the Early Abbasid Era

With the rise of the Abbasid dynasty, Najaf began to gain prominence. Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah, the first Abbasid caliph, camped in Najaf, and people from Kufa came to pledge allegiance to him (Ibn Tabataba, 1962, p. 115). After the discovery of Imam Ali's grave, Najaf emerged as a significant religious city, and the Najaf seminary was established. However, during the early Abbasid period, Najaf remained a small village within the geographical boundaries of the Kufa region, overlooking the Najaf Sea. It was Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) who introduced Najaf to specific Shiite followers during the reign of al-Mansur al-Abbasi (Al-Sheikh al-Mufid, Irshad, Vol. 2, p. 13). Najaf witnessed several historical events

during this period, including the uprisings of the Hasanids and the killing of Muhammad al-Nafs al-Zakiyya near Kufa (Ibn Anbah, 1918, p. 150). In 158 AH, Abu Ja'far al-Mansur stayed in Najaf for several days on his way to perform Hajj, establishing it as the final stop for pilgrims before their journey to Mecca (Mahbuba, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 19).

Najaf gained more prominence during the caliphate of Harun al-Rashid (170–193 AH), becoming a destination for pilgrims visiting the sacred tomb of Imam Ali. In 175 AH, the first structure of the sacred shrine was built during Harun's reign. He ordered the construction of a dome with four gates over the shrine, and most historical sources indicate that the tomb gained fame from that period. One day, Harun al-Rashid went hunting outside Kufa and arrived at the Al-Ghari region. When he inquired about the place, he was told that it was the burial site of Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him). He performed ablution and prayed there (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH, p. 101). Harun ordered the construction of a red clay dome, a white stone sarcophagus, and a wall with four gates around the shrine (Al-Mahbuba, Vol. 1, p. 21). From that time, people began visiting the sacred tomb and burying their dead around it (Ibn Anbah, 1918, p. 47). Thus, when the sacred tomb of Imam Ali was discovered during the Abbasid era, it gained religious and social significance and gradually emerged as the capital of Shiism.

One of the reasons rulers and caliphs, especially Shiite rulers, paid attention to the shrine of Imam Ali was its unique characteristics. The presence of the shrine of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him) and the cemetery of some prophets and believers around it made it a significant site. Additionally, it served as a route for pilgrims traveling from the holy shrines to Mecca, becoming the last stop for pilgrims before departing for Mecca. At times, Najaf also became a destination for

revolutionaries and a refuge for those fleeing Abbasid oppression.

Even the Abbasid caliphs would visit the shrine before performing Hajj. In 236 AH, Caliph al-Muntasir, accompanied by his grandmother Shuja', the mother of al-Mutawakkil, decided to perform Hajj and took her to Najaf (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH, Vol. 11, p. 102). The Abbasids' policy toward the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) varied. While some caliphs, like Harun al-Rashid, supported the shrine and ordered its repair and reconstruction, others, like al-Mutawakkil, oppressed Shiites and restricted access to the shrines of the Imams. For example, during the reign of Caliph al-Mutawakkil, his mother, Umm Shuja', visited Najaf and, upon arriving in Kufa, ordered that one thousand dirhams be given to every Talibi and Abbasi, five hundred dirhams to the children of the Muhajirin, and five hundred dirhams to every Hashimi woman (Ibn Tabataba, 1962, p. 189).

However, al-Mutawakkil himself ordered the political activities of Imam al-Hadi (peace be upon him) to be monitored and brought the Imam to Samarra in 233 AH (Al-Sheikh al-Mufid, *Irshad*, Vol. 2, p.). 297). During the caliphate of al-Muntasir Billah (247–248 AH), the Abbasid policy toward the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) changed. He returned Fadak to the descendants of Hasan and Husayn (peace be upon them) and allowed Shiites to visit the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (Al-Hakim, 1427 AH, Vol. 1, p. 315). This shift was especially significant after the improvement of relations between the Alawites and the Abbasids, leading both groups to pay attention to the sacred shrine in Najaf Ashraf. In 283 AH, Abu al-Hayja Abdallah ibn Hamdan, the Shiite ruler of Mosul, built a magnificent dome over the tomb, further enhancing its significance (Qa'idan, *Atabat Aliyat*, 1383 AH, p. 33).

Before the rule of the Buyid dynasty in Iraq, Najaf faced numerous challenges, including attacks from Bedouins and Kharijites. In 318 AH, the Qarmatians caused destruction in Kufa, and the area behind Kufa witnessed attacks by tribes such as the Banu Numayr ibn Amir and Banu Kilab ibn Rabi'ah. These tribes caused devastation and spread fear among the people. Abu al-Fawaris Muhammad ibn Warqa, along with the Banu Hashim, including Abbasids and Talibis, fought against them. Despite their efforts, Abu al-Fawaris was captured, along with Ibn Umar al-Alawi and a cousin of Shayban al-Abbasi. The Bedouins demanded ransom, which was paid, and they were released (Al-Hakim, 1427 AH, Vol. 1, p. 309).

Najaf Ashraf also witnessed the destructive actions of the Kharijites, who continued their hostility toward Imam Ali (peace be upon him) even after his martyrdom. Once, Ibn Qays al-Khariji attacked Najaf after being told that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) had killed his ancestors at the Battle of Nahrawan. The conflict lasted for six days, and after destroying part of the city's walls, Ibn Qays managed to enter the sacred shrine. He addressed the tomb, saying, "O Ali, you killed my fathers and ancestors," and attempted to exhume the sacred grave but failed (Ibn Mahbuba, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 320). Historical sources do not specify the exact date of this attack, but it likely occurred at the beginning of the 4th century AH. Due to the weak city walls, he succeeded in conquering the city.

These events occurred before the rule of Iranian dynasties such as the Buyids and the Alavid state in Tabaristan. Under the attention of Iranian rulers, Najaf and the sacred shrine of Imam Ali gained stability and prominence. With the support of these Iranian states, the political situation in Najaf stabilized, and it became a major Islamic city and a holy site for Shiites worldwide. Najaf served as the final stop for Iraqi pilgrims before their Hajj journey, and its security was ensured, allowing

the scientific movement to flourish. The Najaf seminary became a center of learning, on par with the Baghdad school and other seminaries.

3- Najaf during the Era of Iranian States

Over time, Iraq came under the control of various Islamic states. Among these states were the Buyids and the Alavids of Tabaristan, though their influence was primarily confined to Iranian territories and did not extend significantly into Iraq. There were also states, such as the Seljuks and the Mongols, which were not originally Iranian but ruled over both Iran and Iraq. These states had different religious orientations, which influenced their roles in Iraq, particularly regarding the holy shrines and Najaf. For instance, the Buyids, who were Shiite, showed great interest in the holy shrines, especially Najaf Ashraf. In contrast, the Seljuks, who were Sunni, did not share this interest and often persecuted Shiites during their rule. This section will explore the contributions of these Iranian states to the development of the holy shrines and Najaf.

3-1- Najaf during the Era of the Alavid State

Najaf was a focal point for Shiite rulers, whether they governed within Iraq, like the Buyids, or over both Iran and Iraq. One reason for this attention was the unique characteristics of Najaf, including the presence of the shrine of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (peace be upon him) and the surrounding cemetery of believers, as well as its role as a route for Iraqi pilgrims performing Hajj.

The first powerful Shiite state in northern Iran was the Alavid state of Tabaristan, established in response to the Abbasid policy of persecution against Shiites and Alawites. Founded in the mid-3rd century AH by Hasan ibn Zayd, this state was deeply connected to Imam Ali (peace be upon him) through

lineage. Muhammad ibn Zayd al-Alawi sent Muhammad ibn Ward al-Qattan with 32,000 dinars to distribute in Baghdad, Karbala, Kufa, and Najaf (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH, Vol. 5, p. 150).

Historical records indicate that the Alavid state of Tabaristan was responsible for repairing and reconstructing the walls around the sacred shrine of Imam Ali. Muhammad ibn Zayd (d. 287 AH) restored the shrine and built protective walls around it, addressing the lack of security that had previously left the people vulnerable (Mahbuba, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 209). These walls were intended to safeguard the sanctuary (Ibn Isfandiyar, 1320 AH, Vol. 1, p. 95).

Louis Massignon noted that the Da'i Zayd al-Alawi constructed a grand dome and shrine for Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (Massignon, 1979, p. 133). Abu Ishaq al-Sabi also mentioned that Muhammad ibn Zayd was the first to build a grand structure over the tomb of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (Al-Kufi, 1952, p. 68). Additionally, Abu Ishaq al-Sabi highlighted that Muhammad ibn Zayd was the first to build a dome over the tomb, spending 20,000 dinars on its construction (Al-Sabi, 1977, p. 47).

The Da'i (ruler of Tabaristan) also ordered the construction of a dome, walls, and a fortress with seventy arches, which served as rooms for students. This indicates the presence of a scientific movement in Najaf Ashraf by the end of the 3rd century AH. The construction of these walls also reflected the lack of security and order in Iraq, particularly in Najaf, which was under Abbasid rule at the time.

It is well-known that some Abbasid caliphs harbored animosity toward the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). The Abbasid policy toward the Ahl al-Bayt varied during this period. While some caliphs, like Harun al-Rashid, repaired the shrine, others, like al-Mutawakkil, prohibited visitation to the shrines of the Imams and oppressed Shiites. Al-Mutawakkil's mother,

Umm Shuja', visited Najaf and Kufa, distributing money to various groups (Ibn Tabataba, 1962, p. 198).

Despite al-Mutawakkil's oppressive policies, his mother's actions showed a different approach. Al-Mutawakkil himself prohibited visitation to the shrines of the Imams in Baqi' and Imam Husayn (peace be upon him). Al-Mas'udi noted that before his caliphate, the family of Abu Talib was highly respected, but during his reign, the Alawites lived in fear (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH, p. 122).

The Abbasids maintained this policy until 260 AH, during the caliphate of al-Mu'tamid. However, during the reign of al-Muntasir Billah (247–248 AH), the policy shifted. He ordered an end to the harassment of the family of Abu Talib and returned Fadak to the descendants of Hasan and Husayn (peace be upon them) (Al-Hakim, 1427 AH, Vol. 1, p. 315.)

Shiites, particularly after the improvement of relations between the Alawites and the Abbasids, were permitted to visit the sacred shrine of Imam Ali. The construction of the shrine was a direct response to the Abbasid policies toward the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

The second major development after the destruction of the tomb during al-Mutawakkil's reign and the destruction of Imam Husayn's (peace be upon him) tomb in Karbala was the construction of the sacred shrine of Imam Ali. This was a response to the destruction of the Imams' tombs following the architectural efforts of Harun al-Rashid.

The walls built by the Da'i al-Alawi marked the beginning of the establishment of the holy city of Najaf (Al-Hakim, 1975, p. 94). The construction of these walls and other reconstructions in Najaf Ashraf symbolized the people's movement toward the city's development.

These reconstructions also contributed to the scientific movement in Najaf, spreading the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt

(peace be upon them). This was one of the outcomes of the reconstruction efforts by the Alawites, particularly through the work of Da'i Muhammad ibn Zayd al-Alawi, to revive the sacred shrine of Imam Ali.

This initiative set the stage for other states to follow. Ibn Hawqal noted that Abu al-Hayja Abdallah ibn Hamdan built a strong fortress over the tomb of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) (Ibn Hawqal, 1938, p. 215). He also constructed a dome with tall columns, adorned it with fine curtains, and used valuable Samanid mats to decorate it (Le Strange, 1954, p. 104).

Da'i Muhammad ibn Zayd, the ruler of Tabaristan, played a significant role in building the sacred shrine of Imam Ali. He also sent 30,000 dirhams annually for the construction of holy shrines in Iraq (Al-Sharqi, 1963, p. 54). This financial support became an important economic resource for Najaf, contributing to its growth and prosperity.

3-2- The Social Conditions of Najaf during the Buyid Era

The Buyids were an Iranian dynasty that ruled over both Iran and Iraq. Originating from the Daylamite region along the western shores of the Caspian Sea (Ibn Hawqal, 1938: 319). The dynasty was founded by three brothers: Ali, Hasan, and Ahmad (Miskawayh, 1914: vol. 5, 157). These brothers laid the foundation of the state through a series of conquests, eventually extending their control into the region of Fars (Miskawayh, 1914: vol. 5, 157).

Initially, the Buyids served as military commanders under Mardavij Ziyari. Mardavij appointed Ali, the eldest brother, as the governor of Karaj (Le Strange, 1954: 223). Ali's administrative and military prowess enabled him to seize Shiraz, breaking away from Mardavij's rule (Ibn Hawqal, 1938: 246). After capturing Shiraz, Ali expanded his influence across Fars. He supported his younger brother Ahmad in gaining control

over Khuzestan and Iraq, with Ahmad capturing Baghdad in 334 AH. During this period, the Abbasid Caliphate was in decline, weakened by internal conflicts, particularly between Amir al-Umara Ibn al-Raiq and Abu Abdullah al-Baridi, the governor of Basra. Al-Baridi sought Ahmad 's assistance, leading to the capture of Baghdad during the caliphate of al-Mustakfi Billah (333-334 AH) (al-Suyuti, 1952: 314).

The Buyids state reached its zenith under Adud al-Dawla, who established hospitals in Baghdad and other cities. He also ordered the expansion of the shrines of Imam Ali in Najaf and Imam Husayn in Karbala. Over 127 years, 17 Buyids rulers governed parts of Iran and Iraq, all of whom showed particular reverence for the holy shrines, especially Najaf. Their urban and economic initiatives spurred scientific and cultural growth in Iraq, particularly in the holy cities (Ibn Kathir, 1977: vol. 11, p. 314). The dynasty ended with Malik al-Rahim, whose rule was terminated by the Seljuk ruler Tughril Beg (al-Suyuti, 1952: 315).

The establishment of a Shiite Buyids state under the nominal authority of the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate had significant positive effects on Shiism. The Buyids naturally focused on the holy shrines in Iraq, given the Abbasids' differing stance toward these sites.

The Buyids were particularly devoted to the shrines in Karbala, Kazimayn, and Najaf. As noted by the French orientalist Louis Massignon, "During the Buyids era, the shrine of Imam Ali became the focal point for Shiite pilgrims, and Shiite scholarly families migrated from Kufa to al-Ghari, settling there" (Massignon, 1979: 33). The Buyids also constructed and adorned mausoleums for themselves within the shrine of Imam Ali, known as the Mausoleum of the Sultans (al-Amili, 1985: 188).

During the Buyids period, Shiites visited the holy shrines openly , without fear of persecution. The Buyids sultans

themselves frequently visited the shrine of Imam Ali. For example, Adud al-Dawla visited Najaf, showing great interest in the development of the shrines and commissioning numerous buildings in the city (Zadeh, 1971: 83-84).

The frequent visits of the Buyids sultans to Najaf and their pilgrimages to the shrine of Imam Ali had a profound impact on the city's social life. Adud al-Dawla, for instance, visited Najaf in 369 and 371 AH, performed pilgrimage at the shrine, and distributed gifts among the people, scholars, residents, and the needy (Miskawayh, 1914: vol. 2, 407). These gifts to scholars highlight the presence of Shiite intellectuals in Najaf, and Adud al-Dawla's encouragement of learning through these gifts underscores the Buyids' devotion to the shrine and its community. This also reflects the stability of Najaf during this period and the large population residing near the shrine, which served as a sanctuary for refugees.

Khwaja Hamid al-Din noted that Adud al-Dawla discovered treasures of gold and silver, which he used to fund the reconstruction of the shrines in Karbala and Najaf. This construction effort lasted three years, from 369 to 371 AH (al-Kalidar, 1949: 26-27). Adud al-Dawla also ordered the reconstruction of the shrine of Imam Ali, adding a decorated dome and establishing extensive endowments for its upkeep. He requested to be buried near the shrine, becoming the first person after Imam Ali to be interred there (al-Sadr, n.d.: 90).

It is also said that Adud al-Dawla built a high portico over the shrine of Imam Ali, topped with a white dome. Beneath the portico was a terrace containing the graves of two prophets: Adam and Noah. This point is evident in The traveler Ibn Battuta's words during his visit to Najaf, offering a pilgrimage greeting: "Peace be upon you and upon your companions Adam and Noah" (Harz al-Din, 1427: vol. 2, 94).

The orientalist Donaldson remarked that Adud al-Dawla's construction over the grave transformed the site into a small town with an area of 2500 steps (Donaldson, 1946: 73). Ibn al-Tuhaal, who was close to Adud al-Dawla and oversaw the shrine, noted that Adud al-Dawla funded the shrine's construction, inscribing the date of completion on the dome's wall. He brought carpenters from other regions to complete the work (al-Daylami, 1378: vol. 2, 148). Upon completion, the shrine's door was adorned with the Quranic verse: "And their dog was stretching its forelegs at the entrance. If you had looked at them, you would have turned from them in flight and been filled by them with terror" (Surah al-Kahf, 18).

Adud al-Dawla also commissioned the construction of "Iwan" and "Dar al-Diyafa" within the shrine complex, welcoming pilgrims and distributing funds to those who wished to stay in Najaf or reside near the shrine (al-Hakim, 1427: vol. 1, 320). A special area in the portico was reserved for Adud al-Dawla, where he would sit to address the people's needs, demonstrating his government's close connection with the populace.

After completing the shrine's new architecture, Adud al-Dawla held a grand celebration attended by princes, notables, and scholars (al-Hakim, 1427: vol. 1, 320). Even the Buyids' opponents in Iraq, particularly in Najaf, followed their lead in reconstructing the shrine of Imam Ali.

During Adud al-Dawla's time in Najaf, Imran ibn Shahin, founder of the Banu Shahin state in the marshes, sought his pardon by throwing himself at Adud al-Dawla's feet in the shrine. Imran had vowed to build a portico in the shrine if pardoned, and he fulfilled this promise. One of the mosques built during Adud al-Dawla's reign is attributed to him (al-Barraji, 1952: 82-83). This incident shows that Adud al-Dawla occasionally resided in Najaf and held court there.

Adud al-Dawla also worked to rid Najaf of thieves, placing the city under his supervision and arresting the notorious bandit Dabba ibn Muhammad al-Asadi, who led a group based in Ayn al-Tamr (al-Hakim, 1427: vol. 1, 321).

This explains why Imran ibn Shahin and Abu al-Hasan al-Maghribi, a minister, sought refuge in Najaf in 381 AH after being sentenced to death by the Buyids sultan. Najaf was considered a safe haven where bloodshed was prohibited within its sacred precincts (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 9, 89).

The love for Najaf drove many to migrate there, contributing to the city's scientific and cultural flourishing. During the Buyids era, the allocation of gifts to the city further enhanced its prosperity.

Adud al-Dawla annually sent gifts and antiques to the holy shrines (Harz al-Din, 1427: vol. 2, 97). He also built houses around the shrine of Imam Ali for its residents and custodians, and made annual donations to the shrine (Harz al-Din, 1427: vol. 2, 101). All of Adud al-Dawla's actions were aimed at benefiting the shrine and its community.

Muhammad ibn Sahlan, a minister under Sultan al-Dawla, also contributed to Najaf's development. The city's wall is attributed to him, as he vowed to build it if he recovered from an illness. Similarly, Abu Ishaq al-Arjani built a wall for the Ha'ir al-Husayni (Harz al-Din, 1427: 103). The Buyids' urban initiatives in Najaf extended beyond the sultans, with their ministers also undertaking significant projects.

The Buyids sultans frequently visited the holy shrines, including Najaf. In 431 AH, Malik Abu Tahir Buwayhi, accompanied by his children and the minister Kamal al-Mulk, visited Najaf.

Upon reaching Najaf from Baghdad, they walked barefoot for about 5 kilometers to the shrine of Imam Ali (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: vol. 8, 105). This tradition, rooted in respect for the Ahl al-

Bayt, who sacrificed for the revival of Islam, continued throughout the Buyids era. The urbanization efforts during this period were not limited to the shrine but extended to the entire city of Najaf, which was of great importance to the Buyids as the city of Imam Ali. Najaf expanded significantly during their rule (334-447 AH) and was fortified with a strong wall, built by Adud al-Dawla after the city's expansion (Shirwani, Bustan al-Siyaha, 574). The wall, stretching 2500 steps from the shrine, symbolized the city's growth and security (al-Kufi, 1952: 30).

The Buyids are also credited with constructing Hussainiyas, which are closely associated with Shiism., spending considerable sums on their construction and hosting Shiite rituals, such as mourning ceremonies, celebrations of the Prophet's family's births, and religious observances during Muharram, Safar, Ghadeer Khumm, and other occasions. These Hussainiyas played a crucial role in spreading Shiism, as they were beautifully designed and adorned with intricate geometric patterns and decorations (al-Qifti, n.d.: 263).

The Buyids also focused on improving trade routes as part of Najaf's infrastructure, ensuring the smooth transport of goods. They developed internal and external trade routes, established rest houses for travelers, and built facilities for drinking water (al-Rudhrawari, 1916: 37). Following activities are amongst the significant affords made by Buyids in Najaf city:

A) **Establishment of Markets:** One of the Buyids' key initiatives in Najaf was the establishment of markets. The city had multiple markets, each specializing in different products. For example, the "Najaf market" was known for trading dates and oil. These markets were centrally located for easy access (Ibn Jubayr, 1968: 25) and handled both domestic and foreign goods, earning a reputation for exporting Najaf's famous dates.

B) **Establishment of Bathhouses:** The Buyids built numerous bathhouses in Iraqi cities, particularly in Najaf. They

implemented a structured system within these bathhouses, employing various roles such as treasurers, barbers, cuppers, water carriers, garbage collectors, and lamp keepers (Ibn Hawqal, 1938: 270).

C) **Water Supply Projects:** A major project completed under Adud al-Dawla was the construction of a canal from the Euphrates River to Najaf. Named after the Buyids, this canal was designed to supply water to the city. During its construction in 369 AH, a large spring was discovered, but an obstacle halted further digging. Adud al-Dawla opted for an underground channel, creating an elevated canal with interconnected wells that brought water to the city walls, reaching the low-lying areas (al-Amin, 1968: vol. 11, 154-160).

Several canals were dug to supply water to Najaf, with the Buyids Canal being the most notable. The residents of Najaf long remembered this project, which was crucial for the city's water supply and contributed to its revival and growth (al-Muslimi, n.d.: vol. 5, 1-3).

D) **Urban Development Projects:** The Buyids' urban development efforts in Najaf reflected their deep interest in the city and the holy shrines. The influx of pilgrims from within and outside Iraq demonstrated the religious freedom enjoyed by Shiites under Buyids rule, in contrast to the Abbasids' restrictive policies.

Shiism flourished during the Buyids era, thanks to their efforts. The expansion of the shrine of Imam Ali began with the increase in pilgrims. As Professor Nafisi noted, "The city of Najaf was essentially founded by Adud al-Dawla Buwayhi, and around it, a number of Shiite Imami villages were established. The Buyids aimed to create an Iraqi Shiite front that would protect them and assert their political independence from the Zaydis (al-Nafisi, 1973: 47).

Their care for Najaf, regardless of their motives, led to the spread of Shiite Imami beliefs among a Sunni-dominated authority that viewed Shiism as a deviation from Islam. The Buyids' policies in Najaf, including the construction of the shrine of Imam Ali and the city's development, had lasting positive effects. Following their example, caliphs, princes, and other rulers adopted similar policies. For instance, Badr al-Din Lulu, the ruler of Mosul, sent large chandeliers to the shrine of Imam Ali annually (al-Ruwaishti, 1971: 38).

Even the Abbasid caliphs were influenced by the Buyids. For example, Caliph al-Mustansir Billah (623-640 AH) visited Najaf and undertook the reconstruction of the shrine of Imam Ali after an earthquake in 590 AH damaged the nearby cemetery (al-Khazraji, 1975: 230).

The Abbasids' reconstruction efforts can be seen as a response to the Buyids' influence and the declining power of the Abbasid Caliphate. The spread of Shiite beliefs among the Abbasid caliphs reflects their weakening authority.

The reconstruction of Najaf during the Buyids era spurred scientific activity and increased migration to the city, as people sought knowledge and spiritual fulfillment. This made Najaf a center for religious tourism and a source of significant economic revenue.

The urbanization and development of Najaf also contributed to the flourishing of scientific movements. As the Egyptian magazine "Al-Musawwar" noted, "Just as Najaf gained importance from the presence of the shrine of Imam Ali, it also became a center for Shiite religious education" (Al-Musawwar, 1958: 79).

3-3-The Urban Situation of Najaf during the Seljuk Era (447-559 AH)

The Seljuk Empire, which governed both Iran and Iraq, originated from the Ghuzz tribes rather than Iranian roots. Initially, they settled in the regions beyond the Oxus River (Ibn al-Amid, 1625: 267). Later, they migrated to the plains of Turkestan, embraced Islam, and adopted the Hanafi school of thought, which was dominant in that area (Bartold, 1958: 108). The name "Seljuk" is derived from their forefather, Seljuk ibn Duqaq (Amin, 1965: 45). The Seljuks arrived in Baghdad in 447 AH, marking the end of the Buyid dynasty's control over the city. Since the Seljuks shared the same religious beliefs as the Abbasid caliphs, they supported the Abbasids, and their presence in Iraq was legitimized by the Abbasid endorsement.

Unlike the Buyids, the Seljuks were intolerant toward the Shia sect. Under their rule, the Shia community faced severe persecution, and violent incidents occurred in Baghdad due to the Seljuks' hostility toward Shia Islam.

In contrast to the Buyids, who allowed people to freely choose their religious beliefs, the Seljuks were known for their extreme measures against Shia followers. Even Sheikh Tusi was not spared; after his books and library were burned in Baghdad, he was compelled to leave the city and relocate to the holy city of Najaf. During the Seljuk era, Najaf did not experience significant urban development. Instead, the city became a hub for various political events, limiting the Seljuks' influence in Najaf to political and social spheres.

The Seljuks did not construct any notable buildings or structures in the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) or the city of Najaf, as they showed little interest in the city or the sacred shrine. However, the persecution of Shia scholars in Baghdad, including Sheikh Tusi, and his subsequent migration

to Najaf, played a crucial role in revitalizing scholarly activities in the city.

Despite this, the Seljuks had a significant impact on Najaf. A Seljuk sultan ordered the excavation of a canal from the Euphrates to supply water to Najaf. This initiative began with a visit to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in 479 AH (Ibn Miskawayh, 1914: vol. 9, 29). During the reign of Sultan Sanjar ibn Malikshah, efforts were made to bring water to Najaf, but the project remained incomplete. Traces of this project can still be seen today (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 158).

The construction of the Minaret of the Horns is credited to the reign of Malikshah Seljuk. Ibn al-Jawzi mentions it as part of the events of 480 AH, noting that Sultan Malikshah traveled to the Kufa region on the fourth of Muharram. He killed thousands of people and ordered the construction of a large minaret from their heads, which was to be built in al-Sab'i near al-Rahba on the route to Mecca. This structure remained intact until the time of Ibn al-Jawzi (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: vol. 9, 35).

During the Seljuk period, Shia scholarship thrived in Najaf, and the city was encircled by a high, impenetrable wall. Several princes and caliphs visited the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) during this time. Caliph al-Mustadi visited the shrine and replaced the old curtain at the entrance with a new one (al-Qalqashandi, 1987: vol. 4, 303). This suggests that the Seljuks did not restrict people from visiting the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

3-4-The Urban Conditions of Najaf Ashraf during the Mongol Period (656-738 AH)

The Ilkhanate entered Baghdad in 656 AH and overthrew the Abbasid Caliphate. From this point, the Mongols ruled over Baghdad, establishing themselves as an independent political

force in Iraq, free from the influence of any other authority, unlike previous governments.

The Mongols implemented a policy of brutality and massacre against the inhabitants of Baghdad. However, the holy city of Najaf was spared from the savage actions of Hulagu and his Mongol forces. This was largely due to the efforts of the scholars of Hilla, including Sheikh Ibn Abi al-Azz, Allamah al-Hilli, Sayyid Majd al-Din ibn Tawus, and Sheikh Sadid al-Din Yusuf ibn Ali, who approached Hulagu to prevent the Mongols from reaching and destroying the holy shrines. Through negotiations, they successfully convinced him not to attack Najaf and Karbala (al-Amin, 1968: vol. 6, 30-31), ensuring that no harm would come to the Mongol military forces.

There was no military conflict between the Shiites and the Mongols, as the Mongols' primary objective was to overthrow the Abbasid Caliphate. One of the Shiite scholars, Sayyid Majd al-Din Muhammad ibn Izz al-Din Hasan Al Tawus, authored the book "Basharat" and presented it to Hulagu as a gift. Thanks to these scholars, the cities of Hilla, Najaf, Nil, and Karbala were spared from Mongol attacks, as a treaty was established to ensure their security (al-Jawahiri, 1342: 35). At the request of Prince Saif al-Din Al-Bait Kiji Bahadur ibn Abdullah Khwarizmi, Hulagu's minister, a hundred Mongol soldiers were sent to Najaf to protect the shrine and its surrounding residents (al-Hamadani, n.d.: vol. 2, 296).

After the Mongols settled in Iraq, some of the Iranian scribes and ministers who had accompanied them during the fall of Baghdad in 656 AH took on key administrative roles. Among them was Ata-Malik Juvayni, who was appointed governor of Iraq by Hulagu following the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate and the worsening social and economic conditions in Baghdad. He governed Iraq from the time of the Mongol arrival until 681 AH. Juvayni, who hailed from Khorasan, served as a scribe in the

Mongol court (Jamal al-Din, 1361: 3) and was also involved in administrative affairs in the province of Fars (Jamal al-Din, 1982: 3).

Regarding the Shiite inclinations of the Juvayni family: Juvayni, his brother Shams al-Din, and his son Harun held ministerial positions during the reign of Abaqa Khan and visited Najaf Ashraf. After completing their pilgrimage to the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), a religious discussion arose, and Harun declared, "My religion does not go beyond this Quran," which was placed on the coffin. When he opened it, the first page revealed: "O Harun, what prevented you from leading them astray? Did you disobey my command?" (Surah Taha: Verses 92-93). This led to their conversion to Shiism (al-Ghiyathi, 1975: 95).

Ata-Malik Juvayni paid significant attention to Najaf, with his most notable achievement being the construction of a canal that brought water from the Euphrates River to Kufa and then to Najaf (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 116). This project was undertaken due to the water shortage in Najaf, which hindered the city's scientific development. The canal transformed Najaf into a center of knowledge and scholarship. The cost of bringing water to Najaf was estimated at a thousand gold dinars, and the project was carried out by Taj al-Din Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Tabataba, the father of Ibn al-Taqtqi, author of "Al-Fakhri fi al-Adab al-Sultaniyya" (al-Hakim, 1427: vol. 1, 334).

Another significant contribution by Juvayni in Najaf was the construction of a "*Ribat*" (hostel) near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in 666 AH (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1356: 358). The "*Ribat*" was located on the western side of the shrine, near the Bektashi hospice and the Ra's Mosque. The surrounding houses became known as the "*Rabat*" neighborhood, and the term "*Ribat*" referred to a large fortress housing many homes. Its purpose was to accommodate those who wished to reside near

the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). It is considered one of the oldest buildings from the 7th century AH

Sayyid ibn Tawus mentions this "*Ribat*", stating that Ata-Malik Juvayni excelled in its construction, which began in 676 AH. In 672 AH, he initiated the digging of a canal, ordered by Sultan Sanjar ibn Malikshah, though it was never completed (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 115-11).

The "*Ribat*" was a robust structure, with columns resembling those of the Haidari courtyard, and it remained standing until 1350 AH. Its remnants were used for years by the family of Sayyid Jawad ibn Sayyid Jawad Rafi'i, the keyholder of the shrine, who kept their horses there. The residents of Najaf renovated its houses and used the "*Ribat*" to host pilgrims. Eventually, a religious school was built on the site by the esteemed scholar Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei for students. The "*Ribat*" was designated for Sufis residing in Najaf, and it was referred to as a "*khanqah*" (al-Shibi, 1966: 102). This reflects the Shiite inclinations of Ata-Malik Juvayni and his interest in the "*Ribat*" near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), indicating a scholarly movement, as many students of knowledge resided in Najaf. Although the Mongols themselves were not Shiite, the presence of Iranian figures accompanying them in Iraq greatly benefited Najaf and the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

Other works attributed to Ata-Malik Juvayni include the digging of the Tajiyya Canal in 672 AH, named after Sayyid Taj al-Din Ali ibn al-Amir al-Dalqandi al-Husayni, a prominent Shiite scholar of the time. Juvayni entrusted him with supervising the canal's excavation, which cost over a hundred thousand dinars. The canal stretched from near the old Euphrates at al-Musayyib to Kufa, and since Kufa was the site of excavation, any project completed there benefited Najaf, as the two cities were connected. Juvayni built 150 villages along the river, creating

water channels and numerous farms (Juvayni, 1937: 89). At Juvayni's request, Taj al-Din Ali al-Dalqandi wrote a treatise on the development of Najaf Ashraf and the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). After its completion, Juvayni ordered a group of Sadat, preachers, and scholars, including Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Hashimi al-Kufi, to testify to the subject in poetry or prose at the end of the treatise (Shirin Bayani, 1371: vol. 2, p. 397).

Water for agriculture flowed through an underground canal dug from the Tajiyya Canal, which Juvayni ordered to be constructed in 676 AH. This underground canal ran from Kufa to Najaf, as Najaf's land is approximately 25 meters higher than Kufa's (Harz al-Din, 1427: vol. 2, 201).

The urban development project played a crucial role in the economies of Kufa and Najaf, as the increased water supply led to greater agricultural production. This, in turn, boosted the cities' economies.

Among the Ilkhanid sultans, there were Shiite inclinations that manifested in their support for the holy shrines of Iraq.

The pilgrimages of Prince Jalal and Sultan Ghazan to Najaf and their visits to Karbala to pay homage to Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) indicate their Shiite leanings. Sultan Ghazan, like Adud al-Dawla Buwayhi, visited the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). For example, in 698 AH, he traveled again to Najaf Ashraf and donated funds to the Alids living near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1356: 478).

Ghazan developed an affinity for the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) after the killing of one of the Sadat during Friday prayers in Baghdad. After meeting with Shiite scholars, he became a supporter of the Ahl al-Bayt and an enemy of their enemies, frequently consulting with Shiites and Amir Tarmatmaz (Shirin Bayani, 1371: vol. 2, p. 599). His inclination

towards Shiism grew so strong that he declared: " Mentioning the three caliphs in the sermon is an innovation, because we say: 'O Allah, send blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad,' and not upon his companions., and mentioning the Ahl al-Bayt and Ali (peace be upon them), who is foremost among them, is obligatory. I will include their names in the sermons throughout Iran..." However, Khwaja Rashid al-Din advised him, "We are now preparing for war with the Mamluks, and most of our soldiers are Sunni. It is better to do this when those regions are conquered." The war ended in the defeat of the Mongol army, and Ghazan fell ill and died shortly after. Had he not died young, the officialization of Shiism might have been achieved during his reign (Shirin Bayani, 1371: vol. 2, p. 601).

The historian Howorth notes Sultan Ghazan's numerous pilgrimages to the holy shrines of Najaf, Karbala, and Kazimayn: "Ghazan's attention to the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and his respect for their status, the establishment of special offices for them, the construction of "Dar al-Siyadas" in cities, and his preparations for the residence of Alids near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), as well as his frequent pilgrimages and donations to the shrines' custodians, have led some historians to speculate that Ghazan had converted to Shiism" (al-Qazzaz, 1970: 297).

Sultan Ghazan's pilgrimages to the holy shrines may have been motivated by a desire to attract Shiite support, gain more power and influence, bolster his position against the Mamluks, and legitimize his rule. While Ghazan may have had Shiite leanings, these actions do not confirm his official conversion to Shiism. Regardless, his contributions to Najaf Ashraf were significant and positive.

Among the works attributed to Sultan Ghazan is the Ra's Mosque in Najaf Ashraf, said to have been built in 698 AH on

the site believed to be the location of the head of Husayn (peace be upon him). The construction took a year, during which Ghazan camped in the desert between Najaf and the Hanana Mosque in the Thawiya Cemetery in Kufa until the mosque was completed. This mosque is now known as the Ra's al-Husayn Mosque (Harz al-Din, 1964: vol. 3, 272).

Dr. Sa'ad notes that the mosque was built during the Mongol period, as the tiles of the mihrab date back to the Ilkhanid era. An examination of the mosque's walls reveals that they are of the same type and size as the outer walls of the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

The sections of the Ra's Mosque walls clearly indicate that they were built simultaneously with the walls of the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and date back to the Ilkhanid period (Maher, 1969: 134). Sheikh Muhammad Harz al-Din states that the Ra's Mosque was founded by Sultan Ghazan Khan (Harz al-Din, 1964: vol. 3, 242), and evidence supporting its Ilkhanid origin includes its ancient name, the Sar Mosque (Mahbuba, 1968: vol. 1, 103-104). The mosque's construction likely dates back to the 7th or early 8th century, contemporary with other buildings related to the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), such as the Juvayni "*Ribat*", built in 666 AH and used as a residence by Sufis (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 115). Some modifications were made during the Ottoman period. The mosque is located to the west of the outer western wall of the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), separated only by a '*sabat*' (covered passage) that runs from north to south.

The Ra's Mosque is rectangular from east to west, with a large central courtyard surrounded by two porticos on the north and south sides, featuring marble columns. The mosque's walls are constructed in the same style and size as the outer walls of the shrine of Imam Ali (Maher, 1969: 134).

One of the Mongol sultans who converted to Shiism was Sultan Muhammad Khudabanda (Oljeitu). He embraced Shiism with the help of Allamah al-Hilli, Hasan ibn Yusuf ibn al-Mutahhar (d. 726 AH), after visiting Najaf in 709 AH. Ja'far Bahr al-Ulum refers to a dream that led him to adopt the Imami school. Muhammad Hasan al-Tuma, known as the keyholder, mentions that Sultan Khudabanda ordered the minting of coins in Najaf, adorned with the names of the Imams (peace be upon them).

He also ordered the names of the Imams (peace be upon them) to be inscribed on soldiers' banners and instructed mosque muezzins to include the phrase "Hayya 'ala khayr al-amal" (Come to the best of deeds) in the call to prayer.

Among the Sultan's actions was the distribution of monthly salaries to the custodians of the holy shrines, including the Alids residing in Najaf and Karbala. These funds came from his treasury, and income from annual endowments was distributed among the Alids (al-Kalidar, 1949: vol. 2, 130-132).

During Sultan Ghazan's reign, he ordered the construction of buildings called "*Dar al-Siyadas*" in cities such as Baghdad, Kerman, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Najaf. He endowed numerous estates and villages to them, ensuring that ten thousand dinars were distributed annually to the Sadat (Shirin Bayani, 1371: vol. 2, p. 589). This reflects the widespread activity of Sufis and Sufism during this period, as they made Najaf their home. Najaf became a center for Sufis, and their attachment to this holy place demonstrates their tranquility near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). This peaceful coexistence, free from sectarian conflicts, began during the Buwayhid period and continued under subsequent governments.

Among the Mongol princes who ruled Iraq was Prince Sheikh Hasan Noyan. He governed Iraq for seventeen years and was the last of the Mongol rulers to do so. He showed a strong

inclination towards the Shiites and the holy shrines, establishing buildings in Najaf Ashraf and other holy sites (al-Azzawi, 1955: vol. 2, 80).

During the Ilkhanid period, the scholarly movement in Najaf flourished, as the city attracted Sufis from across the Islamic world who came to visit and reside near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Ibn Battuta, during his visit to Najaf in 726 AH, noted the Sufi movement, stating: "Near the tomb of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him), there are schools and Sufi lodges with the finest buildings, adorned with tiles

He further mentioned: "From the gate of the shrine of Imam Ali, one enters a large school that housed Shiite Sufi students. Whoever enters is hosted for three days, receiving bread, dates, and meat twice a day. From this school, one enters the dome's gate, where guards and notables are stationed" (Ibn Battuta, 1967: vol. 1, 109).

3-5- Urban Development of Najaf during the Jalayirid Era (738-814 AH)

Under the Jalayirid dynasty's rule in Iraq, Najaf experienced significant urban and religious development. The Jalayirid Sultan allocated substantial endowments to the shrine of Imam Ali and commissioned the construction of various buildings in Baghdad, Najaf, and Karbala (Al-Ani, 1368: 251).. After defeating Sheikh Hasan Nuyan, Sultan Hasan gained control over Najaf, and Sheikh Hasan contributed to the city's development by constructing several structures. Upon his death, he was buried near the shrine of Imam Ali (Zadeh, 1971: 164). His son, Sheikh Uways, continued these efforts, completing Najaf's fortifications and renovating the shrine. The city's expansion during this period is evidenced by its 721-meter fortification wall, which

included a gate named "Al-Balda." Ibn Battuta, the renowned traveler, regarded Najaf as one of Iraq's finest cities during the 7th and 8th centuries (Al-Tamimi, 1372: 30). The Jalayirids' focus on building projects, combined with their Shiite inclinations, strengthened Najaf's economy, particularly through religious tourism, which became a significant source of income for the city.

In 662 AH, the ruler of Baghdad initiated the diversion of a branch of the Euphrates River toward Najaf, known as the "Nahr al-Shahab" canal (Harz al-Din, 1427, vol. 2, 319). This project had profound economic and agricultural benefits for the city, further enhancing its status as a religious and economic hub. Najaf's markets were diverse and thriving, making it one of Iraq's most prominent cities during this period (Harz al-Din, 1427, vol. 2, 192).

The urban development of Najaf and the shrine of Imam Ali transformed the city into a major pilgrimage destination for Muslims worldwide. Historical records indicate that Najaf's development began after the discovery of Imam Ali's tomb, with significant contributions from Iranian governments, including the Buyids, Safavids, and Qajars, who played a crucial role in the city's growth and prosperity.

4- The Social Role of Iranian Governments in Najaf

Iranian governments played a crucial social role in Najaf through institutions that shaped the city's social and political landscape. These institutions, connected to the holy shrines in Karbala, Samarra, and Baghdad, influenced Najaf's residents. Their social role encompassed urban development, professions, social classes, and frequent pilgrimages to the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) by the sultans of these dynasties. They also organized Shiite religious events, such as Eid al-Ghadir and Ashura commemorations.

During this period, Iraqi society consisted of various religious groups, including Sunnis in Baghdad and Shiites in Karbala, Najaf, and other cities. The social influence of Iranian governments in Najaf fluctuated based on their religious affiliations. The Buyids, being Shiite, played a particularly significant role in governing Najaf.

Iranian governments established social institutions that became foundational to Najaf's development. Despite the Sunni affiliation of some Iranian rulers, such as the Seljuks, they could not dismantle the Naqibate institution established by the Buyids. They also failed to restrict pilgrimages to the holy shrines, particularly Najaf, due to the city's religious and cultural significance.

Buyid sultans frequently visited the holy shrines, including the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). For example, Izz al-Dawla Bakhtiar, son of Mu'izz al-Dawla, visited the shrine in 364 AH, accompanied by the Naqib of the Sadat, Abu Ahmad Husayn ibn Musa, father of Sayyid al-Radi and Sayyid al-Murtada, and Muhammad ibn Umar al-Alawi al-Rajhi al-Zaynabi (Ibn Miskawayh, 1914: 269-312). Adud al-Dawla al-Buyhi visited the shrine in 371 AH and made generous donations to its residents, including jurists, Sadat, and reciters (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 154). These visits underscored the Buyids' commitment to the holy shrines and contributed to Najaf's social growth. For instance, Abu Tahir Jalal al-Dawla, grandson of Adud al-Dawla, walked from Baghdad to Najaf in 431 AH out of respect for Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359, vol. 8, 105).

This tradition of pilgrimage continues today, with Shiites walking to Najaf and Karbala. Buyid officials also participated in these pilgrimages. For example, Abu Tahir Jalal al-Dawla was accompanied by his minister, Kamal al-Mulk, and other officials. He walked barefoot from Imam Ali's tomb in Najaf to the site of his martyrdom in Kufa. Notably, Najaf attracted both Shiite and

non-Shiite visitors during this period. For instance, Malik Abu Kalijar and his officials visited Kufa and Karbala in 436 AH (Ibn al-Athir, 1963, vol. 8, 267).

5-Elements of Society during the Buyid Period

Iraqi society during the Buyid era was characterized by its diversity, comprising various ethnic and social groups, including Arabs, Daylamites, Turks, Kurds, Persians, Romans, and slaves. The Buyids particularly favored the Alawites, who took pride in their lineage tracing back to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Under Buyid rule, the Alawites' status rose significantly, and they formed an influential class in Iraqi society. The Alawites established the "Naqibate of the Nobles," led by a Naqib al-Nuqaba', who oversaw their lineage, marriages, and rights (Hilal al-Sabi, 1977, vol. 3, 138). This institution played a crucial role in maintaining the Alawites' social and religious identity, particularly in the face of earlier persecution under the Abbasids (Ibn 'Abbad, 1964: 144-151).

5-1-The Naqibate Institution during the Buyid Period

The Naqibs, or leaders of the Alawites, were responsible for resolving disputes, overseeing marriages, and ensuring the community's adherence to religious laws. Under Buyid rule, the Naqibate institution expanded, with the Naqib playing a central role in managing the affairs of the Alawites. The Buyids elevated the Alawites' status, granting them leadership roles in mosques and pilgrimages, which further strengthened their influence in Najaf and other holy cities. The Naqib of the Alawites also played a key role in resolving disputes among Shiite rulers, such as those between the Hamdanids and Buyids. For example, in 403 AH, Sultan Baha' al-Dawla appointed Sayyid al-Radi al-Mousawi as the Naqib of the Talibis in Iraq (Ibn al-

Taqtaqi, 1962: 94), highlighting the Buyids' support for the Alawite.

- The Naqibate Institution and the Naqibs

The Naqibate was formally established during the reign of Sultan Mu'izz al-Dawla Ahmad ibn Buyah to manage the affairs of the Alawites, who were numerous in Najaf and other holy cities. The Buyids' support for the Alawites was a direct response to their earlier persecution under the Abbasids. The first Naqib al-Nuqaba' was Sharif Husayn, the father of Sayyid al-Radi and Sayyid al-Murtada, who was appointed by Mu'izz al-Dawla. This position extended to Najaf, Kufa, Karbala, and Hilla, and later to Mosul and Basra. The Naqib al-Nuqaba' was based in Baghdad and oversaw the Sadat (descendants of the Prophet) in Najaf and Kufa. The origins of the Naqibate position trace back to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who appointed 12 Naqibs during the Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* (Ibn Hisham, 1375, vol. 1, 438).

The Abbasid Caliph al-Musta'in also appointed a Naqib for the Talibis, but under the Buyids, the Naqibate became a more prominent and influential institution. The Naqibs were responsible for religious, social, and administrative duties, including managing the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and defending Najaf. Over time, however, the position's authority diminished, leaving only its name as a relic of its former influence (Kammuna, 1968, vol. 2, 33).

- Key Duties of the Naqibate Position

The Naqib's responsibilities included overseeing the Alawites' lineage, resolving disputes, and ensuring their adherence to religious laws. The Naqib also protected orphans, supervised marriages, and maintained the community's social and religious integrity. The position required a deep understanding of genealogy and religious law, as well as the ability to mediate conflicts and uphold justice within the

community. The Naqib's role was not only administrative but also symbolic, representing the central authority of the Buyid government in Najaf and other holy cities.

-The Naqibs of Najaf Ashraf during the Buyid Era

The role of Naqib (chief) was conferred by the caliph upon the most distinguished and knowledgeable Alid (descendant of Imam Ali (peace be upon him)). In some cases, the Naqib was tasked with managing the social and cultural affairs of the Sadat (descendants of the Prophet) within a city or province. The Naqib of Baghdad held authority over the Naqibs of other cities, earning him the title "Naqib al-Nuqaba" (Chief of the Naqibs) (Mawardi, n.d.: 90). The Abbasid caliphs established the Naqibate institution to grant the Talibiyyin (descendants of Abu Talib) a degree of autonomy while maintaining oversight and control, thereby preventing the emergence of rival power structures. When the Abbasids lost direct control over the Talibiyyin, they created this institution to consolidate their influence. However, it was not strictly regulated by the caliphate but rather functioned as a respected societal institution (Mouri Motoo, 2007: 115).

Sharif Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Umar al-Harithi al-Alawi served as the Naqib of the Talibiyyin in Kufa. He was known for his bravery, generosity, and piety, holding the position of Naqib alongside the role of Amir al-Hajj (leader of the pilgrimage) for a decade. He was renowned for his charitable acts and passed away in Kufa in 304 AH (Qumi, 1361: 220).

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Da'i al-Saghir was appointed as the Naqib of the Alawiyyin in 348 AH under pressure from the Sadat by Ahmad Mu'izz al-Dawla. He held a prominent and influential position with Mu'izz al-Dawla, who referred to him as "Imam" in private settings (Mousavi, 1382: 152).

Abu al-Hasan Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad, known as "Kawkabi," a member of the Sadat, was appointed by Mu'izz al-Dawla as the governor of Basra and later as the Naqib of the Alawiyyin in Baghdad. He retained this position until his death (Mousavi, 1382: 155).

Sharif Abu Ahmad al-Husayn al-Mousavi, the father of Sayyid al-Radi, was a notable Alawi figure appointed by Sultan Baha' al-Dawla al-Daylami as the Naqib of the Alawiyyin in Baghdad. He was honored with the title "Tahir Dhu al-Manaqib" (Qumi, 1361: 220). While still alive, in 383 AH, he transferred all his duties to his son, Sayyid al-Radi (Ibn Khallikan, n.d.: vol. 4, 44).

Sayyid al-Radi, whose kunya (agnomen) was "Dhu al-Hasbayn" (Qumi, 1361: 220), assumed the role of Naqib of the Sadat and Talibiyyin in Baghdad at the age of 21 during the reign of Caliph al-Ta'i' bi-Allah. He was also entrusted with overseeing the pilgrims and managing the Diwan al-Mazalim (Court of Grievances). The appointment decree was issued by Baha' al-Dawla in Basra in 397 AH. By 403 AH, he was granted full authority over the affairs of the Sadat and was designated as the "Naqib al-Nuqaba" (Chief of the Naqibs) for all Sadat in the territories under Buyid control (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 7, 269).

During the Buyid era, several Naqibs held the prestigious position of Naqibate in the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Among these Naqibs were members of notable families, such as the Banu al-Sufi and Al-Mukhtar families. The Banu al-Sufi family, based in Kufa, was particularly prominent, with Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Sufi serving as Naqib during the reign of Sultan Adud al-Dawla al-Buyihi (Ibn 'Anbah, 1918: 368).. The Al-Mukhtar family, whose lineage traced back to Hasan al-Asghar ibn Imam Zayn al-Abidin, also held significant influence. Members of this family served as Naqibs in Najaf and Baghdad, and some were involved in the leadership of the Hajj

pilgrimage and the administration of the Mashhad al-Gharawi (Harz al-Din, 1427, vol. 1, 226).

Another important position established during the Buyid era was that of Sadanat, or custodianship, which was created in the 4th century AH. This role, appointed by the Sultan, involved overseeing the shrine's services and managing its treasury. By the 13th century AH, the position was commonly referred to as "*Kelidary*," a term derived from Persian meaning "keyholder," reflecting the growing Persian influence in Najaf (Harz al-Din, 1427, vol. 1, 223). The custodian often held considerable authority, sometimes acting as the de facto ruler of Najaf, especially when the Sultan's influence in the city was limited. The position was typically hereditary, passed down from father to son, ensuring that certain families maintained control over the shrine's administration for generations (Harz al-Din, 1427, vol. 1, 225).

The historian Ibn Mahbubah noted that Sadanat was a prestigious position with noble duties, appointed by the ruling authority. This position was held by honorable men and continued from the Buyid era to the Safavid period, during which it was consolidated and expanded (Mahbubah, 1968, vol. 1, 258). These positions were established during the Buyid era to manage the social affairs of Najaf, particularly those related to the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). This meant that the Buyids exerted their control over Najaf through the appointment of Naqibs, who acted as representatives of the Buyid sultans in Najaf, Kufa, and Baghdad. In these cities, the Naqibs implemented Buyid policies.

It is well-known that the Buyids' center of presence was in Baghdad, and through these individuals, Buyid policies were executed in the cities, including their control over the holy sites in Iraq, particularly in Najaf.

Several families held the custodianship during the Buyid era, including the Al-Tahal family, who were renowned scholars in Najaf. Members of this family, such as Sheikh Hasan ibn Tahal, were closely associated with the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and were known for their piety and scholarly contributions. They were among the scholarly families of the holy city of Najaf, and several jurists from this family traced their lineage back to the great companion Miqdad ibn Aswad al-Kindi (Mahbubah, 1968, vol. 2, 423). The custodianship later passed to other families, including the Shahriyar family, who continued to oversee the shrine's affairs.

Ibn Tawus mentioned that Sheikh Hasan ibn Tahal, the custodian of the shrine of Imam Ali, performed miracles (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 156). Among those who held the position of custodian from this family were Sheikh Ali al-Tahal, Sheikh Hasan ibn Ali ibn Tahal, and Sheikh Husayn ibn Ali ibn Tahal. Some sources indicate that Ali ibn Yahya ibn al-Husayn al-Tahal al-Miqdadi narrated from his father and grandfather. The Al-Tahal family was always closely associated with the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (al-Daylami, 1978, vol. 2, 438). Ali ibn Yahya was a contemporary of 'Imran ibn Shahin and Adud al-Dawla al-Buyihi (al-Daylami, 1978, vol. 2, 438; Mahbubah, 1968, vol. 2, 425).

5-2-The Influence of Iranian Customs in Najaf

During the Buyid rule in Iraq, Persians and Daylamites gained significant influence in the holy shrines, although their presence in Iraq predated the Buyid era. The Persians, known for their expertise in complex construction and engineering, were already utilized by the Abbasid Caliphate for architectural projects in Iraq (Maliha, 1970: 17). Under Buyid rule, their influence grew even stronger, as the Buyids themselves were of Persian origin.

Similarly, the Daylamites, who originally lived near the Caspian Sea, migrated to Iraq before the rise of the Buyid dynasty (al-Baladhuri, 1978: 359). Since the Buyids were primarily of Daylamite descent, their rule further solidified the Daylamites' influence in Iraq. Both groups held important positions in the government, including roles as ministers, commanders, and other state officials. The Daylamites, in particular, were known for their military prowess, serving as infantry in the Buyid army (Ibn al-Athir, 1963, vol. 7, 309), which was divided into sections for Turkish soldiers and Daylamites (Bosworth, 1975: 47). As a result, Persians and Daylamites became integral parts of Iraqi society, especially in Najaf, where their presence was strongly felt due to the influx of Iranian scholars.

The Persian language spread widely during this period, particularly after Iraq became more accessible to Iranians, who were granted religious freedom and the ability to visit holy shrines. Many of these visitors were Twelver Shiites, further strengthening the cultural and religious ties between Iran and Iraq. The scholarly exchange between the two regions also contributed to the spread of Persian language and Iranian cultural elements in Iraq, particularly in religious and administrative institutions in cities like Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad.

One notable example of this influence was Ibn Sahlan, a minister under Adud al-Dawla al-Buyihi, who was of Persian origin and commanded the Buyid army (Ibn al-Athir, 1963, vol. 8, 140-159). His role highlights the significant presence of Persian elements in the Buyid administration. Another example is Nizam al-Din Husayn ibn Taj al-Din al-Alawi, who served as the head of the Naqibs in Najaf during the Mongol era. His leadership, along with that of other Naqibs from both Iraq and Persia, demonstrates the enduring influence of Iranians in the

holy shrines even after the Buyid era. The religious and cultural affinity between Iran and Iraq facilitated this ongoing exchange, with many Iranian scholars migrating to Iraq and contributing to the intellectual flourishing of Najaf.

The influence of Iranian customs extended beyond administration and religion into everyday life. Iranian traditions, such as gift-giving during the Persian New Year, became common in Iraqi society. During these celebrations, Adud al-Dawla would hold grand assemblies where nobles and officials presented gifts, including gold and silver vessels, flowers, and fruits (al-Tanukhi, 1972, vol. 4, 88-92). This cultural exchange also influenced women's fashion, with the use of jewelry, belts, and intricate clothing patterns becoming widespread. The crafting of gold utensils and other decorative items also became popular, reflecting the blending of Iranian and Iraqi cultural practices (al-Zubayr, 1959: 195).

5-3- The Tombs and Burial Sites of Iranians in Najaf

The construction of tombs in Najaf during the 4th century AH is attributed to the Buyids. These tombs were situated in the Haydari courtyard, near the Bektashi Khanqah and the Scholars' Portico. Another significant tomb in Najaf was the Buyid Crypt, located outside the city walls, which served as the burial site for the Buyid sultans. Remarkably, these tombs survived the fire that devastated the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in 753 AH, as it is said that the Buyid tombs remained untouched (Ibn Zahra, 1963: 161). Sheikh Abbas al-Qumi mentions these tombs, stating: "The Buyids constructed a tomb for themselves opposite the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), known as the Tomb of the Sultans" (al-Qumi, 1956: vol. 2, 91). The Buyid sultans were interred in these designated cemeteries in the holy city of Najaf. Adud al-Dawla

al-Daylami, following his will, was the first Buyid sultan to be buried near the sacred shrine of Imam Ali in 372 AH. After his initial burial in the Shah Palace in Baghdad in 372 AH, his body was transferred to the tomb he had built for himself in Najaf (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: vol. 7, 117). Ibn Khallikan notes: "His body was moved to Kufa and buried in the city of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) " (Ibn Khallikan, n.d.: vol. 4, 54). Adud al-Dawla was first buried in Dar al-Mulk in Baghdad, and a year later, in 372 AH, his body was transferred to Najaf, as per his will, to be buried near the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) on the western side. This tomb stood until Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent ordered its destruction. He entered Iraq in 940 AH and went to Najaf, commanding the demolition of their tombs (Amin, 1968: vol. 3, 94).

Prominent Buyid sultans were buried in this tomb, including Adud al-Dawla's sons: Sharaf al-Dawla, who died in 379 AH, and Baha' al-Din, who died in 403 AH (Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 1, 243). Abu al-Fawaris Shirzad ibn Adud al-Dawla was buried in Najaf in 397 AH, near his father's tomb. Similarly, the body of Baha' al-Dawla Abu Nasr ibn Adud al-Dawla was transferred from Arjan to Najaf and buried in the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in 403 AH (al-Tabataba'i, 1354: vol. 1, 288). Ibn al-Athir also mentions: "The body of Baha' al-Dawla was moved from Arjan to Najaf and buried near the sacred shrine of Imam Ali" (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 8, 77).

The Buyids' decision to bury themselves near the shrine of Imam Ali was driven by their desire to seek his intercession and gain legitimacy among Muslims. This practice encouraged others to bury their dead near the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

Other notable Iranian political figures buried in the Buyid tombs include: Abu al-Fadl ibn Fasanjas, who died in 342 AH; Badr al-Din Hasanwayh al-Kurdi, the governor of Jebal, who

died in 405 AH; Fakhr al-Malik, the minister of Sultan al-Dawla, who died in 406 AH; Abu al-Qasim Husayn ibn Ali ibn Bahram ibn Marzban, who died in 418 AH; Sharaf al-Dawla Anushirwan ibn Khalid al-Kashani, the minister of the Abbasid Caliph, who died in 533 AH; Muzaffar al-Din ibn Zayn al-Din al-Kukmari, who died in 630 AH; Mujir al-Din Abu Sa'id al-Mustajdi, known as Batashtakin, who died in 602 AH; and Izz al-Din Abd al-Aziz ibn Ja'far al-Nishaburi, who died in 672 AH (Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 1, 240). Sheikh Hasan Jalayiri, a Mongol commander and founder of the Jalayirid dynasty, who died in 757 AH, and his son Amir Qasim, who died in 779 AH, were buried near his father. The tomb of Mu'izz al-Din Abd al-Wasi', who died in 790 AH, and the tomb of the late Sayyida Babandah Sultan, the tomb of Najib al-Din Ahmad, and Mahmud ibn Ahmad al-Mahabadi, Mongol commanders in the land of Persia, were also located there (Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 1, 243).

Burials in Najaf predate the Buyids. In other words, the Buyids were not the first to be buried in Najaf, as burials near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) date back to an earlier period. Before the establishment of the Wadi al-Salam cemetery in Najaf, some individuals requested to be buried near the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Many scholarly families have tombs in Najaf, and their names are still present in various corners of the shrine's courtyard and chambers. Some governments exploited the burial of the dead in the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) by charging fees for burials. Among these governments were the Seljuks and the Ottomans, whereas during the Buyid era, there was no such practice of charging fees for burials in the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (AS). Their burials in Najaf were linked to their belief in the intercession of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) (al-Hakim, 1428: vol. 2, 332).

The Wadi al-Salam cemetery holds profound religious significance, symbolizing a gathering of pure souls or a valley of peace and hope for divine forgiveness for visitors and the buried. Due to the status of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), it is believed that those buried there are spared from the reckoning of deeds and the torment of the grave. Some say it is a place where souls gather, just as their bodies are gathered (Muhsin Abd al-Sabah al-Muzaffar, 2008: 92). It is likely that this cemetery became known by this name from the 4th century AH onward, although historical evidence for this is still lacking. However, as with other famous cemeteries in the Islamic world, such as Lisan al-Ard in Isfahan or Shah Zinda in Samarkand, the choice of this name reflects lofty Quranic and religious concepts.

5-4- The Social Classes of the Holy Shrines during the Buyid Era

-the Class of Scholars and Intellectuals in Najaf

This class was the most important social group during the Buyid era. Due to the Buyids' interest in religious sciences and scholarly research, scholars were prominent in Najaf and other cities of Iraq. They were among the most significant elements of society during this period. This group included turbaned individuals who held court positions, scholars, and writers, some of whom held high positions in the government (Ibn Khallikan, n.d.: vol. 1, 426). They were highly regarded by the Buyids. Ibn Khaldun notes: "Adud al-Dawla was a lover of knowledge and scholars, and he engaged in debates with them on various issues. Books were written in his name, such as *"Iḍāḥ fī al-Naḥw"* and *"al-Ḥujjah fī al-Qirā'āt"* (Ibn Khaldun, 1968: vol. 4, 974).

Although religious education existed in Najaf before the Buyids, the flourishing of sciences during the Buyid era cannot be denied. The social and economic prosperity of Najaf contributed to its cultural development. The scholarly movement of Sheikh al-Tusi to Najaf is evidence of the intellectual activity in the city. The competition between the Hilla and Najaf schools is another testament to the scholarly activity in Najaf. The status of scholars during this period rose due to the emergence of theology (kalam), which focused on researching Islamic doctrinal issues, freed from the constraints of jurisprudence (fiqh) and utilizing the standards of logic and dialectics (al-Maqdisi, 2001: vol. 1, 4).

Due to the Buyids' interest in religious scholars and history, three famous historians of the Buyid era emerged: Abu Ali al-Miskawayh, who died in 421 AH; Hilal al-Sabi, who died in 448 AH; and Abu Shuja', who died in 488 AH (Salam, 2009: 43). All three were respected by the Buyid court. Among the manifestations of respect for scholars were praying behind them, seeking their opinions, praising them, and showing politeness in discussions, even when there were disagreements.

-The Merchant Class

In the early Buyid period, trade in Iraq flourished. Kufa, in particular, was an important commercial center, and trade in Iraq was highly profitable (Abu Shuja', 1916: 138). Those who worked in this sector, including some merchants, amassed great wealth. As a result, the Buyids and princes often borrowed from merchants during financial crises or when tax collection was delayed. For example, Ali ibn Isa, the vizier, would borrow from merchants during financial crises and issue "safatij" (a Persian term meaning promissory notes) in return (Miskawayh, 1359: vol. 2, 83). Trade was somewhat affected by the unrest in Iraqi cities, particularly due to the activities of the "ayyarun" (vagabonds) in Baghdad (al-Zubaydi, 1966: vol. 3, 434). Their

presence became a phenomenon that imposed itself on Iraqi society, and this group continued to exist during periods of political instability and economic decline (Mas'udi, 1967: vol. 8, 964). The movement of the "ayyarun" extended to Basra, and although the holy city of Najaf was relatively free from such unrest, its markets were affected by rising prices.

-The Class of Artisans and Craftsmen in Najaf

The holy city of Najaf had numerous industries and crafts, and each group of artisans and craftsmen gathered in a place named after their craft. Among these groups were weavers, builders, blacksmiths, and other artisans (Salam, 2009: 52). Craftsmen had a hierarchical organization, with the head of the guild (ra'is e-sinf) chosen from among the senior masters of the craft. After his election, all members of the guild would carry out his orders, and the duties of the guild head, treasurer, and secretary were combined. The masters of each craft formed the core of the guild, and a novice would rise to the rank of master after completing his training. These crafts were often hereditary, and each craftsman preferred his craft over others, with each having a distinctive attire (al-Hamawi, 1956: vol. 2, 55).

-The Status of Women in Najaf

Women in Iraq, particularly in Najaf, were respected and valued by the Buyids. A respectable woman was not to appear in public with her face or head uncovered; she was required to cover her face (al-Ghazali, n.d.: vol. 2, 230). Women were expected to observe modesty and avoid men when in public, especially given the sanctity of the holy city of Najaf, which required adherence to Islamic norms of modesty as mentioned in the Quran, which also recommended monogamy for men (al-Baghdadi, 1931: vol. 14, 438).

The amount of the dowry (mahr) varied according to social class, and among the wealthy, it could exceed one hundred thousand dinars, in addition to the luxurious clothing,

expensive utensils, and furnishings that the husband brought to his wife's home (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1992: 77). Engagements were arranged through the mediation of a relative or family friend (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1992: 428). Although most people preferred sons over daughters, the birth of a daughter was still celebrated (Salam, 2009: 69). Regarding the remarriage of widows, while Islamic law permitted it, it was not socially encouraged, reflecting the prevailing social customs in Najaf and other Iraqi cities (Salam, 2009: 70).

-The Slave Class

Slaves formed a significant part of Iraqi society. The slave trade flourished in Iraq, and slave owners were overseen by an official known as the "qaym al-rafiq", appointed by the government (Salam, 2009: 70). Slave markets were common in all Iraqi cities, including Najaf, which had a large number of slaves. There were two types of slaves: white and black. White slaves were brought from Turkic lands, Armenia, and Greece, while black slaves were brought from Ethiopia and Sudan (al-Isfahani, 1961: vol. 9, 128). A slave could buy his freedom by paying a sum of money, a practice known as "mukataba". A child born to a Muslim slave woman was free, and it was not permissible to sell a slave woman who was the mother of a child. A slave woman who was the mother of a child was freed upon the death of her master (al-Kindi, 1908: 338). Male and young slaves from Rome, Slavonia, and Sudan were widespread in Iraqi society (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 9, 39). The leanest slaves worked in the army, while some advanced to become brokers. Many also worked in industry, trade, and agriculture as assistants to their masters. Their numbers increased from the 3rd century AH, particularly with the rise of a new class of wealthy feudal lords who used large numbers of black Somali slaves in agricultural work (Salam, 2009: 72).

-The Common Class

Among the classes found in all Iraqi cities, including Najaf, were farmers and the poor or semi-poor. Due to the economic crises that Najaf witnessed, many left the city and headed to Khorasan (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 8, 443). Some moved to Basra in hopes of finding enough dates to meet their needs (al-Antaki, 1909: vol. 2, 104). Others gathered around prominent scholars and nobles, demanding bread and lower prices, in order to make their voices heard by the Sultan (Abu Hayyan, n.d.: vol. 3, 155). Internal unrest due to the activities of the "ayyarun" in Baghdad and their spread to other Iraqi cities naturally led to rising prices and famine in Iraqi cities. In addition to the aforementioned elements, there were also Christian and Jewish communities, whose presence was more prominent in Baghdad, Mosul, and Basra. It is worth noting that the social elements of Iraqi society during the Seljuk and Mongol periods were similar to those of the Buyid era.

5-5- Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines in Iraq and Najaf

During the Buyid rule in Iraq (334-447 AH), pilgrimage to the holy shrines in Baghdad, Najaf, and Karbala was common, not only among Iraqis but also among people from various Islamic lands. The security during this period facilitated this, enabling people to visit the holy shrines in Iraq. During this era, Shiites were no longer subjected to persecution by the Abbasid government. This was something that occurred in Shiite governments, including the Buyid government, which intellectually supported Shiism. Thus, Shiite persecution ceased, and it was natural for people from all Islamic countries to visit the holy shrines in Iraq. This phenomenon continued during the Seljuk and Mongol periods and afterward, despite the dominance of Sunni rule, and Sunni governments were unable to prevent pilgrims from visiting the holy shrines.

The Buyids played a significant role in promoting pilgrimage to the holy shrines by officially declaring the observance of Husayni mourning ceremonies and the celebration of Eid al-Ghadir, which were part of Shiite Islamic events. These ceremonies were held under the Buyids' patronage. The thirst for visiting the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and the observance of Shiite occasions contributed to political stability in Karbala and Najaf during this period.

Najaf and Karbala were somewhat removed from the sectarian conflicts between Sunnis and Shiites that occurred in Baghdad, but these religious conflicts temporarily hindered the pilgrimage of lovers of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) to the holy shrines. The conflict between the two sides also affected the pilgrim caravans coming from Qom: "The people of Bab al-Basra in Baghdad attacked the people of Qom who wanted to visit the shrines of Imam Ali and Imam Husayn (AS), killing three of them" (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: vol. 9, 418). Bab al-Basra was one of the four gates of Baghdad, and those coming from Iran, Ahvaz, Basra, and Yamama entered through it (al-Hamawi, 1956: vol. 1, 459).

However, this sectarian conflict did not last long, and at times, it was accompanied by friendship and affection between Sunnis and Shiites. Ibn al-Jawzi, in the events of 442 AH, mentions: "The elders of the Sunnis and Shiites gathered, reconciled, and together visited the shrine of Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) " (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: vol. 9, 122).

It is worth noting that the freedom to visit the shrines of the Imams (peace be upon them) was not limited to the Buyid era. The people of Iraq continued to visit the holy shrines even during the Seljuk period. In 529 AH, a significant development in pilgrimage to the holy shrines occurred, as Ibn al-Jawzi mentions: "During this time, countless people visited the

shrines of Imam Ali and Imam Husayn (peace be upon them), and Shiism grew" (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359: vol. 10, 281).

However, pilgrimage to the holy shrines was not limited to the general public. Caliphs, sultans, and viziers also visited. For example, al-Musta'sim bi-Allah (640-656 AH) visited the shrine of Imam Ali (AS) in Najaf in 640 AH (al-Ghassani, n.d.: 611).

The scope of pilgrimage to the holy shrines expanded, becoming a prominent phenomenon that inspired poets to compose verses in praise of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) in the first half of the 4th century AH, during Buyid rule in Iraq. Religious freedom and tolerance were provided by the Buyids.

When the Hamdanids gained political power in northern Iraq and Syria, their rise led to an influx of people from Syria visiting the holy shrines in Iraq. Poets composed numerous poems, including Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Murad al-Dabbi, known as al-Sanawbari, who visited the shrine of Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) and composed a poem in his praise:

"Turn to the land of Taff, where the heirs of guidance inherited from their forebears.

We weep at graves, though we weep for none but them" (al-Sanawbari, 1970: 511).

Due to the religious freedom for Shiites during the Buyid era, pilgrimage to the holy shrines became easier for them, leading to a scholarly movement with students from various Islamic lands coming to Najaf to study. The religious connection between Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq also stabilized after a period of tension and conflict during the rule of some Buyid princes. Perhaps the reason for these conflicts was the Sunni reluctance to accept the spread and popularity of Shiite beliefs during the Abbasid Caliphate.

5-6- Islamic Occasions during the Buyid Era in Najaf

Every religion and sect possesses its own set of religious beliefs, like mourning rituals, specific holidays and celebrations. Given that the Buyid dynasty was a Shia Islamic state, they observed both Islamic and Shia holidays, such as Eid al-Ghadir, Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr (Al-Isfahani, 1961: Vol. 3, 64). During these Eids, lanterns and chandeliers were hung throughout Najaf and Kufa, and the grand mosques were elaborately decorated. Rivers were illuminated with lanterns and lighted boats, while the palaces of the princes were adorned with numerous lamps. People wore turbans, tall hats, and carried shields inscribed with Islamic phrases (Al-Isfahani, 1961: Vol. 3, 64).

Another notable celebration during the Buyid era was the beating of drums during prayer times and on holidays (Al-Sabi, 1986: 136). People would visit one another, and during their rule, the last ten days of Ramadan were marked with special celebrations. On these days, the wealthy would distribute money and alms to the poor (Al-Tawhidi, 1973: Vol. 3, 6). Throughout Ramadan, Quran recitations were held in mosques, and the wealthy provided food to the poor and needy (Al-Tha'alibi, 1983: Vol. 3, 42). Some holidays were unique to the Buyid era, rooted in Persian traditions, such as Nowruz, which was a central Persian festival. The Buyids celebrated Nowruz with great enthusiasm, exchanging gifts and engaging in joyful activities like splashing water on one another (Miskawayh, 1914: Vol. 2, 249).

Certain religious occasions were specific to the Twelver Shia, and since the Buyids were Shia, they naturally supported these events. One of the most significant was the mourning of Ashura on the 10th of Muharram, a day when Shia commemorated the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). On this day, Shia mourned the death of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him)

and his family, with men closing their shops and forming mourning processions. Women would also leave their homes to offer condolences to Lady Zainab bint Ali (peace be upon her), striking their cheeks as a sign of grief (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 7, 17).

A unique ritual in Najaf was the sighting of the Ramadan crescent. Three days before Ramadan, the muezzins would announce the arrival of the holy month, and on the 29th of Sha'ban, they would ascend rooftops to sight the crescent. During Ramadan, food shops would close in the afternoon and reopen before Maghrib, remaining open until midnight. Families prepared special meals for Iftar, including soup, stew, rice, lentils, sherbet, sweets, fruits, chicken, fish, and kebabs. After Iftar, the people of Najaf would visit the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) for Quran recitation and prayers. Scholars held scientific and literary gatherings, while tribal sheikhs organized councils to recite poetry and discuss their tribal histories. Afterward, people would return home to rest. The "Musahhirun" would announce Suhoor in the streets with drums and horns, and the muezzins would recite prayers from the minarets. After Suhoor, people would head to the holy shrine for Fajr prayer. During fasting hours, eating and drinking in public were avoided (Hassan al-Hakim, 1432 AH: Vol. 27, p. 325).

Another important Shia holiday celebrated by the Buyids was Eid al-Ghadir, marking the day when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) appointed Imam Ali (peace be upon him) as his successor. Celebrations included raising domes, hanging banners, displaying decorations, lighting fires in security centers, and sacrificing camels in the morning (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, 409).

The 15th of Sha'ban, known as "Al-Majina," was also celebrated by scholars in Najaf to honor the birth of Imam

Zaman (peace be upon him). These gatherings featured religious and scientific discussions, as well as poetry recitations. The nights of the 19th, 21st, and 23rd of Ramadan, known as the Nights of Qadr, were observed as nights of mourning for the martyrdom of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). After confirming the end of Ramadan, the people of Najaf prepared for Eid al-Fitr. Men and women would gather in the courtyard of Imam Ali (AS) for the Eid prayer, followed by visits to the graves in Wadi al-Salam (Hassan al-Hakim, 1432 AH: Vol. 27, p. 340).

- Mourning Rituals during the Buyid Era

The mourning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) became widespread during the Buyid rule, although it had existed earlier. Previously, it was not common throughout the city and was primarily observed by Alawites and Shia. The mourning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) expanded during their rule and was observed in all Iraqi cities, including Najaf and Karbala. Mr. Saleh al-Shahristani noted that the Buyid princes were not the first to hold mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). Instead, the Buyids expanded these ceremonies from private homes and gatherings into the streets and markets, where participants would beat their chests (Al-Shahristani, 2003: Vol. 1, 147).

Regarding the developments in mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) during the Buyid era, they declared mourning an official institution. In 351 AH, Mu'izz al-Dawla al-Buwayhi issued a decree in Baghdad to hold mourning ceremonies on Ashura. This announcement included other Iraqi cities, such as Najaf and Karbala, and declared the 10th of Muharram an official holiday. Ibn al-Athir mentioned that Mu'izz al-Dawla ordered people to close their shops and markets on the 10th of Muharram in 352 AH and to display grief. Men wore black hats, and women participated with

blackened faces, striking their cheeks (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 7, 245).

Another development during the Buyid era was the introduction of lamentation and weeping in the morning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) and other Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon him). Although this practice existed earlier, it became more organized during the Buyid era. When the captives from the Ahl al-Bayt were taken past the martyrs of Karbala, they lamented and wept (Al-Tabari, 1968: Vol. 5, 456).

Sheikh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din noted that chest-beating was one of the rituals introduced during the Buyid era in the morning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) (Sheikh Mahdi Shams al-Din, 1996: 277). In this context, chest-beating refers to organized processions of mourners (Sheikh Mahdi Shams al-Din, 1996: 277).

During the Buyid era, mourning became an independent Shia practice, as evidenced by the spread of mourning for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) in Shia-majority cities during their rule (Al-Shahristani, 1382 AH: Vol. 2, 9). These ceremonies were held in Hussainiyas built by the Buyids in the holy city of Najaf. All religious occasions related to the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon him), such as the births and martyrdoms of the Imams (peace be upon them), were observed in these Hussainiyas in Najaf and other holy cities of Iraq.

6- The Social Role of the Seljuks in Iraq

The Seljuk dynasty, a Turkic ruling family, governed both Iran and Iraq. Their era is known for the persecution of Shia in Iraq. However, despite this, the city of Najaf remained free from these conflicts. After the persecution of Shia by the Seljuks, Sheikh al-Tusi migrated from Baghdad to Najaf. With his presence, Shia Islam was strengthened in Najaf. Thus, the social

role of the Seljuks in Najaf is evident through their frequent visits to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

In 479 AH, Sultan Malikshah Seljuqi and his vizier, Nizam al-Mulk Abu Ali al-Hasan al-Tusi, visited the Najaf desert for hunting and paid their respects at the shrines of Imam Ali (AS) in Najaf and Imam Hussein (AS) in Karbala (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, 143). In the same year, during Ramadan, Imad al-Dawla al-Sarhang entered the holy city of Najaf and provided substantial funds to the city's elders (Al-Bundari, 1900: 71). The visits of Seljuk sultans and officials to Najaf continued. In 480 AH, the Seljuk vizier, Nizam al-Mulk, revisited Najaf (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 35). Some Seljuk viziers also stayed briefly in Najaf, including Vizier Abu Shuja, who, after being dismissed in 484 AH, chose to stay in Najaf for a short period before heading to Mecca (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 56). His decision to stay briefly in Najaf indicates that the city was free from the conflicts and turmoil of Baghdad and enjoyed internal stability.

The Seljuks' attention to Najaf can be attributed to the city's status as a destination for many people from within and outside Iraq. The power and influence of the Naqib (leader) and the Naqaba (leaders) of Najaf, as well as their control over the holy city, were significant factors in maintaining its stability and security. Religious tourism and the financial income it brought to the Seljuk treasury were also important. Additionally, Najaf had become a major center of learning and culture, attracting many scholars. Najaf gained its religious status in the Islamic world, and during the final period of the Abbasid Caliphate, some Abbasid caliphs, such as Al-Nasir, frequently visited the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Najaf.

Due to the harmony and closeness between the Abbasids and the Seljuks, the Seljuks followed the Abbasids in visiting the holy shrines in Iraq, including Najaf Ashraf. For example, in 550

AH, Sultan Suleiman Shah Seljuqi visited Najaf Ashraf and the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) with Caliph Al-Muqtafi (Ibn Kathir, 1932: Vol. 12, 290).

During the Abbasid era, the tradition of bidding farewell to pilgrims took place in Najaf. Abbasid caliphs and their viziers would bid farewell to pilgrims in Najaf during the Seljuk rule. In 550 AH, Caliph Al-Muqtafi bid farewell to pilgrims in Najaf Ashraf (Ibn Kathir, 1932: Vol. 12, 232).

6-1-Visiting Holy Shrines during the Seljuk era

During the Seljuk era, Twelver Shia thought was suppressed, and significant social and cultural changes were imposed. For example, changes were made to the Adhan (call to prayer) for Shia, replacing "Hayya 'ala khayr al-'amal" (Hasten to the best of deeds) with "Al-salatu khayrun min al-nawm" (Prayer is better than sleep). Shia would recite the Adhan in fear of the Seljuk authorities in the Quraysh cemeteries and the mosques of the Karkh district.

Phrases such as "Muhammad and Ali (peace be upon them) are the best of humans," inscribed on the gates of roads, were removed. Shia jurists were accused of heresy and either exiled or killed. For example, Sheikh Abu Ja'far al-Tusi was forced to leave Baghdad after his house was looted (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 385). These actions were accompanied by a ban on holding Husayni rituals in Baghdad during the Seljuk rule. Al-Dhahabi mentioned in his account of the events of 455 AH: "Sultan Tughril Beg suppressed the Shia and removed their slogans" (Ibn 'Imad, 1332 AH: Vol. 3, 295).

Historical sources do not mention that the people of Najaf Ashraf were persecuted by the Seljuk government or prevented from performing Husayni rituals. during the Seljuk era, Najaf was under the authority of the Naqib of Najaf. Thus, the city was free from the policy of opposing Shia Islam. The Naqib had

complete independence in administering Najaf. As a result, Shia Islam became firmly established in the holy cities of Iraq, with the exception of Baghdad, which was the center of Seljuk rule. The Seljuk rule in Iraq was administered by the 'Amid, who served as the deputy of the Seljuk ruler in Iraq.

the Seljuks' visiting the holy shrines in Iraq was due to differences in religious policy among the Seljuk rulers themselves. The religious policy of Tughril Beg differed from that of Sultan Suleiman Shah Seljuqi, who frequently visited the holy shrines.

6-2-The position of the Naqib and the Naqibs of Najaf during the Seljuk era

The position of the Naqib (chief) persisted throughout the Seljuk era, having been established in Najaf during the Buyid period. Although the role was not directly tied to the Buyid government, it was managed by prominent families in Najaf. The leadership of the Naqib was hereditary, passed down from fathers to sons, and was closely associated with the administration of the holy shrines. This office continued to function during the Seljuk era, with several Naqibs holding the position, including members of the Al-Mukhtar family, who traced their lineage to Umar Mukhtar, the Naqib of the Alawites. This family held the position during both the Buyid and Seljuk periods. Umar Mukhtar simultaneously served as Naqib and Amir al-Hajj, and the role was inherited within his family. Notable members of the Al-Mukhtar family included:

"Abu Nizar Adnan bin Abi al-Fada'il al-Mukhtar" (Al-Sharqi, 1963: 45),"Amid al-Din Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Adnan al-Mukhtar"(Al-Barqi, 1356 AH: 205),"Shams al-Din Abu al-Qasim Ali bin Muhammad al-Mukhtar" (Mahbuba, 1968: Vol. 1, 288),

and "Al-Tahir Abu Ali al-Hasan bin Ali al-Mukhtar" (Al-Khazraji, 1975: 607).

6-3-Social Conditions in Najaf during the Seljuk Era

From a social perspective, the Seljuks had limited influence in Najaf, aside from occasional visits by Seljuk sultans and their ministers to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). The city was primarily administered by the Naqib institution, which contributed to its internal stability, as Najaf was not a political capital like Baghdad. This allowed the city to remain free from political conflicts during Seljuk rule.

6-4- Religious and Sectarian Groups in the Atabat during the Seljuk Era

Iraqi society during the Seljuk period was diverse, consisting of Sunnis, Christians, Sabians, Jews, Yazidis, and Shia. While the Seljuk state was Sunni, Shia Islam continued to thrive, particularly in Najaf, Karbala, and Baghdad. The Sharifs and Sayyids, who traced their lineage to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), were a significant social group. They received certain rights from the Seljuks, and their affairs were managed by an independent judiciary under the Naqib, who was appointed by the caliph (Metz, 1957: 218). The Naqibs, who were Shia, led Shia processions and ceremonies, reflecting the spread of Shia beliefs in Iraqi society (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 82).

6-5-Social Classes during Seljuk Rule

The social structure in Iraq during the Seljuk era was varied. The majority of the population were farmers, while other classes included rulers, ministers, scholars, merchants, and craftsmen.

The strategic commercial location of Iraq along major trade routes contributed to the prominence of urban merchants and craftsmen. (Hamza, 2007: 196). Slaves were also a part of society, sourced from war booty and the slave trade (Al-Hamawi, 1907: Vol. 2, 420). The slave trade was prevalent in all Iraqi cities, including Najaf (Al-Hamawi, 1907: Vol. 2, 420).

6-6-Social Elements during the Seljuk Era

The Arab population constituted the largest percentage of Iraqi society, with prominent tribes such as the Khafaja, Banu Asad, and others residing in regions like Kufa and Basra (Amin, 1965: 15-16). The Persian class also played a significant role, having settled in Iraq before and after the Islamic conquests (Al-Baladhuri, 1988: 275). The presence of Iranians in the revolt of Mukhtar and later during the Abbasid Caliphate increased. During the reigns of Caliphs Mansur and Harun, their influence in the foundation of Baghdad and the administration of the caliphate expanded (Ya'qubi, 1356 AH: 13). During the Buyid rule in Iraq, they held important military positions, and some even served as viziers. Among them were Shia who came to Iraq to visit the holy shrines, particularly during the Buyid era, strengthening their influence in Iraq, which continued until the Ba'athist era. Thus, Najaf was influenced by Iranians from the Buyid era, and their presence continued during the Seljuk period.

6-7-Festivals and Occasions during the Seljuk Era

Religious festivals such as Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr were celebrated by both Sunnis and Shia in Najaf and other Iraqi cities. Shia-specific occasions, like the mourning of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) on the 10th of Muharram, were also observed. The commemoration of Eid al-Ghadir, a

significant Shia festival, continued from the Buyid era into the Seljuk period (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 9, 146).

The Social Conditions of Najaf Ashraf during the Mongol Era (656-738 AH)

With the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in 656 AH, the Mongols took control of Baghdad and ruled Iraq. Despite being generally Sunni, the Mongol rulers, particularly the Ilkhanids, showed a degree of religious tolerance. Najaf became a center for Islamic studies, attracting students from across the Muslim world. Mongol leaders, including Sultan Muhammad Khudabandah and Sultan Abu Sa'id Bahadur, visited the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and contributed to its development.

7-The Social Role of the Mongols in Najaf

The Mongols played a significant social role in Najaf, with frequent visits by Mongol nobles and emirs to the holy shrine. It is evident from the texts that even Sunni followers visited Najaf, not only to seek blessings from the holy shrine but also to contribute to the development and reconstruction of the Atabat. Sultan Mahmud Ghazan visited the shrines of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) to oversee reconstruction efforts, establishing special offices for them and creating Dar al-Siyadah in major cities, including Najaf Ashraf, to support the residents. Ghazan's frequent visits to the shrines of the Imams, including the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him)), and his donations to their custodians (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 9) demonstrate the Mongols' interest in the Atabat, particularly the holy city of Najaf.

Sultan Mahmud Ghazan examined religious issues and sought the approval of religious scholars in Najaf. He never ceased to give charity, feed the poor, and support the needy in

Najaf. He stood by them, visited the Atabat, and honored the Imams and religious scholars (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 9). Sultan Ghazan's assistance greatly benefited the Atabat, thanks to the role of Shia scholars in this regard. During this period, zawiyas (small mosques or prayer rooms) emerged in Najaf, serving as places of refuge for ascetics. These zawiyas were a type of Ribat (Sufi lodge). Sufis and the poor gathered there in 727 AH. During the Ilkhanid rule in Iraq, zawiyas, madrasas, and takiyas (Sufi lodges) were established, where teaching sessions were held, and the poor used them as residences. They also provided accommodations for travelers (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 10). Among those who used these zawiyas as residences were the homeless, who found shelter in these zawiyas and mosques. Additionally, some doctors provided free medical care to the poor, just as physicians treated patients, and Sufi sheikhs used herbal medicine to treat the poor (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 11).

Sultan Oljeitu (703-716 AH), after recovering from an illness, ordered that alms and money be distributed to the poor of Iraq, including the poor of Najaf, asking them to pray for his recovery.

The Mongol government forgave the people and exempted them from taxes during times of conflict and unrest, instead providing financial assistance from the treasury to revive agriculture and urban life (Al-Qazzaz, 1970: 273). In 696 AH, Sultan Ghazan visited the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and allocated funds for the Alawites residing there (Khasbak, 1961: 232). During the reign of Ilkhan Gaykhatu (690-693 AH), alms and money were distributed to the poor and needy. As a result, several Muslim jurists joined other religious scholars from different sects to pray for his recovery (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 12).

7-1-Religious Elements of Society in the Atabat during the

Ilkhanid Era

Iraqi society during the Ilkhanid period was predominantly Sunni and Shia, with minority groups such as Jews, Christians, and Sabians. Shia Islam was particularly strong in Najaf and Karbala, where the majority of the population was Shia (Al-Maqdisi, 2001: 136). The Alawite class, which held positions like Naqib al-Nuqaba, played a key role in the administration of the holy cities.

7-2-Islamic Occasions during the Mongol Era

Religious festivals such as Ramadan and Eid al-Ghadir were celebrated during the Mongol era. The tradition of distributing Ramadan gifts to mosques and shrines continued, and Shia-specific ceremonies were supported by some Ilkhanid rulers (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 15). The recitation of martyrdom accounts, particularly during Ashura, remained an important Shia ritual.

7-3-Visiting the Holy Shrines in the Atabat during the Ilkhanid Era

Muslims from across the Islamic world visited the Atabat, particularly the holy city of Najaf. Despite the Sunni affiliation of the Mongol sultans, they pursued a policy of religious tolerance toward other Islamic Sects. Additionally, some Shia tendencies among the Mongol sultans led them to visit the holy shrines in the Atabat. (Al-Ta'i, 2014: 15).

On the day of Ashura, the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was recited in the holy city of Najaf. In urban areas of Iraq, groups of reciters specialized in reciting the martyrdom accounts during specific times of the year. The recitation of martyrdom accounts existed during the late Abbasid era and continued into the Mongol era in Iraq. The recitation was accompanied by self-flagellation and the use of

chains (Yasin, 1978: 240). Thus, the recitation of martyrdom accounts during this era is evidence of the lack of increased pressure on Shia and the absence of restrictions on Shia rituals.

8- Najaf during the Jalayirid Era

The Jalayirids, who ruled parts of Iraq and Azerbaijan after the Ilkhanids, continued the tradition of building tombs near the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). This practice, which began during the Buyid era, reflected the belief that being buried near Imam Ali (peace be upon him) would bring intercession. The Jalayirid tombs were located near the northern portico of the shrine (Mahbuba, 1963: Vol. 1, 243).

Bahr al-Ulum believed that the Jalayirid tombs were located on the left side near the northern portico (Bab al-Rahmah), about four or five cubits from the wall (Bahr al-Ulum, 1936: Vol. 1, 288). When the rocks were removed from the courtyard, tombs were discovered, which were seen by the people of Najaf. Among these tombs was the Jalayirid cemetery, built of Qishani stone. One of the tombs bore the inscription: "The blessed Prince Sultan Bayazid, may his soul rest in peace," and another tomb read: "This is the tomb of the late Babandah Sultan" (Al-Tabataba'i, 1354 AH: Vol. 1, 288). Among those buried in this cemetery was Sheikh Hasan Nuyan, the last of the Mongol sultans (Al-Marwadi, n.d.: 104-105).

8-1 The Social Status of the Naqib and the Alawite Custodians during the Ilkhanid Era

The institution of the Naqib continued to be a significant social and religious position during the Ilkhanid era. Ibn Battuta noted the authority of the Naqibs in Najaf during this era, writing: "In this city, there is no tax collector or governor; all affairs are managed by the Naqib al-Nuqaba. The people of Najaf are traders who travel and engage in commerce across

the world" (Ibn Battuta, 1967: 198-204). Ibn Battuta's observations demonstrate the social influence of the Naqibs in Najaf. The Naqibs managed the affairs of the holy shrines and were respected figures in Najaf. Notable Naqibs during this period included *Abu Tahir Hibat Allah* (Harz al-Din, 1427 AH: Vol. 2, 199), *Shams al-Din Muhammad bin Jamaz* (Ibn Zahra, 1963: 115), *Nizam al-Din Husayn bin Taj al-Din al-Awi* (Ibn Battuta, 1967: Vol. 1, 200), and *Shams al-Din Muhammad bin Jamaz bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Idris* (Al-Husayni, n.d.: Vol. 1, 24).

Summary

from the Buyid era, we witness a growing urban, developmental, and civilizational movement in Najaf. The most significant achievement of the Buyid state in Najaf was the establishment of the position of the Naqib and the leadership of the Sayyids. This position was exclusively held by the Alawites. The Alawites became one of the most important classes in Iraqi society during the Buyid era and even during subsequent Iranian-ruled governments. It can be said that the social achievements of the Buyids in Najaf laid the foundation for future governments, including other Iranian-ruled states in Iraq. One of the outcomes of Iranian rule in Iraq, particularly during the Buyid era, was the influence of the Persian class in Iraqi cities and their use in administrative and military institutions. As a result, Iranian cultural influence, rituals, and customs increased in the Atabat.

Regarding other states, the most distinguishing feature of their era was their visits to the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and their donations to the residents, Sayyids, and poor Alawites of Najaf and Karbala. Thus, the Buyids should be considered the pioneers of Iranian states in the social, political, and urban administration of Najaf. Security was established in Najaf, and the city flourished in all aspects. The urban development movement emerged during this period in Najaf and continued until the end of the 8th century AH.

Iraqi society consisted of various classes, including Arabs, Daylamites, Turks, Kurds, Persians, Romans, and slaves. Among them, the Arab class was notable. The Buyids paid special

attention to the Alawites and Sayyids and established extensive interactions with them. As a result, Persians and Daylamites became part of Iraqi society. The social classes during the Buyid era included scholars, merchants, craftsmen, the general public, and slaves.

The construction of tombs for scholars and sultans in the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Najaf began in the 4th century AH during the Buyid era. These tombs were located in the Haydari courtyard and near the Qibla Gate. The Buyids built tombs for themselves near the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), known as the tombs of the sultans, though no traces of them remain today.

Chapter three

The Cultural Contribution of Iranian Scholars in Educational Institutions and the Expansion of Islamic Sciences in Najaf Ashraf

1-Introduction

The capture of Baghdad, the Abbasid Caliphate's capital, by the Buyid dynasty in 334 AH marked a pivotal moment in the rise of Shiism and the emergence of Shiite figures in the holy cities, particularly Najaf Ashraf. This political shift led to the escalation of conflicts that had plagued Baghdad during the Abbasid era, including power struggles among emirs and clashes between Daylamite and Turkish forces. Amid this turmoil, Ahmad ibn Buyeh entered Baghdad, and the caliphate's armies failed to repel the Buyids. As a result, Caliph al-Mustakfi bi-llah welcomed him and bestowed upon him the title of "Amir al-Umara" (Commander of the Commanders). What set the Buyid rule apart was its non-sectarian nature; it did not govern in the name of a specific religious group and actively promoted intellectual freedom. Their governance emphasized religious tolerance and dialogue among different sects, creating an environment where Mu'tazilites and other theological groups could engage in open debate.

Following Baghdad, which was a hub of Shiism, Najaf Ashraf also flourished under the Buyids' patronage, particularly due to

their focus on the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). This attention transformed Najaf into a center of Shiite scholarship.

During the Buyid era, prominent Shiite jurists emerged, becoming the backbone of Shiite thought and leadership in Iraq. Among them was Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Nu'man, known as Shaykh al-Mufid (336-413 AH), a pioneer of "ijtihad" (independent reasoning) within Twelver Shiism. His students included notable figures like Sayyid al-Radi, Sayyid al-Murtada, and Shaykh Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Tusi (358-460 AH). Shaykh al-Mufid was a contemporary of 'Adud al-Dawla al-Buyhi (367-372 AH). These jurists leveraged their ties with the Buyid government to foster the political, social, and cultural growth of Shiism. This intellectual flourishing persisted until the fall of the Buyids and the Seljuk takeover of Baghdad in 447 AH. Initially, Baghdad was the heart of Shiism, attracting religious leaders from across the Islamic world. Shiism began to solidify as a distinct school of thought. Notably, Shiite jurists of the Buyid era largely avoided political involvement, focusing instead on religious matters, supported by the Buyids, particularly 'Adud al-Dawla, who participated in theological debates and discussions.

Shaykh al-Mufid gained prominence by defeating the Mu'tazilite judge 'Abd al-Jabbar in a debate on the Imamate. 'Adud al-Dawla rewarded Shaykh al-Mufid's students with stipends and honored him with valuable gifts (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: vol. 8, 11). Shaykh al-Mufid played a crucial role in countering intellectual currents opposed to Shiite beliefs.

Within Shiite circles, a movement advocating for "ijtihad" in legal rulings emerged, championed by Ibn Junayd al-Iskafi. However, Shiite scholars rejected Ibn Junayd's views, sparking controversy due to their deviation from Shiite principles, which opposed "qiyas" (analogical reasoning) and personal opinion in deriving legal rulings.

Shaykh al-Mufid was instrumental in combating doctrinal deviations and establishing rulings in line with Sharia principles. He rejected the use of 'ra'y' (personal opinion) and "qiyas" in Sunni jurisprudence, relying instead on the views of Ibn Junayd al-Iskafi (Qazwini, 2005: 24).

Shaykh al-Mufid also emphasized the qualities necessary for religious leadership. His dedication to teaching produced a generation of scholars, including Sayyid al-Radi, Sayyid al-Murtada, and Shaykh al-Tusi, who are credited with revitalizing Shiism in Najaf. After al-Mufid and Sayyid al-Murtada, Shaykh al-Tusi became the third leader of the Baghdad school and the last prominent Shiite jurist of the "ijtihad" era, which lasted over a century and influenced the Hilla school of jurisprudence.

Shaykh al-Tusi is regarded as the first heir to the Shiite intellectual tradition. He sought to reform Shiite beliefs through a balanced, scholarly approach. His works are foundational to Shiite sciences, covering theology, Quranic exegesis, comparative jurisprudence, "ilm al-rijal" (the study of narrators), "usul al-fiqh" (principles of jurisprudence), and 'ilm al-hadith" (the study of hadith).

The early phase of Shaykh al-Tusi's career unfolded in Baghdad, spanning approximately forty years. This period was crucial for his scholarly output, as it allowed him to produce works that later Shiite jurists would rely on (al-Qazwini, 2005: 30).

Due to his scholarly reputation, the Abbasid caliph al-Qa'im Bi-Amr Allah (422-467 AH) sought to disseminate his lectures to students of Islamic sciences from various sects. To this end, a "Chair of Theology" (*kursi al-kalam*) was established, reserved for scholars of exceptional standing.

The initial intellectual flourishing occurred in Baghdad. However, after the Seljuk persecution of Shiites, the center of scholarship shifted to Najaf. Shaykh al-Tusi, supported by the

Buyids, played a pivotal role in this transition. The migration of Iranian scholars to Baghdad, driven by persecution under Sunni rulers, further contributed to this shift. Shaykh al-Tusi himself was forced to leave Baghdad for Najaf due to Seljuk oppression, making Najaf a sanctuary for Shiite scholarship. The shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) became a focal point for Shiite studies in the fourth century AH.

2-The Role of Iranian Scholars in the Scholarly Excellence of Najaf

Shaykh al-Tusi

Shaykh al-Tusi was born in 385 AH in Tus (al-Sadr, 1951: 9). He studied in Khorasan, a major center of learning at the time, before moving to Baghdad at the age of 23. His decision to relocate to Baghdad was strategic, as the city was a hub of intellectual activity during the Buyid era (al-Hakim, 1975: 64). Upon his arrival, Shiite leadership was under Shaykh al-Mufid, who hosted scholarly gatherings attended by figures like Sharif al-Radi and Sayyid al-Murtada (Ibn Kathir, 1932: vol. 12, 15). The scientific movement in Baghdad, supported by the Buyids, was a key factor in Shaykh al-Tusi's decision to move. The political instability in Khorasan, where Sunni Hanafi beliefs gained dominance under Ghaznavid rule, also compelled him to leave. The Ghaznavids persecuted Shiites, exiling many and ordering public curses against them (Ibn 'Imad, 1351 AH: vol. 3, 186).

In Baghdad, Shaykh al-Tusi studied under Shaykh al-Mufid. The Baghdad school was a prominent center of learning, attracting scholars from various sects. Al-Tusi also attended lectures by Sunni scholars, including Ibn Shadhan. After Shaykh al-Mufid's death, leadership passed to Sayyid al-Murtada, during which the practice of "ijtihad" expanded. Shaykh al-Tusi

often disagreed with al-Murtada's views. Following al-Murtada's death in 436 AH, al-Tusi assumed religious leadership, dedicating himself to teaching and scholarship for twelve years (436-448 AH). However, the Seljuk invasion of Baghdad in 447 AH intensified Shiite persecution, leading to widespread violence. Shaykh al-Tusi's home was destroyed, and his books and teaching chair were burned (Ibn Kathir, 1932: vol. 12, 71; Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: vol. 8, 179). Among his works from this period are "al-'Udda fi Usul al-Fiqh", and "al-Muqaddima ila 'Ilm al-Kalam".

Shaykh al-Tusi's Migration to Najaf

The development of the Najaf Ashraf school in the fifth century AH is closely tied to Shaykh al-Tusi, whose scholarly contributions left a lasting impact. After the Buyids' support facilitated Najaf's growth, the Seljuk persecution of Shiites in Baghdad disrupted the Imami scholarly movement. Facing threats to his life and the destruction of his works, Shaykh al-Tusi was compelled to leave Baghdad for Najaf (Harawi, 1367 AH: 19). He resided in Najaf until his death in 460 AH, dedicating himself to teaching, research, and writing. His legacy continued through his family, and his school and home remain significant to this day.

3-Scholarly Centers in Najaf Before al-Tusi

Shaykh al-Tusi's migration to Najaf indicates the presence of scholarly activity there before his arrival. For instance, the poet Abu 'Abd Allah al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn al-Hajjaj al-Nili al-Baghdadi (d. 391 AH) referenced Najaf's scholarly environment in his poetry "Qasida al-Fa'iyya" :

"O owner of the white dome in Najaf,

Whoever visits your grave and seeks healing from you, is healed.

Visit Abu al-Hasan al-Hadi, for you

Will be rewarded with bounty and nearness.

Visit him whose whispers you hear, for whoever

Visits his grave in distress, is relieved.

Say peace, from Allah, the peace, upon

The people of peace, and the people of knowledge and honor." (al-Hakim, 2009: 199).

Several factors influenced Shaykh al-Tusi's decision to migrate to Najaf. The city's distance from Baghdad provided a refuge from sectarian conflicts, and the spiritual significance of Imam Ali's shrine offered a safe haven for persecuted scholars. Additionally, Najaf's proximity to Shiite strongholds like Kufa made it an ideal location for scholarly activities (al-Hakim, 1428 AH: 49). Thus, Najaf became a center for Shiite scholarship, with Shaykh al-Tusi playing a key role in its expansion.

Al-Tusi organized his students and standardized the terminology of Islamic sciences, transforming the scholarly school of Najaf into a specialized center for jurisprudence and hadith. The most important feature of Shaykh al-Tusi's school was that lessons were taught in specialized circles. These circles, which Shaykh formed with his students, included the study of Islamic sciences such as hadith, exegesis, jurisprudence, "usul al-fiqh" (principles of jurisprudence), and more. The method that Shaykh al-Tusi followed in teaching his students was considered a novel scholarly approach in the history of the Najaf seminary. Some of his students studied all of his works in al-Ghari (Majlisi, 1315 AH: vol. 2, 25). The "Amali" of Shaykh al-Tusi consists of his lectures delivered in the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to his students who had migrated from

Baghdad or were from Najaf, where he narrated various hadiths.

The compilation of "Amali Shaykh al-Tusi" was written by his students during his lessons, especially by his son Shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Tusi. As he wrote: "The great Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Tusi, may Allah be pleased with him, dictated to us, and his dictation began on Tuesday, the 26th of Safar in the year 456 AH in the holy courtyard of Imam Ali (AS)" (Ibn Tawus, 130-131).

As Abu 'Ali al-Tusi mentioned, al-Tusi used the holy shrine as a place for teaching, which means that the holy shrine was the first scholarly school established in the holy city of Najaf. Initially, the mosque was the school, and schools were not independent from mosques (Ma'ruf, 1973: 141). However, there is other evidence that schools existed in Najaf before the presence of al-Tusi.

The most important feature of the Najaf Ashraf school was its exclusivity to one sect, as the sciences and knowledge of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) were taught there, and no other sect besides the Ja'fari school existed in Najaf. However, this does not mean that the Najaf Ashraf school was exclusively for the Ja'fari school, as other Islamic sects were also taught there. Evidence of this is that Shaykh al-Tusi wrote the book "al-Khilaf", which is considered an encyclopedia of Islamic jurisprudence, among his works, in which he discussed the opinions of other Islamic sects in comparison to what the Imamiyya rely on in religious matters (Bahr al-'Ulum, 1354 AH: vol. 3, 230).

Shaykh al-Tusi continued to serve the Imami school in Najaf Ashraf and engaged in scholarly discussions, teaching, and research (460-448 AH). Shaykh Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar al-Khazin said: "Shaykh Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Tusi, may Allah have mercy

on him, narrated to us in the holy shrine of al-Ghuraybi in the month of Ramadan in the year 458 AH" (Ibn Tawus, 1323 AH: 218). The Najaf Ashraf school continued to progress from the year 448 AH and became one of the most important religious universities in the Islamic world (Amin, 1965: 379).

The most important aspect of Shaykh al-Tusi's scholarly life that should be noted is his intellectual productions in Najaf, including the book "Amali Shaykh al-Tusi". Al-Tusi summarized the book "Ikhtiyar Ma'rifat al-Rijal", which is an abridgment of the book "Rijal al-Kashshi" (al-Bahrani, 1969: 403). Shaykh al-Tusi mentioned this and said: "I summarized these narrations from the book "al-Rijal" by Abu 'Amr Muhammad ibn 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and selected its contents" (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH: 131).

Shaykh al-Tusi continued his scholarly research and teaching until the end of his life. He passed away while writing the book "Sharh al-Sharh", without completing it. Hasan ibn Mahdi al-Sulayqi, one of Shaykh al-Tusi's students said: "Among his works that were not listed was the book *Sharh al-Sharh fi al-Usul*, which he left unfinished, and nothing like it has been written" (al-Bahrani, 1969: 294).

The most important point to note in Shaykh al-Tusi's life in Najaf is that, despite his twelve-year residence in the holy city of Najaf, he always devoted himself to teaching, lecturing, and research in the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him)). However, his book writing was at a lower level compared to his teaching. While he wrote more books in Baghdad, his educational productions in Najaf were greater than in Baghdad, reaching up to 300 students (Hasan al-Hakim, 1433 AH: 525). In Najaf, he only wrote the books "Amali", "Muntakhab al-Rijal", "Sharh al-Sharh", and "Khulasat Misbah al-Mutahajjid". This indicates his belief in the sufficiency of the books he had written in Baghdad, and the most important aspect that

distinguished these intellectual masterpieces was his creativity and innovation in shaping the overall Islamic culture of his time. For this reason, the opinions of Shaykh al-Tusi formed the foundation for jurisprudential and fundamental issues for Shiite jurists and scholars of 'usul al-fiqh" for a long time.

Thus, Shaykh al-Tusi, with a strategic and cultural engineering program in the Najaf seminary, attracted lovers of Shiite sciences to Najaf, and they shared in his scholarly apparatus, becoming influential jurists and specialists in Islamic sciences who impacted the course of Shiism in Shiite centers. The number of his students in Najaf reached several hundred, and if we refer to the list of Muntajab al-Din, he mentions 544 scholars from Rayy and other central cities of Iran, many of whom were directly or indirectly students of al-Tusi (Muntajab al-Din, 1366 AH: 32-132).

Shaykh al-Tusi, while being the most knowledgeable jurist of his time, passed away after leaving his works in the Najaf Ashraf seminary, and his students carried the banner of his scholarly school. Shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Tusi was born in the fifth century AH, and his influence continued until the sixth century AH, which signifies the continued progress of the Najaf school after its establishment in the fourth and fifth centuries AH.

4-The Works of Shaykh al-Tusi

Shaykh al-Tusi's works reflect a blend of traditional and fundamentalist approaches to jurisprudence. His major work, 'al-Mabsut fi Fiqh al-Imamiyya", exemplifies his commitment to "ijtihad". This text became a primary reference for medieval scholars, summarizing earlier jurisprudential works (al-Hakim, 1975: 320). Al-Tusi's contributions span various fields, including "rijal", hadith, theology, jurisprudence, and "usul al-fiqh".

The Science of Hadith

Shaykh Tusi stands as one of the three foremost scholars who played a pivotal role in compiling Shi'a hadiths through his seminal works, "Al-Tahdhib" and "Al-Istibsar". These two texts are counted among the "Four Books", the most authoritative collections in Shi'a tradition. Historically, narrations from the Imams (peace be upon them) were recorded in foundational texts known as "Usul" (Al-Tehrani, 1390 AH, vol. 2, pp. 125–126). These works laid the groundwork for Imami thought, drawing from the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). Among these, "Al-Kafi" by Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni, compiled in Baghdad in 328/329 AH, contains 16,199 hadiths (Al-Bahrani, 1969, pp. 394–395). Another key text, "Man La Yahduruhu al-Faqih" by Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Babawayh al-Qummi (d. 381 AH), comprises 9,044 hadiths (Al-Sadr, 1951, p. 288). Shaykh Tusi's "Tahdhib al-Ahkam" includes 13,590 hadiths (Al-Sadr, 1951, p. 288), while his "Al-Istibsar" features 5,511 narrations (Al-Hakim, 1975, p. 324). These four texts were composed during the Buwayhid era, a period marked by religious tolerance that facilitated scholarly endeavors in hadith compilation—a notable achievement of Buwayhid governance.

The primary objective of assembling these hadiths was to provide jurists with reliable sources for deriving Islamic rulings. However, these collections were not systematically organized. As Shaykh Tusi observed, certain transmission chains were omitted, and minor inconsistencies may exist. Experts refer to the initial links in these chains as "tafsir" (Al-Amili, n.d., vol. 1, p. 21). In contrast to others, al-Kulayni's "Al-Kafi" meticulously documents the full chain of narrators for each hadith (Al-Amili, n.d., vol. 1, p. 21).

"Al-Tahdhib" and "Al-Istibsar" hold a distinguished place among the "Four Books". Sayyid Bahr al-Ulum emphasized the

importance of Shaykh Tusi in the science of hadith, stating: "Hadith is what people travel for, and through it, humans attain the highest hopes. These four books are among the greatest, valued for their legal reasoning and jurisprudence, guiding us to the principles. These two books include the study of narrators (rijal), comparison of reports, and their integration with transmitted evidence and chains" (Al-Tabataba'i, 1965, vol. 3, p. 229).

Beyond hadith, the book's jurisprudential insights make it vital for Shi'a legal scholarship. Al-Najashi praised "Tahdhib al-Ahkam" as a major work (Al-Najashi, 1323 AH, p. 316). Shaykh Tusi aimed to resolve discrepancies in Imami hadiths and counter doctrinal criticisms, emphasizing the book's religious and legal significance (Al-Hakim, 1975, p. 340).

In "Al-Tahdhib", Shaykh Tusi combined the methodologies of al-Kulayni and al-Saduq. While al-Kulayni included full chains of transmission (Al-Hakim, 1975, p. 341, and Al-Baha'i, 1319 AH, p. 21), al-Saduq often omitted them, detailing them separately (Al-Baha'i, 1319 AH, p. 21 and Al-Mudhaffar, 1958, p. 98). Tusi's balanced approach alternated between full citations and concise references, ensuring scholarly rigor (Al-Mudhaffar, 1958, p. 99). The book's importance is further underscored by commentaries such as "Tanbih al-Arib" and "Tadthkirat al-Labib fi Iqah Rijal al-Tahdhib" by Sayyid Hashim al-Tubli (Al-Afandi, n.d., vol. 5, p. 28).

Another notable work, "Al-Istibsar", addresses conflicting narrations and is a key resource for Imami jurists (Al-Tehrani, 1390 AH, vol. 2, pp. 15–16). It is a key reference for Imami Shi'a in deriving legal rulings and is cited by scholars like al-Najashi in "Al-Rijal" and Ibn Shahrashub in "Ma'alim". Sayyid Shafi' highlighted the main difference between "Al-Tahdhib" and "Al-Istibsar": while "Al-Istibsar" covers all jurisprudential topics like "Al-Tahdhib", it focuses exclusively on reconciling conflicting

narrations, unlike "Al-Tahdhib", which includes all transmitted reports, whether agreed upon or disputed. It also cites relevant Quranic verses, consensus (ijma), and even narrations from opponents (Sayyid Shafi', n.d., p. 182).

The Science of Rijal (Narrator Criticism)

Shaykh Tusi's contributions to "Ilm al-Rijal" (the study of hadith narrators) were foundational. Among the five principal Shi'a texts in this field, two were authored by him. The oldest, "Rijal al-Kashi" by Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Kashi, was later refined by Tusi, who noted its errors (Al-Najashi, 1323 AH, p. 288). His work classified narrators from the Prophet's companions to the followers of Imam Hasan al-Askari (peace be upon him) (Ibn Tawus, 1368 AH, p. 131). The second foundational work is by al-Ghada'iri, Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Ubaydullah, a contemporary of Shaykh Tusi (Al-Barafrushi, n.d., p. 35). The third is "Rijal al-Najashi" by Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn Ali al-Najashi (372–450 AH).

Agha Buzurg al-Tehrani regarded it as pillar of jurisprudential principles (Al-Tehrani, 1390 AH, vol. 10, p. 154). The fourth and fifth foundational works are Shaykh Tusi's "Al-Rijal" and "Al-Fihrist", in which he followed al-Najashi's methodology. Tusi organized "Al-Fihrist" alphabetically, noting the reliability (thiqa) of narrators, their epithets, and critiques about them. He also mentioned their beliefs and sectarian affiliations, demonstrating his precision in selecting narrators and their reports.

The Shi'a Bibliographical Index (Fihrist Kutub al-Shia)

This seminal work represents one of the five core texts in Shi'a biographical scholarship. Sheikh Tusi compiled a comprehensive record of Shi'a scholars and their literary contributions.

When cataloging his own works, Tusi begins by stating: "This index was prepared by Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Ali Tusi." (al-Tusi, 1961: 188). The renowned scholar Allama Majlisi later used it as a primary source for his encyclopedic "Bihar al-Anwar" (al-Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol.1:5). Modern researcher Dr. Hasan Mahfouz highlights how Tusi systematically documented Shi'a writers from different regions, including their works, source materials, and transmission chains - providing evaluations of each text's reliability, methodology, and historical significance. This pioneering effort established the first alphabetically organized reference for Shi'a studies (Mahfouz, 1967:122-123).

Tusi himself explained the need for this work: "At the repeated urging of my teacher, I undertook to create this comprehensive compilation of scholarly works and sources." Organized from A to Z, the index prioritizes practical accessibility over strict chronology, while applying rigorous standards to assess authors' doctrinal positions and trustworthiness. It employs technical terms like "unreliable," "inconsistent," and "questionable" to flag problematic sources (al-Tusi, 1961:36,49,132).

The 7th-century scholar al-Muhaqqiq al-Hilli later produced an abridged version, streamlining the content by names and titles (Amin, 1968, vol.44:50). Notably, Tusi's original references an astonishing 4,283 works - demonstrating that Shi'a scholars were producing approximately ten publications annually during Islam's early centuries (Mahfouz, 1967:122).

The Book of Narrators (Kitab al-Rijal)

This foundational text divides historical narrators into two key categories:

- 1) Those who directly transmitted teachings from the Prophet and Imams
- 2) Their contemporaries who didn't serve as direct sources

Tusi organized the material alphabetically for easy reference, while acknowledging the impossibility of complete coverage given the vast number and wide distribution of narrators (al-Tusi, 1961:2). The work stands out for its detailed documentation of 3,238 companions of Imam Sadiq, applying consistent evaluation standards like "trustworthy" or "unreliable" to each.

Selected Narrators (Ikhtiyar al-Rijal)

This refined edition of the earlier **Rijal al-Kashi** corrects errors while maintaining its comprehensive scope covering both Sunni and Shi'a transmitters. As scholar al-Baha'i observed: *"While al-Kashi's original was thorough, Tusi's improved version became the definitive reference work"* (al-Baha'i, n.d.:12).

Sheikh Tusi's Theological Works on Kalam and Imamate

Sheikh Tusi is widely recognized as a leading authority in Islamic theology (kalam) and the doctrine of Imamate. His major contributions include:

1. ***Talkhis al-Shafi*** - An abridged version of Sharif al-Murtada's work, focusing particularly on defending the doctrine of Imamate against Mu'tazili critiques. Tusi created this accessible summary in response to scholarly demand, carefully editing and reorganizing the material while adding his own clarifications (al-Tusi, 1963, vol. 1: 62).

2. ***Al-Ghayba*** (The Occultation) - A comprehensive theological treatment of the Twelfth Imam's concealment, addressing: historical and theological reasons for the occultation, responses to objections from dissenting groups, and the necessity of the Imam's leadership despite his absence (al-Tusi, 1385 ,2).

3. ***Al-Muflih bi'l-Imama*** - A textual defense of the Twelve Imams' legitimacy through Prophetic traditions and Quranic evidence.

4. ***Al-Iqtisad*** - A systematic work on divine justice (adl) and monotheism (tawhid) that became influential in later Shi'a theology. The text also addresses differing perspectives on Imamate, challenging those who reject its necessity either on rational grounds or due to misinterpretations of scripture.

Beyond these major works, Tusi produced numerous other texts, such as: *Muqaddima fi al-Madkhal ila Ilm al-Kalam*, *Ma Yu'allal wa Ma La Yu'allal*, *Istifā' fi al-Imāma* , and a critical response to Fazl ibn Shadhan's views on the Cave.

Tusi's works became standard references in Shi'a seminaries, cited by major scholars like Allama Majlisi in *Bihar al-Anwar*. His balanced methodology combining rational argumentation with textual evidence set the template for subsequent Shi'a theological discourse. The clarity and systematic organization of his writings ensured their enduring influence across centuries of Islamic scholarship.

The Evolution of Sheikh Tusi's Jurisprudential School in Najaf (A Period of Transformation and the Rise of Rational Jurisprudence)

Following the closure of *Ijtihad* (independent legal reasoning) in Iraq, Sunni religious authorities made the decision to restrict this practice. The fourth Islamic century represented a pivotal moment in Islamic legal development, characterized by the establishment of Islamic legislation through absolute *ijtihad* based on personal interpretation of Quranic texts and Prophetic traditions. By this time, the era of innovative legal formulation had concluded (Metz, 1957, vol. 1, p. 369).

The pre-Tusi period, particularly during the fourth century, witnessed stagnation in jurisprudential thought among Sunni scholars who had abandoned independent reasoning. In

contrast, Imami Shiism experienced significant jurisprudential advancement, with Sheikh Tusi emerging as a leading figure in absolute ijtihad within both jurisprudence and its foundational principles (Bahr al-Ulum, 1980, p. 2).

By the early fifth century, mere transmission of hadiths proved inadequate for developing Shiite jurisprudence. The growing political influence of the Shiite Buyid dynasty in Baghdad, coupled with increasing Shiite populations and their expanding influence across Islamic lands, necessitated a more sophisticated framework for addressing emerging jurisprudential questions. Sheikh Mufid, recognizing the permissibility and methodology of legal derivation during and after the era of the Imams, began systematizing Shiite jurisprudence by combining transmitted traditions with his own jurisprudential analysis.

His pioneering work in Shiite legal theory, *Al-Tadhkirah bi Usul al-Fiqh*, established new foundations. This methodological approach was further developed by his distinguished student Sharif al-Murtada in *Al-Dhari'ah ila Usul al-Shari'ah*, which clarified the principles of jurisprudence while distinguishing them from theological discourse (Sharif al-Murtada, 1376 AH, vol. 1, p. 2).

Through his exceptional intellectual gifts, innovative thinking, and rigorous scholarship under eminent teachers, Sheikh Tusi established a distinctive jurisprudential school. His approach not only built upon the foundations laid by Sheikh Mufid and Sayyid al-Murtada but surpassed contemporary schools through its comprehensive methodology. He introduced novel concepts and robust argumentation, creating a framework for future scholars to engage in systematic legal reasoning and analysis. His methodological influence endured for a century after his passing, with jurists continuing to employ his approach

to ijtihad. Allamah Bahr al-Ulum's tribute captures his significance:

"Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Ali al-Tusi represents the standard-bearer of authentic Islamic law, the preeminent leader of Imami Shiism following the infallible Imams, and the cornerstone of Shiite scholarship across all religious disciplines. He meticulously investigated both foundational principles and detailed rulings while mastering rational and traditional sciences. When reference is made to 'Sheikh al-Ta'ifa' (Leader of the Community), indicating universal respect, it refers specifically to Tusi" (Bahr al-Ulum, 1362 AH, vol. 3, p. 227).

Sheikh Tusi's contributions elevated Imami jurisprudence to its zenith. His commentary on Sheikh Mufid's *Al-Muqni'ah* refined its narrational foundations, while his independent analysis of Imami traditions in *Al-Istibsar* demonstrated critical scholarship. His *Al-Nihayah* established new standards for argumentative jurisprudence, and *Al-Mabsut* became the cornerstone of comprehensive Imami legal scholarship. Beyond jurisprudence, he produced significant works in theology and biographical studies, including *'Uddat al-Usul* and *Risalah fi al-'Amal bi Khabar al-Wahid* in legal theory.

Scholars suggest that *Al-Mabsut* and *Al-Khilaf* were composed in Najaf following the Seljuk conquest of Baghdad in 447 AH. This period of Sunni political resurgence influenced his methodology, ultimately enriching Imami jurisprudence by incorporating elements from Sunni legal texts - a transfer of legal knowledge that significantly advanced Shiite jurisprudential development (Modarressi Tabatabai, 1362 AH, p. 59). While acknowledging Sunni influences, it would be inaccurate to characterize this as imitation; rather, it reflected his scholarly independence and commitment to comparative jurisprudence, as noted in his introductions (Tusi, 1422 AH, pp. 14-15).

The period from Sheikh Tusi's emergence until his death in 460 AH, though brief, constituted a golden age of scholarship. As heir to both traditionalist and rationalist scholarly traditions, he synthesized these approaches into a cohesive system. Following Sayyid al-Murtada's death in 436 AH, Shiite religious leadership devolved upon Sheikh Tusi, whose lectures attracted both Shiite and Sunni scholars. After the Buyid dynasty's collapse, his relocation to Najaf proved transformative - within twelve years, this previously minor scholarly center eclipsed Baghdad as the preeminent hub of Shiite learning, attracting scholars from across the Islamic world.

In his bibliographical work *Al-Fihrist*, Sheikh Tusi documented approximately forty-two authored works spanning multiple disciplines (Tusi, n.d., pp. 240-242). His jurisprudential contributions include three particularly innovative works:

a) *Al-Nihayah fi Mujarrad al-Fiqh wa al-Fatawa* presented hadith texts as legal rulings without transmission chains, serving as a standard seminary text until Muhaqqiq al-Hilli's *Sharai' al-Islam*.

b) *Al-Mabsut fi Fiqh al-Imamiyyah* employed independent juristic reasoning incorporating rational argumentation, which Sheikh Tusi described as potentially "unparalleled among both Shiite and Sunni works" if completed (Tusi, 1422 AH, p. 16).

c) *Al-Khilaf* pioneered comparative jurisprudence by analyzing various schools' positions before advocating his own (Subhani, 1424 AH, p. 128). This methodology involved presenting differing juristic opinions without hierarchical evaluation (al-Hakim, 1963, p. 13).

Other significant works include *Al-Ijaz fi al-Fara'id* (Tusi, *Al-Ijaz fi al-Fara'id*, p. 3), cited by Majlisi in *Bihar al-Anwar* (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 1, p. 5), and *Al-Jumal wa al-Uqud* (Tusi, 1961, p. 189).

The Science of Principles (Usul al-Fiqh)

The science of the principles of jurisprudence progressed through three historical phases:

1-The formative period establishing jurisprudential foundations, continuing through Ibn 'Aqil and Ibn al-Junayd before culminating with Sheikh Tusi.

2-The definitional period systematizing legal theory's parameters, during which Sheikh Tusi and Ibn Idris emerged as leading figures (al-Qummi, 1956, vol. 1, p. 205).

3- the maturation period perfected by Wahid al-Bihbahani (al-Hakim, 1975, p. 468).

Al-'Uddah fi Usul al-Fiqh

This landmark work in legal theory, mentioned in Al-Fihrist (Tusi, 1961, p. 189), addressed Imami scholars' need for systematic legal theory and remains unparalleled in scope (al-Sadr, 1331 AH, p. 57). Sheikh Tusi revolutionized Imami jurisprudence regarding legal evidence. Previously, two dominant approaches existed: Traditionalist jurisprudence exemplified by Sheikh al-Kulayni and Sheikh al-Saduq and rationalist jurisprudence represented by Ibn Abi 'Aqil, Sheikh Mufid and Sayyid al-Murtada. Sheikh Tusi's synthesis bridged these traditions (The Great Islamic Encyclopedia, 1377 AH, vol. 8, p. 452). He pioneered systematic derivation of legal rulings from foundational principles, establishing ijtiḥad-based jurisprudence. Unlike traditionalists, he incorporated Quranic and hadith evidence, rational proofs, and communal consensus based on the theological principle of *lutf* (divine grace) rather than presuming the Imam's participation in consensus. He validated solitary reports under specific conditions while rejecting analogical reasoning (Tusi, 1422 AH, vol. 1, pp. 14-15).

Earlier scholars had disputed solitary reports' validity. While some traditionalists accepted them, most rationalists rejected

them based on Quranic prohibitions against conjecture. Sayyid al-Murtada argued: "Legal rulings require certainty. Therefore, we consider solitary reports invalid in Islamic law as they produce conjecture rather than certainty" (Sharif al-Murtada, 1376 AH, vol. 2, p. 517).

Sheikh Tusi countered by asserting consensus supported solitary reports' validity when transmitted through reliable Imami narrators directly from the Prophet or Imams (peace be upon them) (Tusi, 1417 AH, vol. 1, pp. 126-127).

This position maintained that while conjecture remains invalid, solitary reports derive validity from definitive Quranic, traditional, and rational evidence of their reliability - constituting an exception to general prohibitions against following conjecture (Mudhaffar, 1378 AH, vol. 2, p. 82). Rejecting such reports would have severely constrained juristic derivation as contextual evidence diminished over time (Mudhaffar, 1378 AH, vol. 2, p. 83).

Regarding consensus, earlier scholars like Sayyid al-Murtada proposed the Imam's hypothetical participation (*ijma' dakhuli*) in scholarly agreement, which became impractical after the occultation (Sharif al-Murtada, 1376 AH, vol. 2, p. 605). Sheikh Tusi's alternative theory of *ijma' lutf* held that divine grace ensures the Imam would correct any erroneous consensus to preserve religious truth (Tusi, 1417 AH, vol. 2, p. 631).

By the fifth century, Sheikh Tusi had perfected legal theory, as noted by Ibn Zahrah (Ibn Zahrah, n.d., p. 281). Despite later critiques like those of Ibn Idris al-Hilli, most jurists continued upholding Sheikh Tusi's validation of solitary reports (Mudhaffar, 1378 AH, vol. 2, p. 83), representing a synthesis of rational and traditional methodologies (Azizi, 1384 AH, p. 323).

Supplications and Acts of Worship

Sheikh Tusi's devotional works include *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*, containing Ahl al-Bayt's supplications and historical accounts (Tusi, 1961, p. 189), and *Al-Amali* - lectures delivered at Imam Ali's shrine documenting hadiths, supplications and historical narratives (al-Tihrani, 1390 AH, vol. 2, p. 306).

Other works by Sheikh Tusi include "*Maqatal al-Imam al-Husayn*", a brief history of Imam Husayn's martyrdom, and "*Tarikh Mukhtasar al-Mukhtar ibn Abi 'Ubaydah*".

5-Sheikh Tusi's Innovations in Islamic Sciences

Sheikh Tusi lived during a flourishing era of Islamic scholarship, inheriting the intellectual legacy of figures like Sheikh Mufid and Sayyid al-Murtada. With 300 students, he advanced this legacy in a spiritually rich environment, playing a pivotal role in establishing Najaf's scholarly movement. His innovations include:

a) Legal Theory: authored the seminal '*Uddat al-Usul*', systematized the validity of solitary reports, and developed the theory of *ijma' lutf*.

b) Jurisprudence: established systematic *ijtihad*-based jurisprudence, and pioneered comparative jurisprudence in *Al-Khilaf*

c) Biographical Studies: produced three of Shiism's four foundational biographical works

d) Quranic Exegesis: composed *Al-Tibyan*, the first comprehensive Shiite Quran commentary

e) Hadith Studies: Compiling two of the four major Shiite Hadith collections: "*Tahdhib al-Ahkam*" and "*Al-Istibsar*" , validating solitary reports, ensuring the continued relevance of Hadith in jurisprudence , and resolving contradictions in Hadiths, exemplified in "*Al-Istibsar*".

6-Distinctions of Sheikh Tusi's School

Sheikh Tusi's school established: a systematic methodology combining rational and textual evidence, comprehensive hadith and biographical collections, expansive derivative jurisprudence through Al-Mabsut, and refined legal theory regarding evidence and consensus.

7-Sheikh Tusi's Students

Sheikh Tusi led the Shiite Imamiyya for nearly a quarter-century (436–460 AH), overseeing a major seminary with around 300 students from various Islamic sects (al-Qummi, 1956, vol. 2, p. 97). Notable students include:

1. "*Al-Mashhadi*": Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Hamzah al-Tusi al-Mashhadi, a scribe for Sheikh Tusi and author of '*Al-Wasilah wa al-Wasitah*' (al-Sadr, 1951, p. 305).

2. "*Abu al-Salt*": Muhammad ibn Abd al-Qadir ibn Muhammad (al-Kazimi, 1322 AH, p. 5).

3. "*Al-Amuli*": Muhammad ibn Abi al-Qasim al-Tabari al-Amuli, who authored '*Basharat al-Mustafa*' (al-Hakim, 1975, p. 206).

4. "*Al-Nasafi*": Adam ibn Yunus ibn Abi Muhajir, (al-Tihrani, 1970, p. 95).

5. "*Al-Khuza'i*": Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Naysaburi, a narrator from Sayyid al-Radi, Sayyid al-Murtada, and Sheikh Tusi (Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 25, p. 3).

6. "*Ibn Babawayh*": Ishaq ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh (al-Kazimi, 1322 AH, p. 5).

7. "*Al-Asadi*": Barakah ibn Muhammad ibn Barakah al-Asadi, author of '*Haqa'iq al-Iman fi al-Usul*' (al-Kanturi, 1330 AH, p. 196).

8. *"Al-Halabi"*: Taqi ibn Najm al-Halabi, a prominent student of Sayyid al-Murtada and Sheikh Tusi, known for 'Al-Kafi fi al-Fiqh', where he theorized the guardianship of the qualified jurist ('wilayat al-faqih') (al-Hakim, 1975, p. 177).

9. *"Al-Husayni"*: Ja'far ibn Ali ibn Ja'far al-Husayni, listed among Sheikh Tusi's students by Muntajab al-Din in 'Al-Fihrist' (al-Hakim, 1975, p. 178).

10. *"Huska"*: Al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn ibn Babawayh al-Qummi, a renowned student of Sheikh Tusi (al-Bahrani, 1969, p. 335).

Other students included *Al-Lu'lu'i*, *Abu Muhammad ibn al-Ayn al-Zarbi*, *Sheikh Ahmad ibn Shahriyar*, and many more, contributing to the flourishing of Najaf's scholarly tradition.

Thus, under Sheikh Tusi's leadership, the Najaf seminary rapidly advanced, producing works in Hadith, exegesis, jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, and theology, solidifying Shiism's intellectual foundation in Najaf.

8-The School of Najaf Ashraf in the Sixth Century AH

Following Sheikh Tusi's migration to Najaf, his intellectual legacy was carried forward by his son, Sheikh Abuali Tusi, and subsequent generations of scholars. Abuali staunchly upheld his father's jurisprudential methodologies, establishing them as canonical interpretations that few dared to question (Al-Sadr, 1951: 66). Contemporary Shia jurists regarded these teachings as foundational, with any dissent being viewed as a challenge to Sheikh Tusi's authority (Al-Amin, 1968: vol. 44, 36).

During the 5th century AH, Najaf witnessed near-universal adherence to Sheikh Tusi's legal rulings. The deeply entrenched tradition of emulation (taqlid) within his school initially hindered the acceptance of his more innovative ideas, requiring time for gradual assimilation (Al-Sadr, 1951: 70). The continuity

of Najaf's scholarly tradition was ensured through dynastic succession, with Sheikh Tusi's descendants - including his son Abuali, grandson Abunasr, and the Shahriyar family - maintaining intellectual leadership. This period saw no significant challengers emerge from other centers like Hilla, allowing Tusi's methodologies to dominate.

The first substantial challenges to Tusi's school emerged externally, particularly from the burgeoning intellectual center of Hilla. Sheikh Muhammad ibn Idris al-Hilli (543-598 AH) became the standard-bearer of this critical movement, openly declaring his departure from Tusi's teachings (Al-Fadhli, 1389: 132). His seminal work *Al-Sara'ir* demonstrated fundamental methodological differences, particularly in jurisprudential reasoning (Al-Sadr, 1951: 74). This intellectual shift represented not a decline for Najaf, but rather the emergence of healthy scholarly competition that enriched Shia jurisprudence.

Najaf's continued vitality was evidenced by the arrival of numerous Iranian scholarly families, the Shahriyar, Tusi, Al-Katilah, and Al-Ratbah (Al-Mukhtar) dynasties, during the early 6th century AH. The production of significant theological works and Ibn Tawus's observations about the preservation of knowledge at Imam Ali's shrine (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 718) further attest to the city's enduring intellectual prominence.

Sheikh Abuali Tusi's leadership (d. post-515 AH) maintained Najaf's preeminence. Known as "Sheikh al-Mufid al-Thani," he received his teaching authorization in 455 AH from Sheikh Tusi's mother (Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 2, 475) and continued his father's pedagogical traditions (Al-Tehrani, 1385: 11). Contemporary scholars like Sheikh Hurr al-Amili praised his jurisprudential expertise and reliability in hadith transmission (Al-Amili, 1385: vol. 2, 67). Al-Sadr suggests that Abuali accompanied his father to Najaf during his childhood or early

youth, as his exact birth and death dates remain unclear. However, historical evidence confirms he was alive until 515 AH. Tabari, in "Basharat Al-Mustafa", mentions that Sheikh Abuali lived seventy years after his father, studied under him alongside Al-Hasan bin Al-Husayn Al-Qummi, and received his teaching license in 455 AH (Al-Sadr, 1951: 65). This underscores the high scholarly standards of the Najaf seminary under his leadership.

Sheikh Abuali also studied under prominent scholars in Baghdad, such as Abutayyib Al-Tabari, Al-Khallal, and Al-Tanukhi (Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 2, 475). Some of these scholars had also studied under his father, including Sheikh Abi Al-Wafa Abd Al-Jabbar bin Abdallah Al-Razi and Sheikh Abi Muhammad Al-Hasan bin Al-Husayn Al-Qummi, who attended Sheikh Tusi's lectures on "Tafsir Al-Tibyan".

9-Students and Narrators of Sheikh Abuali Tusi

The following jurists and scholars were nurtured by Sheikh Tusi's school and contributed to its continuity:

1. *Sheikh Ardashir bin Abi Al-Majid Al-Kalbi*
2. *Sheikh Ilyas bin Hisham Al-Ha'iri*
3. *Sheikh Ismail bin Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Halabi*
4. *Sheikh Abul Fadl bin Ataf*
5. *Sheikh Ayyub Al-Basri*
6. *Sheikh Badr bin Sayf bin Badr*
7. *Sheikh Al-Hasan bin Hibat Allah Al-Surawi*
8. *Sheikh Al-Husayn bin Ahmad bin Tahhal Al-Miqdadi*
9. *Sheikh Al-Husayn bin Tamim bin Said Al-Qunsurini*
10. *Sheikh Al-Husayn bin Al-Fath Al-Bakrabadi Al-Jurjani*
11. *Sheikh Hamzah bin Ahmad bin Shahriyar Al-Khazin*
12. *Sheikh Dawud bin Muhammad bin Dawud Al-Jashbi*
13. *Sheikh Al-Da'i bin Ali*

14. *Sheikh Dhafer bin Al-Da'i bin Dhafer Al-Hamdani Al-Qazwini*

These students protected and perpetuated Sheikh Tusi's legacy, ensuring its growth despite the challenging social and geographical conditions of Najaf. Many hailed from Iranian cities and excelled in hadith, jurisprudence, and theology, earning reputations as leading scholars of their time. Their contributions solidified the school's scholarly heritage, which came to be known as the "Muqallida" school due to their deep reverence for Sheikh Tusi's teachings.

Just as Sheikh Tusi served the Imami school through his seminal works, his son, Abuali, inherited his father's scholarly legacy in Najaf and the broader Shia world. Among his notable works are:

"Al-Amali" or *"Majalis"* (distinct from his father's *"Al-Amali"*), *"Al-Murshid ila Sabil Al-Muta'abbid"*, *"Al-Anwar"* (Al-Tehrani, 1971: 13), and *"Al-Yaqin"*, which Ibn Tawus praised for its unique insights and eloquent expression (Al-Tehrani, 1971: 13).

Sheikh Abuali Tusi passed away in Najaf after 515 AH and was buried beside his father (Al-Tabatabai, 1354: vol. 1, 201).

10-The Most Prominent Scholars of Najaf Ashraf in the 6th Century Hijri"

Some of these scholars studied under Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, which demonstrates the influence and strength of the Najaf Ashraf seminary during this era. The presence of migrant students and graduates of the Najaf seminary attests to its prosperity during this period. Among them were:

1. *"Sheikh ibn Isa al-Rumani"*: He was the maternal grandson of Sheikh Tusi and studied religious sciences under his uncle, Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi. Among his works is the book *'Kashf al-Ghummah fi Fada'il al-A'immah'*.

2. "*Abu al-Baqā' ibn Suwayqah*": A prominent figure of the 6th century Hijri, he is cited by Sayyid ibn Tawus regarding events that occurred in Najaf in 501 Hijri (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 130).

3. "*Sayyid Abu al-Makarim ibn Katilah*": He attained a high scholarly status in Najaf. He received authorization ('ijazah') from the custodian of the Alawi shrine, Sheikh Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar (al-Tehrani, 1971: 8). He was a hadith scholar, and Abu al-Fath Muhammad ibn Muhammad, known as Ibn Ja'far al-Ha'iri, narrated from him at the Alawi shrine in 553 Hijri (al-Tehrani, 1971: 8).

4. "*Sheikh Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Wajh*": Known as Sheikh Abu al-Abbas, he was among the scholars residing near the Alawi shrine. One of his students recited the book '*al-Ta'azi*' by Sharif Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Alawi in his house in Najaf in 571 Hijri. He also recited a book for Sheikh Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar al-Khazin in 561 Hijri (al-Tehrani, 1390: vol. 4, 205).

5. "*Sheikh Ahmad ibn Ali al-Razi*": Known as Sheikh Abu al-Futuh, he was a student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi and Sheikh Mufid Abu al-Wafa' ibn Abd al-Jabbar al-Muqri al-Razi (al-Tehrani, 1971: 12).

6. "*Sheikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Shahriyar*": Known as Sheikh Abu Abdullah Ahmad, he was the custodian of the Alawi shrine and the grandson of Sheikh Tusi. He narrated from his uncle Hamzah ibn Abdullah, his maternal uncle Abu Ali Tusi, and his father, Sheikh Tusi (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 403). He was also among the teachers of Taj al-Din al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Darabi (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 403). Scholars such as Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Alawi and Nizam al-Sharaf Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Aridi narrated from him. Al-Aridi was one of the teachers of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Idris al-Hilli. The noble Sheikh Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn al-Husayn narrated the book '*al-Ta'azi*' in his house

near the Alawi shrine in 517 Hijri. Sayyid Abu al-Makarim ibn Katilah narrated from him in 553 Hijri, and Sayyid Zayd ibn Nasir al-Alawi narrated from the author of 'al-Ta'azi', Sayyid Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Alawi (Ibn Mahbubah, 1968: vol. 2, 406).

7. "*Sheikh Ardashir ibn Abi Majid al-Kabuli*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he was recognized among the Shiite scholars in Najaf as a trusted jurist (al-Tehrani, 1971: 17). This description highlights his scholarly competence in jurisprudence.

8. "*Sheikh Ismail ibn Mahmud al-Jabili*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he studied under him and was among the literati of Najaf Ashraf. Works attributed to him have been cited (al-Khoei, 1970: vol. 3, 177).

9. "*Sheikh Ilyas ibn Hisham al-Ha'iri*": He narrated from Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi and Sayyid Abu Talib al-Alawi al-Suliqi, who narrated from Sheikh Tusi (al-Amin, 1968: vol. 12, 455). Among his works is the book 'al-Masa'il al-Ha'iriyyah' (al-Bahrani, 1969: 292). After completing his religious studies in Najaf, he returned to Karbala. Sheikh al-Qummi described him as a noble, virtuous, and learned scholar (al-Qummi, 1956: 54).

10. "*Sheikh Badr ibn Sayf ibn Badr al-Arabi*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he was known as a pious and devout jurist. He was also among the teachers of Sheikh Muntajab al-Din, the author of 'al-Fihrist' (al-Majlisi, 1315: vol. 105, 213).

11. "*The Daughters of Sheikh Tusi*": Two of Sheikh Tusi's daughters were among the learned scholars of their time. They received narrational licenses ('ijazah') from scholars in Najaf, including their brother Abu Ali ibn Sheikh Tusi and their father (al-Amin, 1968: vol. 7, 113). The scholarly licenses granted to Tusi's daughters indicate the depth of religious and intellectual continuity within the Tusi family, where knowledge was not confined to men. It appears that scholarship was hereditary in

this family. The intellectual openness of Sheikh Tusi and his son, Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, enabled them to advance scholarly pursuits in the 5th and 6th centuries Hijri (al-Hakim, 1975: 490).

12. "*Sayyid Taj al-Din Abu al-Hasan Ali*": A distinguished and powerful scholar, he held the position of 'niqabat' (leadership) of the Alawis in Najaf and was the leader of the Hajj caravan (Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 1, 295).

13. "*Sheikh Tarab ibn al-Hasan al-Khashshab al-Basri*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi and Abu Salah al-Halabi, he was described as a pious jurist (al-Tehrani, 1971: 38).

14. "*Sheikh al-Hasan ibn al-Husayn al-Halabi*": A student of Abu Ali Tusi, he recited Sheikh Tusi's book 'al-Nihayah' under Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Sahl al-Zaynabadi at the Alawi shrine. He was known as a virtuous scholar (al-Tehrani, 1971: 76–77).

15. "*Abu Muhammad al-Husayn al-Qummi*": Known as Shams al-Islam, he was a scholar and jurist who studied all his writings under Abu Ali Tusi in Najaf Ashraf (al-Qummi, 1324: 191). He later left Najaf for Qom. Among his works are 'al-'Ibadat', 'al-A'mal al-Salihah', and 'Sirr al-Anbiya' wa al-A'immah' (al-Kanturi, 1330: 133).

16. "*Sheikh al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Tahal al-Miqdadi*": He attended hadith sessions under Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi at the Alawi shrine (al-Majlisi, 1315: vol. 96, 102). He narrated from Abu al-Baq'a' Hibatullah ibn Nasir ibn al-Husayn in 448 Hijri (al-Tehrani, 1971: 204).

17. "*Al-Husayn ibn Tamim ibn Sa'd al-Qinnasrini*": He migrated from Qinnasrin to Najaf for knowledge. his journey reflects the scholarly vibrancy of Najaf during the Tusi family's era. He recited Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi's 'Tahdhib al-Ahkam' and later returned to Nablus (Ibn Hajar, 1331: vol. 2, 276).

18. "*Sheikh al-Husayn ibn Fath al-Wa'iz al-Bakrabad*": Known as Muwaffaq al-Din, he was a student of Sheikh Abu Ali

Tusi and was described as a pious jurist (al-Khoei, 1970: vol. 6, 65).

19. "*Sheikh al-Husayn al-Surawi*": Jamal al-Din Abu Abdullah al-Husayn ibn Hibat al-Surawi was a student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi and was described as a pious jurist (al-Amili, 1385: part 2, 93–104). He narrated hadith at the shrine of Imam al-Husayn in 560 Hijri (al-Khwansari, 1306: vol. 3, 30).

20. "*Sheikh Hamzah ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar*": The custodian of the Alawi shrine, he narrated from his uncle, Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 403). He was among the prominent scholars of the Imami community (al-Afandi, n.d.: vol. 2, 293).

21. "*Ali ibn Hamzah ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar*": Known as al-Muwaffaq al-Khazin, he was a custodian of the Alawi shrine and a scholar who held hadith sessions in Najaf. He transcribed 'Rijal al-Kashi' in his own handwriting in 562 Hijri (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 405).

22. "*Sayyid Diya' ibn Ibrahim al-Alawi al-Shajari*": A student of Abu Ali Tusi, he was a pious jurist of his time (al-Khoei, 1970: vol. 9, 158).

23. "*Sheikh Dhu'far ibn Da'i Hamdani al-Qazwini*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he was described as a pious jurist (al-Qummi, 1317: 291).

24. "*Sheikh Tahir ibn Zayd ibn Ahmad*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he was a trusted scholar and jurist (al-Qummi, 1317: 218).

25. "*Sheikh Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Jashti*": A student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, he studied the works of Sheikh Tusi under Abu Ali Tusi and Shams al-Din Huska ibn Babuyah at the Alawi shrine (al-Amili, 1385: part 2, 180).

26. "*Sheikh Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Tahal*": A distinguished scholar of Najaf, he narrated the miracles of Amir

al-Mu'minin (AS) at the Haidari shrine (al-Afandi, n.d.: vol. 3, 294).

27. *"Sheikh Hibatullah ibn Ratbah al-Surani"*: Jamal al-Din Abu Abdullah Hibatullah al-Surani studied under Abu Ali Tusi (al-Khoei, 1970: vol. 19, 309). He was among the virtuous scholars of his time (al-Nuri, 1384: vol. 3, 472).

28. *"Sheikh Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ali al-Tabari"*: Known as Imad al-Din Abu Ja'far, he was among the prominent scholars of Najaf in the 6th century Hijri. After Abu Ali Tusi, he and Abu al-Wafa' Abd al-Jabbar were relied upon by Imami scholars. He compiled a list of jurists who studied under Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi (al-Ardabili, 1334: vol. 2, 57). Among his works are 'Basharat al-Mustafa', 'Sharh Masa'il al-Dhari'ah', and 'al-Faraj fi al-Awqat' (al-Qummi, 1317: 384).

29. *"Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Husayn ibn Ja'far al-Shawhani"*: A resident near the Alawi shrine, he studied under Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi and narrated from prominent scholars of Najaf (al-Amin, 1968: vol. 44, 214).

30. *"Ibn Tahal"*: Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Husayn al-Tahal al-Miqdadi, a student of Sheikh Abu Ali Tusi, was the custodian of the Haidari library. He witnessed miracles at the Alawi shrine in 575 Hijri (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 426).

31. *"Sayyid Fadlullah ibn Ali ibn Ubaydullah al-Husayni al-Rawandi"*: A student of Abu Ali Tusi, he migrated from Rawand Kashan to Najaf for knowledge and later returned. He was a jurist, exegete, and poet. Among his students were Sheikh Muntajab al-Din al-Razi and Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi. His works include 'Dhu' al-Shihab fi Sharh al-Shihab' and 'Qisas al-Anbiya' (Muntajab al-Din al-Razi, 1366: 96).

32. *"Nizam al-Sharaf Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Aridi"*: He was among the teachers of Ibn Idris al-Hilli.

33. *"Sheikh Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn al-Husayn"*: A scholar residing in Najaf, he recited the book 'al-Ta'azi' at the house of

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar in 571 Hijri (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 405).

34. "*Sheikh Abu Ali Fadl ibn Hasan al-Tabarsi*": Originally from Mazandaran, he was born in 470 Hijri and studied under Abu Ali Tusi in Najaf. Among his students were Rashid al-Din Abu Ja'far Muhammad al-Sarawi and Muntajab al-Din al-Razi. His works include 'Majma' al-Bayan' and 'Makaram al-Akhlaq'. He was martyred during the Ghuzz invasion and buried in Mashhad (Ahmad Ali Majid al-Hilli, 2017: vol. 2, 168).

35. "*Sheikh Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Tusi*": Known as Abu Nasr, he was among the most trusted jurists of his time. He succeeded his father, Abu Ali Tusi, in teaching at the Najaf seminary. Non-Imami sources describe him as the leading scholar of the Shiites (Ibn al-'Imad, 1351: vol. 4, 126–127).

After the death of Sheikh Abu Nasr Muhammad al-Tusi in 540 Hijri, the Tusi family's influence waned to some extent. Ibn Mahbubah noted that with his death, the family's legacy faded (Ibn Mahbubah, 1986: vol. 2, 488). However, some sources indicate that his descendants continued their scholarly work. The 5th and 6th centuries Hijri were the era of the Tusi family in Najaf, where their intellectual legacy thrived under Abu Ali Tusi and his successors (Hasan al-Hakim, 2009: 50). Their influence extended beyond Najaf, as seen in the works of their students and descendants, such as Ibn Idris al-Hilli. Despite claims of decline, the Tusi family's intellectual impact endured, and their contributions remain central to Najaf's scholarly heritage. Today, one of the gates of the Alawi shrine is named after Sheikh Tusi in their honor.

11-The School of Najaf Ashraf in the 7th Century AH

The 7th Islamic century witnessed significant developments in Shia scholarship, marked by the emergence of Hillah as a

formidable intellectual center that challenged Najaf's traditional dominance. While Najaf maintained its scholarly activities during this period, it experienced a relative decline compared to the vibrant new school developing in Hillah under the leadership of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Idris al-Hilli, a descendant of the renowned Sheikh al-Tusi.

The fundamental distinction between these two centers lay in their methodological approaches. Ibn Idris observed what he perceived as intellectual stagnation in Najaf, where scholars had largely ceased independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) and were merely replicating al-Tusi's teachings. In response, he reinvigorated scholarly discourse through groundbreaking works in hadith studies, jurisprudence, and Quranic exegesis, establishing Hillah as a dynamic alternative to the more conservative Najaf tradition. Some of his important works are "Al-Sara'ir al-Hawi li al-Tahrir", "Mustatrafat al-Sara'ir", "Mukhtasar al-Tibyan", "Ta'liqat 'ala al-Tibyan", "Risala fi al-Mudayyiqah", "Jawabat al-Masa'il", "Mas'alat al-Ma' al-Musta'mal", and "Mas'ala fi Tatmim al-Qalil Kurran".

while the Hillah School flourished in the 7th century AH with the arrival of scholars from Iran and Lebanon, leading to the relative decline of the Najaf School during this period, this decline did not signify its demise. This scholarly rivalry, however, did not represent a complete break between the two centers. Both institutions remained committed to the Imami tradition, and the migration of scholars from Najaf to Hillah - including prominent figures like Sheikh al-Salih Izz al-Din ibn Husayn ibn Ali ibn Ahmad ibn al-Husayn ibn Abd al-Karim al-Gharawi (al-Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 7, p. 157) and Sheikh Muhammad ibn Salih, known as al-Gharawi (al-Majlisi, 1315 AH, vol. 7, p. 108) - reflected more of an intellectual realignment than a sectarian divide. As noted by Ali al-Sharqi (1963), this migration did not signify the end of Najaf's scholarly tradition,

but rather a temporary shift in intellectual leadership. During the time of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Idris al-Hilli (d. 598 AH) and Muhaqqiq al-Hilli Abu al-Qasim Najm al-Din Ja'far ibn al-Hasan (d. 676 AH) and with the presence of eminent scholars like Jamal al-Din al-Hasan ibn Yusuf (d. 726 AH), Hillah reached its zenith (Bahr al-'Ulum, 1965, vol. 2, p. 53).

The scholarly movement in Najaf thrived during the era of the Tusi family, attracting numerous students. Prominent figures from Iraq and Iran traveled to Najaf to seek knowledge from its scholars. Among them were Sheikh Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Mu'ayyad ibn Hamawiyyah al-Juwayni al-Shafi'i (d. 622 AH), the Sufi scholar (al-Zayn, n.d., p. 13), Sayyid Radi al-Din Ali ibn Tawus (d. 664 AH), and Sayyid Muhammad ibn Muhammad [Qadi al-Alawi] (d. 641 AH) (al-Nuri, 1384 AH, vol. 1, p. 325). This indicates that both scholars and the general public held the views of Sheikh al-Tusi and his descendants in high regard.

The establishment of a new school in Hillah alongside the seminaries of Najaf Ashraf, due to their proximity and the ensuing competition, ensured the continuity of scholarly activity in both cities. Hasan al-Asadi remarks: "As a result, these two cities influenced each other religiously and intellectually, even differing for a time over the leadership of Shia scholarship" (al-Asadi, 1975, p. 32).

In the 7th and 8th centuries AH, the Najaf School was weaker than the Hillah School. However, since the foundation of the Najaf School had been laid by the Buyid dynasty and reinforced by the efforts of Sheikh al-Tusi and his family, the Hillah School did not endure for long. With the death of the son of Allamah al-Hilli in 771 AH, the Hillah School came to an end, and its students migrated back to Najaf Ashraf. This migration attested to the continued vitality of the scholarly movement in Najaf, especially as no rival school remained (al-Asadi, 1975, p. 32).

The migration of Sheikh al-Tusi to Najaf and his role in its scholarly movement, representing the Najaf School, continued after his time. Iranian and even non-Iranian scholars played significant roles in Najaf Ashraf, either by migrating there or studying under Sheikh al-Tusi before returning to Iran, where they gained prominence in the 6th and 7th centuries AH in cities like Ray and Qum (Muntajab al-Din al-Razi, 1366 AH, pp. 33–131).

Among these scholarly families were the renowned Al-Awi family, whose origins trace back to the city of Awa between Qum and Saveh. Several scholars and intellectuals emerged from this family. The lineage of this family traces back to the city of Aveh, located between Qom and Saveh, from which several scholars and intellectuals emerged.

1- Sayyid Taj al-Din Muhammad Aveh'i

He was a distinguished and highly revered scholar, a prominent figure among the elite scholars of his time and a contemporary of Allamah al-Hilli. He held significant religious positions and was one of the nuqaba (leaders) of the city of Najaf. After Sultan Muhammad Khodabandeh converted to Shiism, he brought Sayyid Taj al-Din close to him, making him one of his most trusted companions. This proximity led several high-ranking officials and ministers of the Ilkhanate under Uljaytu to embrace Shiism. Sayyid Taj al-Din was appointed by Sultan Uljaytu as the chief naqib (leader) of all territories under Ilkhanid rule (Mahbubah, 1986, vol. 1, p. 302). Due to his high status and influence, Sayyid Taj al-Din faced envy from some court dignitaries, such as Khwaja Rashid al-Din Fazlullah Hamadani. After the death of Sultan Uljaytu, false accusations were leveled against him, leading to his brutal execution along with his son, Shams al-Din (Ahmad ibn Anbah, "Umdat al-Talib fi Ansab Al Abi Talib", p. 308).

2- Sayyid Razi al-Din Muhammad ibn Sayyid Majd al-Din al-Husayn al-Avi

Sayyid Muhammad ibn Sayyid Muhammad al-Avi hailed from Aveh, a region near Qom (al-Amini, 1936, p. 70). He lived in Najaf al-Ashraf and held the position of naqib for the Alawis in Najaf. He was a noble, pious, and highly respected figure, known for his spiritual virtues (al-Qummi, 1317 AH, p. 622). He maintained a close relationship with the esteemed scholar Ali ibn Tawus, who resided in Hilla and had connections with Najaf. Ibn Tawus referred to him as his righteous brother, attributing to him spiritual insights and miracles. Sheikh Yusuf ibn Mutahhar, the father of Allamah al-Hilli, also narrated from him. The First Martyr, Muhammad Makki al-Amili, stated: "The practice of numerical istikhara (seeking divine guidance) was not common in earlier periods before the time of the great worshipper, Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Avi al-Husayni, who resided near the sacred shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). We learned this practice and all its narrations from several of our teachers, including the noble Sheikh Jamal al-Din ibn Mutahhar, who in turn received it from his father and Sayyid Razi al-Din, from the possessor of the divine command during the Major Occultation—a great virtue unparalleled by any other" (Mahbubah, 1986, vol. 1, p. 305). He passed away in 654 AH. Muhammad Husayn Najafi, a genealogist and librarian, noted about him: "He was a noble and high-ranking sayyid, the naqib of the Mashhad al-Gharawi, and a man of wealth and status. His name, inscribed numerically, remains on the entrance of the corridor facing the sacred shrine's door, dated 700 AH" (Mahbubah, 1986, vol. 1, p. 305).

3- Sharaf al-Din Muhammad ibn Taj al-Din al-Aveh'i

He was a son of Sayyid Taj al-Din and was only a child when his father was killed. He was kept hidden until he grew up. He initially assumed the position of naqib of Najaf under the

guardianship of Qutb al-Din Abi Zar'ah al-Shirazi, and later, the position was formally entrusted to him, which he held until his death. He left behind four sons: Shams al-Din Husayn, Taj al-Din Muhammad, Majd al-Din al-Qadi, and Sulayman. His lineage continued through the first three sons (Mahbubah, 1986, vol. 1, p. 305).

4-Qutb al-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Buwayhi al-Razi (d. 766 AH)

He was one of the scholars of Najaf in the 8th century AH, specializing in philosophical thought. Among his works is "Muhakamat bayn Sharhay al-Isharat", a manuscript from the 12th century AH in Nasta'liq script, preserved in the Haydariyah Alawi Library. In this work, Qutb al-Din critically examines the views of Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, Khwaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, and Ibn Sina's "al-Isharat", organizing it into three volumes covering logic, theology, and natural sciences. The section on logic was completed in Dhu al-Hijjah 756 AH, and the natural sciences section in late Jumada al-Thani 755 AH (Ahmad Ali Majid al-Hilli, 2017, vol. 2, p. 64). Another of his works is "Tahrir al-Qawa'id al-Mantiqiyyah fi Sharh al-Risalah al-Shamsiyyah", a manuscript of which, dated 1073 AH and written by Husayn ibn Muhammad Sharif al-Husayni, is also housed in the Haydariyah Alawi Library (Ahmad Ali Majid al-Hilli, 2017, vol. 2, p. 64).

Thus, it becomes clear that from the time of Sheikh al-Tusi and his family in Najaf, the cultural and intellectual influence of certain Iranian families in Najaf al-Ashraf significantly impacted the intellectual and cultural currents of the city and even Hilla. Among these families were the Al-Avi and Khurasani families, who remained active in Najaf until the 8th century AH. Through their intellectual legacy in authorship and the establishment of schools, they played a pivotal role in the scholarly movement in Najaf. The Al-Avi family, in particular, endowed their books to

the treasury of the sacred shrine. Alongside them, other families contributed to the scholarly revival in the holy city of Najaf by donating their works to the public treasury of the shrine (Mahbubah, 1347 AH, vol. 1, pp. 301–302).

12-Public Libraries in Najaf al-Ashraf

Due to the support of the Buyid dynasty for the scholarly movement in Najaf, numerous libraries emerged, housing many endowed books. Some of these libraries continued to thrive. Sheikh Ja'far al-Mahbubah lists approximately 33 libraries, both extant and extinct. These libraries were located in homes, mosques, religious centers, and seminaries. Their proliferation in these spaces was facilitated by the religious freedom during the Buyid era, as they were divided into private and public categories (al-Shammari, 1434 AH, pp. 250–251). The number of public libraries reached 25, the most famous of which included the Haydariyah Library, the Imam al-Hasan (peace be upon him) Library, and the Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) Library. Some were established during the Buyid period, while others were founded under subsequent ruling dynasties in Iraq. The oldest among them is "Alawiyyah (Haydariyah)" Library.

The Alawiyyah (Haydariyah) Library

This is one of the oldest libraries in Najaf al-Ashraf, serving as the treasury of the sacred Alawi shrine. Princes and sultans, including 'Adud al-Dawlah al-Buwayhi (d. 372 AH), contributed to its establishment and development (Kurkis, 1948, p. 130). The library dates back to the 4th century AH during the Buyid era, though some historians suggest its founding may have been earlier. Some attribute its establishment to 'Adud al-Dawlah al-Buwayhi (al-Khalili, 1966, vol. 2, p. 224).

The library contained manuscripts, books, and publications, many of which were autographed by their authors. Authors would donate a copy of their works to the shrine as a blessing, a tradition that continues to this day (al-Mahbubah, 1968, vol. 1, p. 148).

The expansion of the Haydariyah Library coincided with the flourishing of the scholarly movement in Najaf and the presence of Sheikh al-Tusi in the mid-5th century AH. As students from various Islamic regions came to Najaf, the demand for scholarly resources led to the library's growth (al-Khalili, 1966, vol. 2, p. 224).

The library continued to function until the mid-7th century AH when a fire broke out in the sacred shrine, destroying the library. Shortly afterward, scholars who possessed books revived it by endowing their collections to the Haydariyah Library.

Among the scholars who played a key role in its revival was Sayyid Sadr al-Din al-Avi in 760 AH. Alongside Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqin Abu Talib Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Hilli (d. 771 AH), he renamed it the Alawiyyah Library (Sabernia, 2016, pp. 277–278).

After Sadr al-Din's death, the library continued to operate. He advised his nephew to use a third of his inheritance to purchase books for the shrine's treasury. His nephew acquired many books from Baghdad, especially during a severe famine when prices dropped (al-Khalili, 1407 AH, vol. 2, p. 226).

The library has been known by various names, including "al-Khizanah al-Ghuriyyah", "al-Khizanah al-Hadrah al-'Alawiyyah", and "Maktabat al-Haydariyah". Its exact location within the shrine has changed over time (al-Milani, 1429 AH, pp. 61–62).

The exact number of books in this library during different periods is unclear. However, due to the fame of the library of the Holy Shrine of Ali (peace be upon him), it is evident that it

was a big and significant library. The importance and fame of this library among the libraries of Najaf al-Ashraf stem from its proximity to the Holy Shrine of Ali (peace be upon him), as well as the presence of the Najaf seminary and the interest of students from various Islamic regions in Islamic studies. This contributed to the scientific and cultural movement in Najaf, particularly in the fields of books and libraries. Additionally, the dedication of scholars and authors to the Haidariyya Library through book endowments strengthened its collection.

The Haidariyya Library was managed by a librarian, known as the "Khazen" (custodian), who served as the head of the library. The term "Khazen" refers to the keeper of books and the custodian of the Holy Shrine, responsible for safeguarding donated precious items and treasures. Among the notable custodians were:

1- *Yahya ibn Alian*: A narrator of hadith and a scholar mentioned in Ibn Tawus's "Farahat al-Ghari" where he is cited as the custodian of the Holy Shrine of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him).

2-*Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar*: Sheikh Sa'id Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Shahriyar, who held the custodianship of the Alawi library.

3- *Ali Kitabdar ibn Ibrahim*: Responsible for the librarianship of the Alawiyya Library.

4-*Muhammad Husayn Kitabdar ibn Muhammad Ali*: A servant of the Holy Shrine and a prominent scholar who transcribed a large collection of books on various sciences (al-Yasiri, 2013: 495).

The Haidariyya Library's most distinguishing feature compared to other libraries was its leadership by the scholars of Najaf. It housed rare and invaluable manuscripts and Qurans, though some were lost to fire or theft. Despite this, the remaining collection includes unique manuscripts and Qurans.

The Qur'anic Treasures of the Haidariyya Library

The library preserved exceptional Quranic manuscripts, including: a parchment codex in Kufic script attributed to Imam Ali (peace be upon him), though paleographic analysis dates it to 301 AH , masterpieces by renowned calligraphers Yaqut al-Musta'simi , and al-Tabrizi (Kurkis, 1948: 133).

Manuscript Collection: A Scholarly Treasury

Notable Shi'a manuscripts included:

1- *Al-Tasreeh* (772 AH): Ata'iqi's medical commentary (Borujerdi, 2021:30).

2-*Sharh Diwan al-Mutanabbi* (781 AH): Literary exegesis by Ata'iqi (Borujerdi, 2021:121).

3-*Al-Tibyan fi Tafsir al-Quran*: Sheikh al-Tusi's unparalleled Quranic commentary (al-Tehrani, 1390, 3:328).

4-*Quwa al-Aghdhiya* : Hunayn ibn Ishaq's dietary treatise in Kufic script (al-Khalili, 1966, 2:231).

The Haidariyya Library's Transformation

Under Sheikh Faris al-Husun's leadership, the library was reorganized as the "Rawdat al-Haidariyya" research center, with Sayyid Hashim al-Milani overseeing administration. Its modernization included: digital archiving and virtual indexing systems, laser disc reproduction services for researchers, and expanded collections of printed and manuscript works.

13-The Mosques of Najaf

Since the dawn of Islam, mosques in Najaf have served dual roles as places of worship and centers of scholarship. As noted by Iraqi scholar Husayn Ali Mahfouz:

"It is fitting that Najaf hosted the most distinguished schools and mosques among cities. Its mosques were schools, its assemblies were schools, its markets were schools—every

corner hosted scholarly circles and lessons of erudition within its sacred precincts" (Husayn Ali Mahfouz, 1992: 19).

The development of residential quarters around the Holy Shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) from the 3rd century AH onward led to the establishment of several historically significant mosques:

1-Masjid Hannana: One of Najaf's three holiest sites, where Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) performed prayers. Originally named Masjid al-'Alam, it later housed the sacred head of Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) and remains a major pilgrimage destination (Al Mahbuba, 1:100).

2-Masjid Imran ibn Shahin: Built mid-4th century AH by the Shi'a Buyid ruler as a votive offering following his deliverance from 'Adud al-Dawla. Now incorporated into the shrine complex, it hosts scholarly gatherings (Al Mahbuba, 1:101).

3-Masjid Sheikh al-Tusi: The former residence of Sheikh al-Tusi (d. 460 AH), converted into a mosque per his testament. It became an intellectual hub under his son Abu Ali (Al Mahbuba, 1:104).

4-Masjid Saffat al-Safa: An 8th-century AH structure adjacent to tombs of notable Sayyids, featuring Arabic poetic inscriptions and endowed residential quarters (Al Mahbuba, 1:112).

Summary:

the city of Najaf had transformed into a Shi'a scholarly center by the 3rd century AH, even before the Buyid era. When Shi'a communities faced Abbasid restrictions—including prohibitions on commemorating Shi'a occasions such as Ghadeer Khumm and Ashura—the Buyids openly celebrated these events in Baghdad and other Iraqi and Iranian cities from 351 AH onward. They authorized public observances and supported Shi'a rituals, enabling Shi'a to practice their ceremonies in the sacred shrines without fear. The Buyids also expanded existing Husayni rituals. However, when the Abbasids later banned these practices again, Shi'a were forced to conduct them in confined spaces like markets and shops.

The Buyid government allocated dedicated spaces within the shrines for religious students, which bolstered the scientific movement. Consequently, Najaf and Karbala became pilgrimage hubs, attracting visitors from across the Islamic world to the sacred shrines, particularly Najaf al-Ashraf.

Even during subsequent Iranian regimes like the Seljuks—despite their Sunni orientation and persecution of Shi'a—they could not suppress Husayni rituals, especially in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. During the Mongol period, the recitation of Hussayni martyrologies in the shrine cities continued, and the establishment of libraries in Najaf al-Ashraf provided abundant Islamic manuscripts for religious research.

The scholarly school of Najaf al-Ashraf flourished significantly in the 5th century AH through the contributions of prominent Iranian figures, most notably Sheikh al-Tusi, who authored numerous works within this intellectual tradition. Following persecution by the Seljuks against Shi'a scholars and

beliefs in Baghdad, al-Tusi migrated to Najaf al-Ashraf. With his broad cultural vision and open-mindedness toward diverse jurisprudential, theological, and doctrinal schools, he successfully led the scientific movement of his time. His academic activities in circles that methodologically differed from him provoked varied reactions. Under his leadership, Najaf evolved into a specialized academic center for jurisprudence and hadith studies, which remains one of the most important sources of Imami thought today. Al-Tusi's works in hadith studies, biographical evaluation, cataloging Shi'a texts theology, principles of jurisprudence, and comparative jurisprudence, among others, propelled Najaf al-Ashraf into a period of remarkable progress and prosperity. This legacy was continued by his son, Abu Ali al-Tusi, and his students.

Moreover, the religious affinity between Iraq and Iran during the Buyid and Ilkhanid periods fostered the spread of the Persian language in the shrine cities, strengthening ties between the people of the shrines and Iranians. This contributed to deeper connections between the two communities, creating inseparable bonds between Iranians and Iraqis in Najaf and Karbala.

Chapter Four

The Economic Role of Iranian Governments in Najaf Ashraf

1- Introduction

The economic history of Najaf dates back to the emergence of the shrine of Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him). However, the history of its surrounding areas stretches to the pre-Islamic era in Hira. Najaf was one of the most important economic centers in the Arabian Peninsula due to its natural and geographical position, which granted it not only scientific and cultural significance but also a vital economic role.

The inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, whether Bedouins or urban dwellers, relied on Najaf for clothing, daily necessities, tools, and food supplies. Bedouins sold their surplus products in Najaf and sought refuge in the holy city during times of weakened livestock production (Al-Tamimi, 1372 AH: 120). Similarly, the people of Najaf provided financial and grain loans to the residents of the Arabian Peninsula during their hardships without demanding anything in return (Al-Tamimi, 1372 AH: 21). The virtuous ethics of the Najafis, along with their noble economic activities—particularly in agriculture (grain cultivation) and industries like textiles—distinguished Najaf among other Iraqi cities, as it supplied agricultural products to other regions of Iraq.

Najaf's location, adjacent to the desert on one side and the Euphrates River on the other, allowed it to thrive on fresh water and desert breezes. However, its elevation (26 to 60 meters

above sea level) made transporting fresh water challenging. Initially, water for washing was drawn from wells, while drinking water was carried from the Euphrates by donkeys (Hasan al-Hakim, 1432 AH, Vol. 26: 135). A qanat (underground canal) dug by Sulayman bin A'yan (d. 250 AH) in Najaf irrigated farms and orchards, but it was destroyed during Qarmatian raids and later restored under the orders of Adud al-Dawla. He also commissioned the construction of a canal from the Euphrates to Najf in 369 AH (Hasan al-Hakim, 1432 AH, Vol. 26: 139). This canal, known as the Buyid Qanat, revitalized Najaf, enhancing its social and economic conditions. The Buyid rulers periodically maintained it.

After the decline of the Buyids, Malik Shah Seljuq visited the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in 479 AH and donated 300 dinars to the Naqib of the Alids for qanat maintenance. The canal was later restored during the reigns of Sultan Sanjar and Atamalik Juwayni (d. 681 AH), who allocated 100,000 gold dinars to dig the Tajiyya Canal. This project led to the establishment of 150 villages, farms, and orchards, further developing Najaf and its surroundings (Hasan al-Hakim, 1432 AH, Vol. 26: 142).

Thus, Najaf flourished during the Buyid era, diversifying its economic activities. After its emergence as a holy city—marked by the identification of Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) burial site by Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) and the construction of a dome with four gates over the shrine by Caliph Harun al-Rashid in 175 AH (Muhsin Abd al-Sahib al-Mudhaffar, 2008: 83)—many Islamic governments, including the Alavids of Tabaristan, the Hamdanids, and the Buyids, elevated Najaf's status. With Buyid support for scientific endeavors and the influx of pilgrims, especially from Iran, Najaf regained its economic importance. The Buyids, Mongols, and even the late Abbasid caliphate provided financial support, transforming

Najaf into a key economic hub in Iraq. By the Mongol era, Najaf ranked fifth among Iraqi cities in economic prosperity and trade.

2- The Economic Conditions of Najaf During the Buyid Era

Najaf Ashraf held religious significance for the Buyids, who played a pivotal economic and developmental role in the city. As a destination for pilgrims, Najaf's tourism sector thrived, attracting devotees of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). The Buyids sought greater legitimacy through their patronage of Najaf, recognizing that economic prosperity strengthened their rule. They promoted industrial and economic growth in Iraqi cities, particularly Najaf.

Security, urbanization, and construction projects under the Buyids led to the establishment of prominent industries in Baghdad and Najaf. Access to raw materials connected these industries to cities across the Islamic world. Iraq's abundant agricultural, mineral, and livestock resources facilitated commercial development. While a detailed study of Buyid-era industries is beyond this scope, these industries produced goods for local consumption and export, bolstering Iraq's economy.

2-1-Crafts and Professions

The Buyids did not invent these professions, which existed since the Abbasid era. Kufa remained a center for handicrafts, and the Buyids preserved its industrial significance. The Abbasids formalized these trades by registering them in

commercial records, and the Buyids further regulated them (Al-Duri, 1995: 234).

Professional hierarchies emerged, including the "Ra'is al-Hirfa" (Guild Master), selected after rigorous testing, and the "Ustad" (Master), who trained apprentices. Beginners learned trade secrets before advancing to higher ranks (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH, Vol. 14: 293).

Major Industries in Iraq and Najaf During the Buyid Era

1-Soap Production: This industry emerged due to hygiene needs and the growing number of public baths in Najaf and Kufa (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1992: 24).

2-Textile Industry: The Buyids invested in textiles to meet demand for military and civilian clothing. Factories produced diverse fabrics from silk, wool, and cotton (Al-Maqdisi, 2001: 436; Al-Rudhrawari, 1916: 49).

3-Carpet Weaving: Utilizing available materials, carpets were woven from silk, cotton, and wool, often featuring geometric patterns. The famous "Adudi" carpets, attributed to Adud al-Dawla, were produced in Najaf (Al-Duri, 1995: 105).

4-Rosewater Production: This industry expanded under the Buyids, with distilleries established in Najaf and other Iraqi cities (Al-Istakhri, 1961: 160).

5-Stable Construction: The Buyids built stables to protect livestock from extreme weather, particularly along pilgrimage routes (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH, Vol. 14: 270).

6-Goldsmithing: The Buyids promoted gold and silver craftsmanship, producing decorative items and prayer niches. Adud al-Dawla commissioned golden prayer niches for holy shrines (Ibn al-Zubayr, 1959: 195).

7-Armament Industry: Vital for military supply, this industry flourished under Adud al-Dawla, with Kufa as a key center (Abu Shuja, 1916: 15, 37, 39).

Other industries, such as brickmaking, pottery, and shipbuilding (in Basra), also thrived, contributing to Iraq's self-sufficiency and export economy.

2-2-The Buyids' Role in Trade Expansion

Trade in Najaf predated the Buyids, linked to its ancient commercial position near Hira and trade routes connecting Arabia, Iraq, China, and India. Ibn al-Jawzi noted that Najaf's port once hosted ships from China and India (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH, Vol. 14: 276).

Under the Buyids, Najaf's trade flourished due to its desert-edge location and the influx of pilgrims. The "Basita" market, a major trading hub, attracted caravans and Bedouins. The Buyids maintained security and built markets, taxing goods to boost revenue (Al-Maqdisi, 2001: 135).

Trade was divided into domestic (within Iraq) and international (with China, India, and Byzantium). The Buyids reopened trade routes disrupted by tribal conflicts, enhancing Iraq's economic integration.

Markets of Kufa and Najaf

Kufa's central markets, including those for blacksmiths and livestock, operated twice weekly, drawing merchants from across Iraq. The Buyids regulated these markets, ensuring fair trade and taxation (Al-Maqdisi, 2001: 135).

2-3- Exports and Imports

Dates, animal fat, and Kufi textiles were exported (Al-Duri, 1374 AH: 139); while, carpets, fruits, linen, rosewater, saffron,

and curtains were imported from Iran, India, and Byzantium (Al-Istakhri, 1961: 90; Al-Maqdisi, 2001: 394, 442).

2-4- Buyid Coinage Policy in Najaf Ashraf

The Buyids standardized coinage, minting gold dinars and silver dirhams. The dinar weighed 25 grams of gold, while the dirham contained 2.97 grams of silver (Al-Duri, 1995: 208, 221). Economic instability sometimes led to currency devaluation (Ibn al-Taqtaqi, 1962: 379–380).

2-5- Weights and Measures in Buyid-Era Najaf

Standardized weights and measures, supervised by the "Muhtasib" (market inspector), ensured fair trade. Land measurements used the "farsakh" (6 km²) (Hintz, 1982: 34, 94).

2-6-Taxation Under the Buyids

The tax system during this period largely continued the practices established by the Abbasid government, though it was not free from corruption and oppression, drawing criticism from many jurists. The Buyids found it necessary to modify the tax system to align with their new authority, introducing changes to suit their governance.

Types of Taxes

1- Kharaj (Land Tax)

The most prominent tax under the Buyids, serving as a key revenue source for their treasury (Al-Duri, 1374 AH: 213). Levied on agricultural land, its amount depended on factors like land area, crop quality, and proximity to water sources (Al-Duri, 1995: 214). Considered non-canonical (ghayr shar'i) due to

Abbasid modifications. The Buyids continued it with adjustments, such as implementing a guarantor system for tax collection (Al-Duri, 1995: 215). Collected in cash or kind (e.g., half the harvest), often leading to arbitrary exploitation by tax collectors.

2- Inheritance Tax

Not newly imposed by the Buyids; the Abbasids had previously confiscated estates of those without heirs for the state treasury (Al-Duri, 1995: 215). For example, in 351 AH, the estate of a deceased individual named Da'laj (a colorful garment) was seized and added to the treasury, despite its endowed status (Al-Duri, 1995: 215).

3- Customs Duties (Mukūs)

This tax, imposed in key commercial cities like Kufa, Basra, Baghdad, and Wasit (Al-Duri, 1995: 223), was applied to imported goods, increasing prices and affecting trade. It was paid in cash (e.g., one dirham per caravan load) or kind, with no distinction between cheap and valuable goods (Al-Duri, 1995: 224). Foreign ships (e.g., Chinese, Indian) paid a tenth of their cargo's value, while Muslim traders paid less (Al-Duri, 1995: 225).

4-Property Tax

Levied on shops, markets, houses, baths, and mills (Miskawayh, 1914, Vol. 5: 296), this tax (Like customs duties) inflated prices and burdened urban economies (Al-Duri, 1995: 227).

Taxation System

During the early Buyid period in Iraq, particularly under Mu'izz al-Dawla's rule, the "iqṭā'" (tax farming) system dominated revenue collection. Under this system, the government delegated tax collection rights to individuals, who often exploited farmers through arbitrary levies and unofficial

surcharges. Historical accounts reveal rampant corruption, with collectors fabricating expenses and imposing unauthorized taxes (Miskawayh, 1914, Vol. 5: 283). Efforts to reform taxation under 'Aḍud al-Dawla included abolishing certain taxes and fees. However, the central government's inability to fully regulate collection led to persistent chaos. Tax agents (*muqatta'ūn*) continued to act autonomously, disregarding Buyid directives aimed at curbing abuses (Al-Duri, 1995: 229). The resulting oppression forced farmers to abandon their lands, causing agricultural decline that affected cities like Najaf. Structured customs system (*mukūs*), resembling modern tariffs, was established. Inspection posts (*al-marāṣid*) were set up in Kufa and Wasit to collect trade duties (Al-Duri, 1995: 224).

2-7-Agricultural Revival in Najaf

Before the Buyids came to power, Iraq's agricultural situation had deteriorated significantly due to neglect of agricultural affairs. This was related to the country's political conditions and internal conflicts among princes, compounded by the destruction of canals and collapse of bridges, leading to worsening agricultural conditions. The security situation was even worse, as Iraq suffered from brutal bandit attacks. Agricultural production declined, and farmers abandoned their lands, surrendering them to the government, which then allocated them to soldiers as compensation, leading to the ruin of agricultural lands and further deterioration of farming conditions. People refused to pay *kharaj* due to their inability to harvest crops and the poor security situation (al-Duri, 1995: 55).

This situation did not last long, as during Mu'izz al-Dawla's reign, agricultural reforms were implemented in all Iraqi cities, especially Najaf. Old, ruined *qanats* were restored, new *qanats* and wells were dug (al-Duri, 1945: 194). These agricultural

reforms improved farming conditions in all regions and cities. The methods of collecting kharaj and taxes were reformed. Previously, kharaj was collected before harvest, but under Adud al-Dawla, it was collected seasonally (al-Duri, 1995: 60). These reforms strengthened agriculture in the cities. Under Buyid supervision, irrigation methods included constructing reservoirs, canals, and dams. With financial support and funding, engineers protected these systems (al-Duri, 1988: 62). The irrigation methods used in Najaf relied on direct river irrigation through water channels that wound around each other, with canals dug from the Euphrates to agricultural areas (al-Duri, 1988: 63). Among these was the great canal for Najaf and Karbala, which facilitated agricultural growth in these two cities.

The most famous agricultural product in Iraq was rice cultivation. Since this crop was grown in low-lying areas requiring high temperatures, it was concentrated in western Iraq, particularly Najaf, where conditions were most suitable (al-Duri, 1995: 69). Other agricultural products Najaf was known for included wild plants that grew naturally without human cultivation. These weren't limited to Najaf but included all Iraqi cities. Other products were seasonal vegetables, also not limited to Najaf but grown throughout Iraq (al-Duri, 1995: 69). Fruit tree cultivation in Najaf and all Iraqi cities became famous, with no region in Iraq lacking fruits. The most famous fruits cultivated were grapes, watermelons, apples, and others (Ibn Hawqal, 1938: 15).

2-8- Market Conditions in Najaf during the Buyid Era

Market stability in all Iraqi cities was generally linked to political and security conditions. Some markets in Iraqi cities faced looting, theft, inflation, and economic problems that

negatively impacted market activity in Iraq. Some movements against the Buyids emerged, like the Ayyaran movement during Baghdad's economic recession, affecting some cities where people used markets as shelters. Sectarian conflicts between Sunnis and Shi'a in Baghdad's Karkh district also negatively impacted market activity, causing closures, price increases, theft, famine, and migration to other cities. This situation also secretly affected the country's economic activity.

Najaf's markets remained free from internal turmoil during the Buyid era. Historical sources don't indicate Buyid interference or opposition activities in these markets, so they remained secure during their rule. Although enjoying economic stability, they were affected by internal trade from other cities, especially Baghdad as the main trade center connected to other Iraqi cities, particularly through rising commodity prices. The holy city of Najaf was a destination for Shi'a pilgrims from across the Islamic world. The influx of pilgrims, as mentioned, created commercial, agricultural, and industrial vitality. Buyid policies in Najaf stemmed from its religious character, scholarly movement, and religious tourism.

Each Iraqi city had its unique cultural and religious characteristics. Najaf enjoyed political stability during the Buyid era due to its cultural and religious position and the presence of Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) shrine. The Buyids' special attention to Najaf compared to other Iraqi cities meant multiple income sources for Najaf's society.

Income Sources of Najaf's Society

1- Commercial Vitality of Najaf: The merchants of Najaf played a significant role in domestic and foreign trade, which was primarily land-based.

2- Religious Significance and Hajj Stopover: Due to its religious importance, Najaf served as a departure point for pilgrims. After visiting the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), pilgrims would set out for Mecca to perform Hajj. Caravans of pilgrims passed through Najaf on their way to and from Hajj.

3-Center of the Niqabat of the Sayyids: Najaf was the seat of the Niqabat of the Sayyids, an institution responsible for safeguarding the rights and properties of the descendants of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

4- Religious Obligations such as Khums and Sadaqat: Shiites sent khums and sadaqat to Najaf, as the city was considered the religious leadership center of Shiism. These funds were used to build schools, pay stipends to religious students, and similar purposes.

5-Patronage by Rulers and Officials: Ministers and rulers paid special attention to Najaf, particularly in restoring and developing the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), the city walls, and constructing canals. These projects created job opportunities. For instance, Muhammad ibn Zayd al-Alawi, the ruler of Tabaristan, sent substantial funds annually for Najaf's restoration, including 30,000 gold dinars for the upkeep of the holy shrine (Ibn Isfandiyar, 1320: Vol. 1, 95).

6-Gifts from Kings and Sultans: Monarchs and sultans sent valuable gifts and annual donations to the shrine of Imam Ali (AS), pilgrims, and residents near the shrine. Among them was

Adud al-Dawla of the Buyid dynasty, who sent precious items and gifts to the holy sites (Bruvais, n.d.: 89). The practice of gifting the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) was not limited to the Buyids; Abbasid caliphs also sent gifts. For example, in 663 AH, the Abbasid caliph Al-Mustansir Billah sent 8,000 dinars to Najaf, allocating 1,000 dinars to impoverished Abbasids, 1,000 to needy Talibis, 2,000 to poor Alawis near the shrine, and 1,000 to noble Sayyids residing in Dar al-Siyada (Khasbak, 1961: 257).

7-Donations During Pilgrimages: Military commanders and officials would allocate substantial gifts to the shrine's caretakers, the poor, and funds for Najaf's development during their visits to Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) shrine. These contributions were a major economic resource for the city. For example, during his pilgrimage in 371 AH, Adud al-Dawla al-Daylami allocated sums from the treasury: 21 dirhams to each Alawi Sayyid, 5 dirhams to shrine caretakers, 30 dirhams to jurists, and 5 dirhams to pilgrims (Ibn Tawus, 1368: 154).

8- Income from Burials: A unique source of Najaf's income was fees for burying the deceased in Wadi al-Salam cemetery. Shiites believed burial in this sacred city guaranteed the intercession of Imam Ali (AS). Many Najaf families were engaged in preparing and burying the dead, earning significant income. Reports indicate that 5,000 to 8,000 bodies were buried annually in Najaf (Al-Khalili, 1966: Vol. 1, 234–238).

9-Revenue from Pilgrimages: Pilgrimages to Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) shrine were a major financial resource. Shiites visited the shrine for blessings and intercession, spending on lodging, transportation, and other services, especially during religious occasions like Eid al-Ghadir, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) mission anniversary, and Ashura. Ibn Battuta noted that on the 27th of Rajab (the night of the Prophet's mission), large groups of 30–40 pilgrims from Iraq,

Persia, Byzantium, and Khorasan would gather, and markets would operate for ten days (Ibn Battuta, 1967: Vol. 1, 200). The English traveler Loftus, who visited Najaf in 1270 AH, reported that the city had become financially prosperous, with an estimated 80,000 pilgrims annually (Khalili, 1966: Vol. 1, 234–237).

3-The Economic Influence of the Seljuks in Najaf al-Ashraf

The Seljuk Empire, which extended its rule over both Iran and Iraq, demonstrated limited economic engagement with Najaf due to their Hanafi Sunni orientation. Despite this, Najaf maintained its economic vitality as a center of religious pilgrimage, a legacy bolstered by earlier Buyid patronage. The city's financial stability relied on traditional revenue streams, including burial fees, while its scholarly institutions continued to thrive under residual Buyid-era support. However, the Seljuks prioritized broader economic policies that encompassed all Iraqi territories.

Central to Seljuk economic administration was the "Iqta" (land grant) system, inherited from earlier Abbasid and Buyid governance. This system, rooted in the allocation of land revenues to military and administrative officials, became a hallmark of Seljuk rule. The term "Iqta"—literally denoting "apportionment"—referred to lands assigned to soldiers and bureaucrats in exchange for services (Al-Razi, 1976: 227; Al-Zaydi, 2011: 339). As Turkic commanders under the Abbasid caliphate, the Seljuks adapted this system to consolidate their authority.

Within Seljuk domains, "Iqta" took multiple forms:

1. "Revenue grants": Allocated for military service or as pensions for officials.

2. "Provincial governance ": Delegated to regional rulers or military leaders.

3. "Tax farming": Known as "*Daman*", where tax collection rights were leased.

4. "Private and subsistence grants": Including lands for royal families and religious elites ("The Cambridge History of Iran", Vol. 5, p. 228).

The "*iqta*" system emerged as a response to administrative disarray and declining agricultural productivity. By distributing urban and rural lands as "*iqta*", the Seljuks incentivized military elites to restore productivity while securing their loyalty. However, this system blurred distinctions between military and civil administration, as all grants remained revocable at the sultan's discretion ("The Cambridge History of Iran", Vol. 5, p. 229).

Under Seljuk rule, the "*iqta*" framework evolved into a tool for centralization, binding regional governance to imperial authority. This was particularly evident in Iraq, where cities like Najaf became enmeshed in the system. For instance, military governors ("*shihnas*") held "*iqta*" rights in strategic towns such as Tikrit and Wasit ("The Cambridge History of Iran", Vol. 5, p. 232). Yet, Najaf's "*iqta*" arrangements were unstable, often disrupted by political rivalries—exemplified by the grant of Wasit to Imad al-Din Zangi. Similarly, Kufa faced Bedouin raids, prompting the appointment of military defenders. The Seljuks' reliance on "*iqta*" to quell unrest revealed systemic vulnerabilities, as regional commanders prioritized personal gain over governance (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 16, p. 216).

3-1-Agricultural Decline in Seljuk-Era Iraq and Najaf

Historically dependent on the Tigris-Euphrates basin, Iraq's agricultural sector faltered under Seljuk rule. The "*iqta*" system,

formalized by Vizier Nizam al-Mulk, transferred farmland to militarily loyal but agriculturally inexperienced elites, disrupting traditional land management (Ismail, 2000: Vol. 6, p. 56). Compulsory labor and peasant flight further eroded productivity, while conflicts between Seljuk authorities and "*Muqta's*" (landholders) accelerated rural decline (Al-A'raji, n.d.: 342).

Traveler Ibn Jubayr documented the ruin of Iraqi farmlands, attributing it to feudal disputes (Ibn Jubayr, 2000: 187). Outdated farming techniques and "*iqta*"-driven neglect exacerbated soil degradation, plunging regions like Najaf and Kufa into agrarian crisis. The Seljuks' failure to address these issues reflected their preoccupation with territorial control beyond Iraq.

3-2- Industrial Stagnation in Seljuk Najaf

Industrial activity under the Seljuks paled in comparison to the Buyid era, as the "*iqta*" system redirected economic focus toward agriculture. Wars among "*Muqta's*" destroyed mines and halted mineral extraction (Ismail, 2000: Vol. 6, p. 61), while oppressive taxes crippled workshops. Artisans faced fluctuating levies, with profits funneled to the imperial treasury (Al-A'raji, n.d.: 12–13). Corruption among tax collectors further stifled production, as luxury industries served elite "*Muqta's*" and military suppliers.

Despite these challenges, Najaf's religious economy endured, sustained by endowments for scholars and shrine custodians. The city's industries—primarily inherited from Buyid times—languished without state support, underscoring the Seljuks' extractive policies.

3-3- Trade Under the Seljuks: Constraints and Decline

While domestic and foreign trade persisted from the Buyid period, Seljuk rule imposed heavy commercial taxes ("*Mukus*") and arbitrary fines. Trade routes suffered from Bedouin raids and Crusader blockades, while sectarian policies targeted non-Muslim merchants (Ismail, 2000: Vol. 6, p. 46). Ibn al-Athir notes how soldier revolts in Baghdad (1963: Vol. 8, p. 315) and Sunni-Shi'a clashes disrupted markets, though Najaf remained relatively insulated due to its sacred status.

Another reason for the decline of Iraq's foreign trade was its encirclement by the West, where Crusaders cut off Mediterranean trade routes, compounded by internal unrest as Bedouins sought control over transportation routes. This occurred in Kufa, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Persian Gulf, exhausting the Seljuk populace, especially in commercially active cities like Baghdad and Kufa.

3-4- Najaf's Markets: A Haven Amid Turmoil

Unlike strife-torn cities like Baghdad, Najaf's markets avoided major upheavals, benefiting from its spiritual prestige and Buyid-era institutional foundations.

3-5- Taxation Under the Seljuks

The Seljuk period essentially continued Abbasid fiscal policies across all domains, particularly in taxation. The key taxes of this era included:

Mukus (Customs Tax)

This tax, inherited from the Abbasid and Buyid eras, remained a cornerstone of Seljuk revenue. A specialized official called the "*Mukhtasib al-hadra*" was appointed to collect it (Al-

A'raji, n.d.: 15). The *Mukus* was an elastic levy—its rates fluctuated based on economic conditions rather than fixed import tariffs, creating price instability. Its administration was closely tied to regional “*Muqta's*” (landholders), who often manipulated collections. During internal conflicts, the Seljuks raised this tax to fund wars, eventually extending it from imports to local markets. This exacerbated inflation, harming ordinary citizens (Al-A'raji, n.d.: 16).

Aqar (Property Tax)

Unlike fixed taxes, the “*Aqar*” was an emergency levy imposed on real estate (houses, shops, baths) during fiscal shortfalls. Its arbitrary application—exemplified by Sultan Mas'ud's double taxation in 526 AH to finance wars against Sultan Sanjar—revealed the regime’s extractive priorities. Such measures sparked widespread grievances, including in Najaf, where residents protested the seizure of private assets (Al-Suyuti, 1952: 331).

Inheritance and Escheat Tax

Building on Abbasid precedents, the Seljuks confiscated estates lacking legal heirs through the “*Diwan al-Tarakāt*”. In 445 AH, Sultan Tughril Beg institutionalized this practice across Iraq, including Najaf. By 531 AH, burial permits required ministerial approval to identify heirless estates—a policy that diverted wealth from vulnerable groups like orphans to the treasury (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 17, 322).

Road Toll (Rahdari)

Pilgrims and merchants paid this fee (7 dinars per traveler) for military escorts against Bedouin raids (Al-Rawandi, 2015: 205). However, chronic insecurity—like attacks on Kufa’s trade routes—rendered the tax ineffective. Combined with the “*Mukus*”, it stifled commerce (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, 80–81).

Animal Tax

Levied on livestock (camels, horses) and even fish sales, this local-market tax inflated transportation costs, further burdening the populace (Al-A'raji, n.d.: 17).

Tax Collection Methods

Seljuk agents employed coercive tactics, including threats ("*Iljā'*") to seize properties from smallholders for "*Muqta's*". Unlike the Buyids, who discouraged arbitrary collections, the Seljuks institutionalized such abuses, worsening rural flight and economic decline. Brief reforms under officials like Abu Ahmad Nahawandi (e.g., abolishing usurious gold loans) were reversed after his tenure (Al-Zubaydi, 1966: Vol. 3, 534).

4- Natural Disasters in Iraq and Najaf During the Buyid and Seljuk Eras

Natural disasters—including floods, torrential rains, and destructive inundations—had devastating impacts on agricultural production and human life during both the Buyid and Seljuk periods. These calamities significantly contributed to economic crises in Iraqi society by submerging farmland, destroying crops, and disrupting livelihoods. The loss of livestock further exacerbated food shortages, leading to price inflation and widespread famine.

4-1- Documented Catastrophes and Their Impacts

The Great Snowfall of 398 AH (1007 CE)

- Najaf and Kufa experienced continuous snowfall for 20 days (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, p. 49).

- Other Iraqi cities faced heavy rains accompanied by severe cold, causing extensive damage (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 15, p. 58).

The Extreme Winter of 417 AH (1026 CE)

- A brutal cold wave gripped Iraq, freezing the Tigris River solid.

- This was compounded by drought and scarce rainfall, which became so severe that no pilgrims could travel from Iraq to Mecca that year (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, p. 158).

Drought and Livestock Plagues (423 AH/1032 CE)

- Mosul and other regions suffered prolonged drought, leading to grain shortages and soaring food prices.

- The crisis spread to Najaf, where the scarcity of water and fodder caused mass deaths of sheep and cattle (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 8, p. 205).

The Tigris Flood of 449 AH (1057 CE)

- Torrential rains triggered a catastrophic overflow of the Tigris, drowning farmland and wiping out harvests across multiple cities (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 17, pp. 95–96).

The Frost Disaster of 515 AH (1121 CE)

- Unusually heavy rains followed by a hard freeze destroyed fruit and date palms, crippling agriculture in Najaf and Kufa (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 17, p. 99).

Earthquakes and Their Aftermath

- 544 AH (1149 CE): A violent earthquake struck Iraq, shaking the ground ten times. Government buildings, homes, and markets collapsed, paralyzing the economy (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 18, p. 72).

- 590 AH (1194 CE): Another quake extended to Najaf, damaging infrastructure and leveling the Wadi al-Salam cemetery (Ibn al-Athir, 1963: Vol. 10, p. 78).

The Euphrates Flood of 653 AH (1255 CE)

- The river's overflow submerged towns and even reached the Great Mosque of Kufa (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: p. 227).

Secondary Crises: Epidemics and Famine

Stagnant floodwaters bred waterborne diseases, while livestock plagues (e.g., the 437 AH and 459 AH epidemics) decimated herds. Key effects included:

- **Humanitarian Toll:** Mass deaths from collapsed housing and outbreaks like cholera.

- **Economic Collapse:** The 437 AH epidemic killed warhorses, crippling military logistics (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 15, p. 302).

- **Market Disruptions:** Meat shortages spiked prices, and beggars overcrowded cities (Ibn al-Jawzi, 1359 AH: Vol. 16, p. 62).

Not all famines stemmed from natural causes. Instability—such as Bedouin raids, Sunni-Shi'a conflicts in Baghdad, and Seljuk-Abbasid power struggles—disrupted trade and agriculture. For example: Crusader blockades cut Mediterranean supply routes, and Sectarian clashes forced market closures, inflating prices.

5- The Economic Role of the Mongols in Najaf Ashraf

The Mongols governed both Iran and Iraq from 656 AH to 738 AH, with some rulers displaying religious flexibility—shifting between Shamanism, Christianity, Islam, and Shiism. Notably, rulers like Ghazan favored the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and Shiism, while Oljeitu officially embraced Shiism. These leaders prioritized Najaf Ashraf, implementing key charitable and infrastructural projects in Iraqi cities, particularly in Najaf. For instance, Oljeitu facilitated water access to Kufa, Najaf's central region, fostering economic growth. Reconstruction efforts in Kufa and Najaf were synchronized, as Mongol-era Iraq included Arab Iraq, parts of the Jazira region, and Persian Iraq. According to Hamdallah Mustawfi Qazvini,

Iraq under Mongol rule extended from Mosul to Abadan and from Qadisiyyah to Hulwan (Qazvini, 1362 AH: 28).

Qazvini's account describes Arab Iraq expanding northward into the Arabian Peninsula, with Mongol authority reaching the Jazira region. Unlike the Abbasid era, which defined Iraq as Mesopotamia between the Tigris and Euphrates, Mongol prosperity hinged on agriculture, thriving in cities like Najaf.

Irrigation systems sustained agriculture amid low rainfall. Ata-Malek Juvayni, Iraq's financial administrator, notably dug a Euphrates-to-Najaf canal, investing over 100,000 dinars to enable crop cultivation (Khasbak, 1961: 15). Water availability spurred Najaf's agricultural boom, generating income for locals and supplying food to other Iraqi cities through trade networks.

The Ilkhanid period saw challenges like the 685 AH Euphrates flood, which submerged Hilla, Kufa, and nearby canals (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 442). Arab Iraq received less attention than Persian Iraq, as the Ilkhanids focused on their Iranian capitals, Tabriz and Soltaniyeh. However, Najaf's agricultural and commercial activities, dating to the Buyid era, persisted under Mongol rule.

Kufa, Najaf's agricultural hub, specialized in cotton, wheat, and grains (Al-Kufi, 1952: 53). Proximity to the Euphrates ensured irrigation for wheat, which was exported across Iraq, bolstering Najaf's economy. Yet, post-invasion instability caused rural decline, prompting Ghazan's reforms. He granted land (lqta') to soldiers, mandated peasant retention, and banned landowner exploitation (Khasbak, 1961: 8–12). His Kufa canal project, costing 100,000 dinars, revitalized the region (Khasbak, 1961: 11).

5-1- Taxation System Under the Ilkhanids

Historical accounts, such as those by Vassaf, describe the tax organization in Iraq under Sultan Mahmud Ghazan in 694 AH. Taxes were imposed on all Iraqi cities, including Basra, Wasit, Hilla, Kufa, and others, in three forms: legal taxes, guaranteed taxes, and taxes entrusted to local rulers or notable figures (Khasbak, 1961: 20).

Taxes in Ilkhanid Iraq fell into Sharia-compliant categories (e.g., *kharaj*, *zakat*) and non-Sharia levies (e.g., market fees, inheritance taxes). Additional impositions included land, capital, and household taxes, with exemptions for the elderly and minors (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 339). Ata-Malek Juvayni abolished inheritance taxes for heirless estates (Khasbak, 1961: 19).

Additional compulsory taxes and forced loans were introduced, including land taxes, capital taxes, household taxes, property taxes, and levies on goods sold in markets. The state also confiscated *waqf* (endowment) revenues and embezzled funds from officials. The head tax applied to all Iraqi residents, including Najaf, except for the elderly and minors (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 339). Inheritance taxes for those without heirs were directly deposited into the state treasury. Ata-Malek Juvayni, the *divan* official of Iraq, abolished this tax during his governance (657–681 AH) (Khasbak, 1961: 19). Property taxes were also imposed (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 478), along with innovative taxes like pasture fees, where those owning over 100 sheep were taxed (Khasbak, 1961: 20).

Qazvini recorded the revenues of Iraqi cities in the 8th century AH, such as Samarra's 16 *tumans* and 4,000 *dinars* (Qazvini, 1362 AH: 43). Internal trade taxes were levied, especially between Baghdad and other cities, due to strong commercial ties. Other taxes were forcibly collected as "contributions" (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 398–424).

Tax collection methods in Najaf and other Iraqi cities included direct collection, tax farming (*ḍamān*), and *lqtaʿ*. Tax farming involved local residents paying a fixed sum to the government, while *lqtaʿ* granted individuals control over a region in exchange for a share of taxes. Direct collection was managed by state officials.

In 694 AH, Sultan Ghazan implemented extensive financial reforms across his domains, including Iraq and Najaf, standardizing tax collection (Khasbak, 1961: 25). Tax farming was used for *kharaj* and market taxes, while direct collection applied to forced contributions, loans, and unstable taxes like property levies.

Ata-Malek Juvayni, as the *divan* official of Iraq, acted as the chief tax farmer, submitting revenues to the central Ilkhanid government while retaining a significant portion for himself. He further delegated tax collection to subcontractors, who kept a share (Khasbak, 1961: 30).

These taxes were often so heavy that collectors struggled to pay, leading to corruption. Much of the collected wealth never reached the treasury, prompting the Ilkhanid government to confiscate assets and torture officials (Khasbak, 1961: 35).

5-2-Monetary Policy in Najaf Under the Ilkhanids

Transactions were conducted using gold dinars, silver dirhams, and copper *fulus*. In 682 AH, monetary reforms replaced copper *fulus* with silver ones, but these were later abandoned (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 430–431).

Coins were valued by weight or count. Ata-Malek Juvayni ordered the minting of copper *fulus*, with 24 *fulus* equaling one dirham and five dirhams equaling one dinar by weight (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 358). In 682 AH, new dirhams were minted and distributed (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 446).

The dinar-dirham exchange rate was unstable, varying by money changer. The Ilkhanid monetary policy lacked consistency, as Iraq was not an independent state but part of a vast empire. Sultan Ghazan attempted to standardize the currency to prevent fraud (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 499).

Ghazan ordered uniformly weighted dirhams, with some weighing half a mithqal and others three or one mithqal. One mithqal of gold equaled 24 dirhams (Ibn al-Fuwati, 1351 AH: 498).

Najaf was not a mint city under the Mongols; coins were struck in Baghdad, Basra, Hilla, and Mosul. Ilkhanid dinars were medium or small in size, while Hulagu's coins were larger.

Religious inclinations were reflected on coins, typically inscribed with "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." Some featured animal motifs or Sunni-oriented inscriptions, such as the names of the first four caliphs. Under Sultan Öljaitü, Shiite phrases like "Ali is the Wali of Allah" appeared on coins (Bahr al-Ulum, 1936: vol. 1, 288).

This indicates two facts: first, the inscriptions on coins during the Mongol rule were not consistent, and second, during the reign of some Ilkhanid sultans, Shiite slogans were adorned on the coins. The phrase "Ali (peace be upon him) is the Guardian of God" serves as evidence of Sultan Muhammad Khodabandeh's Shiite inclinations, just as Sultan Khodabandeh ordered the minting of coins in Najaf bearing the names of the infallible Imams (peace be upon them). He also commanded that the names of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) be inscribed on the army's banners. Oljeitu further decreed that the phrase "Hayya 'ala khayr al-'amal" (Hasten to the best of deeds) be included in the call to prayer. Additionally, he allocated monthly stipends to the servants of the holy Alawi shrine (Al-Kildar, 1949: Vol. 2, pp. 130–131). The allocation of

monthly stipends to the servants of the holy Alawi shrine demonstrates the continuity of this practice since the Buyid era.

5-3-The State of Industry in Iraq and Najaf During the Ilkhanate Era

The growth of industry in Iraq was prevalent even before the Mongol rule. The flourishing of industry in Kufa and Najaf dates back to the Buyid period. Due to Baghdad's status as the political center and its connections with other Iraqi cities, an extensive network of trade and communication existed between urban centers.

Since the Abbasid era, Iraq had become a major industrial hub. This was largely due to its strategic geographical position, as Iraq lay on one of the world's key trade routes and served as a center for the production of essential goods such as textiles, paper, glass, and other important industries. Ibn al-Faqih, in the late 3rd century AH (9th century CE), noted during his travels to Iraq: "Iraq is the heart and the great treasury of the kingdom" (Ibn al-Faqih, 1302: 252). He mentions the industries of Kufa's people, including cotton, silk brocade ("khazz"), and perfumes (Ibn al-Faqih, 1302: 252–253). As al-Maqdisi writes, one of Kufa's major crafts was silk brocade production (al-Maqdisi, 2001: 138). Geographers also mention a river in Kufa called "al-Nars", a canal branching off from the Euphrates, around which several villages were established, known collectively as "al-Nars". These villages were renowned for a textile industry called "al-Narsiyya" (al-Hamawi, 1956, vol. 4: 773).

Some industries in Iraq declined due to internal instability during the Ilkhanate period. However, Kufa and Najaf remained largely untouched by Mongol occupation, thanks to the efforts of Shi'a scholars. This was primarily due to the negotiations of scholars from Hilla, such as Shaykh Ibn Abi al-'Izz (father of

Allama al-Hilli) and Sayyid Majd al-Din ibn Tawus, who persuaded the Mongols to keep their distance from the sacred shrines of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Najaf and Imam Husayn (peace be upon him) in Karbala. Thus, Najaf maintained its internal stability and was spared Mongol occupation.

Ibn Battuta, during his stay in Najaf, described his visit to the shrine of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him). He noted that the threshold was made of silver and wrote: "Under the dome, the floor was covered with various silk carpets. There were large and small lamps of gold and silver, and in the center stood a square-shaped wooden zarih (shrine enclosure) plated with gold sheets. The inner ceiling of the dome was draped with silk curtains" (Ibn Battuta, 1967, vol. 1: 109–110). From Ibn Battuta's account, it is evident that industry in the holy city of Najaf had advanced by the late Ilkhanate period.

6- The Economic Role of the Jalayirids in Najaf

The economic role of the Jalayirid dynasty in Najaf, essentially, was the continuation of previous dynasties. If we compare the economic systems that existed from the Buyid period through the Jalayirid era in Najaf, we find that these regimes maintained remarkably similar economic policies and activities (Abdullah, 2014: 121).

The Jalayirid period witnessed Timur's repeated attempts to gain control over Iraq, which negatively impacted all aspects of their economic role. This era saw no significant economic reforms except for some restoration work on buildings in Najaf and the holy shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), which was undertaken due to certain Shiite sympathies among Jalayirid rulers.

During the Jalayirid period, the *iqta* (land grant) and daman (tax farming) systems inherited from the Seljuks era remained in

place. Under this system, tax collectors received a portion of the revenues they gathered. Taxes during this period were divided into two main categories:

Prescribed Taxes (*Al-Muqarrara*) and Religious Taxes (*Al-Shar'iyya*). The first collected by the *Diwan Al-Istifa* (revenue department) as state treasury income and the second collected by religious figures, which also contributed to state coffers (Abdullah, 2014: 125).

Additional taxes included gifts and bribes (taken in cash or kind), as well as specialized levies like the *tamgha* (stamp tax) imposed on carpenters and mills, a practice dating back to Mongol rulers.

Political instability during the Jalayirid period hindered the development of Iraqi cities including Najaf. Internal conflicts among Jalayirid factions and Timur's expansionist campaigns left no opportunity for economic reforms that might have improved conditions in Najaf and other Iraqi cities.

The problematic tax situation inherited from previous regimes - where revenue collection was the sole priority - remained unaddressed. The Buyid period stands as an exception, having implemented some economic reforms. However, during the Jalayirid era, arbitrary tax collection practices by muqata'an (tax farmers) and daman holders overshadowed any potential reforms.

Despite these challenges, Najaf under Jalayirid rule never reached complete ruin. The renowned traveler Ibn Battuta confirms this, describing 14th century Najaf as "among the finest cities of Iraq" and superior to other Iraqi urban centers.

As the above demonstrates, Najaf remained an important commercial center during Iranian dynastic rules. Ibn Battuta notably observed that while commercial activity was common for Najaf's residents, the city's political stability and insulation from conflicts significantly boosted its commercial prosperity.

7- Natural Disasters in Iraq and Najaf During the Mongol and Jalayirid Eras

The cities of Iraq were exposed to various natural disasters, which negatively impacted the overall economy of the region. Among these calamities were floods that submerged the city of Kufa, as well as locust swarms that invaded Iraq, devastating agricultural crops. Additionally, severe cold waves struck the country, further damaging crops (Abdullah, 2014: 79). These disasters contributed to an economic crisis marked by rising prices.

While the Mongols attempted to devise solutions to counter this economic crisis, they failed to take initiatives such as building hospitals, leaving Iraq vulnerable to epidemics.

The economic situation worsened due to the heavy taxes imposed by the Mongols on all Iraqi cities, including Najaf. These taxes, coupled with frequent market fires, placed a heavy burden on the people. The crisis was exacerbated by the Mongols' neglect of these economic issues, which adversely affected livelihoods and lowered living standards across Iraqi cities. Some Mongol rulers, such as Ghazan, implemented reforms, including standardizing weights and measures and abolishing the guarantor system (Abdullah, 2014: 82).

In addition to economic crises, political conflicts over the throne among the Mongols further destabilized the economy. Although Najaf was not a political center during Mongol rule and remained somewhat insulated from these conflicts, Baghdad, as the capital, bore the brunt of the political turmoil.

However, Iraqi cities were interconnected, with close ties between Baghdad and other regions. Thus, any economic crisis in Baghdad inevitably affected the rest of Iraq. As a result,

repeated epidemics and famines spread throughout the country.

A similar situation persisted during the Jalayirid era in Iraq, where political instability prevailed due to conflicts between the Jalayirids and Timurid invasions. The imposed taxes, combined with political turmoil and natural disasters—such as locust invasions and epidemics—further deteriorated the economic conditions, leading to soaring prices.

Summary

Before Iranian rule, Najaf already held a commercial significance. However, the political stability during the Buyid dynasty's rule in Iraq greatly boosted the city's trade. Agriculture flourished with the construction of canals from the Euphrates to Najaf. Industries such as perfume-making, leatherworking, and political stability under the Buyids facilitated commercial exchanges with other countries, particularly Iran.

The policies of Iranian regimes were largely similar. Taxation policies, particularly the introduction of new levies, often burdened the populace. The Iranian rulers employed the "Iqta" system (land grant system), which further exhausted the peasant class.

Najaf's industries during this period included goldsmithing, perfume-making, rosewater extraction, weaponry, blacksmithing, carpet-weaving, soap-making, tile-making, architecture, and textiles. These industries thrived due to financial support from the Buyids in Iraq. Textile factories in Najaf produced fabrics of various sizes and colors, relying on silk, wool, and cotton cultivated by local farmers.

Under the Buyids, agriculture, industry, and trade flourished. Their support led to the establishment of markets around the Imam Ali Shrine, boosting Najaf's economy. Trade with the Persian Gulf, Iranian cities, and the Arabian Peninsula expanded exports and imports, revitalizing Najaf's markets. These markets were organized by commodity type, with merchants trading goods for locals and pilgrims.

Taxes in Najaf included levies on imported goods, inheritance, real estate, and land taxes (kharaj), where tax collectors controlled agricultural land in exchange for land grants (lqta).

Najaf's economy thrived on diverse income sources, such as gifts and endowments from rulers, Shia pilgrimage tourism, and financial aid from Iranian dynasties like the Buyids. Annual charitable distributions in Najaf and the Imam Ali Shrine, along with trade, agriculture, livestock, and industries, sustained the city's wealth. The commercial vibrancy of Najaf relied on merchants engaged in domestic and international trade, as well as religious dues like khums and alms sent by Shia followers.

Prominent Iranian figures, such as Ata-Malik Juvayni, the Mongol-appointed administrator of Iraq, played key roles in Najaf's economy. He ordered the construction of a canal from the Euphrates to Najaf, significantly enhancing agricultural productivity.

During the Seljuk and Mongol periods, similar conditions prevailed. However, the Jalayirid era saw Iraq's economy deteriorate due to constant wars, political instability from Timurid invasions, natural disasters, and oppressive taxation. Despite this, Najaf retained some economic vitality thanks to Jalayirid support and endowments.

Religious conflicts in Iraqi cities often led to price hikes and famines. While Najaf was relatively shielded, it still felt the impact of rising commodity prices. Like other regions, Iraq faced natural disasters—droughts, cholera, plagues, earthquakes, and extreme cold—causing mass casualties, destroyed homes, and epidemics in Najaf.

Conclusion

From the 4th to the 8th century AH (10th to 14th century CE), the city of Najaf was under the rule of Iranian dynasties such as the Buyids, Seljuks, Ilkhanids, and Jalayirids, who governed both Iran and Iraq. While the Alavids of Tabaristan did not rule Iraq, they played a role in Najaf's urban development due to their Zaydi Shiite faith and natural interest in the sacred shrines.

This study sought to answer four questions, with the following results:

What was the political role of Iranian governments in Najaf?

The Buyid dynasty gained control over Iraq during the Abbasid caliphate in 334 AH. Their establishment was significant for supporting Shiite beliefs and followers. The Buyids' attention to the sacred shrines was a response to Abbasid policies opposing Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and their supporters. They uniquely focused on the shrines in Iraq, particularly Najaf. During Buyid rule, Najaf enjoyed relative political stability, remaining distant from the opposition movements they faced in Baghdad. Najaf was free from the sectarian conflicts seen in Baghdad, including Sunni-Shiite clashes and the ayyarun (vagabond) movements. Other ruling dynasties in Najaf, especially the Seljuks, generally persecuted Shiites. However, Najaf remained insulated from political conflicts and opposition movements against them. Iranian governments followed decentralized policies in Iraq, creating important administrative positions to manage the region. Thus, Najaf fell under the authority of the naqib al-nuqaba (head of sayyids), who played political, social, and cultural roles.

After overthrowing the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad, the Mongols performed a great service for Shiites by supporting them, as they had suffered under Abbasid persecution. Consequently, Shiite beliefs flourished in Iraq, especially in Najaf and Hilla. This was the most significant achievement of

the Mongol occupation for Shiism, particularly after some Ilkhanid rulers like Ghazan Khan and Oljaitu showed Shiite leanings, facilitating the spread of Shiism. During the initial Mongol invasion of Baghdad, Najaf remained unaffected by these events, thanks to the efforts of scholars from Hilla. The situation in Najaf during the Jalayirid period was no different from the Ilkhanid era, and their rule over Iraq was short-lived, ending with Timur's invasions.

What was the social role of Iranian governments in Najaf?

From the Buyid era onward, Najaf witnessed growing urban development and urbanization. The most important social contribution of the Buyids in Najaf was establishing the position of Naqaba (leadership of sayyids), which was exclusive to Alids. Under the Buyids and subsequent Iranian dynasties, Alids became one of the most important social classes in Iraq. The Buyids' social achievements in Najaf laid the foundation for future governments, including other Iranian dynasties that ruled Iraq. One outcome of Iranian rule in Iraq, especially under the Buyids, was the influence of the Persian class in Iraqi cities and their employment in administrative and military institutions. This increased the cultural influence of Persian customs and rituals in the shrine cities.

Other dynasties were distinguished by their pilgrimages to the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and their financial gifts to shrine custodians, sayyids, and needy Alids in Najaf and Karbala. Thus, the Buyids should be considered pioneers among Iranian governments in managing Najaf socially, politically, and urbanistically, as they established security and fostered prosperity in all aspects. Urban and architectural movements emerged during this period in Najaf and continued until the end of the 8th century AH.

The construction of tombs for scholars and rulers in the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Najaf began in the 4th century AH during the Buyid era. These tombs were located in the Haydari courtyard and the Qibla gate. The Buyids built a mausoleum for themselves opposite the shrine of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), known as the "Tombs of the Sultans," though no traces remain today.

What was the role of Iranian scholars in intellectual and cultural changes and the expansion of Islamic sciences in Najaf?

Najaf had already become a Shiite commercial and scholarly center by the 3rd century AH, before the Buyids. Shiites faced Abbasid restrictions on commemorating Shiite occasions like Eid al-Ghadeer and Ashura. In 351 AH, the Buyids openly celebrated these occasions in Baghdad and other Iraqi and Iranian cities, permitting Shiite rituals. Under Buyid rule, Shiites performed their rituals in the shrine cities, especially Najaf, without fear. The Buyids expanded existing Hussaini rituals that had been banned by the Abbasids, forcing Shiites to observe them in limited spaces like markets and shops. The Buyid government allocated spaces within the shrine for students, fostering scholarly activities. Najaf and Karbala became pilgrimage destinations, attracting visitors from across the Muslim world.

Even under other Iranian dynasties like the Seljuks, despite their Sunni orientation and persecution of Shiites, they could not suppress Hussaini rituals in Najaf and Karbala. During the Mongol era, the recitation of Hussaini martyrologies in the shrines and the establishment of libraries in Najaf provided many Islamic resources and manuscripts for religious research.

The scholarly school of Najaf flourished in the 5th century AH with the contributions of prominent Iranian figures like Shaykh al-Tusi, who wrote many works in this tradition. After

facing Seljuk persecution in Baghdad, al-Tusi migrated to Najaf. With his strategic vision, vast knowledge, and high ethics, he trained hundreds of jurists and conducted groundbreaking research that remains influential in Shiite seminaries. Through cultural engineering, he established and led extensive scholarly movements in jurisprudence, theology, and doctrine. Under his leadership, Najaf became a specialized school for jurisprudence and hadith studies. His works in hadith, *Rijal* (biographical evaluation), Shiite bibliography, theology, *Usul al-Fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), and comparative jurisprudence brought great progress to Najaf, which continued under his son Abu Ali al-Tusi and his students.

Thus, Shaykh al-Tusi's strategic and cultural program in Najaf attracted Shiite scholars, who participated in his academic circle and became influential jurists and specialists in Islamic sciences. His students in Najaf numbered in the hundreds; Muntajab al-Din's index lists 544 scholars from Rayy and other Shiite centers in Iran, many of whom were directly or indirectly his students (Muntajab al-Din, 1366 AH, pp. 32–132).

In addition to the religious affinity between Iraq and Iran during the Buyid and Ilkhanid eras, the interaction between the shrine cities and Iran facilitated the spread of the Persian language in the shrines and strengthened ties between the two communities. Iranians and Iraqis in Najaf and Karbala maintained inseparable bonds.

What was the economic role of Iranian governments?

Before Iranian rule, Najaf already had a commercial position, but the political stability under the Buyids significantly boosted its trade. Agriculture flourished with the construction of canals from the Euphrates to Najaf. Industries like perfume-making, leatherworking, and political stability under the Buyids

facilitated commercial exchanges with other countries, especially Iran.

The economic policies of Iranian dynasties were largely similar to Abbasid policies. Taxation included new levies that burdened the people. Iranian governments used the *iqta* system, which exhausted the peasant class.

Najaf's industries during this period included goldsmithery, perfume-making, rosewater distillation, arms manufacturing, blacksmithing, carpet-weaving, soap-making, tile production, architecture, and textiles. These industries thrived due to Buyid financial support in Iraq. Najaf's textile workshops produced fabrics of various sizes and colors, relying on silk, wool, and cotton from local farmers.

Under the Buyids, agriculture, industry, and trade grew. Their support led to the establishment of markets around the Imam Ali (peace be upon him) Shrine, boosting Najaf's economy. Trade with the Persian Gulf, Iranian cities, and the Arabian Peninsula expanded exports and imports, revitalizing Najaf's markets. These markets were organized by commodity type, with merchants trading goods for locals and pilgrims.

Taxes in Najaf included duties on imports, inheritance, real estate, and agricultural land (*kharaj*), where tax collectors controlled farmland in exchange for *iqta* rights.

Najaf's economy thrived on diverse income sources: gifts and endowments from rulers, Shiite pilgrimage tourism, and financial aid from Iranian governments like the Buyids. Annual charitable distributions in Najaf and the Imam Ali Shrine, along with trade, agriculture, livestock, and industries, sustained the city's wealth. Najaf's commercial vibrancy relied on merchants engaged in domestic and international trade, as well as religious dues like *khums* and *alms* sent by Shiites.

Prominent Iranians like Ata-Malik Juvayni, the Mongol-appointed administrator of Iraq, played key roles in Najaf's economy. He ordered a canal from the Euphrates to Najaf, significantly boosting agriculture.

The Seljuk and Mongol periods followed similar patterns, but the Jalayirid era saw Iraq's economy deteriorate due to constant wars, political instability from Timurid invasions, natural disasters, and heavy taxation. Despite this, Najaf retained economic vitality thanks to Jalayirid support and endowments.

Iraqi cities under Iranian rule faced economic crises, including sectarian conflicts in Baghdad and activities of groups like the Ayyarun, which caused price hikes and famines. While Najaf was relatively insulated, it still felt the impact of rising prices. Like other regions, Iraq suffered natural disasters—droughts, cholera, plagues, earthquakes, and extreme cold—causing mass casualties, destroyed homes, and epidemics in Najaf.

Thus, throughout the period under study, Iranians had broad political, social, cultural, and economic influence in Najaf.

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هشتم هجری

دکتر اصغر منتظرالقائم

(استاد دانشگاه اصفهان)

دکتر حیدر الحدراوی

دکتر علی اکبر عباسی

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مترجم: دکتر سمیه حاجی بابایی