Buddha or Yūdhāsaf?
Images of the Hidden Imām in al-Ṣadūq's *Kamāl al-dīn*

George Warner

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Abstract

This article is an exploration of how a fourth/tenth-century Muslim author makes ingenious use of radically extra-canonical and unusual narratives for the defense of serious theology. The theology in question is the occultation of the Twelfth Imām, a defining tenet of Twelver Shi'ism. The extra-canonical narratives, meanwhile, include a selection of Arabic stories about the Buddha. The study explores how the unexpected appearance of these stories in the text, al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq's *Kamāl al-dīn wa-tamām al-niʿmah*, reflects and responds to the epistemological challenges facing its author, and how, far from being a peripheral curiosity, they constitute part of a highly developed authorial strategy.

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Introduction

This paper presents a study of one of the earliest Twelver Shi'i works on the occultation of the Twelfth Imām, *Kamāl al-dīn wa-tamām al-niʿmah* ("The Perfection of Religion and the Completion of Blessing," hereafter *Kamāl al-dīn*) by Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Mūsā b. Bābawayh (d. 381/991), more commonly known as Ibn Bābawayh or by the honorific al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (hereafter Ṣadūq).[1] We will examine how scholars like Ṣadūq struggled in this early period to prove that the occultation had indeed taken place, and how in *Kamāl al-dīn*, he attempts an extraordinary solution to this problem. *Kamāl al-dīn* is distinguished, among other things, by the many unusual texts it contains, both those directly concerning the Twelfth Imām and others, most notably a considerable volume of stories about the Buddha. While these stories themselves have been subject to several studies, this has not been accompanied by any interrogation of the use to which Ṣadūq puts them.[2] It is this that we shall investigate here—how Ṣadūq harnesses such material to address pivotal epistemological challenges facing the nascent Twelver Shi'i community in the aftermath of the vanishing of the *imām*.

Changing history

Changing history in the Abbasid intellectual milieu was no easy task. Donner has described the considerable unanimity with which the early Islamic historical tradition agreed upon a narrative of Islam's origins, and how writers in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries were thus constrained from any attempt to generate new narratives by a redoubtable body of widely known earlier material.[3] Even though sectarian disputes often pivoted on conflicting accounts of Islam's origins—most crucially, of course, regarding who was or was not the legitimate successor to the Prophet—this did not, on the whole, result in widely divergent accounts. Differences were instead largely contended on the basis of different interpretations of the same events.

Nowhere is this more visible than in Shi'i polemical endeavors. As sectarian identities solidified over the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, the Shi'i view of history stood in increasing contrast with that of Sunnis. Imami Shi'i beliefs in ʿAlī's inherent, total superiority were predicated on a narrative of betrayal

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[1] In terms of extant writings, *Kamāl al-dīn* is probably the third oldest substantial Imami treatment of the subject of the Hidden Imām to survive. Ṣadūq's father, ʿAlī b. Bābawayh (Ibn Bābawayh the Elder, d. 329/941) leaves a treatise entitled *Al-Imāmah wa'l-tabṣirah min al-ḥayrah* ("The Imāmate and Clarity from Perplexity") (Qom: Madrasat al-Imām al-Mahdī, 1985) which presents itself as a discussion of the occultation in its brief introduction, but the text that follows, as we have it, does not discuss the Twelfth Imām. (This is almost certainly due to its being incomplete. We need look no further than *Kamāl al-dīn* to read the substantial body of *aḥādīth* concerning the Twelfth Imām that are narrated from Ibn Bābawayh the Elder.) Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī's (d. 329/941) *Al-Kāfī* (Tehran: Dār al-Kutub al-Islāmiyyah, 1388 [1968]) and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Nuʿmānī's (d. 360/971) *Al-Ghaybah* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī li'l-Maṭbūʿāt, 2013), both substantial discussions from earlier in the century, as well as Pseudo-Masʿūdī's *Ithbāt al-waṣiyyah* (which cannot be dated with certainty due to its unknown provenance), will be discussed below.

[2] See note 58 below.

[3] See Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginning of Islamic Historical Writing* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 14; Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), 286–287.

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and frustration, in which many of the companions and caliphs whom Sunnis held to be righteous were denounced as having reneged on the Prophet's final commands. What we find in practice, however, is that Shi'is of Ṣadūq's day had very little leeway to challenge the sequence of events accepted by other groups if they aspired to any kind of broad credibility. We do find Shi'i accounts offering a radically transformed narrative, such as reports that the Prophet's ghost had visited Abū Bakr after his inception of the caliphate, demanding that he relinquish the office to ʿAlī, only to be dissuaded by ʿUmar, who convinced him that this visitation from beyond the grave was merely witchcraft brought about by ʿAlī.[4] Such unapologetically history-altering texts, however, were of little use outside the very small portion of the population who accepted them. Instead, polemics with the majority had to be constructed around events like the Prophet's speech at Ghadīr Khumm or the gathering beneath Fāṭimah's cloak, the historical reality of which was broadly accepted.[5] What was contested were the details and the interpretations, even the exact meanings of the words spoken, rather than whether or not major events had actually occurred.[6]

This state of relative conformance to the historical consensus was to be put to the test by the occultation of the Twelfth Imām. Throughout the third/ninth century and much of the second/eighth, the Imami Shi'ah had been defined first and foremost by their contention that God could not, in his justice, expect humankind to abide by his will and so attain Paradise (or be forever damned for failing to do so) without providing them at all times with an infallible guide, an *imām*, the proof (*ḥujjah*) of God's will who was forever on hand to tell them exactly what that will was. The Imami Shi'ah identified a line of such *imām*s stretching back to the Prophet, beginning with ʿAlī and his two sons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, and then a patrilineal line of succession through Ḥusayn's descendants, each *imām* having named a successor from among his sons.

In the year 260/874, however, the eleventh *imām* al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī died, ostensibly without a male heir. This precipitated a serious crisis; Imami sources describe the aftermath of this death as "the time of perplexity (*ḥayrah*)." A number of competing solutions emerged to explain or negate this catastrophic discontinuity, among them the claim that Imām ʿAskarī was to be succeeded by his brother, and the claim that there was simply no further need for an *imām*. By far the most successful in the long run, however, was the doctrine of a twelfth, hidden *imām*. Imām ʿAskarī, this doctrine declared, had in fact had a son, but this son had been kept in concealment in the face of persecution. Following his father's death, this hidden son was now the Twelfth Imām, who would remain in this state of hiddenness (*ghaybah*) until, at last, he

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[4] See Pseudo-Masʿūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwāʾ, 1988), 155.
[5] See Maria Massi Dakake, *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 33–48.
[6] Stewart provides a valuable theorization of the situation of Imamis (specifically with regard to Imami legal thought) in his formulation of the three options historically available to the Imami Shi'ah as a minority: conformance to consensus, rejection of consensus, or adoption of consensus. It was conformance to consensus that dominated the Imami experience of the Buwayhid period, and it is this same conformance to consensus that we see dominating Imami attitudes to history at that time. See Devin Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1998), 1–109.

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returned at the end of time as the messianic *qāʾim* to overthrow the Abbasids, bring deliverance to his followers, and restore justice to the world.[7]

So it was that Imami authors who wished to uphold this doctrine were confronted with the difficult task of affirming an alternative history, narrating the birth, infancy, and continued existence of a Twelfth Imām who most of the Muslim community at large did not even acknowledge had ever been born. The contention concerned not only the question of whether such events as the *imām*'s birth, survival, and indeed his pursuit by Abbasid agents had taken place, but also many inherently miraculous elements, most notably the *imām*'s sustained total concealment from enemies and followers alike and, increasingly, his indefinite longevity.[8]

The burden of proof was thus a formidable one, and if these Imami scholars were going to be successful in their task they were going to need evidence. Unsurprisingly, then, by the middle of the fourth/tenth century we find an abundance of narrated reports circulating among the Imami Shi'ah purporting to prove that the Hidden Imām did, indeed, exist: reports of those who had seen him with his father as an infant, reports of those who, against all odds, had encountered him after his concealment on a dark night in a lonely place, as well as reports in which previous *imām*s prophesied his existence and circumstances in some detail.

A prodigious body of such reports is already present in the *Al-Kāfī* of al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941).[9] *Al-Kāfī* is an encyclopedic work composed almost entirely of compiled *aḥādīth* with very little commentary from Kulaynī himself, and therefore, while his substantial corpus of textual proofs of the Hidden Imām bears witness to the availability and even popularity of such reports among Imami scholarly circles, we have little explicit

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[7] The earliest account of these disputes is found in the early Imami doxography of al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī (d. *ca*. 300–310/912–922), *Firaq al-Shīʿah* (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿat al-Dawlah, 1931), 79–94. For the authoritative overview of the disputes surrounding Imam ʿAskarī's death and succession, see Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shiʿite Islam: Abū Jaʿfar Ibn Qiba Al-Rāzī and His Contribution to Imāmite Shīʿite Thought* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1993), 3–105.

[8] This imperative to defend the occultation occurred in the context of a much broader pressure felt by the Imami Shi'ah under the new circumstances of Buwayhid rule. The increased public acceptance of Imamis in this period allowed greater interaction between them and the non-Shi'i majority, increasing the need for Imami scholars to have ready mechanisms to defend and justify their doctrines in the face of their adversaries. See Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy*, 1–69 and *passim*. Regarding the inherently contentious nature of attributing miracles to the *imām*s, see note 55 below.

[9] See Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfī*, 1.328–343, 514–535.

indication of how Kulaynī expected his reader to respond to them.[10] If, meanwhile, we look to the Imami works on the occultation in the later decades of the fourth/tenth century, we find consistent expression of the concern that, abundant as these proof-texts might be, they are falling distressingly short of attaining credibility beyond Imami circles. Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) writes at the start of the chapter on the Twelfth Imām in his *Al-Irshād* that although he does supply the reader with a selection of eyewitness accounts of the Hidden Imām's birth, these are not a necessary proof of his existence. Instead, he declares that certainty in this matter is to be attained not by textual proof but by reasoned theological arguments.[11]

A little earlier, Nuʿmānī's (d. 360/971) *Al-Ghaybah*, though a very different work, exhibits a more emphatic reluctance to rely on these would-be-proof-texts. Unlike Mufīd, Nuʿmānī's downplaying of such material is not couched in terms of a methodological shift from text to reason. His proofs continue to be grounded in narrations, but he specifically excludes all texts containing eyewitness testimonies to the Hidden Imām's existence, even those witnessing the doctrinal necessity that is the *imām*'s designation (*naṣṣ*) by his father (texts Nuʿmānī's teacher, Kulaynī, narrates in abundance). His work instead relies only on texts in which previous *imām*s and the Prophet himself prophesy the advent and occultation of the Twelfth Imām. Significantly, Nuʿmānī is careful to assert that many of these texts are drawn from Sunni sources.[12]

Such texts inevitably fall short of the details found in the reports of those who claimed to have met the Hidden Imām, Nuʿmānī's collected prophecies being largely restricted to vaguer assertions regarding the number of the *imām*s or the rather more distant matter of what will happen when the *imām* returns from his occultation.[13] What Nuʿmānī profits from this expurgation, however, is a broader acceptability among non-Imamis; Muḥammad's foretelling of twelve successors is, after all, to be found in no less unassailably Sunni a source than al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The strategy was an enduring one, and is further to be found in the works of two students of Ṣadūq, the *Kifāyat al-athar* of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Khazzāz (d. *ca.* 420/1030) and the *Muqtaḍab al-athar* of Aḥmad b. ʿAyyāsh al-Jawharī (d. 401/1012). Both of these authors set themselves the task of proving that the Prophet was to be succeeded by twelve *imām*s using

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[10] What can be noted is that *Al-Kāfī* presents itself as an encyclopedia for the Imami faithful. In the introduction (5–9), Kulaynī addresses the book to an unnamed interlocutor who seeks the guidance of the *imām*s, rather than setting out to defend the book's contents against a more hostile readership (though this does not mean he was not mindful of the possibility of such a readership encountering the work). Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 385/995), meanwhile, writing a few decades later, does not appear to know of Kulaynī's *Al-Kāfī*, giving no mention of him in his *Fihrist*, further indicating that the book had yet to reach a readership beyond those of similar persuasions to those of Kulaynī himself (though he seems to have been an Imami, Ibn al-Nadīm's interests lay very much in the realm of philosophy rather than traditionalism, as was not uncommon among Imamis in the Buwayhid period).

[11] Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Mufīd, *Al-Irshād* (Beirut: Muʾassasat Āl al-Bayt li-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth, 2008), 2.342–343.

[12] E.g., Nuʿmānī, *Al-Ghaybah*, 65–74.

[13] Accounts of the apocalyptic events that will accompany the *imām*'s reappearance function to prove the all-important contention that this has not happened yet, bolstering the claim that the *imām* is, indeed, still in occultation and not to be identified with the claimants of other sects, most notably the Fatimids. See Nuʿmānī, *Al-Ghaybah*, 179, 240–245.

only Sunni *aḥādīth*, thereby once again marginalizing the transparently Imami corpus surrounding the Hidden Imām himself and the details of his disappearance.

All these Imami scholars thus exhibit a similar disquiet with the ostensibly invaluable resource of eyewitness testimonies to the Twelfth Imām's existence, a sentiment that sends them in search of alternative strategies of argument that may carry more weight with their non-Imami opponents. No matter how many accounts there were to narrate bearing detailed witness to the circumstances of the Twelfth Imām's birth, investiture, and concealment, these, like the story of Abū Bakr and the ghost of the Prophet, were of no use if they remained implausible to the other groups by whom the Imamis were surrounded. History (or rather the accepted version of history), these scholars knew well, was not so easily changed.[14]

It is in this context that Ṣadūq writes *Kamāl al-dīn*. *Kamāl al-dīn* may be counted alongside these other works of the later fourth/tenth century (that is, about one hundred years after the beginning of the *imām*'s occultation) in that it seeks to address this disquiet with the proof-texts for the occultation, but it stands quite apart from other Imami writings of the time in terms of how it does so. Ṣadūq tells us in his introduction how he was commanded by none other than the Hidden Imām himself (visiting in a dream) to pen a work on how his occultation was prefigured in the careers of previous prophets.[15] Though the book does draw on proofs shared with his contemporaries, adducing the theological necessity for an *imām*, previous *imāms*' predictions of the occultation of the Twelfth and so on, the bulk of it is spent, as the *imām* commanded, demonstrating that the apparently bizarre defining doctrine of the Imami Shi'ah—that the necessary *imām* of the Muslims, the one true successor to Muḥammad, is guiding his community from a state of inaccessible hiddenness—is not some weird idiosyncrasy of a fringe group, but rather a recurrence of a necessary phenomenon that can be observed time and again in the long history of God's many revelations to His creation.

If Moses can be hidden from his *shīʿah*, so, too, can the Twelfth Imām. If Noah can live for a thousand years, so, too, can the Twelfth Imām.[16] Occultation and revelation, *Kamāl al-dīn* aims to show, have always gone hand in hand, with scarcely a prophet setting out to teach his people without at some point

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[14] Though the details of Imami *isnād* criticism in the earlier fourth/tenth century are little known, it can certainly be observed that the *asānīd* of the texts pertaining to the Twelfth Imām in *Al-Kāfī* (and indeed in *Kamāl al-dīn*) are in many cases self-evidently problematic, most obviously in cases wherein the original narrator (and thus the witness to the Imām's existence) is unnamed. See, e.g., Kulaynī, *Al-Kāfī*, 1.514, no. 2; 519, no. 8; 522, no. 17; and 523, no. 19. Cf. Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ibn Bābawayh (Ṣadūq), *Kamāl al-dīn wa-tamām al-niʿmah*, ed. ʿAlī Akbar Ghaffārī (Qom: Muʾassasat al-Nashr al-Islāmī, 1429 [2008]), 463–464, nos. 1 and 4.

[15] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 33–34. For an examination of the possible significance of this origin-story of *Kamāl al-dīn*, see Roy Vilozny, "What Makes a Religion Perfect? Al-Ṣadūq's *Kamāl al-dīn* Revisited," in M. A. Amir-Moezzi et al. (eds.), *L'Ésotérisme shi'ite: ses racines et ses prolongements* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 473-491, 477–480.

[16] A similar, though less concerted, argument is deployed by Nuʿmānī, who evokes the examples (employed extensively by Ṣadūq) of Joseph's remaining unrecognized by his brothers in Egypt and Moses' concealment from Pharaoh as an infant to justify the Hidden Imām's concealment. See Nuʿmānī, *Al-Ghaybah*, 101, 111, 116–117.

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along the way being hidden from them, that they might, paradoxically, be better informed of God's will. Similarly, just as these prophets eventually returned from hiding to deliver their final message, so, too, will the Hidden Imām at last return as the savior of the Shi'ah. The argument does not exclude the Imami narrations concerning the Hidden Imām, but seeks an alternative means of validating them, relying not on the credibility or otherwise of the texts' sources but on their resonance with a broader salvific narrative that Ṣadūq draws on the wider *ḥadīth* corpus to construct.[17]

Vanishing prophets

Before setting out to illustrate this phenomenon at length, Ṣadūq presents a number of *aḥādīth* to underscore the value of the exercise. Though twice he describes his objective in very modest terms as being "to move [the occultation of the Twelfth Imām] from the realm of the impossible to the realm of the possible" (*min ḥadd al-maḥālah ilā ḥadd al-jawāz*), he makes sustained efforts to present the book's demonstrations as rather more forceful.[18] Of greatest significance in this regard is his adducing of the Prophet's reported statement that, "Whatsoever has befallen previous communities shall befall my community also."[19] The very bedrock of *Kamāl al-dīn*'s mechanisms of proof, this *ḥadīth* confirms not that stories of previous prophets can merely show that the occultation is possible, but that they constitute a guarantee that it will happen—that it *must* happen. If previous communities experienced a prolonged absence of their *imām*, then the Muslim community, too, is destined by these words of Muḥammad to

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[17] The desire to find parallels between the lives of the *imām*s and those of the prophets has been widely observed as a characteristic of Imami Shi'i literature in particular. See Judith Loebenstein, "Miracles in Šīʿī Thought: A Case Study of the Miracles Attributed to Imām Gaʿfar al-Ṣādiq," *Arabica* 50 (2003): 199–244, 235–237, and 241–242; Matthew Pierce, *Twelve Infallible Men: The Imams and the Making of Shi'ism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 92, 108–109, 120, 130–132, 144–146; Khalid Sindawi, "The Donkey of the Prophet in the Shīʿite Tradition," *Al-Masāq: Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean* 18 (2006): 87-98; idem, "Noah and Noah's Ark as the Primordial Model of Shiʿism in Shīʿite Literature," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* (n.s.) 1 (2006): 29–48.

[18] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 111, 157.

[19] Also adduced repeatedly are a set of *aḥādīth* in which the Twelfth Imām is foretold as exhibiting a *sunnah* from one or more previous prophets (many of which involve concealment), for example Moses's concealed birth or Muḥammad's use of the sword. See, e.g., Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 58, 176–7, and 184.

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undergo a similar experience. The vanishing of the Twelfth Imām is thus moved from the impossible to the inevitable.[20]

It is on this basis that *Kamāl al-dīn* begins (following a long introduction in which Ṣadūq puts certain theological issues to rest) with a veritable history of prophecy from more or less the beginning of time. Marvelous stories of God's chosen and their adventures are presented in chronological order, starting with Idrīs (identified as a son of Adam), and proceeding through Noah, Ṣāliḥ, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Jesus up to Muḥammad himself. Though the protagonists of these stories are familiar, as often as not the events described are less so: we read about Noah's flood and about Joseph's longing to be reunited with his father Jacob, but we also read about Abraham's encounter in the desert with a mysterious old man from beyond the sea and about the hidden island on which Jesus's loyal followers were secreted after his ascension to safeguard his religion, where they were provided with honey to eat by bees borne to them across the sea on the backs of jellyfish. The narratives are filled with the dramatic unfolding of the divine will, with marvels and wonders, and with suspense and vindication.[21]

Both in presentation and in substance, this extensive collection of stories is thoroughly subjected to Ṣadūq's stated objectives. No story passes in which it is not clear to the reader that the prophet-

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[20] It is worthy of comment that Ṣadūq elects to seek this precedent in the lives of the prophets rather than those of previous *imām*s. Pierce has studied the extensive commonalities that appear across biographies of different *imām*s in Imami literature from the Buwayhid period onward, such that *imām*s' births, martyrdoms, and so on conform to largely interchangeable types, while Buckley identifies a similar process in *ḥadīth* dating back to the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries: Ron P. Buckley, "The Morphology and Significance of Some Imāmī Shīʿite Traditions," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 52 (2007): 301–334. For more on the presence of such motifs in *Kamāl al-dīn*, see below. In *Al-Kāfī*, meanwhile, Kulaynī's chapters on occultation include *aḥādīth* wherein earlier *imām*s, primarily al-Ṣādiq, discuss their own states of hiddenness (as well as foretelling that of the Twelfth Imām) (e.g., *Al-Kāfī*, 1.333–334, no. 2).
Ṣadūq's choice of focus might be explained by his seeking a non-Imami audience (for whom the precedent of the *imām*s would mean little). This is not how he presents the book, however. In his introduction, he describes motivation stemming from the bewilderment of the Imami faithful with regard to the occultation (33), and later opines that discussions of the Twelfth Imām are pointless if one's interlocutor does not already accept the necessity of an *imām* (74). A better explanation might simply be that an established literature of "lives of the *imams*" had yet to emerge. The earliest datable text of this type we have is Mufīd's *Al-Irshād*. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015), Mufīd's student, is still to be found introducing his unfinished *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-aʾimmah* as a book about the births, deaths, deeds, and virtues of the Twelve Imāms as though such a work were a novelty: al-Raḍī, *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-aʾimmah* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī liʾl-Maṭbūʿāt, 1986), 23–25. While Pierce's study includes two texts (Pseudo-Masʿūdī's *Ithbāt al-waṣiyyah* and the *Dalāʾil al-aʾimmah* attributed to Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Rustam al-Ṭabarī) that are notionally before Mufīd, both of these are, as he acknowledges, of deeply uncertain provenance (Pierce, *Twelve Infallible Men,* 22–25).
[21] See Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 158–232 (the first twenty-one chapters of the book). For a case study of the significance of one such story to *Kamāl al-dīn*'s overall objectives see Kyoko Yoshida, "*Qiṣaṣ* Contribution to the Theory of *Ghayba* in Twelver Shīʿism," *Orient* 44 (2009): 91-104.

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protagonist has not undergone some form of concealment that is portentously analogous to the present occultation of the *imām*, though exactly what may constitute an occultation varies considerably from text to text. A prophet may be hidden, like the Twelfth Imām, for fear of persecution, such as when the infant Abraham is hidden from the depredations of Nimrod, who has heard tell of the child to be born who will spell his downfall.[22] In other instances, however, more benign episodes in a prophet's life will be appropriated for the occultation paradigm, such as Moses's adoption by Pharaoh's daughter (and thus his subsequent absence from his mother and the Israelites), Joseph's years in Egypt apart from his grieving father, and even Solomon's remaining closeted with a new wife![23]

Ṣadūq's instructive voice aids the process when an event is perhaps less obviously an exemplar of occultation, both by his expressly framing the stories as tales of occultation and occasionally by his inserting commentary to identify the key elements of correspondence between a given prophet's story and that of the Hidden Imām. The diction of the accounts themselves also sets them firmly within Ṣadūq's desired frame of reference. The word *ghaybah* (occultation) itself and its cognates are a recurrent presence in the stories, as are stock Imami terms such as *rujūʿ* (returning), *khurūj* (emergence) and *ẓuhūr* (reappearance) as descriptors of the different protagonists' return from their occultations. Moreover, the occultations themselves are regularly enriched with further details that can only resonate deafeningly with the Imami reader. Prophets will console their followers with the promise of a future *qāʾim* who will one day come to relieve them (this being neatly identified with the next prophet in the sequence of chapters: Idrīs foretells the appearance of Noah, Noah tells of Hūd, and so on); the expected figure will often be identified as a young man (*ghulām*) like the *qāʾim* himself; many a loyal *shīʿah* accompanies prophets and awaits (*intiẓār*) their return from occultation, even while their faith and resilience are sorely tested. We hear how when prophets do return, many lack the purity of heart to recognize them; sometimes there is a *faqīh* to whom they may turn for guidance in the prophet's absence; prophets leave legatees (*waṣī*) after them; those who seek a sign of the hidden *ḥujjah* may yet be granted one if they persevere.

The corpus is a remarkable one and it is to be regretted that, pending new texts coming to light, we know little about its sources. Nonetheless, the quantity of these *aḥādīth* and the pervasive presence of Shi'i motifs within them indicates a number of important things about this group of texts and Ṣadūq's use thereof. Excluding the unlikely explanation of massive forgery on Ṣadūq's part, in the late fourth/tenth century there clearly already existed a prodigious array of *qiṣaṣ* material that is steeped in unmistakably Imami concepts and language. This tells us in turn that there was by this time an established interest among Imamis in identifying and imagining precedent for the current soteriological status quo in the vast literature of *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*.[24]

There does, in fact, survive another Imami text from the period in which stories of the prophets are used extensively in a similar manner, in the form of Pseudo-Masʿūdī's *Ithbāt al-waṣiyyah*. Here, too, is a work which prefaces accounts of the Hidden Imām with accounts of earlier prophets in which an Imami coloring, including many a motif of the occultation, is clearly evident (though the focus here is less on the Twelfth Imām than on creating a sustained narrative from Adam to the present). Unfortunately, the dating and

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[22] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 169–171.
[23] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 173–176, 180, and 189–190.
[24] See note 17 above.

provenance of the work remain uncertain. Indeed, its similarity to *Kamāl al-dīn* is a not-insignificant component of its probable dating to the fourth/tenth century, such that to adduce it as evidence for the study of Ṣadūq's text risks becoming circular. The text's *asānīd* certainly argue for a date no earlier than the first half of the fourth/tenth century, but their presence is patchy, and it is quite possible that the work is a composite. The component of the work concerning the Twelfth Imām cannot, of course, predate the turn of the fourth/tenth century. If nothing else, the book certainly attests to a circulation of Imami-influenced *qiṣaṣ* material around the time of Ṣadūq's writing *Kamāl al-dīn*.[25]

The presence of these texts is significant in its indication that *Kamāl al-dīn*'s endeavor was not entirely unprecedented in Imami literature.[26] This in turn suggests what we shall develop in detail below: that the simple exercise of presenting these stories of previous prophets and their occultations is not, contrary to Ṣadūq's account of the book's origins, the full extent of his ambitions in *Kamāl al-dīn*.

The Vanished Imām

Having given us this survey of occultations past, Ṣadūq moves to the present occultation of the Hidden Imām, with which the former are to be compared. He first supplies a voluminous body of reports that document the foretellings of the Twelfth Imām's finality and occultation supplied by the eleven previous *imām*s, Muḥammad, Fāṭimah, and God. These are then followed by an extensive collection of eyewitness accounts of the *imām*'s existence, narrating direct encounters as well as the receipt of letters from the *imām*. These are the very reports that we have seen other Imami writers of the period treat with such circumspection, but Ṣadūq here embraces this rich corpus in all its improbable details (adducing more material than is found in *Al-Kāfī*), for these same details have now been prefigured and legitimized by his stories of the prophets. Resonances appear everywhere: the journey of one Abū Saʿd Ghānim the Indian across a landscape of hostile Sunnis (and occasional, secretive custodians of the truth) to his eventual meeting with the Twelfth Imām mirrors that of Salmān the Persian as he set out, defying his Zoroastrian parents, to seek Muḥammad.[27] Several stories appear of believers who, often when on pilgrimage, encounter a mysterious companion whom they only later discover to be their *imām*; these are reminiscent of the story of King Solomon's new parents-in-law, dining unsuspectingly with their daughter's new husband only to learn at the end, confronted with a climactic display of the prophet-king's magical powers,

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[25] For discussions of the book's provenance (albeit rather more focused on the fact that Masʿūdī probably did not write it rather than on who did) see Charles Pellat, "Masʿūdī et l'Imāmisme," in R. Brunschwig (ed.), *Le Shîʿisme Imâmite: Colloque de Strasbourg (6-9 mai 1968)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970), 69–90; Tarif Khalidi, *Islamic Historiography: The Histories of Masʿūdī* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975) 136–142.

[26] As *Kamāl al-dīn*'s own title illustrates, there is no way to positively identify such other works on the subject as may have existed from the bibliographical record alone. Yoshida notes in his discussion of *Kamāl al-dīn* that stories about al-Khiḍr, at least, appear in Shi'i literature in the mid-fourth/tenth century, a contention for which he cites Franke who, in turn, cites *Kamāl al-dīn* as the earliest example (Yoshida, "*Qiṣaṣ* Contribution to the Theory of *Ghayba* in Twelver Shīʿism," 94; Patrick Franke, *Begegnung mit Khidr: Quellenstudien zum Imaginären im traditionellen Islam* [Stuttgart: Steiner, 2000], 11).

[27] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 194–198 and 465–468.

that they are in the presence of Solomon himself.[28] In the more ominous image of the *imām* seen by the emissary al-ʿAmrī at Mecca, clinging to the Kaʾbah's cover and crying, "O God avenge me upon my enemies," we find an echo of the prophet Idrīs, who Ṣadūq tells us remained embittered in his cave, refusing to ask God to relieve the drought afflicting the people who rejected his message.[29]

One might be forgiven for thinking that at the close of these narratives of the Twelfth Imām Ṣadūq's work is done. If *Kamāl al-dīn* set out to affirm the portentous equivalences between past prophets and the present Hidden Imām, these have now been abundantly illustrated. It therefore comes as a surprise to find that when the curtain falls on the last of Ṣadūq's stories of encounters with the Hidden Imām, there still remains a great deal of *Kamāl al-dīn* left to read. Across what amounts to approximately the last third of the book, Ṣadūq presents us with an expanse of material that in various ways goes beyond his original remit, embodied in the earlier sections described above, of illustrating the Hidden Imām's predecessors in occultation among previous prophets. Some of what follows offers doctrinal clarifications regarding the earlier material (such as the permissibility or impermissibility of naming the Twelfth Imām), but in the main it comprises reports offering more stories—stories about neither *imām*s nor prophets.

Longevity and implausibility

The most substantial group of these stories to be presented is that concerning the *muʿammarūn*—the extraordinarily long-lived—a rubric under which Ṣadūq explicitly groups them.[30] This is a subject matter that is of clear pertinence to the truth of the Hidden Imām. Ṣadūq is writing *Kamāl al-dīn* perhaps over one hundred years after the death of Imam ʿAskarī, and thus faces the ever more urgent imperative to justify the Imamis' waiting for the Hidden Imām to reappear—reappear indeed as a young and warlike leader of men—now that he has remained hidden for longer than a normal human lifespan.[31] What better way to rebut such objections than to remind doubters of the many individuals in human history who have lived for hundreds of years? Ṣadūq presents a formidable corpus here, enumerating almost fifty individuals who are said to have enjoyed vast lifespans, many of which make the Twelfth Imām's one hundred-odd years look decidedly pedestrian by comparison. "Whatsoever has befallen previous communities…"

Things are not so simple, however, for these texts are clearly of a very different sort to those containing the stories of the prophets and then of the *imām* with which the book has been concerned up until this point. Ṣadūq's *muʿammarūn* are for the most part figures from the lore of pre-Islamic Arabia, figures who

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[28] Ibid., 189–190; 380, no. 34; 385, no. 49; and 468, nos. 7 and 8.

[29] Ibid., 158–164; 468, no. 10.

[30] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 559–604. These are preceded a few chapters previously by a much smaller group of *aḥādīth* which describe the longevity of the prophets and their communities (549–551).

[31] While this question no doubt became more vexed as the occultation approached its centenary, it is interesting to note that already in Nuʿmānī we see the assertion that the *imām* is going to be gone for a very long time. See Nuʿmānī, *Al-Ghaybah*, 137.

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are more familiar from the pages of wisdom literature,[32] wherein the image of the exceptionally long-lived patriarch is closely tied to the sage counsels that his many years entitle him to impart (more often than not in verse), counsels that may exhort the young to piety or lament the fatigue and futility of time's passing.[33] It is entirely in this familiar guise that they appear in *Kamāl al-dīn*; although Ṣadūq, as we shall see, draws particular focus to their age (his most diminutive entries noting only the name of an individual and their fabled lifespan), often he will supplement this information with the same mix of anecdotes, aphorisms, and verses that accompany *muʿammarūn* in other literary contexts.[34] The *muʿammarūn* stories are a colorful assemblage as presented in *Kamāl al-dīn*, their world-weary Arab sages accompanied by treasure seekers finding prophecies inscribed in subterranean vaults and hubristic kings building magnificent, impossible palaces in the desert.

This new set of protagonists has clear theological implications. After all, according to the terms of Ṣadūq's own arguments, the capacity of previous prophets to authoritatively prefigure the career of the Twelfth Imām is substantially rooted in their status as prophets ("a *sunnah* from Moses," etc.), a status that these ancient Arabs do not share.[35] These issues with their subject matter, meanwhile, feed into a broader range of generic questions regarding the texts themselves, texts that are more familiar as curiosities of poetry or genealogy than as components of serious theological debate. Most significant is the question of their sources. Most are supplied without *asānīd*, with others being even more dubiously sourced, one text purporting to have been found written on a rock near Alexandria and another even being quoted from a damaged text such that the story breaks off mid-narrative (frustratingly, just as the speaker is about to explain the difference between various types of jinn).[36] As such, they must contrast starkly with Ṣadūq's presentation of the *ḥadīth* of the *imām*s. Not only are the great majority of these supplied with an *isnād* going back to an infallible source, as is usual with *ḥadīth* literature, but Ṣadūq is repeatedly at pains to

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[32] Al-Ṣadūq is not alone in putting the *muʿammarūn* to legal or theological use. Juynboll has examined how in the second/eighth century *ḥadīth* transmitters would have recourse to (supposedly or actually) exceptionally long-lived transmitters to join otherwise problematically distant links in an *isnād*. See G. H. A. Juynboll, "The Role of *Muʿammrūn* in the Early Development of the *Isnād*," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 81 (1991): 155–175.

[33] For an examination of Muslim traditions regarding the long-lived and giant-sized peoples of ages past and their significance in the wider Middle Eastern context and beyond, see Brannon Wheeler, *Mecca and Eden: Ritual, Relics and Territory in Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 99–122.

[34] The most significant extant example of this literature (first edited by Ignaz Goldziher [Leiden, 1899]) is the *Kitāb al-Muʿammarīn* of Abū Ḥātim Sahl b. Muḥammad al-Sijistānī (d. 255/869). Ṣadūq shares a great deal of material with Sijistānī and is very probably using him as a source. He refers to a *Kitāb al-Muʿammarīn* in which he finds much of his material but does not name Sijistānī. It is also possible that the books shared a common source or that Ṣadūq was getting Sijistānī's material secondhand.

[35] Though *aḥādīth* linking the Twelfth Imām's occultation to the precedent of specific prophets clearly have no bearing on the *muʿammarūn*, the case of Ṣadūq's more general proof-text, "whatsoever has befallen previous communities shall befall my community," is less clear-cut. Ṣadūq forcefully evokes this *ḥadīth* in the context of the *muʿammarūn* stories in a rebuke to his detractors (*Kamāl al-dīn*, 601), but as we shall see, he is elsewhere eager to assert that the *muʿammarūn* stories are not to be relied on as positive proof in the way that the stories of the prophets are.

[36] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 575 and 581.

assert the textual integrity of the *imām*s' reported words as he narrates them in *Kamāl al-dīn*. Indeed, a claim he fiercely reasserts throughout the book is that so irrefutably densely transmitted (*mutawātir*) are the *aḥādīth* proving the occultation that whosoever denies their validity is implicitly denying the validity of textual proof as a whole, rejecting as they do so the very foundation of belief in prophecy and revelation and reducing themselves to the level of the Brahmins.[37]

It is therefore no surprise to find Ṣadūq framing the stories of the *muʿammarūn* with a very different sort of argument. The long lives described here are not, as Noah's was earlier in the book, presented as a guarantee that, having occurred then, they must reoccur now. Instead, Ṣadūq strikes a much more polemical tone, introducing these accounts as examples of the kinds of farfetched things that other groups believe in, even as they have the gall to reject the Imami belief in the Hidden Imām.[38] "They believe," Ṣadūq objects regarding one such narrative, "that that gazelle's dung endured in excess of five hundred years, unchanged by either rain or wind, or by the passing of days, nights and years by it; yet they do not believe that the *qāʾim* from Muḥammad's house shall endure until he rides out with the sword!"[39] The *muʿammarūn* stories thus function not so much as proof-texts as *anti*-proof-texts, the very opposite of the *imām*s' authentic and indubitable testimony, a carnival of the implausible that illuminates the absurd hypocrisy of Ṣadūq's opponents.

The less-than-certain provenance of these texts thus works to Ṣadūq's advantage, further signaling the weakness of these fanciful tales in comparison with his proof-texts. Ṣadūq also employs a number of measures to identify these narrations not just as unreliable but as enemy property, narrated by non-Imamis from non-Imami sources.[40] Discussing "the Old Man of the Maghrib" Abū Dunyā, Ṣadūq notes that "it is not even now confirmed among them that he has died."[41] The focus is entirely on these opponents' beliefs regarding Abū Dunyā, with no indication given of what view Ṣadūq or his fellows might make of this. When telling the story of King Shaddād, who lived for nine hundred years and built the city of Iram, Ṣadūq goes to some length to altericize the story, telling how no less a non-Shiʾi than Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān (d. 60/680) learns of the place, summons the man who claims to have seen it, and asks Kaʿb al-Aḥbār (d. 32/653) to corroborate his account.[42] Ṣadūq is clear that the disreputable sources of these texts only add to their narrators' hubris, asking incredulously how people can believe stories of warring serpents

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[37] Ibid., 34, 85, 113–114, 117, 134, etc. For a discussion of this role of the Brahmins (*barāhimah*) in Islamic thought as trope for monotheists who reject all Abrahamic prophets (among other characteristics attributed to them), see Norman Calder, "The Barāhima: Literary Construct and Historical Reality," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 57 (1994): 40–51.

[38] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 578, 581, etc.

[39] Ibid., 558–559.

[40] Ibid., 601.

[41] Ibid., 564.

[42] Ibid., 578–581. Kaʿb is, in fact, one of the figures whom Ṣadūq singles out as narrators of the improbable whom the Imamis' opponents inexplicably believe while rejecting the Hidden Imām. Ibid., 557.

and Quixotic kings from mere scholars, but not confirmation of the occultation spoken by God's prophet or his *imām*s.[43]

The *muʿammarūn* texts here appear as a continuation of Ṣadūq's efforts to rehabilitate the proof-texts for the occultation, efforts that do not much dwell on the details of these proof texts' sources but instead seek validation by less conventional means. Ṣadūq has first bolstered them by illustrating the binding precedent of earlier chapters of prophetic history; now he takes to task those who refuse to believe in them by reviewing absurdities to be found in more accepted texts. *Kamāl al-dīn* thus develops a polemic based on a set of rigorous, hierarchical, and dichotomous taxonomies between the book's different corpora: the supremely reliable *aḥādīth* attesting to the Twelfth Imām and his occultation are opposed to the laughably apocryphal and fanciful narrations of other groups and their authorities. The stories in these non-Imami narrations, meanwhile, implausible and absurd as they are, are also opposed to the momentous precedent of the stories of the prophets, every detail of which is a potential indicator of the present reality of the Hidden Imām. The plausible is opposed to the implausible, the authentic to the spurious, the sacred and binding to the insignificant and extraneous. Together these taxonomies all labor to verify as fact the events of the Hidden Imām's birth, investiture, disappearance, and eventual return.

Even as Ṣadūq works to qualitatively differentiate his different corpora, however, they still end up looking remarkably similar. Of course, that the stories of the Hidden Imām and the stories of the prophets should look similar is entirely the point, but by no means is this the sum of the correspondences, resonances, and echoes that continue to appear across *Kamāl al-dīn*'s stringent divisions.

The *muʿammarūn* texts, we have seen, are grouped on the basis of their shared testament to non-Imamis' unwitting and/or hypocritical acceptance of one aspect of the doctrine of the Hidden Imām, his preternaturally long life in occultation. In this respect, then, we expect to see parallels between these texts, anti-proof-texts as they are, and the proof-texts of earlier chapters. But it is not only in the long lives of the protagonists that such parallels appear. In one story, for instance, Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn (d. 282/896) seeks to plunder the treasure of the pyramids, whereupon he encounters an inscription in Greek that none can read.[44] He is advised by a wise man from among the people that the only man with the knowledge to decode the text is a three hundred-year-old bishop who lives in Ethiopia (here the eponymous *muʿammar*). The bishop is too old to make the journey north, and so the king resorts to an exchange of letters. Eventually the bishop reveals that the inscription instructs that none will be able to open the treasury until the *qāʾim* from the house of Muḥammad comes to claim it.[45] Rather than being just another example of others' belief in the possibility of abnormal longevity, here is a story which shares several pivotal motifs with the doctrine of the Hidden Imām. Apart from the bishop's prodigious age, not only do we see a direct assertion of the truth of the returning *qāʾim* at the story's climax, but we find, too, the necessity to seek knowledge from an absent, pious authority, and indeed the need to do so through letters on account of that authority's remaining at a distance. After constant reiterations of these images

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[43] Ibid., 556–559 and 601.

[44] The printed text of *Kamāl al-dīn* renders the name Ḥammādawayh, however Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, ruler of Egypt (r. 270/884–282/896), is clearly meant.

[45] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 588–590.

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and of their high significance across hundreds of pages, it is quite inconceivable that they remain there by accident.

Neither is this an isolated incidence; rather, such diverse reflections of the Hidden Imām continue to recur across the *muʿammarūn* texts. We read that Abū Dunyā, the Old Man of the Maghrib, was last seen retiring to his native land to await the coming of the *mahdī*.[46] As well as living for hundreds of years, Ḥabābah al-Wālibiyyah is also identified as the custodian of the mysterious pebble on which each successive *imām* will leave his imprint, a recurring proof-text in defenses of the Twelfth Imām.[47] Just as believers may, Emmaus-like, meet an unidentified stranger on the road who eventually turns out to be the Hidden Imām who rewards them for their pious conduct, so the white snake that ʿAbīd b. Sharyah rescues turns out to be a benevolent jinn in disguise.[48] Ṣadūq is clearly showing his reader a great deal more in these texts than examples of his opponents' belief in extreme longevity, and as he does so, the resonances multiply between corpora he has striven to separate.

These resonances are even more conspicuous when they concern the very details he lambasts as absurd. Regarding a narration telling of the magical city of Iram, he is conspicuously eager to stress the implausible quality of the tale, himself straying into hyperbole as he decries the story "of a place like unto Paradise itself" hidden somewhere on earth, a comparison which the reports he cites do not themselves make (though Iram's splendor is certainly emphasized).[49] Yet this fantastical tale exhibits unmistakable parallels with Ṣadūq's earlier accounts of the Hidden Imām. Iram is a jewel-encrusted city in the middle of the desert, upon which the narrator stumbles whilst searching for his lost camel. In an earlier section, meanwhile, we read how a *shaykh* of the Banū Rāshid in Ḥamdān, having become stranded from his caravan on the way to Mecca, put his trust in God and wandered on foot, eventually finding himself in a green oasis, in the midst of which was a glittering citadel rising like a sword from the grass. Upon entering he was told by attending servants that God intended a blessing for him, and was led behind a veil to where there sat a young man above whose head was suspended a sword. The man announced himself as the *qāʾim* of the house of Muḥammad, who would rise up with this sword at the end of time to fill the world with justice. At the story's end, the lost pilgrim from Ḥamdān falls on his face in reverence, but the *imām* kindly raises him up and sends him on his way home with a purse full of gold.[50] Whatever is highlighted as absurd credulity in the story of Iram, the reader is meanwhile asked to meet with pious acceptance when it concerns the Hidden Imām himself.

These sustained, diverse echoes of the *imām*'s image across *Kamāl al-dīn*'s internal divisions have serious implications for Ṣadūq's arguments. What is significant here is not merely that his vociferously opposed corpora have a great deal in common but that they have more in common than Ṣadūq seems ready to admit, and that their similarities can be found along the very axes about which he is keen to

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[46] Ibid., 573.
[47] Ibid., 562–564.
[48] Ibid., 574–575.
[49] Ibid., 578. Tellingly, Ṣadūq inserts no such objection earlier on in *Kamāl al-dīn* when Alexander at the end of his wanderings comes across a land in which descendants of Moses's people are living in a perfect society, with whom Alexander elects to dwell for the rest of his days. See Ibid., 433–435.
[50] Ibid., *Kamāl al-dīn*, 480–481.

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differentiate them. He states that he does not rely on the *muʿammarūn* texts and their like to prove the Hidden Imām's validity, rather he relies on the authentic *aḥādīth* of the *imāms*; yet we find so much material in the *muʿammarūn* stories' anti-proof-texts that looks suspiciously like proof. Even if the sages and kings in these tales are not prophets, it is a determinedly cynical reader who can wade through the stories of almost fifty such long-lived men and women (alongside one or two vultures) and not find the continued survival of the Twelfth Imām a little more palatable, let alone all the other elements of the *imām*'s occultation and return that these non-Imami texts seem to affirm. Though Ṣadūq instead presents these texts only as examples of his opponents' folly, when the reader encounters within them what appear to be the exact same set of images of vanished authority figures and pious expectation that Ṣadūq accords such probative importance in the stories of the prophets, that reader may well suspect that they are, in fact, fulfilling the same function. Such an eventuality, of course, might in turn lead to the accusation that Ṣadūq is, indeed, relying on these less-substantiated texts, and so to the catastrophic implication that the *imām*s' *aḥādīth* are not the self-sufficient proof he claims them to be.

No less precarious are Ṣadūq's insistences that his anti-proof texts are evidently less plausible than his proof texts. His contemporaries show that it is quite possible to create a sanitized corpus of testaments to the Hidden Imām's existence, one that could be easily contrasted (as Ṣadūq aims to do) with such florid details as talking wolves and exploding dung. The essential elements of the Twelfth Imām's story are, after all, few: he needs to have been born, he needs to live a long time, he needs to be concealed, and he needs to return without his absence having brought about an epistemological catastrophe. Instead of this, however, Ṣadūq includes stories of the Twelfth Imām that easily rival the *muʿammarūn* texts in terms of the wonders they describe. In so doing, even as he protests at his opponents' denying the Hidden Imām whilst believing in eccentric apocrypha, he courts the readerly rebuttal that the accounts of the Twelfth Imām's occultation (and of the ancient prophets in whose careers it is prefigured) are in fact every bit as ridiculous as Kaʿb al-Aḥbār's tales of Abū Dunyā and then some. As well as details that threaten only Ṣadūq's asserted hierarchy of plausibility, *Kamāl al-dīn* also includes material that specifically threatens Imami orthodoxies, such as the suggestion that there could be times when there was no *ḥujjah* on earth, a report suggesting that the Hidden Imām has a brother called Mūsā who resides with him in occultation, and another stating that Zaynab bt. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 62/681) assumed the mantle of *ḥujjah* after the death of her brother Ḥusayn (in contrast to the by then thoroughly accepted Imami view that asserts a continuation of patrilineal male *imām*s in the person of Ḥusayn's son).[51]

It seems that Ṣadūq is guilty of inexplicable self-sabotage, his unending compiler's permissiveness towards the weird and wonderful, be it jellyfish being ridden by bees, the quest for the water of life, or birds with the power of speech, placing *Kamāl al-dīn*'s vital taxonomies under precarious and unnecessary stress. As well as threatening Ṣadūq's stated objectives within *Kamāl al-dīn*, this also sits at odds with a defining element of Ṣadūq's career visible across his works: the increasing pressure to bend his traditionist position to the Muʾtazilite rationalism that held sway over much of the Buwayhid intellectual

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[51] See Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 169, 474–476, and 528.

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world.[52] His largest surviving work to deal with theological questions, *Al-Tawḥīd*, introduces itself explicitly as a rebuttal to accusations that the *imām*s' *ḥadīth* contain theological heresies, while his *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā* is dedicated to al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād (d. 385/995), the ardently Muʿtazilite vizier who is reported to have banished Ṣadūq from Rayy for excessive traditionism (before or after the composition of *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, we cannot tell).[53] Both works correspondingly contain prominent chapters detailing the *imām*s' wisdom on the subject of God's unity and justice (*al-tawḥīd waʾl-ʿadl*), the central tenets of Muʿtazilite doctrine.[54] Such looming censure is near at hand in *Kamāl al-dīn*, such as the passages in the book's introduction cited from the Imami theologian Ibn Qibah al-Rāzī (d. before 319/931) that explicitly deny such 'excesses' as the belief that the *imām* has knowledge of the unseen, a denial that Ṣadūq repeatedly flouts with abandon elsewhere in the book.[55]

We might conclude that Ṣadūq is simply overreaching himself, his eagerness to ply his readers with ever more images of occultation, no matter how bizarre their details or dubious their source, directly conflicting with his simultaneous desire to affirm the probative sovereignty of the *imām*s' *ḥadīth*, both projects thus falling victim to his attempt to combine them. To so conclude, however, may be to underestimate Ṣadūq. While we could attribute *Kamāl al-dīn*'s conflicting jumble of proofs to a lack of authorial self-control, to do so risks neglecting the potential advantages of such a strategy. Not only do the *muʿammarūn* texts and others like them offer Ṣadūq possibilities that *aḥādīth* do not, but he has much to profit, too, from fostering overlaps between the content of his different corpora, even as he must meanwhile (perhaps a little disingenuously) assert their stark qualitative separation. To explore these potential advantages to what could otherwise be mistaken for ineptitude, we move now to *Kamāl al-dīn*'s last and most bewildering set of narratives, those purporting to concern the Buddha.

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[52] That Ṣadūq felt this pressure has long been documented; more than one recent scholar has read concessions to Muʿtazilism in his theological writings. See Martin J. McDermott, *The Theology of Al-Shaikh Al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022)* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq Éditeurs, 1978), 341–342 and Wilferd Madelung, "Imāmism and Muʿtazilite Theology," in Brunschwig (ed.), *Le Shîʾisme Imâmite*, 13–30, 19–20.

[53] Ibn Bābawayh (Ṣadūq), *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī liʾl-Maṭbūʿāt, 2006), 166–167.

[54] Idem, *ʿUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā* (Qom: Manshūrāt Dhawī al-Qurbā, 1427 [2006]), 1.105–138; idem, *Al-Tawḥīd*, 103–104.

[55] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 140. Their attribution of miracles to the *imām*s was an ongoing source of controversy for the Imami Shi'ah, provoking near-unanimous censure from other groups. See Loebenstein, "Miracles in Šīʿī Thought," 202–211.

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Bilawhar and Yūdhāsaf

The *muʿammarūn* texts are followed by perhaps the most intriguing part of *Kamāl al-dīn*, indeed what was until recently the only part of the book to receive sustained discussion in Western scholarship.[56] This is a set of stories concerning an Indian prince named Yūdhāsaf (or Būdāsf), better known in English as the Buddha.[57] Together the stories are of a considerable length, comprising some seventy pages in printed editions and thus around 10 percent of *Kamāl al-dīn* as a whole, and are moreover conspicuously placed as the last substantial component of the book before its closing miscellanies (*nawādir*). Though a number of studies have drawn on Ṣadūq's texts to reconstruct what was known of the Buddha in Abbasid literature and the sources thereof (*Kamāl al-dīn* is particularly remarkable in this regard for preserving what appear to be several stories of the Buddha not known in any other source), very little attention is paid to the question of Ṣadūq's own interest in the stories.[58] What did an Imami *faqīh*, in a discussion of the most troublesome of doctrinal questions, have to gain from narrating such tales, let alone at such length?

Following our previous analysis, we must also ask how these Yūdhāsaf stories fit into the puzzling dynamics at work between *Kamāl al-dīn*'s assembled corpora. In many ways, this new batch of thoroughly extra-canonical material figures similarly in the book's workings to the *muʿammarūn* texts it follows. In other ways, however, these stories are quite distinct, contributing new registers to *Kamāl al-dīn*'s mix of proofs even as they beg new explanations regarding why Ṣadūq has included them.

Ṣadūq appears to supply a ready answer to this last question. At the close of the Yūdhāsaf stories, he states that he has included such texts not as proof of his arguments but only as a lure to the curious reader, attracting their attention with engaging tales of magic and derring-do in the hope that, thus engrossed, they will feel compelled to read on, perusing the rest of the book and so becoming educated in

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[56] Recently *Kamāl al-dīn* has been better served with studies on diverse aspects of the work having been provided by Mohammad ʿAlī Amir-Moezzi, "A Contribution on the Typology of Encounters with the Hidden Imām," in ibid., *The Spirituality of Shiʾi Islam: Beliefs and Practices* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 431–460; Vilozny, "What Makes a Religion Perfect?"; and Yoshida, "*Qiṣaṣ* Contribution to the Theory of *Ghayba* in Twelver Shīʿism."

[57] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 603–667. On the question of Yūdhāsaf/Būdāsf/Buddha's name, see note 69 below.

[58] Daniel Gimaret produced a translation and edition of *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf* (Paris: Librairie Droz, 1972), based on a manuscript of *Kamāl al-dīn* and other Arabic exemplars of the story. S. M. Stern and Sophie Walzer give a translation and analysis of those stories in the text that are unknown in any Buddhist source: *Three Unknown Buddhist Stories in an Arabic Version* (Oxford: Cassirer, 1971). Zeina Matar examines an instance of continued interest in the text in later Shiʾi writings: "The Buddha Legend: A Footnote from an Arabic Source," *Oriens* 32 (1990): 440–442. For an analysis of the potential sources of the text in *Kamāl al-dīn*, see F. de Blois, "On the Sources of the Barlaam Romance, or How Buddha Became a Christian Saint," in Christiane Reck, Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, and Dieter Weber (eds.), *Literarische Stoffe und ihre Gestaltung in mitteliranischer Zeit Kolloquium anlässlich des 70. Geburtstages von Werner Sundermann* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2009), 7–25.

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the truth of the Hidden Imām.[59] There is undoubtedly some truth to this. In other writings we frequently find Ṣadūq mixing material of direct doctrinal and polemical import with miscellaneous items that may grab the less committed reader's attention, such as explorations of why pregnancy interrupts menstruation and why corpses weep.[60] The Yūdhāsaf stories, meanwhile, are certainly as alluring a bait as could be wished for. If, however, we examine these texts closely in the context of *Kamāl al-dīn*'s stated objectives, we are driven to suspect that this given reason is not the sum of Ṣadūq's motives; rather Yūdhāsaf and his exploits are part of the same probative continuum of motifs that stretches across *Kamāl al-dīn*.

The story begins when the mighty but thoroughly impious king of India is confronted by a lone sage who seeks to change his ways, and who tells him the story of one Yūdhāsaf with that aim. This story, in turn, is that of the youthful Yūdhāsaf, a sheltered prince and the son of another, more graphically impious king, a king who has banished all men of religion from his kingdom on pain of execution. So many were burned to death in this pogrom that the land of India remained ablaze for an entire year. Prince Yūdhāsaf, meanwhile, undergoes the proverbial realization of change and mortality familiar from Buddhist literature, stealing out of the palace into the real world, where he sees before him the shocking realities of decay and death from which he had been protected. Cast into doubt, he seeks the means of answering his mortal dilemma, and learns of the men of religion who once roamed the land but whom the king has driven into hiding, whom he dearly wishes now to find and consult. The wise man of God, Bilawhar, residing in another country, hears of the prince's plight, and travels in disguise to find him and teach him. They meet in secret and begin Yūdhāsaf's education, an education which consists largely of Bilawhar telling the prince improving stories, some of which contain characters who themselves tell stories in turn. For seventy pages we are transported into a maelstrom of parables and aphorisms, narratives and metanarratives, a world where men of God are forever struggling to spread the faith in the face of despotic, idolatrous rulers, whose depredations often compel them to do their work in secret.

It is clear that, far from being only a Shahrzadesque narrative bait to keep untrustworthy readers interested, the Yūdhāsaf stories are deeply embedded in the contentions that Ṣadūq has been making in the earlier parts of the book. It is dominated by the same motifs that dominate Ṣadūq's selection of stories of the prophets and, indeed, the *muʿammarūn* stories. We see the custodians of religion driven into hiding by unholy tyrants; we see the pious quest of the faithful to learn their teachings in their enforced absence. Like the stories of the prophets, the Yūdhāsaf stories are further linked to the master-narrative of the Twelfth Imām not only by motifs of plot but also by the staple vocabulary of Imami literature on the subject, regularly employing terms like *imām*, *khurūj*, and, of course, *ghaybah*.

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[59] This concern that the reader be kept entertained and interested, and, indeed, that they might be so interested as to be coaxed into reading something improving despite themselves, is a familiar one in Abbasid literature, an extensive study of which is provided by G. J. H. van Gelder, "Mixtures of Jest and Earnest in Classical Arabic Literature: Part I," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 23 (1992): 83–108, 95–106; and idem, "Mixtures of Jest and Earnest in Classical Arabic Literature. Part II," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 23 (1992): 169–90, 169–172.

[60] See Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Mūsā b. Bābawayh (Ṣadūq), *ʿIlal al-sharāʾiʿ* (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Aʿlamī li'l-Maṭbūʿāt, 2007), 282–283 and 296.

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So far Ṣadūq's presentation of the Yūdhāsaf stories is very reminiscent of how he treats the *muʿammarūn* stories, complete with the same apparent contradictions. Once again we find a set of material, the utility of which for *Kamāl al-dīn*'s central contention is evident, but just as evident is Ṣadūq's determination to distance himself from that utility. Once again we find Ṣadūq anxious to reaffirm that he needs only the *imām*s' *ḥadīth* to prove his points, and that these other texts are of a thoroughly secondary (or tertiary) importance. Where Ṣadūq narrates stories of the prophets, the parallels between the Hidden Imām and prophets like Joseph and Abraham are often vociferously pointed out to the reader, but such guiding interventions are quite absent from the Yūdhāsaf stories, their many resonances with the occultation of the *imām* remaining implicit for the reader to find.

In two ways, however, the Yūdhāsaf narratives appear the greater oddity. The first is the different reason supplied for their inclusion. Ṣadūq does not suggest that these are governed by the same rubric of anti-proof under which he included the *muʿammarūn* texts, instead having us believe that Yūdhāsaf is there solely to entertain (a claim that their clear probative value renders all the more implausible). This is all the more noteworthy in combination with the second distinguishing feature of the Yūdhāsaf stories: their alterity. We have seen how Ṣadūq emphasizes that the *muʿammarūn* stories are of a less verifiable quality than the *aḥādīth* of the *imām*s, but with the Yūdhāsaf stories we arrive in even less canonical territory. Though the *muʿammarūn* stories contain their share of unsourced texts and improbable legends, they still in the main deal with matter which is very local, both geographically and epistemologically: the long-lived Arabs whom Ṣadūq lists include figures to whom are attributed familiar poems and to whom tribes trace their genealogies. While the events they describe are often filled with wonders and perhaps unfamiliar for it, they are nonetheless accompanied by Ṣadūq's energetic attempts to situate them as the property of the Imamis' accustomed opponents, narrated by their authorities and written in their books. With Yūdhāsaf, however, we have moved to a very different register, a place of the exotic, the unknown and the quite unverifiable, once upon a time and far, far away.

> I have heard that there was once a king amongst the kings of India. His soldiers were many, his kingdom was large, he was held in dread by his people and was victorious over his enemies. But he was also possessed of great desire for the pleasures of this world, its delights and its diversions, and so was ruled and swayed by his passions. For him, the most beloved and trusted of men was he who flattered him and lauded his opinions, while the most despised and doubted was he who neglected his commands and bade him do otherwise than he wished.[61]

The even more fabulous, altericized register inhabited by these narratives in some ways heralds a proportional escalation of the risk of their inclusion. If Ṣadūq is nervous of being seen to rely on *isnād*-devoid wisdom literature like the *muʿammarūn* stories, this can only be exacerbated when it comes to a text like the Yūdhāsaf stories that has minimal, if any, claim to authority. This heightened risk in turn intensifies the puzzle of why Ṣadūq includes so hazardous a text and on such a scale.

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[61] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 603. Interestingly, in some manuscripts, "I have heard" is prefixed by a short *isnād* of mostly unknown sources, while in others this is omitted.

Conversely, we see in this same otherness that distinguishes the Yūdhāsaf stories in *Kamāl al-dīn* the beginnings of their utility. They are extraneous to the known, to the knowable, and thus extraneous to the verifiable, and this allows them to function with certain freedoms and flexibilities that are not possible for Ṣadūq's other texts. The stories told in his other texts, be they about recent historical figures like Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn or more distant individuals like Luqmān or even Dhū'l-Qarnayn, must confine their images of occultation to certain frameworks of who these figures are known to be and the exploits in which they are known to participate, even though these may include such wondrous details as bejeweled citadels and adventures beneath pyramids. The setting of India,[62] by contrast, removes us to a context that is utterly distant, non-Abrahamic, and unverifiable.[63]

In such a setting, Ṣadūq's images of the Twelfth Imām can now appear on an altogether grander scale. The hidden *imām*s who appear in the Yūdhāsaf stories are persecuted not by their fellow Muslims over disputes of legitimacy, but by wicked, idolatrous tyrants, monstrous kings who give no pretense of piety but condemn entire religions to be burned to death. Their persecution is justified not by theological minutiae but by the charge of piety itself, the teachings for which they are hounded none other than the essential truths of God's oneness and power and of man's frailty.[64] As for the one who seeks the hidden figure of guidance, the humble believers of the stories of the Twelfth Imām, now it is the young, heroic prince, setting out to seek adventure and to restore just rule to the land, perhaps encountering one or two fair maidens in towers as he does so.[65] This is the story of the Twelfth Imām not merely corroborated but reinvigorated and writ large, a story that the Yūdhāsaf stories are able to create precisely because of their apocryphal nature.

Even as he presents these most dramatic illustrations of the reality of occultation as a pervasive, perennial phenomenon of human experience, we have seen how Ṣadūq is anxious to distance himself from any open reliance on these texts for probative value, fearful that to do so would be a fatal blow to his arguments' credibility. Rather, all that is offered here is tacit similarity, the stories relying only on the

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[62] India is often to be found playing the role of the exotic other in Abbasid literature. This receives abundant illustration in the ʿAjāʾib al-hind of Buzurg b. Shahriyār (d. 342/954) (Jabil: Dār wa-Maktabat Bībliyūn, 2009), whose exotic tales must represent a much more widespread popular literature along similar lines now lost to us. This imaginative habit is meanwhile tellingly rebuffed in a work that set out to correct it: Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī, in the introduction to his *Taḥqīq mā li'l-Hind*, vents not a little frustration at people's credulity with regard to this subject matter: *Kitāb al-Bīrūnī fī Taḥqīq mā li'l-Hind min maqūlah maqbūlah fī'l-ʿaql aw mardhūlah* (Qom: Intishārāt-i Bīdār, 1418 [1997]), 1–6. Al-Sayrāfī similarly is anxious to distinguish his account of the region from the common currency of sailors' tales; see James E. Montgomery and Tim Mackintosh-Smith (trans.), *Two Arabic Travel Books* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 132–133.

[63] We should note that, as we saw above, it is the example of the Indian Brahmins and their extraordinary, unapologetically foreign, total rejection of the Abrahamic model of prophecy that is presented in *Kamāl al-dīn* as the dreadful eventual consequence of Ṣadūq's opponents' rejection of his proof-texts.

[64] It is worth noting that Ṣadūq is elsewhere quite clear that even such essential truths as these cannot become known without the guidance of a *ḥujjah*. See *Al-Tawḥīd*, 314–321.

[65] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 659.

reader's imagination to form the associations that they facilitate. Ṣadūq ensures that this imaginative leap will indeed occur by a simple process of accumulation, enacting countless reiterations of his key motifs across the length of *Kamāl al-dīn*, from Nimrod's pursuit of Abraham, to Pharaoh's pursuit of Moses, to the Abbasids' pursuit of the Hidden Imām, to the awful king of India's murderous designs, ever reinforcing them in the reader's mind such that they become unmissable.

This cumulative instruction of the reader's imagination in turn engenders powerful assertions of equivalence and truth that draw on something more profound, more visceral than the textual-critical authenticity that had proved so elusive to Imami proponents of the occultation. The Hidden Imām, these stories declare, *is* the wandering, pious sage whom the true of heart must seek out. His disappearance *is* the necessary flight from tyrannical, bloody persecution. The Imami believer *is* the heroic young prince. The Abbasid caliph, meanwhile, *is* the genocidal, unbelieving oppressor, the enemy of religion itself. Much of this is achieved by the grand scale of the Yūdhāsaf stories, but much, too, is accomplished by a strategic shrinking of certain of *Kamāl al-dīn*'s leitmotifs. While Imami scholars equivocate endlessly on the exact reason for God's concealment of the *imām* and what this entails for his community,[66] in the Yūdhāsaf stories things are simpler, the men of God hiding for fear of persecution, not as a result of some inscrutable divine act. They are not miraculously concealed, only hidden in another country, and if needs must they can return to answer the virtuous quest of the young prince. The *mysterium tremendum* of the occultation is, at the last, lessened here, the *imām*'s inscrutable hiddenness incorporated into the older, the more recognizable, indeed the qurʾānic and indelibly Shi'i paradigm of the enlightened few fleeing the tyrannical, misguided majority. The soteriological rupture of the *imām*'s hiddenness, meanwhile, becomes mollified into no less familiar a motif than the young man setting out to seek his fortune.

Ṣadūq thus attempts to raise the image of the Hidden Imām to the level of myth and archetype, rendered truth by its intrinsic human drama that may resonate with fundamental motifs of storytelling. This device that we see at its clearest here in the Yūdhāsaf stories in turn sheds invaluable light on the curious, apparently counter-productive fixation with the outlandish and the apocryphal that Ṣadūq has exhibited throughout the *Kamāl al-dīn*. While he could present theologically watertight accounts of the *imām*'s occultation and those of previous prophets, to do so would be to severely impoverish this parallel engine of proof by myth. The latter requires both quantity and quality; Ṣadūq may convey a certain amount through sheer weight of repetition, but he appreciates the need for the memorable, the extraordinary, the dramatic, and the fabulous. What the image of Idrīs rebuked by God for sulking, the image of Salmān wandering a *ḥujjah*-deprived world, and, indeed, the image of Alexander encountering little furry people with mismatched ears may cost in terms of credibility, Ṣadūq gambles they will recuperate by further engrossing the reader in his seething intertext of shared motifs.[67] If his material is rich enough, he

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[66] In *Kamāl al-dīn* itself we see Ṣadūq offer a number of answers to this question. See 507–508, nos. 7–10. For an examination of the significance of Ṣadūq's given reasons and how they interrelate with *Kamāl al-dīn*'s chronicled stories of the prophets, see Vilozny, "What Makes a Religion Perfect?" 487–490.

[67] Ṣadūq, *Kamāl al-dīn*, 430–431. In other works, Ṣadūq steps in with commentary to clarify reports in which a prophet appears less than perfect to bring it in line with the Imami belief in prophetic infallibility, but not here. See, e.g., idem, *Al-Tawḥīd*, 128.

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paradoxically attains a measure of deniability—he can state outright that he does not rely on these texts, trusting their message will penetrate regardless.[68]

Kamāl al-dīn is unusual amongst other writings on the Twelfth Imām by Ṣadūq's contemporaries in that it does not avoid or talk down the narrated testaments to the Twelfth Imām's existence but asserts their indubitable probative force. Nonetheless, we have seen how Ṣadūq is painfully aware of these texts' limits in the face of a cynical, unbelieving majority. In parallel to *Kamāl al-dīn*'s declared goal, he therefore pursues a broader, more ambitious project: to compensate for these proof-texts' lack of textual-critical credibility by drawing instead on a resource which he perceives them to have in abundance—the sheer compelling drama of the stories they tell. Rather than create a sanitized account of the occultation, he embraces all that is unstable and eccentric in the corpora available to him, committing to accounts that his less intrepid fellow scholars dared not go near and embedding them in an eternal drama of absent authority, in the hope of imagining a Hidden Imām who is simply too enticing a story not to believe in. It is a daring and ingenious strategy that reaches its culmination in the last, long flight of fancy provided by Yūdhāsaf and his adventures.[69]

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[68] The presence of pervasive, continuing motifs and narrative patterns in Imami *ḥadīth* literature and in particular in texts concerning the lives of the *imām*s has received attention from a number of scholars. Pierce has explored how these patterns develop in collective biographies of the *imām*s in the Buwayhid period and after, while Buckley identifies a similar dynamic in individual *aḥādīth* as they are narrated as early as the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries. Both scholars examine the phenomenon from a diachronic perspective, analyzing the role of these recurring narratives in the ongoing creation of a shared Imami Shi'i cultural memory (see also Rainer Brunner, "The Role of Ḥadīth as Cultural Memory in Shīʿī History," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 30 [2005]: 318–360). While elements of Ṣadūq's motif-building may certainly be seen as part of just such a process, what we have also seen here in *Kamāl al-dīn* is how a single author at a particular historical moment can actively undertake to shape and exploit the narrative resonances of his material to very specific ends. As such, Ṣadūq's endeavors have much in common with what Bray observes within Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi's (d. 328/940) writing (from which study the use of the term 'myth' is borrowed): Julia Bray, "Abbasid Myth and the Human Act," in Philip F. Kennedy (ed.), *On Fiction and Adab in Medieval Arabic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 1–49.

[69] Unlike the son of Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, the Bodhisattva from whose title the word Yūdhāsaf ultimately derives is a long way from any historical memory that Ṣadūq might be party to. Yūdhāsaf becomes Josephat in European context, a figure of legend with similarly little connection to any self-consciously Buddhist context. Although other Arabic versions of the story are nearer the mark in their location of diacritics with *Būdāsf* (as followed by Gimaret), and though we have no way of knowing whether the shift from *b* to *y* comes from Ṣadūq or a later scribe, to correct the text would be to impose a quite fictitious notion that Ṣadūq or the scribe was somehow mistaken in giving the name Yūdhāsaf to the protagonist of this text's wondrous adventures, when in fact Yūdhāsaf is perfectly named to perform the task intended for him. It seems judicious, then, to leave him as he is.

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About the author

George Warner studied Arabic and Islam in Cambridge and Damascus as an undergraduate before pursuing his doctorate at SOAS, University of London, which he completed in 2017. He has published on Shi'ism and *ḥadīth* literature, and his research focuses on the interplay between sectarian and literary identities in the premodern Middle East. He currently teaches at SOAS.

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