

## Why the Persians Accepted Twelverism -Research Focusing on the Description in the *History of the Prophets and Kings*-

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### Abstract:

In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, around the time when the Safavid order established its power, acceptance of Twelverism in Persia advanced greatly. The Safavids, self-proclaimed descendants of the prophet Muhammad, built a theocratic political authority based on Twelverism. At the same time, the Safavi Dynasty took the Monarch of Shah, used in the ancient Persian Empire, and revived Persian political independence, which had been lost since the Sassanid Dynasty was destroyed by the Saracen Republic (the Rightly Guided Successors or the Rashidun Caliphs). From them, it is generally considered that the Safavid Dynasty succeeded in establishing Persian nationalism based on Twelverism. According to such a historical view, it is reasonable to think that familiarity to Twelverism had been common among the Persians at least in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Then the issue of why the Persians had had some kinds of sympathies with Twelverism can be naturally considered. This research proposes one hypothesis on this argument, focusing on the description in the *History of the Prophets and Kings*, the historical book written by Al-Tabari in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Specifically, this book contains the legend that the descendants of Shehr Bano, the Princess of Yazdegerd III, the last Sassanid emperor, and Husayn ibn Ali, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Twelver imam, inherited the subsequent Twelver iams, and I suggest the hypothesis that this legend might have passed on from intellectuals to the common people and had a strong influence in acceptance of the Persian Twelverism faith in connection with nationalism.

**Key Word:** Twelverism, Religion in Persia, History of Persia, History of Al-Tabari, Shehr Bano.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, around the time when the Safavid order established its power, acceptance of Twelverism in Persia advanced greatly. The Safavids, self-proclaimed descendants of the prophet Muhammad, built a theocratic political authority based on Twelverism...

### II. DISCUSSION

Then I focus on a legend in the descriptions of the *History of the Prophets and Kings*, the historical book written by Al-Tabari in the 10<sup>th</sup> century...

### III. CONCLUSION

I suggest the hypothesis that this legend might have passed on from intellectuals to the common people and had a strong influence in acceptance of the Persian Twelverism faith in connection with nationalism...

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