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A MESSIANIC PROPHETHOOD CLAIMS WITHIN ISLAM, HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY IN THE CONTEXT OF ZEITGEIST

Zamanın Ruhu Bağlamında İslam, Hinduizm ve Hıristiyanlık İçerisinden Mesiyanik Nübüvvet İddiaları

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Abstract

The concept of "zeitgeist" is used to express the rising values of time within the framework of the ideas that emerge in a certain period. The concept enables the understanding of similar ideas emerging in the same or different geographies at certain times. Because humanbeings often display similar attitudes in similar situations, and even if they live in different regions and geographies, they produce similar solutions to their common needs. As a matter of fact, it is understood that the similar situational so took place in the 19th century, the people struggled with disasters and wars and in connection with this, ideas related to "the End of the World" were put forward. Some people living in different parts of the world, such as the Indian sub-continent, Europe, Russia, and America, were in a "savior" expectation, and some of them were in the expectation of a "prophet" in the context of the continuity of prophethood in that time. In this context, various beliefs about the combina-

Öz

"Zamanın ruhu" mefhumu, belli bir dönemde ortaya çıkan fikirler çerçevesinde zamanın yükselen değerlerini ifade etmek için kullanılmaktadır. Kavram, aynı veya farklı coğrafyalarda ortaya çıkan benzer fikirlerin anlaşılabilmesine imkân vermektedir. Zira insanoğlu, çoğu kez benzer durumlarda, benzer tutumlar sergilemekte, farklı bölge ve coğrafyalarda yaşasa dahi, ortak ihtiyaçlarına benzer çözümler üretmektedir. Nitekim dünyanın yıkım ve savaşlarla karşı karşıya kaldığı ve bu bağlamda dünyanın sonunun yaklaştığına inanılan 19. yüzyılda da aynı durumun söz konusu olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bu dönemde, Hint alt-kıtası, Avrupa, Rusya ve Amerika gibi dünyanın birbirinden oldukça farklı coğrafyalarında yaşayan insanların bir kısmı "kurtarıcı"; bir kısmı ise nübüvvetin kesintisizliği düşüncesi bağlamında bir "peygamber" beklentisi içerisinde olmuşlardır. Bu minvalde, "kurtarıcı-

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tion of salvation and prophethood institutions have also come to the agenda; thus, a new theory of prophecy, which we can call "messianic prophethood", meaning "savior-prophet", which expresses a higher mission, has emerged. The basis of this theory was the idea that a mere "savior" would not be enough for the restoration of the deterioration in the end times and a universal savior-prophet would be needed to dissolve religious differences. This understanding carries out a significant mission in terms of understanding the spirit of that time. The aim of this study is to examine some examples of the claims of "messianic prophethood" in Islam, Hinduism and Christianity in the context of "zeitgeist".
Key Words: Zeitgeist, Messianic Prophethood, Savior, Prophet, 19th Century.

lık" ile "nübüvvet" müesseselerinin bir araya getirilmesine dair de çeşitli inanışlar gündeme gelmiş; böylelikle daha yüksek bir misyon ifade eden ve "kurtarıcı-peygamber" anlamına gelen "mesiyanik nübüvvet" olarak adlandırabileceğimiz yeni bir nübüvvet teorisi ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu teorinin temelinde ise ahir zamandaki bozulmanın restorasyonu için artık salt bir kurtarıcının yetmeyeceği ve din farklılıklarını eritecek evrensel çapta bir "kurtarıcı-peygamber"e ihtiyaç duyulacağı düşüncesi yer almıştır. Bu anlayış da o dönemin ruhunun anlaşılabilmesi açısından önemli bir misyonu icra etmektedir. Bu çalışmada da hedeflenen, İslam, Hinduizm ve Hristiyanlık içerisinde söz konusu olan mesiyanik nübüvvet iddialarına dair bazı örneklerin "zamanın ruhu" bağlamında incelenmesidir.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Zamanın Ruhu, Mesiyanik Nübüvvet, Kurtarıcı, Peygamber, 19. yüzyıl.

Introduction

The concept of "zeitgeist"[2] is used to express the rising values of time within the framework of the ideas that emerge in a certain period. It avails to reach general conclusions from particular events, and enables the understanding of similar ideas emerging in the same or different geographies at certain periods. Because human beings often display similar attitudes in similar situations, and even if they live in different regions and geographies, they produce similar solutions to their common needs. As a matter of fact, it is understood that the similar situation also took place in the 19th century in which a large part of the world was colonized especially

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[2]Although the concepts such as "the spirit of the age" and "the spirit of the time" are available in English as a counterpart to this concept, the concept of "zeitgeist" of German origin, especially with the intensive use of German philosophers, has been started to be used intensely in English since1850s. See. Jung Theo, "The Politics of Time Zeitgeist in Early Nineteenth-Century Political Discourse", *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 9/1 (Summer 2014): 24-49.

by the imperial states,[3] people struggled with hunger and wars and in connection with this, ideas related to the end of the world were put forward. During this period, some people living in different parts of the world, such as the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Russia, and America, were in a "savior" expectation, and some of them were in the expectation of a "prophet"[4] in the context of the continuity of prophethood.[5] In this context, various beliefs about the combination of salvation and prophethood institutions have also come to the agenda; thus, a new theory of prophecy, which we can call "messianic prophethood", which expresses a higher mission, has emerged. The basis of this theory was the idea that a mere savior would not be enough for the restoration of the deterioration in the end times and a universal "savior-prophet" would be needed to dissolve religious differences. This understanding carries out an important mission in terms of understanding the spirit of that period. In this article, we try to evaluate some examples of the claims of "messianic prophethood" which means "savior-prophet" in the context of "zeitgeist".

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[3]The 19th century, in particular, is a time period that expresses the "last period" of collective colonial activities. Colonial initiatives in this period are very systematic and focused on getting results. As a matter of fact, the most obvious imperial power of this period is especially England. It ruled many points of the world from the Far East to Africa as a colonialist in this period. Other states that were colonialists during this period were especially France, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal. The region which Italy and France colonized was mostly African lands; and Netherlands and Portugal colonized the Far East.

[4]In the text, we preferred "nubuwwat" expression while talking about the prophecy in the Islamic tradition, but in general use we opted "prophethood" concept.

[5] During this period, there were "savior" ideas for renovation among various religions. These salvation claims in this period show the general tendencies of the societies. However, in this study, we excluded the ideas only about messiah because we have determined the concepts that combine prophetic and savior ideas. Indeed, in this period, there were many messianic claims in Europe, from the Slavic republics to Spain, on the American continent and in the Far East. However, since the framework we have determined in the article is "messianic-nubuwwah", the other detected messianic claims were not included in the article. For detailed examples on the subject, see. Motti Inbari, *Messianic Religous Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises* (USA: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 153-154; Waldemar Chrostowski, "The Suffering, Chosenness and Mission of the Polish Nation", *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 1/4 (1991): 1; Marc Saperstein, *Essential Papers On Messianic Movements Personalities in Jewish History* (USA: New York University Press, 1992), 5.

1. "The End of the World"

Human beings have always had a curiosity and interest in the subjects about future. The part that keeps the most place among the curious issues about the future is the issue about "the end of the world". As a matter of fact, since the early periods of human history, all religions, including non-celestial ones, dealt with issues such as "apocalypse" and "hereafter", and as a result of this there has been a rather comprehensive view of humanity about before and after apocalypse, which is considered as the end of the world. The cornerstone of these views was the information obtained from the scriptures, prophets and people around them. Within this information, the time period specified as the end of the world has been described as a period when evil and disbelief has become widespread and war, destruction and sufferings are evident throughout the world.[6] Thus, in the context of the end of the world, whenever there was a period in which the problems and sufferings were widespread in the history of the earth, that period was associated with the "end of the world" and there occurred a widespread belief that the apocalypse was close. Indeed, the 19th century, which is the time frame mentioned in our article, represents a historical time, perhaps most closely related to the end of the world.

The 19th century is the last period of the world map before it took its present shape in the context of country borders. This period refers to a time period in which wars and sufferings are widespread in the world from East to West, from North to South. Especially the systematic colonial activities of the imperial states in Asia and Africa, the pressure of the whites on black people in America and the civil war formed the prominent features of this period. In addition, when reasons such as the aging of the world and the decrease of the natural resources were added to this situation, there occurred a strong belief that the end of the world was approaching and that the so-called end times were experienced.

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[6]Ekrem Sarıkçıoğlu, *Mehdi Gelecek mi? Dinlerde Mehdi Tasavvurları* (Samsun: Fakülte Kitabevi, 1997), 42, 65, 84; E. Der Abegg, *Messiaglaube in Indien und Iran* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1928), 39, 64-65, 68, 127; Şinasi Gündüz, *Din ve İnanç Sözlüğü* (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 1998), 210, 341; Gülsüm Ürdüç, *Hinduizm'de Avatara ve Hristiyanlık'ta İnkarnasyon İnancı Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Uludağ Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Unpublished Master Thesis, 2006), 9, 26, 34; Cemil Kutlutürk, *Hinduizm'de Avatar İnancı* (Ankara: Otto Yayınları, 2017), 213; Inbari, *Messianic Religous Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises*, 153-154.

2. "The Savior"

One of the concepts that comes to the agenda when talking about the end times in terms of celestial and non-celestial religions is the "savior" belief. Because the concepts of "End Times" and "Savior" have been generally evaluated together.[7] As a matter of fact, the belief in the "savior" who will emerge in the period thought as the end of the world in which sufferings and destruction are widespread has been existed in almost all religions and thoughts.[8] In the 19th century, at a time when the apocalypse was believed to be approaching, an expectation towards the savior was intensely discussed[9] and many people emerged from different parts of the world with the claim that he was the savior. Actually, from the point of view of this period, the concept of "the end of the world" and "the savior" has become the prominent features reflecting zeitgeist. However, some of the salvation allegations that were mentioned in this period pointed to a stronger form of salvage; a form that is combined with prophecy which we could call messianic prophethood, not merely a savior.

3. "Messianic Prophethood"

The concept of "prophet" and "savior" has been evaluated as two interrelated concepts throughout human history. Indeed, the followers of the divine religions first envisioned the "prophets" as "saviors" sent to the world to establish justice and be the voice of the oppressed. In this respect, prophecy has been considered as a

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[7] For the relationship between the apocalypse and the savior, see. Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī An Outline of His Thought and A Study of His Image In The Eyes of Posterity* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, McGill University, 1966), 18, 193-194.

[8] Gordon Johnson, *Hint Dünyası Atlaslı Büyük Uygarlıklar Ansiklopedisi*, trc. Müfide Pekin (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), X: 144-145; H. J. Störing, *İlkçağ Felsefesi Hint Çin Yunan*, trc. Ömer Cemal Güngören (İstanbul: Yol Yayınları, 2000), 63; Hervé Rousseau, *Dinler (Tarihi ve Sosyal incelemeler)*, trc. Osman Pazarlı (İstanbul, 1970), 171; Sarıkçıoğlu, *Mehdi Gelecek mi? Dinlerde Mehdi Tasavvurları*, 29, 35; Ürdüç, *Hinduizm'de Avatara ve Hristiyanlık'ta İnkarnasyon İnancı Üzerine Bir Araştırma*, 3, 34,38.

[9] Inbari, *Messianic Religous Zionism Confronts Israeli Territorial Compromises*, 153-154; Marc Saperstein, *Essential Papers On Messianic Movements Personalities in Jewish History*, 130-131.

mission that includes the image of a savior.[10] This savior mission continued by being transferred from prophet to prophet. However, with the Jews not accepting the Prophet Jesus, who was sent as the messiah, as a savior, there was a break in this understanding and the prophecy has lost its "savior" mission for some people. Thus, "prophet" and "savior" were started to be evaluated as two different identities. On the other hand, by the end of the 19th century, efforts were made to combine "prophethood" and the "messianic tradition" in different religions of the world such as Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. Indeed, as a result of these efforts, a new form of prophecy has emerged, which can be conceptualized as "messianic prophethood". This refers to the concept of "prophethood" associated with the idea of a "savior". The concept identifies both the "savior / messiah / mahdi", which is claimed to come in order to save mankind in the end times, and the "prophet" sent to lead mankind to the right path. In this respect, it expresses a higher level of prophecy, which is quite different from traditional approach of prophethood, which is believed to be sent to guide people towards the right path.[11]

The nature of the messianic prophecy, which also contains the "savior" identity, is different from traditional forms of prophecy in terms of its followers. This kind of prophethood is intended to unite all religions, to provide human beings with a state of goodness and to make the religion it comes from dominant. In this respect, the title of "salvation" in the understanding of prophecy in this format is more pronounced than that of the traditional prophecy. As a matter of fact, while prophethood in the traditional approach offers a suggestion of correction through the worship and social sphere rules, the difference of messianic prophethood is that, leaving the existing rules fixed, it offers a proposal only in the context of efforts to get rid of existing problems. In this context, it will not be wrong to say that the concept of the savior in the messianic prophethood means a higher value and a higher mission in terms of its believers compared to traditional prophecy.[12] The claims of messianic

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[10]Orhan Yılmaz, "Mehdi İnancına Kaynaklık Teşkil Eden Hadislerin Değerlendirmesi", *Turkish Studies International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic C* 12/2 (2017): 277;Halide Rumeysa Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed ve Ahmedîlerin Mirza Gulam Ahmed Telakkisi* (Dicle University Institute of Social Sciences Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, 2018), 279; Saperstein, *Essential Papers On Messianic Movements Personalities in Jewish History*, 130-131.

[11]Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 279.

[12]Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 278-280.

prophethood, which emerged from various religions in the 19th century as in the previous centuries, will be discussed first through the examples in the Islamic tradition.

3.1. Messianic Prophethood Claims Within Islam

19th century is a time period that is remembered with very painful memories for Muslims. Because almost all of the Muslims around the world were exposed to colonial activities in various ways and were seriously persecuted. These traumatic experiences also brought the idea of a "savior". As a matter of fact, in this process, claims of "salvation" – Mahdi belief - were expressed from almost Muslim community in trouble. The claims of messianic prophethood, which combines the authority of prophethood with the salvation authority, have emerged in a very limited environment. Because the fact that the Holy Prophet was the last prophet was one of the most important limitations to claiming a prophethood, whatever the name. However, in the 19th century, there were some claims of messianic prophethood from both Sunni and Shia Islamic traditions. These claims have generally grown in the Indo-Iranian geography where people from different beliefs and cultures have lived together.

Mirza Gulam Ahmad is the founder of Ahmadiyya, which emerged from Islam in India in the late 19th century. He came up with the idea of a renewal for Islam and claimed to be mujaddid, messiah, mahdi, prophet and avatar respectively. The most original view of Mirza Gulam Ahmad's stated ideas was the approach that combines the "nubuwwah authority" with the "salvation institution". His belief, which can be named as messianic prophethood, is based on the idea of uniting all world religions through a single "savior prophet", "ideal person" - in terms of his believers- and eliminating religious differences.[13]

Mirza Gulam Ahmad's idea of prophethood is different from traditional nubuwwah. As a matter of fact, he did not shape his prophethood through a traditional form of nubuwwah that led humankind to good. On the contrary, he handled prophethood in an effort to return it to the tradition of nubuwwah which lost its form of savior after Jesus was not accepted as the Messiah. As a matter of fact, he presented his prophethood as a higher mission that unites all religions and based his prophethood's mission on a

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[13]Mirza Gulam Ahmad, "The Messenger of the Latter Days", *Review of Religions*, 1907, 1: 5, 15. Cf. Muhammed Ahmet İsmail el-Mukaddem, *Hurafe Değil Gerçek Mehdi*, trc. Mustafa Öztürk (İstanbul: Guraba Yayıncılık, 2011), 14.

"savior ambassador" that will emerge in the last period of humanity and save mankind from distress.[14] At this point, he claimed that he was a Mahdi for Muslims who were surrounded by serious troubles at that time, Messiah for Christians, Krishna-avatar for Hindus, Masiodarbahmi[15] for Zoroastrians. He claimed that he was sent by Allah to gather all the religions in the end times under "a single religion" and to make Islam, the true religion, superior to all religions. Moreover he defended that this was the true "khatm-e nubuwwah" -end of nubuwwah- by defining himself as the Prophet Adam, the Prophet Noah, the Prophet Abraham, the Prophet Moses, the Prophet David, the Prophet Joseph, the Prophet Solomon and the Prophet Jesus and all the other prophets.[16]As a matter of fact, with this approach, he combined the thoughts of messiah-mahdi and nubuwwah together and added a savior mission to prophethood. Expressing this thought as "the ambassador expected to come in the future", he proposed a different version of the idea of "the savior expected to come in the future", which is found in almost all religions, and in this context he qualified himself as the "ideal savior-prophet" expected in a universal framework.[17] In this respect, his claim expressed a much higher mission than being a classical Islamic prophet.

It is also necessary to evaluate Mirza Gulam Ahmad's claim to be an "avatar" for Hindus in the context of his approach combining the thought of nubuwwah with the savior concept. Because the concept of avatar refers to the institution of "salvation" in Indian religions, especially in Hinduism. It is possible to evaluate this institution as a substituted authority instead of "prophecy" in Indian religions that do not have the concept of "prophecy". This approach, which combines the nubuwwah and the savior mission, should have been

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[14]Mirza Gulam Ahmad, "The Messenger of the Latter Days", 1: 5, 15; el-Mukaddem, *Hurafe Değil Gerçek Mehdi*, 14.

[15]For the understanding of Mahdi in Zoroastrianism, see. Şinasi Gündüz, "Mecûsilik", *Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi DİA* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları TDV, 2003), 28: 91-94 ; Mircea Eliade, *Dinsel İnançlar ve Düşünceler Tarihi*, trc. Ali Berktay (İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınları, 2009), 1: 381.

[16]Mirza Gulam Ahmad, *A Misconception Removed* (UK: Islam International Publications, 2007), 3, 18-19; Mirza Gulam Ahmad, *British Government and Jihad*, trc. Tayyba Seema Ahmad - Lutfur Rahman (UK: Islam International Publications, 2006), introduction-xii; Mirza Gulam Ahmad, *The Honour of Prophets* (UK: Islam International Publications, 2017), 65.

[17]"The Promised Messiah A Prophet to Unite Mankind in the Latter Days", access: 09 Nisan 2018, https://www.alislam.org/topics/messiah/; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 365.

the basis of Mirza Gulam Ahmad's understanding of savior notioned prophecy. As a matter of fact, he argued that the Holy Spirit was sent down to him by God as "avatar" and "the prophet of time".[18] In this context, he saw "Krishna", which the Hindus accepted as an avatar, as a divine prophet whose religion was distorted and presented himself both as the prophet and the savior/avatar to this religion.[19]

Mirza Gulam Ahmad's claim for messianic-envisioned nubuwwah will be more meaningful when considered in the context of rising values of time. Because Mirza Gulam Ahmad emerged with the claim of messianic nubuwwah at the end of the 19th century, especially when the Indian subcontinent Muslims lived in chaos and the savior discourses of various religions in the region were seriously voiced. At this point, it would not be wrong to say that there is no full prophetic institution in Indian religions and instead of the prophetic institution, a stronger "salvation" institution than that of the celestial religions was substituted and the Muslims of the region were somehow affected by this tradition.

Another thought of messianic nubuwwah within Islam was in question together with Bahaism in a similar period with Mirza Gulam Ahmad in the Iranian geography, which is a region close to the Indian subcontinent.

Bahaism is an over-minded Shiite movement founded by Mirza Ali Muhammad in the 19th century. However, with Mirza Husayn Ali, who came to the fore after the death of Mirza Ali Muhammad, the movement broke off its ties with Islam in the process, evolved into a separate and independent religion and declared this situation officially.[20]

Bahaism is a religious structure based on the idea of the uninterrupted prophethood. Accordingly, prophecy is an institution that is impossible to end. In the context of people's needs, God sent "prophets" at various times. And in this period, God sent Mirza Ali Muhammad as "bab" to prepare the arrival of the universal God messenger, and then Mirza Husayn Ali with the name "Bahaullah" -

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[18]Mirza Gulam Ahmad, *Tadhkirah* (Islam International Publications, 2009), 486; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 293-296.

[19]Mirza Gulam Ahmad, *British Government and Jihad*, introduction-xii; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 295.

[20]Sabri Hizmetli, "İtikadi İslam Mezheplerinin Ortaya Çıkış Sebepleri Ve Babilik-Bahailik", *İslam'da İnsan Modeli ve Hz. Peygamber Örneği (Kutlu Doğum Haftası:1993)*, *172* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1995), 215-221.

Bab ad-din- as the universal God messenger to lead people to salvation.[21] According to the Bahaists, "Bahaullah" is the "savior", "maw'ud" -promised-, promised by all religions. In this respect, it carries both the characteristics of "salvation" and "prophethood" which express a higher mission and it becomes the "expected person" for Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus and Buddhists.[22]

This situation will be better understood when we look at the claim of prophecy in the context of the Shiite tradition that Bahaullah came from. Because at that time -as it is now- there was a settled Mahdi belief in the Shiites. In the context of the troubles experienced in Iranian geography at that time, as in almost all Muslim geographies, the arrival of Mahdi was more desirable. In this sense, it is more meaningful for Bahaullah to appear before them with the claim of prophethood with a higher form than Mahdi.

The claims of messianic prophethood, which emerged from the Sunni and Shia traditions of Islam in the 19th century, were generally opposed by Muslims. However, these religious formations, which emerged as a result of a syncretic religious understanding, have been received acceptance by millions of people who have tendency to such ideas.

3.2. The Lost Prophet of Hinduism: Keshab Chandra Sen

Since the Indo-Iranian geography was the region that deeply felt the destruction caused by the colony in the 19th century, there were various claims of messianic prophethood in similar periods. As a matter of fact, it is possible to see that these claims are not only limited to Islam, but also in the movement called Brahmo Samaj that emerged from Hinduism.

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[21]Muhammed Fatih Demirdağ, "Dini Hareketlerin Bir Çeşidi Bahailik", *Journal of Islamic Research* 28/3 (2017): 393-394; Hizmetli, "İtikadi İslam Mezheplerinin Ortaya Çıkış Sebepleri Ve Babilik-Bahailik", 215-221;

Hacı Çiçek, "Bahâîlik, Bahâîliğin Görüşleri, İslâm Düşüncesindeki Yeri Ve Ona Dair Bazı Yorumlar", *Kilis 7 Aralık Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 3/6 (Ocak 2017): 135, 153.

[22]Demirdağ, "Dini Hareketlerin Bir Çeşidi Bahailik", 393-394; Hizmetli, "İtikadı İslam Mezheplerinin Ortaya Çıkış Sebepleri Ve Babılik-Bahailik", 22; Hacı Çiçek, "Bahâîlik, Bahâîliğin Görüşleri, İslâm Düşüncesindeki Yeri Ve Ona Dair Bazı Yorumlar", *Kilis 7 Aralık Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 3/6 (Ocak 2017): 135, 153.

Brahmo Samaj[23] is a religious movement that emerged in Hinduism with the understanding of renewal in the late 19th century. Its founder is Ram Mohan Roy.[24] The movement was influenced by Islam and Christianity and advocated monotheism against the polytheism of Hinduism and also it accepted that it was shirk to express God in stone, painting and human figures and Jesus is the Messenger of Allah.[25]

The movement smoothed off the mystical sides of Hinduism, from which it came out, brought "mind" to the fore more and presented a highly didactic image.[26] In this context, the movement had almost no religious worship and ritual when it first appeared. The current rituals are made up of individual and personal prayers based on their own practices.[27]

The movement was also influenced by the Christian rulers of the time,[28] in this context it opposed the sati-suttee- practice,[29] rejected the caste system, and defended the equality of women and men and equality in heritage.[30]

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[23]The expression "Brahmo Samaj", the name of the movement, means the community of God. see. Halide Edip Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair* (İstanbul: Can Sanat Yayınları, 2014), 167; Vera Höke, "Approaching the *rasa-lila* of 'great men'': interlinking Western "intuitive" theologies with traditions of Bengal in the Brahmo Samaj", *Religion* 45/3 (03 Temmuz 2015): 455, 457.

[24]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 167.

[25]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 168.This movement believes that renewal in Hindu religion will be realized by taking the old classical sources as a basis, like Vedas.

[26]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 168. In fact, because of these aspects, there were those who associated the movement with the Sunni tradition in Islam.

[27]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 170, 172.

[28]Brahmo Samaj members did not feel uncomfortable with the British being in India, they claimed that the British were elected people and living under them is their destiny. About the subject see. Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 473-474.

[29]Sati practice is the tradition of burning the woman with her husband who died. In this tradition, it is believed that the woman showed loyalty to her husband and committed suicide for not being able to withstand his death. For detailed information, see. Axel Michaels, *Hinduism: Past and Present*, trc. Barbara Harshav (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, t.y.), 149-153.

[30]Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 461; Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 169-170.

The movement has carried out many social reforms, such as wellfare activities and the fight against lack of education, using the methods of the Christian

Different people from different times led the movement,[31] and Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884) was among the third generation leaders of the movement and contributed significantly to the movement.

With Keshab, the movement regained the mystical aspect within Hinduism and the movement began to contain excitement in terms of "faith" and move away from its old, didactic and monotonous appearance.[32]

Because Keshab added worship to the movement that could be performed with congregation in the context of old folk beliefs.[33]

Keshab remained in England for a six-month period in 1870, after which the Christian influence on the Movement became more evident. For, although the Movement remained within a Hindu framework, it was almost under the influence of Christianity in the sense of creed. For this reason, Keshab had serious problems with the prominent representatives of the Movement and a split occurred in the Movement. Indeed, as a result of this division, Keshab started a new movement called "Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj".[34] The basic philosophy of this new religious formation has been based on combining Hinduism and Christianity. However, Keshab aimed to create a universal religious movement in this process by adding

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missionaries. He abolished early marriage and polygamy, advocated for equality between men and women, opened educational centers, and trained all members of the sect, including children. Women also took an active role in community life. In addition, Ram Mohan Roy's biggest contribution to the history of India is that he founded Kolkata University through his movement. This university is a Nobel laureate university. About the subject see. Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 457; Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 169-170.

[31]Höke, "Approaching the Rasa-Lila of 'great Men", 456; Adıvar, Hindistan'a Dair, 170.

[32]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 171.

[33]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 172. These worships were started to be performed in the streets by the members of the movement accompanied by flags, drums and hymns. These rituals are similar to the Bengali poets and artists' worship which are performed by dancing and reading hymns. Thus, he gave the movement a spirit that corresponds in the public. Keshab chose the prayers read in these rites from the religious literature of Christians, Muslims and Hindus. Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 172. See about Bengali devotees. Rasih Güven, "Bengal Edebiyatı ve Baüller (Devotees who dance by singing hymns), yl. 1991, sy. 2, C. 35, s. 139-154.", *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi*, 1991.

[34]This new name of the movement means "India's Brahmo Samaj".

various ideas and values from different religions to this syncretic understanding of religion.[35]

Although Keshab's activities to unite various religions, especially Hinduism and Christianity, in a universal framework, were again reacted by some of the followers of the movement, they were met with excitement by the majority of the people, who were mostly at a low level in terms of education, and the number of people around them started to increase rapidly.[36]As a matter of fact, as the number of people around him increased, he showed different tendencies to differentiate in the sense of creed and started to attribute a divine aspect to himself.[37] In this context, those around him showed tendency to evaluate his words as "divine inspiration".[38]

Being aware of this growing interest in him, Keshab started doing some activities to unite other religions in 1881 in addition to Hinduism and Christianity.[39]As a matter of fact, he claimed that in 1881 he had built a new religion called "Naba Bidhan" or "Nava Bidhana"[40] that would unite all religions, and asserted that he was

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[35]Keshab Chandra Sen, "Hindu Philosopher And Social Reformer", 20 Şubat 2020, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Keshab-Chunder-Sen;   Höke, "Approaching the Rasa-Lila of 'great Men", 457; Adıvar, Hindistan'a Dair, 172.

As Keshab started to use the name of the movement, the people who remained in the main body of the movement changed the name of the movement to "Adi Samaj" meaning "real, the original Smaj" and removed the Christian teachings that Keshab included in their theology.

[36]Asim Roy, *The Islamic Syncretistic Tradition in Bengal* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1983), 95-98; Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 166-167, 174; Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 463.

It should be noted that the movement originated in Bengal, one of the most cosmopolitan regions of India, and almost any idea in this region has the potential to find a place for itself. As a matter of fact, it should be noted that even though this region remained on the Muslim side, in Pakistan, in the India-Pakistan distinction based on the religious identity experienced in 1947, in the process it also left Pakistan and gained an autonomous structure.

[37]Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 470-473; Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 173.

[38]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 173.

[39]"Hinduism, Religion, The modern period (from the 19th century)", 11 Ocak 2020, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Hinduism/The-modern-period-from-the-19th-century#ref50592.

[40]The concept means "New Dispensation, New Destiny, New Fate" in the Indian language.

the prophet of this new religion. He declared this new religion under a flag with various symbols of Islam, Christianity and Hinduism, and in an area containing the holy books of the Bible, Quran, Buddhism and Hinduism.[41] However, gradually, the superior structure of the regional culture prevailed and he began to interpret the polytheism of Hinduism and claimed that different gods are the symbol of one god.[42] Thus, it aimed to evaluate Hinduism as a roof and unite other religions under this roof. Keshab died soon after his proclamation of this new religion (1884), and his tomb contained a cross, a crescent, a trident[43] -triple spear symbol of Hinduism- and symbols of the Vedic religion.[44]

Keshab's stated activities aiming at unifying religions made an overwhelming impact on his period and his environment, but was forgotten in the process. As a matter of fact, in this context, he started to be called "the forgotten prophet of Bengal".[45]

Keshab's claim to prophethood and his activities to unite religions make sense when evaluated in the context of "society" and "time" in which he comes from. For, it would not be wrong to say that the activities of uniting religions were one of the rising values of the time, in a period in which there were severe "religious conflicts" between Muslims, Hindus and ruling Christians in the region where he lived. As a matter of fact, as stated earlier, messianic nubuwwah claim of Mirza Gulam Ahmad, from the same region, again within Islam, also coincides with the same period with Keshab and shares the same ideals.

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[41]Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 456; Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 173.

[42]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 174. However, after returning to India, when he wed her 14-year-old daughter to a Hindu prince, some of his followers left him because he was against his teachings. As a matter of fact, this incident is also shown as the reason for Keshab to establish movements called "Naba Bidhan" or "Nava Bidhana". See. "Keshab Chandra Sen, 'Hindu Philosopher And Social Reformer'"; Höke, "Approaching the *Rasa-Lila* of 'great Men", 456; John Stevens, "Marriage, duty and civilization: Keshab Chandra Sen and the Cuch Bihar controversy in metropolitan and colonial context", *South Asian History and Culture* 7/4 (Ekim 2016): 411.

[43]This is a symbol used by Shaivism, which is based on worshiping Shiva, a Hindu sect.

[44]John A. Stevens, *Keshab: Bengal's forgotten prophet* (Oxford, United Kingdom; New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1.

[45]Stevens, *Keshab*.1.

3.3. Messianic Prophethood Claims within Christianity

Christianity is a religion that determines the belief in "messiah" as the principal of creed. The basis of this understanding of messiah is based on the return of Jesus Christ to the world and his establishing an "ideal state" for his followers. Due to this belief, there has been various messianic claims in various periods. However, the claims of messianic prophethood in the 19th century emerged in a form that is much more prominent than other claims and as a result of the influence brought by zeitgeist. As a matter of fact, the movements that emerged with these claims were accepted as heretical by the church.

In the context of zeitgeist, the first of the claims of messianic prophethood in Christianity in the 19th century belongs to Joseph Smith. Joseph Smith is the founder of the Mormon movement of Christian origin in America. There are some fundamental differences between the Mormon and Christianity in terms of their creed. In this understanding, God has human characteristics.[46] They base this situation on various verses in the book of Mormon, which they consider sacred.[47] Another difference in their understanding of God is that they have both a monoteistic and a polytheistic understanding of god. Because they think that the three elements in the holy trinity, "father-son-holy spirit", have separate ontological beings and these different beings combine on the same purpose.[48] In the context of polytheistic god conceptions, another point that they differ from Christian theology is that it is possible to be "godlike" and "sanctified"[49] as a result of the purification of human beings.[50]

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[46]Fuat Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", *Türkiye'de Misyonerlik Faaliyetleri* (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2005), 231-232.

[47]*Mormon Kitabı İsa Mesih Hakkında Bir Başka Tanıklık*, t.y., 3. Nefi, 11:32, 35-36; 3. Nefi, 27: 1-33. For detailed information about Mormon holy books, see. Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 240-242.

[48]Yıldız Kızılabdullah - Şahin Kızılabdullah, "Mormon Kilisesinde Eğitim", *Dini Araştırmalar* 15/41 (Aralık 2012): 38-39; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 228, 231.

[49]The issue of sanctification is one of the most emphasized issues in the holy Mormon books. For various verses on the subject, see. *Mormon Kitabı İsa Mesih Hakkında Bir Başka Tanıklık,* 3. Nefi, 11: 32, 35-36; 3. Nefi, 27: 1-33.

[50]Kızılabdullah - Kızılabdullah, "Mormon Kilisesinde Eğitim", 38-39; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 228, 237.

This new religious movement called Mormonism, founded by Joseph Smith, was based on his claim to prophethood. In this context,[51] he claimed that at a time when he was in search, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit appeared to him and said that the teaching brought by Jesus Christ had been distorted and the ascendancy of all the previous churches had ended, also he claimed that God had called him like other prophets, including Adam, Jesus, and Moses and declared him as a universal prophet.[52]

Joseph Smith shaped his prophetic theory through an ongoing prophetic sequence.[53] As a matter of fact, when he explained his these views, he stated that Jesus' "eternal creed" was the creed that was always sent to the world since Adam, however, other prophets[54] such as Noah and Enok were sent to restore the ancient creed to its actual state since the human being did not accept or distort this creed.[55] He argued that he was a prophet who was sent according to the Old Testament tradition to restore this creed. He also defined these periods when God sent new prophets to restore religion, as a "regulation period". His claim of prophethood also differed from the prophethood chain that he mentioned and contained features that could be defined as "messianic prophethood". As a matter of fact, he

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[51]This information was obtained from the Mormon Book. This book is the holy book of the Mormons. Although a part of this book was written by Joseph Smith, the book has taken its present form with the additions made by other prophets who were his successors. The feature of this book is that it was not compiled from ancient holy books but was created for the establishment of the divine kingdom on earth as a result of the inspiration believed to have been given by God to Mormon prophets recently. See. Kızılabdullah - Kızılabdullah, "Mormon Kilisesinde Eğitim", 43.

[52]Krş."İsa Mesih'in Sevindirici Haberi'nin İade Edilişinin Mesajı", 7, erişim: 20 Ekim 2019, http://www.mormonum.org/Dersler.pdf. The official web site of Mormons for Turkey; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 218.

[53]As a matter of fact, the prophetic sequence is similar to the ones in the Old Testament. In addition, the way the holy books were created by Joseph Smith and the later prophets is similar.

[54]The Mormons define the "prophet" as the person who is invited by God and speaks on behalf of God. They express that the prophet, the messenger of God, received priesthood authority, commands and prohibitions through revelation, and prescriptions of salvation for man from God. The Prophet also informs mankind about his sins and their consequences. The Prophet also has knowledge of the future. However, the main responsibility of a prophet is to testify about the Messiah."İsa Mesih'in Sevindirici Haberi'nin İade Edilişinin Mesajı", 12.

[55]Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 228-229.

determined this period that started with him as "the regulation period in which the times were up" and stated that it was the first of the prophets expected to come in the end times and that the door of the revelation was reopened in order not to close.[56] He expressed the period that started with him with a new religious formation called "Church of the Saints of the Last Day". With this statement, he tried to explain that the ancient creed of God was renewed at the end of human history before Christ came for the second time.[57]

Following the messianic claim of Joseph Smith within Christianity, another claim of messianic prophethood that emerged at the end of the 19th century came from Alexander Dowie, who lived in America.

Dowie, an evangelical Christian, claimed that he was sent by God in the End Times to universally restore the world order, and that he was the Prophet Elijah[58] - the Messiah mentioned in the Bible. The Prophet Elijah, mentioned in Jewish theology, is a prophet believed to come to the world for the second time[59] to prepare the world

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[56] "İsa Mesih'in Sevindirici Haberi'nin İade Edilişinin Mesajı", 11; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 229, 238. According to the Mormon creed, Joseph Smith is the first prophet of the "last regulation period." The successors of Joseph Smith, who is the ruler of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who emerged in the context of the Mormon creed, are the prophets and apostles. According to this theory, the person who chaired the Church today is also a prophet. For detailed information about the subject, see. "İsa Mesih'in Sevindirici Haberi'nin İade Edilişinin Mesajı", 33-34; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 238.

[57] Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 216, 222. This period, which Joseph Smith called "the lastregulation period in which the times were up", must have been formed as a result of bringing together the idea of prophecy with the messianic thought in Christian theology. Because the arrangements that Christ must make when he comes are made in advance by the prophets and in a way the world is prepared for Christ.

[58] The prophet Elijah corresponds to the Prophet Elyas in the Islamic tradition.

[59] In terms of Jewish history, the issue of the Prophet Eliah contains similarities with the issue of Jesus Christ in terms of Islam. Because, as a result of the persecution of the Jews to him, Elijah is believed to be raised to heaven by God. About those which are explained generally in the Torah and the Bible about the Prophet Elijah; and the issues of rising him to the sky, see.1 Kings 17: 2-24, 19: 1-21, 21: 19-24; 22: 38; 2 Kings 2: 1-12; Romans 11: 2; Luke 4: 25-26, 9: 7-8,19; Mark 9: 4-5,11-13.

before Christ.[60] Dowie's views are based on the claim that he is the Prophet Elijah, and has argued that the world needs a serious restoration in the recent period and has set strict religious rules. He banned all of the practices that were very common in America during that period, such as smoking, alcohol, drugs, and dance. He advocated that their religion would be sufficient as a source of healing, and therefore as a religious principle he refused even to consult a doctor for healing.[61]

It is possible to evaluate under this title the Judaism of Hasidism, which was a movement that came out of Judaism in the late-1700s,[62] as a religious formation in the context of messianic prophetic ideals, after the claims of prophethood within Christianity.

The founder of Hasidic Judaism is Baal Shem. The ideas of Baal Shem are based on the idea of a pioneer prophet that was expected by the Jews, sent to prepare and restore the world before the original Christ came. Indeed, in the sources of this movement, the mission imposed on Baal Shem has the same role with that of the Prophet Elijah, who is expected to be sent to prepare the world before the arrival of the Messiah that Jews have been waiting for. In other words, Baal Shem is seen as a messianic prophet.[63]

Nachman of Bratslav, one of the leaders of the same movement that emerged in the 1800s, asserted similar claims and stated that he was the "final preparer" before the Messiah. As a matter of fact, with these statements, he implicitly stated that he was a prophet in contact with God, and thus tried to instill hope in his Jewish coreligionists who were living in Russia under great pressure and distress.[64]

4. Parallel Features of Messianic Prophethood Claims

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[60] About this subject, see. Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, *Ahmadiyyat: the Renaissance of Islam* (London : Zürich: Tabshir Publications ; Islamic Foundation, 1978), 96-102.

[61] "John Alexander Dowie American Religious Leader", erişim: 20 Nisan 2020, https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Alexander-Dowie.

[62] There were some another messianic prophetic claims in Judaism as in 16th Sabbatai Zevi example but we have delimitated the article with some samples from 19th century and around.

[63] Saperstein, *Essential Papers On Messianic Movements Personalities in Jewish History*, 383-384.

[64] Saperstein, *Essential Papers On Messianic Movements Personalities in Jewish History*, 391-394, 400, 411.

Apart from the ideological and temporal similarities of the new generation messianic prophethood movements that emerged at different points of the world, within different religions, in the same periods, they also have some parallel features on some basic issues. The first of the features that would be able to be evaluated in parallel with each other is that they have the similar ideological features and they use similar jargon. Because, even if these structures came from different religions, they have brought similar ideas in terms of their creeds to the forefront. As a matter of fact, these structures defended that the door of communication with heaven was reopened at the end of the 19th century and they used similar jargon while expressing this situation.[65]

The mentioned messianic movements were generally accepted as "heretic" by the main body of the religions to which they belong and they somehow left the main body. These new movements, preferring attitudes similar to each other, chose to urbanize far from the main body in order to keep their members together and to carry out their activities more easily; and they built new "settlements" from scratch in which all the centers that would be needed in a city were located. Places of worship in the "centers" of these new settlements were located.[66] These places started to be managed within the framework of religious ideals of the said movements. It would not be wrong to call these new cities "sacred towns" of the modern period.

It is possible to give many examples to these centers that can be called as "sacred towns" of the modern period from the messianic movements. This also goes for the messianic movements that emerged from the Islamic tradition. As a matter of fact, the first example of this situation was in question with the Ahmadiyya established by Mirza Gulam Ahmad. Mirza Gulam Ahmad gave great importance to the town of Qadian in Punjab, where he was born and raised and carried out religious activities in his health, and attributed to Qadian the characteristics of the holy city after Mecca-Medina.[67] However, after the India-Pakistan separation in 1947, tens of thousands of Ahmadis had to migrate to Pakistan due

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[65]Krş. Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 169; Ron Geaves, *Islam and Britain: Muslim Mission in an Age of Empire* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 31.

[66]Krş. Yasin Aktay, "Mormonluk: Amerika'nın Ahir Zamanının Dini ve Azizleri", *Milel ve Nihal İnanç, Kültür ve Mitoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2 (2004): 106.

[67]A. R. Dard, *Life of Ahmad(as): founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement* (Tilford, Surrey: Islam International Publications, 2008), 771-782.; Simon Ross Valentine, *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at, History, Belief, Practice* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2008), 40.; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 412.

to the fact that Qadian remained on the territory of India. Migration to Pakistan caused a very troubled process to start for the Ahmadis. Because while Mirza Gulam Ahmad's ideas for nubuwwah were not almost considered as a distinct difference among the people from different religions, by the Muslims in India, they were seen as completely distinctive elements among the Muslim communities in Pakistan. For this reason, it became almost impossible for them to live together with Muslims, and they built a new city by purchasing land from a remote and secluded region of Lahore. They gave this city the name of "Rabwah" by emulating the name of "rabwatin"[68] mentioned in the verse about the Prophet Jesus and the Virgin Mary and declared this place the world center of the Ahmadis.[69]

Another messianic movement that emerged within the Islamic tradition and built sacred places for themselves is Bahaism. Bahaullah, who was accepted as the founder and prophet of Bahaism, lived a long exile life in Acra city of Israel and formed a serious congregation around him in this process. During this period, he asked for the corpse of Mirza Ali Muhammed -Bab-, who he saw as the herald of his arrival and was killed in Iran, to be brought to Israel from Iran. For him, he ordered that a grave be built on the outskirts of Mount Carmel, which he accepted as sacred in Haifa,[70] a city close to Acra. As a matter of fact, the body of Mirza Ali Muhammed was transferred to a magnificent grave built together with a temple. For these reasons, the Bahais have ascribed a special meaning to the cities of Acra and Haifa. The nature of this interest in these cities has also expanded in the process. The city of Acra, where the tomb of Bahaullah is located, has turned into the "qibla", and the cities of Acra and Haifa have both turned into genuine "holy towns" where the Bahais came to perform the pilgrimage. As a result of this, these cities have become desirable places to visit and live by the Bahais. As a matter of fact, there is a

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[68]23. Mu'minun 50. "And We made Mary's son, and his mother, a sign, and We gave them refuge on a lofty ground, a peaceful site with springs flowing in it."

[69]Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 412-414. However, the Ahmadis' accepting Rabwah as the "actual" world center, following the official exclusion process that began with their being declared as non-Islamic minority , in 1974 continued until their leader IV. Kalif Mirza Tahir Ahmad left Pakistan in 1984. Because, since this date, although their world center is "officially" known as Rabwah, their "de-facto" center is London, the capital of England, where the Ahmadi khalifa is.

[70]As a matter of fact, the distance between the cities of Acra and Haifa is approximately 17 km.

serious Bahai population in these cities, which still have the world administration center identity of the Bahais.[71]

Another example of the messianic prophethood structures forming their own sacred towns is the movement called Brahmo Samaj, which emerged within Hinduism. As a matter of fact, after the movement's founder, Keshab Chandra Sen alleged prophethood, he bought a place near Calcutta city of India and established a kind of "religious sanctuary" here under the name of forest hometown in order to be certain of this claim. For those who want to live there, he conditioned an ascetic lifestyle to the utmost degree.[72] As a matter of fact, its followers appreciated this place as a holy town.

Another example to the holy towns of the movements, based on the ideas of messianic prophethood, is in question among the Mormons emerged from the Christian tradition. Indeed, the Mormons lived for a long time as "exiles" in different parts of America. At the end of this process, they built a new city called Salt Lake in Utah province. By giving a spiritual mission to this city, they believed that Jesus' second destination, New Jerusalem-Sion-would be in this city, America and they made an effort to complete the institutionalization of this city before Jesus arrived.[73] As a matter of fact, they expressed the purpose of the city they founded was to get rid of proceedings and worship God in the way that he wants. This city is still the center of Mormons on Earth.[74]

Another modern period holy city, which emerged from Christian tradition, is the city of Zion, founded by Evangelist Alexander Dowie in the state of Illinois, USA. The city of Zion got its name from a sacred mountain in Israel. He also established a new Catholic church in this new city. The city became among the richest provinces in America in a short period of time, upon thousands of its residents having settled here. Indeed, there is still a large majority in this city that follows Dowie's religious ideals.[75]

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[71]"The Baha'i World Center", access: April, 13 2020, http://www.bwc.org/.; "Hz. Bahullah'ın Ahit ve Misakı", access: April, 13 2020, https://bahaitr.org/hz-bahaullahin-ahit-ve-misaki/.; "İsrail'de Bahailik İnancı", April, 13 2020, https://www.haberler.com/israil-de-bahailik-inanci-5411632-haberi/.

[72]Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 173.

[73]Aktay, "Mormonluk: Amerika'nın Ahir Zamanının Dini ve Azizleri", 104; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 234.

[74]Aktay, "Mormonluk: Amerika'nın Ahir Zamanının Dini ve Azizleri", 106-107; Aydın, "Mormonlar İsa Mesih'in Son Gün Azizleri'nin Kilisesi", 220, 224, 226.

[75]"Early History", 10 Ocak 2020, http://www.zionhs.com/history.htm.

The aim of these settlements, which emerged within the framework of the "savior-prophet" belief among different religions in the modern era, in places far apart from each other, but with religious purposes parallel to each other, may be to enable their believers to live in their sacred townships and places as pleasant minorities, who believe in the savior prophet, separate from the "others".

In addition to the sacred towns built by the messianic prophet movements parallel to each other, there are also other common points. The first of these is their perceptions of a "unholy savior". Because in these movements, ordinary people turned into "saviors" and gained "holiness". However, in the traditions of Islam, Christianity and Hinduism, savior forms are often considered to be "spontaneously holy" beings. It is possible to encounter examples of this situation in all three religions. As a matter of fact, in the Islamic tradition, it is thought that Mahdi, believed to come as a savior, will come down from the sky and have superhuman powers that can fight everyone. Similarly, in the Christian scriptures, Jesus Christ is taken place as an entity that will descend from the sky with the angels majesticly. In Hinduism, the "savior" is envisioned as a "god" not a person.[76]

The messianic prophet movements is that they give great importance to educational activities and have built various religious and secular educational institutions.[77] The primary purpose of their activities was to train their own followers. It is possible to relate the interest of these movements in education with the spirit of the 19th century. Because, in this period, "education" activities were given great importance due to the effects of modernization activities throughout the world.

Another parallel aspect of messianic prophetic movements is that many of them heard about each other, although they appeared at

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[76]See. Matthew, 24:27, 29-30-31, 25/31; Luke, 21:25-26, 17:24; Mark, 13:24-26, 14:62. About the subject, see. Şevket Kotan, "Melankoliden Mitolojik Mesihçiliğe, 'Pavlus: Hristiyanlığın Mimarı'" 1/21 (Temmuz 2001): 151-158; Ali İhsan Yitik, "Hinduizm", *Yaşayan Dünya Dinleri*, ed. Şinasi Gündüz (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2010), 296; Kutlutürk, *Hinduizm'de Avatar İnancı*, 209.

[77] Cf.Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 169-170; Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyya Movement: A History and Perspective* (New Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1974), 96; Geaves, *Islam and Britain*, 39; Maulvi Dost Mohammad Shahid, "The Life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad", *The Muslim Herald*, trc. M. A. K. Gahuri, Ağustos 1989, 29: 27.

distant points from one another and at a time when communication was not very developed. We were able to identify the examples of this situation, especially through Ahmadiyya. Because in the first period when Ahmadiyya appeared, they were somehow aware of all these messianic formations. As a matter of fact, many examples related to this situation were included in the early Ahmadi sources.

The first example on the subject is the relationship between Ahmadiyya and Brahmo Samaj, which developed on the same land. As a matter of fact, it was detected that there was a connection between the two movements from a very early period and that the leaders of the two movements had serious discussions with each other regarding their beliefs.[78] Interestingly, when examining the relationship of these two structures, it was noticed that both had an "oath or testament" specification to join or exit the movement, and in this specification they had common characteristics such as loving God.[79]

Another relationship of Ahmadiyya was with the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in America. As a matter of fact, the founders of these two movements, Mirza Gulam Ahmad and Alexander Dowie, became aware of each other,[80] and they discussed for a long time through the American newspapers about the correctness of their own messianic prophecy allegations.

The other messianic movements that Ahmadiyya recognized at a very early period are Bahaism and Mormonism. Although no direct relationship could be identified between Ahmadiyya and these two movements, it was detected by us that detailed information about the Bahais and Mormons was given in two different issues of Ahmadis' journal - their official media organ- called *Review of Religions,* in the health of Mirza Gulam Ahmad.[81]

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[78]Geaves, *Islam and Britain*, 37, 39; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 61.

[79]Krş. Adıvar, *Hindistan'a Dair*, 170; Khan, *Ahmadiyyat*, 40-41; Dard, *Life of Ahmad(As)*, 201-203. Moreover another interesting point is that the two founders also worked for the British government. Because, considering that the 19th century India was British colony and people were often excluded from power, this situation is remarkable.

[80]About this subject, see. H. A. Walter, *Ahmadiya Movement* (Lahore, 1918), 44-45; Khan, *Ahmadiyyat*, 96-102; Shahid, "The Life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad", 29: 26-27.

[81]About the subject, see. Mirza Gulam Ahmad, "Mormonism and The Bible", *Review of Religions*, 1907; Mirza Gulam Ahmad, "The Babi or Bahai Religion", *Review of Religions*, t.y.; Küçüköner, *Mirza Gulam Ahmed*, 78, 153-154, 404, 412.

When evaluating the given examples of the messianic prophethood claims that emerged in the 19th century, we could say that in this period, there existed a general expectation of a "savior" among people and for some people a belief about the necessity of a prophet in the context of the uninterrupted prophethood. And it would not be wrong to say that the ideas such as "messianic prophethood", which combines these two institutions that express a higher level of mission, emerged within this context and that this concept was the rising value of the time. Because, in the same periods, similar ideas and tendencies occurred in different parts of the world. However, among these ideas it is also possible to see the claims of Mirza Gulam Ahmad and Keshab Chandra Sen as a commonality in the context of their emerging from the same region and to evaluate them as not reflecting the general spirit of the time. However, considering the messianic prophethood claims of Mirza Huseyin Ali in Iran, Joseph Smith and Evangelist Alexander Dowie in America in the same period, this situation, at least, can be seen as a general tendency of some people. This makes it possible for us to say that at that time there was a search for "renewal" and ways of re-communicating with God, and that this seeking pioneered the emergence of "living" claims of messianic prophethood.

Conclusion

Mankind has believed that everything has an end, as well as an end of the world, and ideas about the end of the world has always kept him busy. Especially the detailed information in the holy and non-holy books on this subject have caused human beings to have a comprehensive envisagement about the end of the world. The most common of these envisagements is the general state of wickedness and deterioration, which are thought to be seen at the end of the world. Along with this widespread wickedness, the notion of a "savior" that will wipe out this evil has also been considered. In particular, considering the age of the world and the negative experiences, from the 1800s the instant period has been perceived as the end times - the end of the world. In this context, the idea of a savior has been brought to the agenda many times in order to make mankind reach to safety. One of the most remarkable and powerful forms of these savior ideas has been the claims regarding messianic prophethood, which combines the concept of savior and prophethood. The basis of these claims was the idea that a mere savior would not be enough anymore and a universal prophet to dissolve religious differences would be needed to restore the deterioration in the end times. At the end of the 19th century, this idea was encountered in quite different religious circles such as

Islam, Christianity and Hinduism and that period also became one of the concepts reflecting the zeitgeist.

In the context of reflecting the zeitgeist in the 19th century, the first claim of messianic prophethood that emerged within Islam came from Mirza Gulam Ahmad who was one of the Indian subcontinent Muslims. Mirza Gulam Ahmad combined the concept of savior with the institution of prophecy. His claim was shaped by the idea of "ideal person" and the "savior prophet".

Another claim of messianic prophethood within the Islamic tradition that emerged in the Iranian geography in the 19th century came from Mirza Huseyin Ali. The basis of his claim was based on the idea of the uninterrupted prophethood. Indeed, he expressed himself as Bahaullah and argued that he was the savior-prophet expected by all religions.

Another claim of messianic prophethood from non-celestial religions in the same century emerged from the group of Hinduism called Brahmo Samaj. As a matter of fact, Keshab Chandra Sen, one of the leaders of this group, claimed that he was the savior prophet and expressed his duty as reviving Hinduism.

In the 19th century, within the context of the zeitgeist, there were various claims of messianic prophethood within Christianity. Two examples of these are the most remarkable in America. The first of these claims came from Joseph Smith at the beginning of the century. As a matter of fact, he described himself as the savior prophet of the end times and expressed his purpose as preparing the world before Jesus Christ came.

In the same century, another claim of messianic prophethood that emerged from Christianity came from Alexander Dowie. He claimed that he was the Prophet Elijah, who is supposed to be sent to prepare the world before Jesus Christ came, and defined his task as restoring the world's deteriorated order.

As a result, although human beings live in different geographies and cultures, they may have similar attitudes in similar situations. Indeed, the "savior" belief is a reflection of this. Because, throughout the history of humanity, people have always been in the expectation of a "savior" whenever they are in trouble. In this context, some people put forward the idea of the uninterrupted prophethood as a proposal to solve the problems and argued that if necessary, a "prophet" should be sent by God. So the expectation turned towards someone to be sent by God. In the 19th century, as a result of the troubles and suffering experienced, people generally had the expectation of a savior, on the other hand some people had

the ideas that a mere savior would not be enough and that a prophet was needed. In this manner, various beliefs about the combination of salvation and prophethood institutions have come to the agenda, thus a new theory of prophethood, which we can call "messianic prophethood", has emerged. This theory also performed an important mission in understanding the spirit of that period.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

"Zamanın ruhu" mefhumu, belli bir dönemde ortaya çıkan fikirler çerçevesinde, zamanın yükselen değerlerini ifade etmek için kullanılmaktadır. Kavram, birbirinden bağımsız tikel olaylardan genel sonuçlara varmada işe yaramakta; zamanın belli bir döneminde, yakın veya farklı coğrafyalarda mevzubahis olan benzer fikirlerin anlaşılabilmesine imkân vermektedir. Zira insanlar, genellikle benzer durumlarda benzer eğilimler göstermekte, birbirlerinden uzak coğrafyalarda yaşasalar dahi, meydana gelen ortak problemlere benzer çözümler üretmektedirler. Nitekim dünyanın büyük bir kısmının özellikle sömürgeci devletler eliyle tahakküm altına alındığı; insanların açlık ve savaşlarla mücadele ettiği ve bununla bağlantılı olarak dünyanın sonunun geldiğine dair fikirlerin söz konusu olduğu 19. yüzyılda da aynı durumun geçerli olduğu anlaşılmaktadır. Bu dönemde, Hint alt-kıtası, Avrupa, Amerika gibi dünyanın birbirinden oldukça farklı bölgelerinden insanların bir kısmı "kurtarıcı"; bir kısmı ise nübüvvetin kesintisizliği düşüncesi çerçevesinde bir "peygamber" beklentisi içerisinde olmuşlardır. Bu bağlamda, kurtarıcılık ile peygamberlik müesseselerinin birleştirilmesine dair çeşitli fikirler de gündeme gelmiş; böylelikle daha yüksek bir misyonu ifade eden "mesiyanik nübüvvet" olarak adlandırabilecek yeni bir nübüvvet teorisi ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu yeni nübüvvet teorisinin ortaya çıktığı zeminde ise, ahir zamandaki bozulmanın restorasyonu için artık salt bir kurtarıcının yetmeyeceği; din farklılıklarını eritecek, halkları etrafında birleştirecek ve evrensel çapta bir kurtarıcı-peygamberin gelmesinin gerekli olduğuna dair fikirler yer almıştır. Bu anlayış da, o dönemin ruhunun anlaşılabilmesi açısından önemli bir misyonu icra etmiştir. Zira 19. yüzyıldaki "mesiyanik nübüvvet" iddiaları, İslamiyet, Hinduizm, Hristiyanlık ve Yahudilik gibi birbirinden oldukça farklı semavi ve semavi olmayan dinlerde söz konusu olmuştur. Sözü edilen bu durum da, bu dönemin, yüksek bir ilahi misyon aracılığıyla gerçekleşecek yenilenme beklentilerinin, ciddi şekilde ivme kazandığı bir zaman dilimi olduğunu söylemeye imkan vermektedir.

Kurtarıcı-peygamber anlamındaki mesiyanik nübüvvet iddialarıyla, çeşitli dinlerde karşılaşılmıştır. İslamiyet içerisinden kurtarıcı-nebi olarak değerlendirilebilecek fikirler hem Sünni hem de Şii gelenekte söz konusu olmuştur. Bu noktada verilebilecek ilk örnek Hint-alt kıtasında yaşayan ve Sünni gelenekten gelen Ahmedîliğin kurucusu Mirza Gulam Ahmed'den (1835-1908) gelmiştir. Mirza Gulam Ahmed, Hristiyanlar ve Müslümanlar için kurtarıcı olduğu fikriyle ortaya çıkmış, süreç içerisinde kurtarıcılık

iddiasını nübüvvet fikriyle mezcederek, bütün dinlerin beklediği evrensel çapta bir "kurtarıcı-peygamber" olduğunu iddia etmiştir.

İslamiyet içerisinden diğer bir iddia ise 19. yüzyılın sonlarında, Şii gelenekten, İran coğrafyasındaki, Bahailiğin kurucusu Mirza Hüseyin Ali'den (1817-1892) gelmiştir. Mirza Hüseyin Ali, Şia'nın "beklenen mehdi" düşüncesini, nübüvvetin kesintisizliği fikriyle birleştirerek, din farklılıklarını kaldıracak, bir nevi insanoğlunu selamete erdirecek bir nebi fikriyle ortaya çıkmıştır.

Hinduizm içerisinden bir mesiyanik nübüvvet iddiası ise Hint alt-kıtasından, bir Hindu reform hareketi olan Brahmo Samaj'ın liderlerinden Keshab Chandra Sen'den (1838-1884) gelmiştir. Nitekim o, din farklılıklarını yok edecek, insanları aynı din altında birleştirecek bir peygamber olduğu düşüncesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır.

Hristiyanlık içerisinden ilk mesiyanik nübüvvet iddiası ise Amerika kıtasından, Mormonluğun kurucusu olan Joseph Smith'ten (1805-1845) gelmiş; o 19. yüzyılda insanoğlunu kurtarmak için Tanrı tarafından mesîhî bir amaçla görevlendirilmiş bir peygamber olduğu düşüncesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır.

Hristiyanlık içerisinden bir diğer mesiyanik nübüvvet iddiası ise yine Amerika'dan, Evanjelik bir Hristiyan olan Alexander Dowie'den (1847-1907) gelmiş, Dowie de dindaşlarını kurtarmak için İsa-Mesih öncesi, dünyayı hazırlamak için gönderilen kurtarıcı bir peygamber olduğu fikriyle ortaya çıkmıştır. Nitekim bu bağlamda, 18. yüzyılın sonlarında, mesihî bir nübüvvet düşüncesi çerçevesinde ortaya çıkan Hasidik Yahudiliğin dayandığı teolojik arka planı da kurtarıcı-peygamber düşüncesi kapsamında değerlendirmek mümkündür.

Birbirinden uzak coğrafyalarda ortaya çıkan ve çeşitli dinler içerisinden söz konusu olan bu mesiyanik nübüvvet iddialarının birbirinden bağımsız temellere dayandığını da söylemek mümkün değildir. Nitekim teolojik benzerliklerine ilaveten, aynı zamanda 19. yüzyılın kısıtlı iletişim imkanlarına rağmen, bu iddia sahiplerinin bir çoğu, birbirlerinden haberdar olmuşlar, hatta birbirleriyle çeşitli münazaralar ve tartışmalar dahi gerçekleştirmişlerdir.

Birbirinden haberdar olan ve mesiyanik nübüvvet iddialarıyla ortaya çıkan bu kişiler, bağlı oldukları dinlerin ana bünyelerinden kendilerine yönelik muhalefete de benzer tepkiler göstermişlerdir. Zira bu kişiler, müntesiplerini bir arada tutabilmek ve ana bünyeden gelen muhalefeti daha rahat karşılayabilmek için kendileri için yeni şehirler, yeni merkezler inşa etmişlerdir. Süreç içerisinde müntesipleri tarafından daha da önem verilen ve kutsiyet atfedilen bu yeni şehirleri ve merkezleri de, modern dönemin kutsal mekanları olarak adlandırmak yanlış olmayacaktır.

İşte bu makalede de, farklı dinler içerisinden söz konusu olan çeşitli mesiyanik nübüvvet iddiaları zamanın ruhu bağlamında incelenmiş; birbirinden farklı coğrafyalarda ortaya çıkan bu fikirlerin, birbirleriyle benzer, birbirlerinden farklı yönleri tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır.