



A Critical Examination of *Mas'ūdī's* Solitary '*Āshūrā*' Narrations in *Murūj al-Dhahab*

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Abstract

The account of the martyrdom of *Ḥusayn* (AS) in *al-Mas'ūdī's Murūj al-Dhahab* (d. 346 AH) holds a special place among extant '*Āshūrā*' sources due to both its antiquity and the author's stature in Islamic historiography. Part of *al-Mas'ūdī's* report reflects the concise narrations of earlier authorities, while another part contains solitary reports found only in his transmission. An analysis of these unique reports, constituting the central problem of this study, shows that some of them suffer from textual inconsistencies and conflict with established historical and transmitted accounts. Nevertheless, these

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reports influenced later historians' narratives. Hence, *al-Mas'ūdī's Maqtal* is at once a valuable source and a subject of caution and scrutiny. Using a descriptive-analytical method and a critical approach, this article seeks to clarify *al-Mas'ūdī's* method and perspective in narrating the events of '*Āshūrā*' and, through comparison of his unique reports with other historical and narrative sources, to evaluate their content reliability. The findings show that assessing *al-Mas'ūdī's* solitary narrations is only possible through historical-narrative analysis; without such scrutiny, parts of '*Āshūrā*' literature remain confused and ambiguous. Accordingly, this study reexamines and evaluates these unique reports.

Keywords: *Maqtal al-Husayn*, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, '*Āshūrā*' Narrations, Solitary Reports, Text Criticism.

Introduction

The study of historical narrations among Muslims is regarded as part of religious knowledge. The writing of *Maqtal* literature, especially the *Maqtal* of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS), as a morally instructive view of history spread among various Islamic sects. Among the Shi'a, however, it acquired particular significance as a religious duty aimed at preserving the objectives of the Karbala event, expressing religious sentiments, and adopting a model of resistance against oppression. Numerous reports and many *Maqtal* works written over time attest to this importance. Beyond political and religious motives that distorted the recounting of this great event, the intermingling of some *Maqtal* works with authors' emotions or preconceptions often failed to present

a clear, contradiction-free picture. Hence, the quest to recover the true image of this historical episode and to analyze reported distortions has been a concern of religious scholarship. Prominent scholars such as *Muḥaddith Noori* addressed this issue in works like "*Lu'lu' wa Marjān*." Among roughly forty principal *Maqatal* works now available (For more information cf. Rahman Setayesh and Rafat, 2009 AD/1388 SH: 81), besides primary historical sources and works of merits literature, there are reports questionable either in transmission or in meaning, sometimes inconsistent with Imam Ḥusayn's (AS) objectives. One well-known source is *al-Mas'ūdī's Maqatal al-Husayn*. This article analyzes modes of engagement with the 'Āshūrā' uprising and the channels through which distortions entered *Maqatal* literature, focusing on *al-Mas'ūdī's* narrations.

The main research questions are:

- Which narrations in this book count among the earliest 'Āshūrā' reports, and what criteria identify them?
- What are the characteristics of *al-Mas'ūdī's* unique narrations, and how can their historical-narrative structure and credibility be assessed?

The author critiques the reported events using criteria such as hadith evidence, historical testimony, and rational considerations. Although this study benefits from a general scholarly background, a focused examination of *al-Mas'ūdī's* 'Āshūrā' narrations has not previously been the main subject of research. Existing works mostly address his historiographical method rather than these specific reports.

Among the works that can be mentioned are "Sources of Islamic

History," (Jafariyan, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 174-179) "The Historiographical Method of *al-Murūj al-Dhahab* and *Ma'ādin al-Jawāhir* by *al-Mas'ūdī*," (Masoumi, 2020 AD/1399 SH) and "History as a Process of Thought in *al-Murūj al-Dhahab* and *al-Tanbīh wa al-Ashrāf* by *al-Mas'ūdī*," (Vasei and Saeidi, 2010 AD/1389 SH) In the existing literature, there is no book or article that directly and centrally addresses the research questions of this study. Even regarding *al-Mas'ūdī*'s historical reports, whether at a general level or specifically in connection with the 'Āshūrā-related narrations of *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn* (AS) with the relevant characteristics, no independent research has been conducted.

1. Mas'ūdī: Biography and Works

Abul Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn Mas'ūdī was a prominent historian and geographer whose works in Islamic history and geography are considered key sources widely used by researchers. He was born in Baghdad in the late 3rd century AH, though his family originally hailed from Kūfah. He became a renowned historian and traveler of the 4th century AH, residing first in Baghdad and later in Egypt, where he passed away in 346 AH (Ziraklī, 1980: 4, 277). His lineage traces back to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). *Jumhūratu Ansāb al-'Arab* records his lineage as follows:

"'Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Zayd ibn 'Utbah ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd." (Ibn

The earliest biography of *Mas'ūdī* can be found in *al-Fihrist* by *Ibn Nadīm*, his contemporary. *Ibn Nadīm* writes:

"He is from the people of the Maghreb and a descendant of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd," (*Ibn Nadīm*, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 188) and he lists several of *Mas'ūdī*'s works, such as *Murūj al-Dhahab* (*ibid*: 188). *Ibn Nadīm* does not mention his religious affiliation. Notably, while *Ibn Nadīm* describes him as a "*Maghribī*," *Yāqūt* in his biography, based on *Mas'ūdī*'s own statement in the second volume of *Murūj al-Dhahab* that he was born in Babylon, considers him a native of Baghdad who later resided in Egypt (*Ḥamawī*, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 13, 91). It is possible that *Ibn Nadīm*'s reference to "*Maghribī*" meant "Egyptian," which would resolve the apparent discrepancy (*Jafariyan*, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 1, 136; *ibid.*, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 174).

Later scholars who wrote about him include *Najāshī* (1945 AD/1365 AH: 254), *Ibn 'Idris Ḥillī* (1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 615), *Yāqūt Ḥamawī* (1993 AD/1414 AH: 13, 91), *Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs* (1948 AD/1368 AH: 126), *Allāmah Ḥillī* (1990 AD/1411 AH: 100, no. 40; *Ibn Dāwūd*, 1922 AD/1342 AH: 241, no. 1018), *Dhahabī* (1992 AD/1413 AH: 15, 569; also 1989 AD/1410 AH: 25, 341), *Sibkī* (n.d.: 3, 456), among others. In addition, many Orientalists have written extensively on *Mas'ūdī*'s historical works and biography; these have been listed by *Fuat Sezgin* (*Sezgin*, n.d.: 1, part 2, 178-179).

Mas'ūdī studied under great teachers such as *Muḥammad ibn Khalaf ibn Ḥayyān*, known as *Wakī'* (*Mas'ūdī*, n.d.: 254); *Aḥmad ibn Sa'īd al-Dimashqī*, from whom he learned *al-Akhhār al-Muwaffaqiyāt* of *Ibn* **71**

Zubayr (ibid.: 3, 121); *Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī* (ibid.: 232);¹ *Ibn Durayd* (ibid.: 2, 215, 228); *Ibn al-Anbārī* (ibid.: 4, 196); *Ṣūlī* (ibid.: 4, 189), and others.

There is considerable disagreement regarding his religious affiliation. Some consider him among the Sunni scholars; others regard him as a devout Twelver Shī'ah,² some as Mu'tazilī (Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 15, 569; also 1989 AD/1410 AH: 25, 341; 'Asqalānī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 4, 225), or as Shāfi'ī (Sibkī, n.d.: 3, 456). There are strong arguments against his being a Shī'ah, for example, in *Murūj al-Dhahab*, he considers the idol-worshipping *Azar* as Abraham's father, similar to the Sunni view (Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 56; 2, 237). He also praises *Abū Bakr* (2, 298) and *Umar* (2, 305). He does not mention the event of *Ghadīr* in *Murūj*, and in *al-Tanbīh wa al-Ashrāf*, he locates it at the end of the Hudaybiyyah peace treaty, not as the *Ḥujjat al-Balāgh* (Mas'ūdī, n.d.: 221). *Mas'ūdī* does not consider post-Prophetic events as certain or fixed (ibid: 2, 426), whereas major Sunni scholars accept them.

The coincidence of two scholars named *Mas'ūdī* has caused some Sunnis and many Shī'ah to assume that the author of *Athbāt al-Wasīyah* is the same as the author of *Murūj al-Dhahab*, leading to the belief that

1. *Mas'ūdī* cites a report from *Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī* in only one instance using the expression "*Ḥaddathanā Abū Ja'far ...*" From this, it may be inferred that he also studied under him, especially since he held *Ṭabarī* in high esteem and praised him in the introduction to his book (cf. idem, Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 23–25).

72 2. The proponents of this view will be discussed below.

Mas'ūdī of **Murūj** was Shi'ah¹ and that both works belonged to *Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn Mas'ūdī* (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 254; Ibn 'Adris, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 1, 615; Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 126; *ibid.*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 31; Ḥillī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 100, no. 40; Ibn Dāwūd, n.d.: 241, no. 1018; Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 15, 569; *ibid.*, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 25, 341; 'Asqalānī, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 4, 225; Nūrī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 1, 115–127; Baḥrānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 2, 448; *ibid.*, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 16; Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 1, 18; 102, 61; Tafreshi, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 3, 252; Qummī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 4, 165; *ibid.*, n.d.: 3, 185; Aqabozorg Tehrani, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 1, 85, 110; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 2, 180). Others reject this identification with convincing reasons (Shubayri Zanjani, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 201–228; also cf. Jafariyan, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 175–176).

A look at *Murūj al-Dhahab* shows that his Shi'i inclinations were quite extensive; however, he cannot be considered a Twelver Shi'i. Moreover, the titles of some of the works² attributed to him indicate that his Shi'ism should be regarded as the Iraqi type (cf. Ja'fariyan,

1. *Allamah Majlisī*, when recounting the events of 'Āshūrā', considers him among the scholars of the *Imāmī* School (cf. Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 44, 310).
2. Among the works attributed to him are: *al-Istibṣār fī al-Imāmah wa Waṣf Aqāwīl al-Nās fī Dhālik min Aṣḥāb al-Naṣṣ wa al-Ikhtiyār wa Ḥujaj Kull Farīq Minhum* (Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 277); *al-Ṣafwah fī al-Imāmah* (*ibid.*: 2, 277); *al-Intiṣār fī al-Imāmah* (*ibid.*: 3, 193); *Ḥadā'iq al-Adhhān fī Akhbār Āl Muḥammad, upon whom be blessings and peace* (*ibid.*: 2, 54, 425; 3, 77, 343, 440; 4, 63); and *Mazāhir al-Akhbār wa Zarā'if al-Āthār li-l-Ṣafwah al-Nūriyyah wa al-Dhurriyyah al-Zakiyyah Abwāb al-Raḥmah wa Yanābī' al-Ḥikmah* (*ibid.*: 2, 382, 425; 4, 65).

2003 AD/1382 SH: 175-176). This refers to those who considered Imam ‘Ali (AS) superior to ‘*Uthmān* and, despite possessing Shi‘i tendencies, transmitting the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, and showing hostility toward the Umayyads and later the Abbasids, did not fit within any of the established Shi‘i sects, whether Zaydi, Imami, or Isma‘ili (cf. Ja‘fariyan, 2008 AD/1387 SH: 22-24).

A number of works have been attributed to *Mas‘ūdī*, including: *Akhhbār al-Zamān min Abādat al-Ḥadathān min al-Umam al-Māḍiya wa al-Jīl al-Mamālik al-Dā‘ira* (Mas‘ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 1, 17, 26, 45, 49, 50, 62, 63, 68, 71, 79, 81, 84, 87, 100, 111, 135, 143, 146, 166, 186, 192, 197, 209, etc.), *al-Kitāb al-Awsaṭ* (ibid.: 1), *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma‘ādin al-Jawhar fī Tuḥaf al-Ashrāf min al-Mulūk wa Ahl al-Dirāyāt* (ibid.: 1, 26), *Kitāb Funūn al-Ma‘ārif wa Mā Jarā fī al-Duhūr al-Sawālif*, *Kitāb Dhakhā‘ir al-‘Ulūm wa Mā Kāna fī Sālif al-Duhūr*, *Kitāb Naẓm al-Jawāhir fī Tadbīr al-Mamālik wa al-‘Asākir*, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*, *al-Maqālāt fī Uṣūl al-Diyānāt*, and others (cf. ibid., n.d.: 1). The number of his works is such that some sources have attributed as many as forty-eight titles to him.¹

2. Features of *Murūj al-Dhahab* and *Mas‘ūdī*’s Historiographical Method

A careful study of *Murūj al-Dhahab* shows that one of the defining

1. For the study of Mas‘ūdī’s works, cf. Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 254; Ziriklī, 1980: 4, 277; Qummī, n.d.: 3, 185; Hādī Ḥusayn Ḥammūd; Mahdavi Damghani, 1974 AD/1353 SH; Shakouri, 1996 AD/1375 SH; Kamran Moqaddam, 1972 AD/1351 SH; Askari, 1997 AD/1376 SH; and Valavī, 1996 AD/1375 SH.

characteristics of *Mas'ūdī*'s historiographical method is the introduction of rational argument into the sphere of historical discussion. Until his time, Muslim historians had generally written history on the basis of transmitted reports and chains of narration, a tendency not unrelated to the dominance of tradition-based in jurisprudence and Hadith studies. The sources of *Mas'ūdī*'s historiography are numerous and diverse (cf. *ibid*: 1, 79, 94, 147, 194, 348; 2, 159, 198, 215; 3, 418, 470; 4, 292, etc.), and this multiplicity constitutes another distinctive feature of both *Mas'ūdī* and his works, namely, their comprehensiveness. In accordance with the subject matter, he presents various viewpoints in theological and philosophical discussions. In some passages he even addresses the social psychology of peoples or offers analyses resembling the psychology of the masses (*ibid*: 2, 34–35, 38, etc.). Moreover, *Mas'ūdī* engages with subtle scholarly discussions, including topics such as dreams and visions (*ibid*: 2, 175), the psychological effects of colors on human beings (*ibid*: 1, 217–218), the biology of birds (*ibid*: 1, 188), and music and its influence on humans (*ibid*: 1, 321), all of which are noteworthy in their own right. Thus, it may be said that *Mas'ūdī*'s work is not limited to historical reports alone; rather, it reflects numerous cultural, sectarian, theological, and literary issues, often drawing upon sources that are no longer extant.

An important stylistic feature of *Mas'ūdī*'s writing is the clarity of his expression, the avoidance of ambiguity and unnecessary complexity, and his reluctance to employ obscure or difficult vocabulary except when accompanied by explanation. He appears to

have favored this style consciously, as he praises authors who display similar characteristics (ibid: 1, 24; 2, 263; 3, 43; 4, 109).

Although *Murūj al-Dhahab* is not *Mas'ūdī's* most extensive work, it is the most substantial of his surviving writings and has been printed repeatedly. One of its notable features is that the author does not arrange events in strict chronological order, unlike *Ṭabarī*, who died thirty-six years before *Mas'ūdī*, and who organized his history year by year. *Mas'ūdī's* method in *Murūj al-Dhahab* appears to follow that of another Shi'i historian, *al-Ya'qūbī* (Mahdavi Damghani, 1974 AD/1353 SH: 111). Another similarity between the two lies in their avoidance of detailed chains of transmission in reporting historical events. For this reason, *Mas'ūdī's* method may be described as analytical historiography. In assessing the accuracy of earlier beliefs and reports concerning phenomena and events, he consistently applies the criterion of reason, examining them through various methods and thereby attempting to correct the views of his predecessors. This approach is evident throughout his works; wherever necessary, he employs it fully in order to present realities as they are. *Mas'ūdī* applies this method both in the study of natural and geographical phenomena and in the examination of beliefs, ideas, historical reports, and, more broadly, socio-cultural events. He makes considerable efforts to uncover the roots of phenomena such as ideas, events, peoples, and other historical developments. For instance, when addressing popular claims about the existence of mythical beings such as the *Nasnās*, he rejects them on rational grounds and regards them as

76 products of popular imagination (*Mas'ūdī*, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2,

208). It seems that his central concern was to open a pathway to reality amid a mass of statements and reports, a logical and rational approach that would minimize error. Although the structure of his work is historical rather than hadith-based, his omission of chains of transmission has limited the possibility of Isnad-based evaluation by later scholars. His method instead consists of composing accounts through comparison, synthesis, and harmonization of diverse narratives. The numerous sources he utilized should not be overlooked; owing to his extensive travels, *Mas'ūdī* sought to benefit from the information he gathered from various regions. As a result, he encountered a vast number of reports and therefore adopted a concise style, emphasizing brevity while carefully examining different accounts and selecting those that were widely accepted and considered reliable for inclusion in his work.

Mas'ūdī provides a list of the chapters of his book in the introduction. The work begins with the story of creation and the origins of the world, and then proceeds to the history of various nations, lands, royal dynasties, and the historical geography of the world. His perspective in these discussions is not purely historical; rather, he approaches the past from multiple angles, presenting a body of information encompassing history, geography, the history of sciences, calendars, religions, and beliefs. After these sections, he turns to the birth of the Prophet and enters into Islamic history, organizing the narrative according to the caliphates, with events discussed under the name of each caliph. The latest year mentioned in the work is 346 AH (Jafariyan, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 177-178).

3. Mas'ūdī and Maqtal al-Ḥusayn (AS)

In *Murūj al-Dhahab*, Mas'ūdī presents a concise account of Imam Ḥusayn's uprising. This report has several features. First, it is presented without a source citation or a chain of transmission. His report resembles those of *Ya'qūbī* and *Dīnawarī* (cf. Asgari and Rafat, 2019 AD/1399 AH: 55). Mas'ūdī appears to have arranged his account based on historical narrative works, but after removing the Isnads, he shaped the material according to his own critical approach. Second, his account of events in Medina and Kūfa is more detailed than his account of Karbalā' and the Day of 'Āshūrā' (Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 54-60). A closer examination reveals similarities in some places with the report of *Abū Mikhnaf*, especially regarding events in Mecca and the advice given by *Ibn 'Abbās*, *Ibn Zubayr*, and *Abū Bakr ibn Hishām*, though differences also exist (cf. Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 54-56; Bilādthurī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 3, 161; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 383). His report of the Imam's journey from Mecca to Karbalā' likewise resembles 'Ammār Duhanī's account, with minor variations (cf. Mas'ūdī, 1978 AD/1409 AH: 3, 54-59; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 347, 349, 351, 389). Another point is that Mas'ūdī's perspective and stance are not clearly revealed through his report. Unlike *Ibn Sa'd* in *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, who displays his doctrinal inclinations, Mas'ūdī does not make his intellectual or sectarian position explicit in his narrative (cf. Rafat, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 126-128; Rafat and Rahman Setayesh, 2023 AD/1402 SH: 290-291). Rather, like other historians, he strives to

record events according to his historical method with great subtlety, paying less attention to doubtful or highly questionable reports.

4. Unrealistic and Distorted Reports in *Murūj al-Dhahab*

4.1. Muslim's Arrival in Kūfa on 5 *Shawwāl*

Mas'ūdī writes that the Muslim departed Mecca in mid-*Ramaḍān* and arrived in Kūfa on the 5th of *Shawwāl* (*Mas'ūdī*, 1978 AD/1409 AH: 3, 54). No earlier sources mention a specific date. According to this timeline, his total travel time would have been about twenty days, far shorter than the usual duration required to travel from Mecca to Medina¹ and then to Kūfa. Even excluding the time needed to send a messenger back to Mecca and receive a reply, the journey would still be unrealistically short. Given the approximate 1,400-km distance between Mecca and Kūfa, he would have had to travel about 70 km per day, not counting days spent in Medina, an implausible pace, especially considering reported delays and consultations along the way (*Ṭabarī*, *ibid*: 5, 354). Even assuming the accuracy of the report concerning Muslim's ill omen-taking, his request to resign, and the confusion he and his companions experienced midway on the journey (cf. Rafat, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 14), after departing from Medina he sent a messenger to Mecca in order to seek instructions from the Imam (AS) (*Dīnawarī*, 1948 AD/1368 1368 AH: 230). If we add to this the time required to find a messenger, dispatch him to Mecca, obtain the

1. *Dīnwarī*, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 230; *Dīnwarī* writes: "Muslim went from Medina [towards Mecca] to visit his family."

Imam's reply, and for the messenger to return from Mecca, together with the period Muslim himself remained in Medina and the time he needed for rest, his journey would certainly have exceeded one month. In other words, even if we exclude the time spent by Muslim's envoy traveling to and from Mecca, the duration of Muslim's own journey from Mecca to Kufa would amount to less than ten days. Covering such a distance within that time frame would ordinarily have been impossible.

4.2. Error Regarding the Governor of Mecca

Mas'ūdī mentions only two figures, *Ibn 'Abbās* and *Abū Bakr ibn Hārith ibn Hishām*, who tried to dissuade the Imam from going to Iraq (cf. Ibn Sa'd, 1993 AD/1414 AH: Khāmisā 1, 442-450). He then states that *Abū Bakr* went to *Hārith ibn Khālīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ ibn Hishām Makhzūmī*, calling him the governor of Mecca (*Mas'ūdī*, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 54-56). However, earlier reports identify the governor as *ʿAmr ibn Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ Umayyad* (cf. Bilādthurī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 5, 299; Dīnawarī, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 244; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 338).

4.3. The Meeting of *Ḥurr ibn Yazīd* with Imam *Ḥusayn* at *Qādisīyya*

Mas'ūdī places the meeting between *Ḥurr* and the Imam in *Qādisīyya* and reports that *Ḥurr* informed him of Muslim's martyrdom (*Mas'ūdī*, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 60-61). Other sources place the encounter near *Qādisīyya*, about three miles away (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 389), however, in another narration by *Ṭabarī*, the place of the

meeting is explicitly stated as "Qādisīyah." (ibid: 5, 401)

It should be noted that the expression "Three miles from *Qādisīyyah*" does not indicate a great geographical distance from *Qādisīyyah* itself; rather, it refers to a nearby area. Nevertheless, some sources use the phrase the "Arrival of *Ḥurr* from the region of *Qādisīyyah*," indicating that the encounter did not take place within *Qādisīyyah* proper (Balādhurī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 3, 170; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 401; Muḥīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 78; 'Asqalānī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 71), but rather in its vicinity, namely, the area of *Dhū Ḥusam* (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 400; Abū Mikhnaḥ Kūfī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 168; Ibn Athīr, 1965 AD/1385 AH: 4, 46).

Apart from the above point, another issue, also reported by Ṭabarī with certain variations (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 389, 397), requires examination. What *Mas'ūdī* relates suggests that the Imam decided to continue his journey solely out of sympathy for and solidarity with the brothers of Muslim. However, in critiquing this narration, which appears to contain problematic elements, several points deserve attention:

First, a comparison of *Mas'ūdī*'s unsourced report with other narrations that possess chains of transmission indicates that the transmitter of this report is *'Ammār Duhnī*. Due to the "Unknown" status of certain transmitters in the chain and the weakness of others, the Isnad is considered weak. In these reports, the narration of *'Ammār* precedes that of *Abū Mikhnaḥ*. Although the chain explicitly states that

‘*Ammār* transmitted it from Imam *Bāqir* (AS), several issues merit scrutiny.

"*Zakariyyā ibn Yaḥyā al-Ḍarīr* narrated to me; he said: *Aḥmad ibn Janāb al-Maṣīṣī*, known as *Abū al-Walīd*, narrated to us; he said: *Khālīd ibn Yazīd ibn Asad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qasrī* narrated to us; he said: ‘*Ammār al-Duhnī* narrated to us; he said: I said to *Abū Ja‘far ...*" (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 347)

Khaṭīb Baghdādī, in *Tārīkh Baghdād*, mentions *Zakariyyā ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ayyūb Abū ‘Alī al-Ḍarīr*, but does not clarify his biographical reliability (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 8, 459). *Haythamī*, in *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id*, refers to him under several traditions and explicitly states: "I do not know him." (Haythamī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 4, 303; 5, 20, 47, 156; 10, 126, 138) Elsewhere he writes: "The chain of transmission of Ṭabarānī's *al-Kabīr* is sound and its narrators are from the transmitters of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, except for *Zakarīyyā ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ayyūb al-Ḍarīr*, whom *Khaṭīb* mentioned; a group narrated from him, yet no one has spoken about him [in terms of reliability]." (ibid: 7, 274–275) Other biographical scholars likewise make no mention of him; therefore, he is regarded as unknown.

In contrast, *Aḥmad ibn Janāb Maṣīṣī* has been considered trustworthy and reliable (Mizzī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 283; Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 19; idem, 1994 NAD/1415 AH: 1, 31).

Regarding *Khālīd ibn Yazīd al-Qasrī*, *Ibn ‘Adī* states: "Not all of his narrations are followed, and no in chain or in text ... in my view he is weak." (Dhahabī, 1962 AD/1382 AH: 1, 647) Others have

likewise judged him weak (Ibn 'Ajamī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 108).

As for 'Ammār Duhnī (d. 133 AH), he was regarded by Sunni scholars such as *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, according to *Najāshī* and *Tafreshi*, as trustworthy, and he has been described as reliable (Najāshī, 1945 AD/1365 AH: 411; Tafreshi, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 316; Ibn Ḥajar 'Asqalānī, 2000 AD/1415 AH: 1, 708; Dhahabī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 6, 138; idem, 1962 AD/1382 AH: 3, 170). *Mu'āwiya*, the son of 'Ammār Duhnī, is counted among the eminent companions of Imam *Bāqir* (AS) and Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS). In Shi'ī hadith collections, only a limited number of narrations from 'Ammār have been preserved (Ṣaffār, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 314; Ṭabarī Āmulī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 172; Kulaynī, 1968 AD/1388 AH: 2, 99, ḥadīth 30; Mufīd, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 73; Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 230; idem, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 462; Ṭabarī Āmulī, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 223).

Khū'ī has presented both textual and rational arguments for his Shi'ī affiliation, which are noteworthy (Khū'ī, 1952 AD/1372 SH: 12, 253–254).

Considering the biographical status of the transmitters, the chain of transmission is deemed weak, and the text of the report cannot be relied upon unless its meaning is corroborated by other narrations of similar content.

Moreover, in general, the narration of 'Ammār Duhnī in historical works is transmitted in an extremely concise form; comparison with other reports makes its brevity and existing ambiguities even more apparent.

Second, it appears that the transmitters sought to portray all individuals associated with the Imam, whether prominent figures or even his own sons, as though they were constantly attempting to dissuade him from his decision, while the Imam steadfastly maintained his position in every instance.

Third, how could life be described as tolerable for the Imam after the martyrdom of Muslim, his special envoy, yet portrayed as unbearable after the martyrdom of Muslim's brothers? Such a statement seems entirely incongruous with the Imam's stature.

Fourth, the Imam's insistence on proceeding toward Kūfa even after the letters of the Kūfans had effectively lost their binding force, following the news of the killing of Muslim, *Hānī*, and *ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yaqṭar*, demonstrates that the principal motive for his movement toward Iraq was not the Kūfan letters. Although it is true that he did not wish to provide his opponents with a pretext, since returning midway might have led to accusations of breaking his pledge, this was only a secondary factor. His primary motive was his awareness that refusal to pledge allegiance would lead to his martyrdom. Iraq, given its transformative potential in the aftermath of his martyrdom and its status as a center of Shiʿism and opposition to Umayyad rule, was the most suitable place for his blood to be shed.

Fifth, the Imam repeatedly declared: "If you dislike my coming, I shall return to where I came from ..." (Balādhurī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 3, 177; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 411)

This did not imply abandoning the uprising; rather, he meant that
84 he would not enter Kūfa as a captive. It signified a possible change of

route, not a renunciation of the movement itself.

Thus, even assuming the authenticity of the aforementioned narration (which was also recorded by figures such as *Shaykh Mufīd* and others), the Imam's renewed decision was not merely out of compassion for Muslim's family, but rooted in higher objectives. It may also be understood as a test of the courage and loyalty of his companions at a critical juncture.

4.4. The Alleged Non-Presence of Syrians in the Battle Against Imam Ḥusayn (AS)

Mas'ūdī is the earliest historian to assert that all those who confronted Imam Ḥusayn (AS) at Karbalā' were Kūfans and that no Syrians were present. He writes: "All those who attended the killing of Ḥusayn and fought and killed him were exclusively from the people of Kūfa; no Syrian was among them." (Mas'ūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 61)

Accordingly, in this 'Āshūrā' analysis, *Mas'ūdī* presents a view different from that of other historians. A survey of earlier historical works reveals no trace of this report or claim. It appears that *Mas'ūdī* was the first to transmit such an account. *Sibt ibn al-Jawzī*, in *Tadhkirat al-Khawāṣṣ*, citing *Mas'ūdī*, writes: "Eighty-one persons from among them were killed, and no one from the people of Syria (ahl al-Shām) was present at the fighting against Ḥusayn; rather, all of them were from the people of Kūfa who had written to him." (Sibt ibn Jawzī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 226)

In later sources such as *al-Dam'ah al-Sākibah* and *Nāsikh al-Tawārīkh*, this claim is emphasized and even, citing *Abū Mikhnaf*, the

non-presence of *Ḥijāzīs* is added: "The army reached eighty thousand cavalry from the people of Kūfa; none among them was Syrian or *Ḥijāzī*. They marched until they encamped near the camp of *Ḥusayn* (AS)." (Behbahani, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 4, 261; Sepehr, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 2, 340) This report is drawn from the well-known but unreliable *Maqtal* attributed to *Abū Mikhnaḥ* (cf. *Abū Mikhnaḥ*, *ibid*: 51-52). If this attributed *Maqtal* dates to the late fourth or fifth century AH (cf. Hosseini, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 193-194), or is considered a work of *Ibn Ṭāwūs* (cf. Kohlberg, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 78-80), or even a Safavid-era fabrication (*ibid*: 89), and if we accept that *Mas'ūdī* died in 346 AH (Ziriklī, 1980: 4, 277), then *Mas'ūdī*'s uniqueness in transmitting this claim becomes evident.

Although *Mas'ūdī*'s report is not directly echoed in earlier authoritative sources, evidence exists both for and against his analysis. Two approaches, affirmative and negative, have been proposed, each requiring careful examination. While some historical reports may suggest the presence of individuals or even troops from Syria, none explicitly records the arrival of a Syrian army under a Syrian commander.

Evidence Cited for the Presence of Syrians

Ibn Sa'd (d. 230 AH) reports that "A man from the people of Syria called out to *ʿAlī Akbar ibn al-Ḥusayn*" (*Ibn Sa'd*, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 5, 1, 470). *Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih* (d. 328 AH) writes that a man from the people of Syria saw *ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan*, described as one of the

Rabbih, *ibid*: 5, 125) *Qāḍī Nu'mān* (d. 363 AH), citing Imam *Sajjād* (AS), relates that "A man from the people of Syria came, lifted me onto his shoulders, and wept..." He reportedly treated the Imam kindly, sheltered him in his tent, and initially refrained from delivering him to *ʿUbayd Allāh ibn Ziyād*. However, when *Ibn Ziyād* offered three hundred dirhams for anyone who would find him, the Syrian, fearing punishment, handed him over bound, apologizing to the Imam (Maghribī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 156).

Ibn A'tham Kūfī (d. 314 AH), regarding *Alī Akbar* (AS), writes that he continued fighting and killing many until the "People of Syria cried out because of him." He then returned to his father wounded and said: "O father, thirst has exhausted me and the weight of the armor has wearied me. Is there any water?" (Ibn A'tham Kūfī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 115)

Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588 AH), in *al-Manāqib*, reports concerning *Qāsim ibn al-Ḥasan* that the "People of Syria wrested him from *Ḥusayn*'s hand." (Ibn Shahrāshūb, 1959 AD/1379 AH: 4, 106) Elsewhere, he explicitly states that *Ibn Ziyād* dispatched *Shimr ibn Dhīl Jawshan* with four thousand men from the people of Syria to Karbalā' (*ibid*: 4, 98).

Although most sources do not explicitly state that Shamir's forces were Syrians, an important issue arises: Shamir was the first prominent commander to arrive at Karbalā' after *ʿUmar ibn Sa'd*, and his arrival on the Day of *Tāsū'ā'* appears to have finalized the decision for battle. This raises questions. If Shamir was the first

commander to arrive after *ʿUmar ibn Saʿd*, why did the certainty of battle only materialize after his arrival?

Two possibilities are proposed: either Shamir had gone from Karbalāʾ to report *ʿUmar ibn Saʿd*'s hesitation to *Ibn Zīyād* and returned with final orders; or he initially came with his Kūfan tribal contingent and later returned on *Tāsūʿā* with reinforcements from Syria. Even if Syrians were present, it seems unlikely that they would have arrived without a designated commander, unless *Ibn Zīyād* appointed Shamir over them.

Some scholars also cite a narration from *Shaykh al-Ṣadūq*'s *al-Amālī* describing Shamir and *Sinān ibn Anas* arriving "With a group of Syrians" and standing over Imam Ḥusayn (Ṣadūq, 1956 AD/1376 SH: 163). Additionally, Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) uses the term "Ahl al-Shām" in describing *Tāsūʿā*: "It is the day on which *Ḥusayn* (AS) and his companions were besieged in Karbalāʾ, and the cavalry of the people of Syria gathered against him." (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 4, 147) *Shaykh Ṭūsī* similarly cites a tradition referring to "Those from the people of Syria who assisted in killing *Ḥusayn*." (Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 667)

Reports also indicate that *Ibn Zīyād* mobilized Kūfans by threatening them with the arrival of Syrian troops and harsh reprisals (cf. Ibn Aʿtham al-Kūfī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 49-50). The very existence of such fears suggests that reports about Syrians circulated in historical memory and may have informed *Masʿūdī*'s analysis, even

Evidence against the Presence of Syrians

Other scholars interpret "*Ahl al-Shām*" not as literal residents of Syria, but as forces politically aligned with the Syrian-based Umayyad government. Thus, "Shamir with the people of Syria" may simply denote the Umayyad army, not troops physically dispatched from Syria.

The only source explicitly stating that *Ibn Zīyād* sent Shamir with four thousand Syrians is *Ibn Shahrāshūb*'s *al-Manāqib* (4, 98). Other sources confirm Shamir's dispatch but do not describe his forces as Syrians. No reliable historical record identifies a Syrian commander at Karbalā'. Had an independent Syrian force arrived, its commander's name would likely have been preserved. *Abū Mikhnaf* and others, in describing 'Umar ibn Sa'd's army on the morning of 'Āshūrā', make no mention of Syrians and identify Shamir merely as commander of the left flank (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 422).

Similarly, *Qāḍī Nu'mān*'s account conflicts with more reliable reports that Imam *Sajjād* (AS) remained with the captives. *Ibn Zīyād*'s statement, "Did God not kill *Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn*?" suggests he believed him already dead (Maghribī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 3, 157), making earlier pursuit unlikely.

The term "A man from the people of Syria" in *Ibn 'Abd Rabbih*'s account may reflect political affiliation rather than geographic origin (Ṭabarī 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 447), especially since the named killer in parallel reports (*Amr ibn Sa'd ibn Nufayl al-Azdī*) was not Syrian (Ṭabarī 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 468). Given that this individual was from the *Azd* tribe and not from the Syria, the expression "A man from the Syria" in *Ibn 'Abd Rabbah*'s text, if not a correction or distortion,

means a member of an army affiliated with the government of the Levant, not a person who actually came from the Syria.

Thus, many expressions in the reports indicate that *ʿUmar ibn Saʿd*'s army was under the authority of the Syrian-based caliphate. Since Syria was the seat of Umayyad rule under *Yazīd*, attributing the army to "Syria" may denote political allegiance rather than geographic origin, just as in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn* the forces of Imam ʿAlī (AS) were called "Iraqis," though not all were residents of Iraq (ibid: 4, 557).

Kūfa itself had been established as a major garrison city (cf. Dīnawarī, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 123-124). It appears that *Masʿūdī*'s analysis regarding the absence of Syrians in the battle against Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS) is derived from a report concerning the number of troops of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS), in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn*. After Imam ʿAlī established Kūfa as the center of his rule and chose it as the capital of his government, historical sources report that the number of Kūfan soldiers in the Battle of *Ṣiffīn* was 65,200 (Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 80). However, figures such as *Masʿūdī* report the number of Imam ʿAlī's forces at *Ṣiffīn* as 90,000 (Masʿūdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 2, 375). In other words, considering this large number of Kūfan troops and the improbability of *Yazīd* assembling an army in Syria and dispatching it to Kūfa within ten days, *Masʿūdī* arrived at his conclusion.

Nevertheless, *Masʿūdī*'s analysis regarding the absence of Syrian troops may be considered defensible. During the time of Imam *Ḥusayn* (AS), given the demographic composition and social structure of Kūfa, as well as the purpose for which the city had been

established, a significant portion of Kūfa naturally consisted of groups descended from slaves and *Mawālī*. According to historical sources, they included about twenty thousand armed fighters, harsh and mercenary individuals who functioned as the government's security forces and were willing to commit any crime (for example, see the report of the martyrdom of Ḥujr ibn 'Adī: Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 259). They were known as *al-Ḥamrā'* (Dīnawarī, 1948 AD/1368 AH: 288, 293), to the extent that Kūfa itself came to be known as "*Kūfat al-Ḥamrā'*." (Āli Yāsīn, n.d.: 72) Moreover, *Ibn Ziyād*'s army did not feel the need to recruit forces from Syria. It should also be added that the shortest route between Syria and Kūfa is approximately 923 kilometers (Muhammadi Reyshahri, *ibid*: 8, 227). Considering the time required for travel, military equipment, rest periods, and related factors, it seems unlikely that, from the second of *Muḥarram*, when Imam *Ḥusayn* was forced to halt in the land of Karbalā', until the ninth of *Muḥarram*, a large number of Syrian troops could have traversed this distance and reached the area.

4.5. The Number of Imam *Ḥusayn*'s Companions

It is necessary to distinguish between different expressions:

- 1) There is a difference between the "Companions of Imam *Ḥusayn* in general" and the "Companions of Imam *Ḥusayn* on the Day of 'Āshūrā'."
- 2) Likewise, a distinction must be made between the terms the "Martyrs of the *Ḥusaynī* uprising" and the "Martyrs of *Ṭaff*."

The reason for this distinction is that the scope of the "Imam's

companions in general" is broader than that of "His companions on the Day of *ʿĀshūrā*." Among his companions were individuals who were martyred in Baṣra, Kūfa, or in the prisons of *Ibn Zīyād* and his father. There were also those who wished to assist him but were unable to accompany him, such as *Ṭirmāḥ* (Balādhurī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 3, 172; Ṭabarī, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 406). Similarly, the term "Martyrs of the *Ḥusaynī* movement" is broader than the "Martyrs of *Ṭaff*," since some individuals in the first category, such as *Sulaymān ibn Razīn* (Ibn Namā', 1985 AD/1406 AH: 27; Ibn Ṭāwūs, 1928 AD/1348 AH: 38), the Imam's envoy to the nobles of Baṣra, were martyred before Karbalā'. Others, including *Muslim ibn ʿAqīl*, *ʿAbd Allāh ibn Yaḡtur*, *Qays ibn Mushir al-Ṣaydāwī*, *Hānī ibn ʿUrwa*, and *ʿAbd al-Aʿlā ibn Yazīd al-Kalbī*, were martyred in Kūfa.

An important clarification is that the scope of the "Imam's companions on the Day of *Ṭaff*" is itself broader than the "Martyrs of *Ṭaff*," since some of those who fought alongside the Imam on the Day of *ʿĀshūrā* were not killed on that day. Among them was *Ḥasan al-Muthannā* and others.

Historically, there is significant disagreement among sources regarding the exact number of the Imam's companions at the event of *Ṭaff*. This disagreement is sometimes so great that the "Number of companions present" has been confused with the "Number of martyrs." For example, some historians inferred the number of the Imam's companions from the number of severed heads brought by tribes to *Ibn Zīyād*, although this method cannot serve as an accurate

measure of all those present (Shāwī, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 4, 184-185).

The reported numbers of companions in historical sources are as follows:

A) Sixty persons: The view of *Damīrī* in *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān al-Kubrā* (2003 AD/1424 AH: 1, 92);

B) Sixty-one persons: The view of the *Shi'ī* *Mas'ūdī* in *Ithbāt al-Waṣīyya* (2005 AD/1426 AH: 166);

C) Seventy persons: The opinion of *Dhahabī* in *Duwal al-Islām* (1999: 1, 54) and *Diyār Bakrī* in *Tārīkh al-Khamīs* (n.d.: 2, 227). *Ibn Abbār* also recorded the number as more than seventy, both infantry and cavalry (1986 AD/1407 AH: 104);

D) Seventy-two persons: The well-known view reported by *Ibn Sa'd* in *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā* (1989 AD/1410 AH: Fifth 1, 475), *Balādhurī* in *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* (1976 AD/1397 AH: 3, 187), *Dīnawarī* in *al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl* (1948 AD/1368 AH: 256: thirty-two cavalry and forty infantry), *Ṭabarī* (quoting *Abū Mikhnaḥ*, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 5, 422), *Ibn A'tham* in *al-Futūḥ* (1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 101), *al-Khuṣaybī* in *al-Hidāya al-Kubrā* (1998 AD/1419 AH: 202), *Shaykh al-Mufīd* in *al-Irshād* (1992 AD/1413 AH: 178),¹ *Ṭabarī Āmulī* in *Dalā'il al-Imāma* (1992 AD/1413 AH: 178), *Ibn Fattāl* in *Rawḍat al-Wā'izīn* (1955 AD/1375 AH: 1, 184), *Ṭabrisī* in *I'lām al-Warā* and *Tāj al-Mawālīd* (1970 AD/1390 AH: 240; 2001 AD/1422 AH: 86),

1. [*Shaykh Mufīd* writes in another place: "When *Zuḥr ibn Qays* came to *Yazīd* with the heads of the martyrs, he said: ... *Ḥusayn ibn Ali* came to us with eighteen of his family and sixty of his followers..." which according to this narration will be seventy-eight people, cf.: *Ibid*: 2, 118]

Ibn Jawzī in *al-Muntaẓam* (1991 AD/1412 AH: 5, 338), *Ibn Athīr* in *al-Kāmil* (1965 AD/1385 AH: 4, 59), *Nuwayrī* in *Nihāyat al-Arab* (2002 AD/1423 AH: 20, 438), *Ibn Kathīr* in *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya* (2001 AD/1422 AH: 8, 178), *Maqrīzī* in *Imtāʿ al-Asmāʿ* (1999 AD/1420 AH: 5, 364), *Ḥusaynī Mūsawī* in *Tasliyat al-Majālis* (1997 AD/1418 AH: 2, 275), and *ʿAllāma Majlisī* in *Biḥār al-Anwār* (1982 AD/1403 AH: 45, 4).

Those who give the number as seventy-two generally count both cavalry and infantry together. It appears from historical and hadith sources that this number includes members of the Hāshimite family, thereby reaching seventy-two individuals. *al-Khuṣaybī* appears to be an exception, as his ambiguous wording suggests that, in addition to seventy-two companions, eighteen descendants of *ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib* were also among the Imam's supporters (Khuṣaybī, 1998 AD/1419 AH: 202). By contrast, *Ṭabarī Āmulī* counts twenty-eight individuals from the Hāshimite family and the rest from among others (Ṭabarī Āmulī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 178). However, considering the recorded names of the martyrs of Karbalāʾ, this interpretation seems unlikely, and the Hāshimites should probably be counted in addition to the seventy-two companions.

E) Eighty-two persons: The view of *Ibn Shahrāshūb* in *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib* (1959 AD/1379 AH: 4, 98), *Shablanjī* in *Nūr al-Abṣār* (n.d.: 259), and *Yāfīʿī* in *Mirʾāt al-Janān* (n.d.: 1, 107);

F) Eighty-seven persons: The view of *Ibn Biʿrī* in *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal* (1992: 110, this number excludes seven sons of Imam ʿAlī

94 and three sons of Imam Ḥusayn);

G) One hundred persons: The view of *Qarashī* in *Ḥayāt al-Imām al-Husayn ibn 'Alī* (1974 AD/1394 AH: 3, 126);

H) One hundred and forty-five persons: Reported by *Ṭabarī* (quoting *'Ammār Duhanī*) (1957 AD/1387 AH: 5, 389; Forty-five cavalry and a hundred foot soldiers), *Sibt ibn Jawzī* in *Tadhkirat al-Khawāṣ* (1997 AD/1418 AH: 222: Forty-five cavalry and a hundred foot soldiers.), *Ibn Namā'* in *Mathār al-Aḥzān* (1985 AD/1406 AH: 54: Forty-five cavalry and a hundred foot soldiers), and *Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs* in *al-Luhūf* (1928 AD/1348 AH: 100, all describing forty-five cavalry and one hundred infantry. *Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs* attributes this report to Imam *Bāqir* (AS), and since *Ṭabarī* also transmits the report of *'Ammār Duhanī* from Imam *Bāqir* (AS), these later authors appear to rely on the same narration;

I) Six hundred persons (five hundred cavalry and one hundred infantry): The view of *Mas'ūdī* in *Murūj al-Dhahab*.

Mas'ūdī writes that Imam *Husayn* encountered the army of *'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād*, commanded by *'Umar ibn Sa'd*, and turned toward Karbalā', at which time five hundred cavalry from among his family and companions accompanied him along with one hundred infantry. When the enemy forces grew numerous before him, he realized that there was no escape. *Mas'ūdī* further states that all those killed with Imam *Husayn* on the Day of 'Āshūrā' numbered eighty-seven individuals.

From these two reports, it appears that, according to *Mas'ūdī*, the Imam's companions numbered six hundred until the eve of 'Āshūrā', but more than five hundred of them either fled beforehand, departed

during the night, or were captured, leaving only eighty-seven who were ultimately killed. This interpretation is based on *Mas'ūdī*'s own statement that when the opposing army became overwhelming, the Imam knew there was no escape. However, as noted earlier, most historical sources neither report the names of such a large number of those killed or captured nor mention such an account at all. Thus, *Mas'ūdī* alone makes this claim and does not himself provide the names corresponding to the number he reports. Nevertheless, based on the earlier argument, his statement may be interpreted as meaning that the figure of six hundred refers to the Imam's companions present at *Ṭaff*, while the eighty-seven refers specifically to the martyrs of *Ṭaff*. Even so, unlike sources such as *al-Ṭabaqāt* of *Ibn Sa'd* or the *History of Ṭabarī*, he does not list all the names of the martyrs or captives.

Conclusion

1. *Mas'ūdī*'s account of the martyrdom of Imam *Husayn* in *Murūj al-Dhahab* is among the briefest yet most valuable *Maqatal* narratives. Though lacking chains of transmission, his careful selection of reports gives it weight. His narrative shows parallels with *Abū Mikhnaf* (events in Mecca) and with *'Ammār Duhnī*'s report (from Mecca to martyrdom).
2. Since *Mas'ūdī* lived and died in Egypt, his access to Iraqi written sources was likely limited; he probably relied on well-known oral reports. Despite its brevity, his account contains unique '*Āshūrā*'-related points worth studying, such as:

- 96 - Dating *Muslim ibn 'Aqīl*'s arrival in Kūfa on 5 *Shawwāl*;

- An error regarding the governor of Mecca;
- Locating *Hurr ibn Yazīd*'s meeting with the Imam at *Qādisiyya*;
- Reporting 600 companions, differing from other sources.

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