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God



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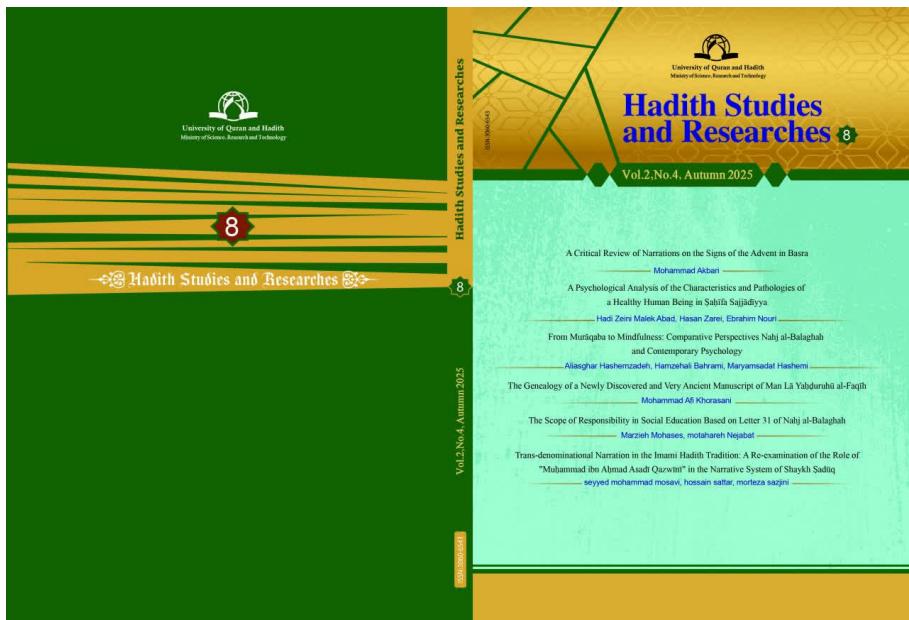


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A Critical Review of Narrations on the Signs of the Advent in Basra

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Abstract

The belief in Mahdism and the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ) is one of the fundamental principles of Shia Islam, accompanied by various signs in narrative sources. The city of Basra in southern Iraq is one of the regions that holds a special place in the narrations concerning the signs of the advent. This article, titled "A Critical Review of Narrations on the Signs of the Advent in Basra," examines four categories of narrations, each of which refers to specific events in this region; the "*Khasf* of Basra," (land sinking) the reading of a letter of dissociation from Amir al-Mu'minīn (PBUH), the destruction of

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Basra, and the emergence of an individual from the lineage of the Prophet who causes the city's ruin. The present study, the authenticity of the chain of narrators (*Sanad*) and the semantic import (*Dalālah*) of these narrations were evaluated using a *Rijālī* and analytical approach. The findings indicate that most of these narrations are either transmitted as *Mursal* (lacking a full chain) or *Marfū'* (with an incomplete chain) or include narrators who are *Majhūl* (of unknown status) and unreliable. Consequently, from a *Rijālī* perspective, they lack sufficient credibility. Furthermore, a semantic analysis reveals conceptual ambiguities and, in some cases, conflict with clear interpretive principles. The conclusion of this study is that these narrations cannot be used with scientific certainty as credible signs of the advent. The central message of this article is to emphasize the necessity of a critical approach and to avoid unsubstantiated historical and geographical applications.

Keywords: Signs of the Advent, Basra, *Khasf*, Dissociation from Amir al-Mu'minīn, Mahdavi Narrations.

Introduction

The belief in Mahdism, as one of the most fundamental theological beliefs in Shia Islam, plays a central role in the identity of Shias and, in continuation of the principle of Imamate, holds a high position in the Shia system of knowledge. This belief that a living Imam is in the occultation and will one day reappear to rid the world of oppression and corruption has always been a key component in the religious and

4 political dynamism of Shia communities.

However, the abundance of narrations related to the signs of the advent and the resulting complexities have led to incorrect interpretations, personal readings, and even the fabrication of some narrations. This is an issue that can fuel theological and political deviations. One of the most important challenges facing research on the signs of the advent is distinguishing authentic narrations from inauthentic ones, explaining their textual implications, and understanding the place of each narration within the overall body of Mahdavi hadiths.

In this regard, the city of Basra in southern Iraq, a city with an influential religious, cultural, and political history in Islam, is one of the geographical regions about which a considerable number of narrations have been transmitted. Narrations such as the "*Khasf* of Basra," the "Destruction of Basra," and the "Reading of a letter of dissociation from Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS)" in this city are among the signs that have been mentioned, directly or indirectly, in hadith texts.

The main issue of the present article is the critical review of the chain of narrators and the semantics of these narrations in ancient hadith and Mahdavi sources. In this process, questions are raised, such as: 'What is the credibility of these narrations from a biographical and chain perspective?' 'Do their implications refer to past historical events or a promised future?' 'What are the differences between these narrations and other signs of the advent?' 'And can these narrations be used as a credible sign of the advent?'

Based on first-hand Shia sources such as *al-Ghaybah* by *al-*

Nu'mānī and *Shaykh Tūsī*, *Kamāl al-Dīn* by *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *al-Irshād* by *Mufīd*, and later works like *Bihār al-Anwār*, the present article seeks to conduct a precise review of the narrations related to the signs of the advent in Basra with an analytical and evaluative approach. Many previous works have only collected these narrations and have neglected a critical review of their chain and a semantic analysis. Therefore, the innovation of the present article lies in this focus: "A precise biographical review and critical analysis of the chain of narrations, a comparison of their content with historical evidence, and a distinction between definite and non-definite signs."

Ultimately, this article attempts to purify the hadith heritage from weak or suspicious data, take a step towards strengthening the scientific discourse on the signs of the advent, and make the reader aware of the methodology for dealing with such narrations. This is an issue that is more necessary than ever in the current tense climate of the Islamic world.

1. Research Background

Based on the search conducted regarding the background of the present study, it can be said that some authors have included content about narrations of the era of the advent in their works, which are related to the topic of this research. For example:

- Alī Kūrānī, (2003 AD/1382 SH), "The Book of the Era of the Advent." In this book, the author has collected and analyzed narrations related to the era of the advent and reviewed its signs in

a categorized manner. A part of this work is dedicated to events in specific geographical regions like Basra, with the explanation that the author focuses more on the collective and applied aspects of the narrations rather than on a critical review of their chain.

- *Ja'far Murtadā 'Āmilī*, (2000 AD/1424 AH), "A Study on the Signs of the Advent." This book is an analytical study on the signs of the advent that attempts to evaluate the narrations related to the signs of the advent with a rational and critical perspective. The author, while referring to narrations about Basra, has expressed doubt about the credibility of some of them. His method of critical review of the chain and content serves as a model for the present article.
- Ayati, Nusratullah, (2011 AD/1390 SH), "A Reflection on the Definite Signs of the Advent." In this work, Ayati has categorized the signs of the advent into definite and non-definite and, in his review of the narrations, has focused on biographical and semantic analysis. In cases such as the *Khasf of Baydā'*, the emergence of *Sufyānī*, and other signs, he provides a precise methodology that can also be applied to the analysis of narrations related to Basra.
- Barari, Muhammad, (2016 AD/1395 SH), article "A Source Study of Narrations of the Signs of the Advent in the Book *al-Ghaybah* by *Shaykh Tūsī*." In this article, Barari has examined the sources and chains related to the narrations of the signs of the advent in the book *al-Ghaybah* and have tried to determine the degree of credibility and the method of transmission of these narrations. This article is important for the present research because a part of the

discussed narrations is transmitted in this very book.

- Sulayman, Khodamurad, (2016 AD/1395 SH), article "An Analysis of the Increasing Trend of Narrating the Signs of the Advent in the Course of Compiling Narrative Sources." In this article, Sulayman has conducted a historical and analytical review of the increasing trend of narrations about the signs of the advent in various sources. He shows that some later narrations lack credible support and are mostly the result of the social conditions of the era of compilation. This is a topic that should also be considered when reviewing the Basra narrations.
- Khalili Rad, Murtada, (2020 AD/1399 SH), article "A Critical Review of the Chain and Semantics of Narrations on the Signs of the Advent in Basra." In this study, the author, focusing on first-hand Mahdism sources, has reviewed the narrations related to the signs of the advent in Basra, such as the *Khasf*, the reading of the letter of dissociation from Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS), and the destruction of the city, from a chain and semantic perspective. His method is based on the reliability of the chain of transmission and the collection of evidence of the strength and weakness of the chains. The conclusion of the article emphasizes the weakness of the chain of these narrations and the impossibility of relying on them with certainty. Unlike Khalili Rad's article, which primarily focuses on evaluating Basra narrations based on the reliability of the chain and a limited chain-semantic analysis within the

framework of primary Mahdism sources, the present article uses a combined biographical, semantic, and applied approach. In addition to evaluating the chain of narrators and analyzing the content, it also assesses the historical, geographical, and ideological context of the narrations. The important distinction of this research is in its critique of unfounded historical applications, the explanation of the educational-warning functions of the signs, and the presentation of an analytical model for separating definite and non-definite signs of the advent in relation to Basra. This model allows for a redefinition of the function of weak hadiths in Mahdavi discourse.

- Elahinejad, Hussein, (2016 AD/1395 SH), article "Symbolism in the Signs of the Advent." In this article, Elahinejad has tried to analyze many of the signs of the advent as symbols with deeper layers of meaning, using a symbolic approach. This approach also provides the possibility of a non-superficial interpretation of the narrations related to Basra and is useful in evaluating their implications.

A general critique of the works written on the signs of the advent is that there are no books, articles, or theses with a focus on the signs of the advent related to the land of Iraq that have addressed the chain and semantic analysis. Many of them have only sufficed with scattered narrations of some of the signs of the advent. Some of them contain incorrect and unscholarly applications, and the fundamental problem of many earlier sources in this field is their generality and the transmission of narrations, and the problem of repetition is seen in

them. We intend in this research to review the narrations of the signs of the advent related to the land of Iraq, which have not been discussed and studied regionally and specifically until now, by conducting a chain and semantic analysis of them.

2. Research Methodology

This research was conducted with a descriptive-analytical approach, using the method of critical review of the chain and semantics. In the first stage, narrations related to the signs of the advent in Basra were collected from credible narrative sources. Then, based on the principles of the science of *Rijāl* (biographical evaluation), their chain credibility was assessed. In the next step, using the method of textual content analysis and the rules of hadith comprehension, the conceptual implications of the narrations were examined, and their application to theological and interpretive principles was evaluated. This approach has made it possible to provide a comprehensive and coherent analysis of the credibility and usefulness of the Basra narrations in the topic of the signs of the advent.

3. Signs of the Advent

The word "*'Alāma*" means a sign (Ibn Manzūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 12, 419), and its plural forms are "*'Alām*" and "*'Alāmāt*." "*'Alam*" is considered its synonym. About the meaning of "*'Allāmah*" and "*'Alam*," it is said that it is something that is set up in deserts to guide those who are lost (ibid.).

10 In terminology, "Signs of the advent" refers to any event that

indicates a hidden event that is supposed to happen in the future, so that it becomes a sign of the occurrence of another event after it. In the science of *Malāhim* (eschatological events), this term is mostly applied to the prediction of the signs of the advent of Imam Mahdi (AS) at the end of time, which indicate the proximity of his advent, such as: the emergence of *Sufyānī*, the emergence of *Yamānī*, the emergence of *Khurāsānī*, the occurrence of a heavenly cry, the killing of *Nafs al-Zakīyah*, and so on. This word is mentioned in the words of Imam *Sādiq* (AS) referring to the principle of the signs of the advent, who says: "Indeed, before the Qaim, there are signs from Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, for the believers." (Ibn Bābawayh Qummī, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 2, 649)

By reflecting on the narrations of the signs of the advent, the answer to the question of why the impeccable Imams (AS) were intent on stating them becomes clear. And what was the general purpose of their dissemination among the Islamic community? It was to make the nation aware of the misleading banners and also the deviant invitations in religious, political, social, and moral matters that will occur before the advent (Nili, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 32).¹ It was also a good tiding of the emergence of the banners of truth (Nu‘mānī, 1976 BAD/1397 AH: 256)² and the preparation of Muslims for the advent,

1. Beware of al-Sufyānī, and beware of the two outcasts from the descendants of so-and-so. They will come to Mecca and divide the wealth there, imitating al-Qā’im.
2. And when al-Yamani emerges, hasten towards him, for his banner is a banner of guidance, and it is not permissible for a Muslim to turn away from him. Whoever does that is among the people of Hellfire.

similar to the story of the Egyptians during the time of Prophet Joseph, who were awaiting seven years of famine, but with prior knowledge and proper planning, they were able to overcome the problems well.

With a precise conceptual and narrative review of the signs of the advent, especially in relation to the Basra region, it becomes clear that many of these signs in narrative sources do not have acceptable chain credibility. The term "*'Allāmah*" in Mahdavi narrations primarily has a warning and awakening aspect. The main purpose of mentioning these signs are to increase insight and intellectual and spiritual preparedness of the community to confront the tribulations and trials before the advent, and not merely to predict temporal and spatial events. From this perspective, signs such as the *Khasf* of Basra, its destruction, and other similar signs, although mentioned in some ancient sources, are often weak in terms of their chain, are transmitted incompletely, or contain unknown and unreliable narrators.

The scientific finding of this article emphasizes that in analyzing the narrations of the signs of the advent, one must proceed with a critical, biographical, and textual approach to avoid falling into the trap of incorrect applications, populist interpretations, and unscientific analyses. As a result, adopting a scientific and methodical approach to these topics not only preserves the credibility of religious research but also prevents the distortion of the fundamental concepts of Mahdism.

that these signs are not merely tools for predicting future events or determining the exact time of the Mahdavi uprising. Rather, they possess various cognitive, educational, and social functions. For example, in their cognitive function, these narrations help to purify the intellectual boundaries of the religious community by warning against deviant movements. In the educational dimension, by focusing on the trial of patience, resilience, and steadfastness of an individual's and a community's faith, they prepare the spiritual ground for confronting crises. And in their social function, by identifying the signs of crisis before the advent, they lead to an increase in public insight and the cohesion of the front of truth. Therefore, a re-evaluation of the traditional approach to the signs of the advent becomes a double necessity.

The "Traditional approach" in this research refers to the dominant method of the early scholars in dealing with the narrations of the signs. In this method, the indications of the authenticity of the narration, including the harmony of its content with other credible texts, its fame among scholars, or the existence of historical confirmations and content parallels, played a more decisive role than the individual evaluation of each narrator in the chain. These indications, some of which were available to past hadith scholars and are now unknown or incomplete to us due to the passage of time, sometimes led to the acceptance of narrations that, from today's biographical perspective, have unreliable narrators.

Given the loss or weakening of some of the previous indications,

contemporary research must inevitably adopt a combination of the traditional method and a new critical-analytical approach. This means that while adhering to the principles of the science of *Rijāl*, one must carefully examine the remaining intra-textual and extra-textual indications to discover the educational and warning goals of the narrations. In this framework, the signs of the advent should not be interpreted merely as indicators of the temporal or geographical occurrence of events. Rather, they should be considered as a stimulus for self-awareness, a factor for strengthening faith boundaries, and a tool for protecting the authentic Mahdavi discourse against distortion. Such a reading both preserves the narrative heritage and enhances the scientific credibility of the analysis.

4. The *Khasf* of Basra

Imam *Sādiq* (AS) in a narration states a number of the signs of the advent, some of which are specific to the land of Iraq. In this discussion, we intend to examine the *Khasf* of Basra.

1) The Text, Content, and Sources of the Narration

"The people will be warned before the advent of the *Qā'm* (AJ) from their sins by a fire that will appear in the sky, and a redness that will cover the sky, and a sinking in Baghdad, and a sinking in the city of Basra, and blood that will be shed there, and the destruction of its houses, and a plague that will befall its people, and a fear that will encompass the people of Iraq with which they will have no peace."

The above narration was first mentioned in the book *al-Irshād*. The rest of the sources, such as "*A'lām al-Warā bi A'lām al-Hudā*," (Tabrisī, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 2, 279) "*Kashf al-Ghummah fī Ma'rifat al-A'immah*," (Irbilī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 2, 463) "*Mukhtaṣar Kifāyat al-Muhtadī li Ma'rifat al-Mahdī*," (Mir Lauhi, 2008 AD/1427 AH: 218) "*Ithbāt al-Hudā bi al-Nuṣūṣ wa al-Mu'jizāt*," (Hurr 'Āmilī, n.d.: 5, 362) "*Bihār al-Anwār*," (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 221) "*Rīyād al-Abrār fī Manāqib al-A'immah al-Āthār*," (Jazāyirī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 3, 171) have narrated this narration from *al-Irshād*. The text of the narration is the same in all sources. The only difference that is noticeable is in the chain of the narration, where in some sources, instead of "*al-Husayn ibn Yazīd*," "*al-Husayn ibn Zayd*" is used (Hurr 'Āmilī, n.d.: 5, 362 and Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 221) or "*al-Hasan ibn Yazīd*"¹ is used. Or, instead of "*al-Khawzī*," "*al-Jawzī*" is used (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 221). And in some sources, "*al-Husayn ibn Yazīd*" is not mentioned in the chain of the narration, and only "*Mundhir al-Khawzī*" is mentioned (Irbilī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 2, 462). In *Bihār al-Anwār*, "*al-Husayn ibn Zayd* from *Mundhir al-Jawzī*" is mentioned (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 221).

The analysis of the above narration confirms that despite the repetition of this content in multiple sources and its narration from great hadith scholars, the weakness of the chain due to its incomplete transmission or the ambiguity of some narrators such as "*al-Husayn ibn Yazīd*" and "*Mundhir al-Khawzī*" makes the position of this

1. *Al-Hasan ibn Yazīd* from *Mundhir* from *Abī 'Abdillāh* (Hurr 'Āmilī, n.d.: 459). This is a typographical error because *al-Husayn ibn Yazīd* is mentioned on page 284.

narration shaky from the perspective of definitive proof. In addition, the lack of a specific timeframe and a clear interpretation of the details of the event make any historical or geographical application difficult. It must be emphasized that the mention of the *Khasf* of Basra has more of a warning, attention-grabbing, and preparatory aspect for the end-of-time trials. Its main function is to lead the community of waiters to be cautious in their judgments and patient in confronting the signs of the advent. A scientific approach requires that the predominance of a symbolic and cautionary atmosphere be preferred over dogmatic analyses to be immune from deviations in interpretation and application.

2) Chain of Transmission (*Sanad*) Review

- *Al-Ḥusayn ibn Yazīd*. His full name is "al-Ḥusayn ibn Yazīd ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Nawfaltī." There is no information regarding his reliability or lack thereof. *Najāshī* says about this person that some of the *Qummīs* accused him of *Ghuluw* (exaggeration), "But I have not seen anything that indicates his *Ghuluw*." (*Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 38)
- *Mundhir al-Khawzī*. There is no information that indicates his reliability or lack thereof. Result of the chain review indicates that in the chain of the mentioned narration, the names of all the narrators are not mentioned, and *Shaykh al-Mufid* has only mentioned the names of two of the narrators. For this reason, the mentioned narration is considered *Mursal* (lacking a full chain) and therefore

lacks sufficient credibility. The weakness of the chain of the *Khasf* of Basra narration due to the incomplete chain and the lack of reliability for key narrators such as "*al-Husayn ibn Yazid*" and "*Mundhir al-Khawzi*" makes the evidential position of this report shaky. Such deficiencies remove the narration from the scope of a conclusive argument and reliance and make relying on it in theological and applied discussions lack sufficient scientific support. Therefore, in Mahdavi studies, paying attention to biographical principles and avoiding reliance on weak narrations is an unavoidable necessity for maintaining the accuracy and integrity of research in the field of Mahdism and religious studies.

3) Semantic Review

This narration contains eight items of the signs of the uprising of Imam Mahdi (AS), which are as follows:

1. A fire that appears in the sky;
2. A redness that illuminates the horizons;
3. The *Khasf* of Baghdad;
4. The *Khasf* of Basra;
5. Blood that is shed in Basra;
6. The destruction of the houses of Basra;
7. The annihilation of the people of Basra;
8. The spread of fear and horror throughout all parts of Iraq, which will deprive all the people of Iraq of peace and tranquility.

5. *Khasf* in the Quran and Narrations

The word "*Khasf*" in Arabic means the sinking of the earth (Farāhīdī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 4, 201). In the Quranic and narrative literature, this concept, in addition to its literal meaning, is sometimes used with a warning and punitive connotation. The Holy Quran explicitly states the actual occurrence of *Khasf* in the past in the story of *Qārūn* and, by threatening infidels and oppressors with sinking into the earth, makes its future occurrence entirely possible and believable.

Basra is also a city in southern Iraq that is mentioned as the location of *Khasf* in a number of Mahdavi narrations. According to these sources, the *Khasf* of Basra is presented as one of the signs of the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ). This linguistic and historical background, while removing any improbability, shows that the mention of the *Khasf* of Basra in narrations, whether in its literal meaning or in its symbolic function, carries a message of warning and preparation of the community for the great changes of the era of the advent.

The word *Khasf* is mentioned eight times in the Quran,¹ and we will mention some of the verses of the Quran:

- "So We caused the earth to swallow him and his home. And he had no party to help him against Allah, nor was he of those who could defend themselves." (al-Qaṣāṣ: 81)

In several instances, infidels and polytheists are threatened with sinking into the earth and similar punishments, some of which we

1. Al-Qīyāmah: 8, al-Ālāt: 40, al-Qaṣāṣ: 81 and 82, Saba: 9, al-Nahāl: 45, al-Isrā: 68, al-Mulk: 16.

will mention:

- "Do they who plot evil deeds feel secure that Allah will not cause the earth to swallow them, or that the punishment will not come upon them from where they do not perceive?" (al-Nahl: 41)

"Or do you feel secure that He will not cause a side of the land to swallow you, or send upon you a storm of stones? Then you will find no one to be your protector." (al-Isrā': 68)

Khasf in narrations; in the narrations of the signs of the advent, *Khasf* is mentioned in several places. The *Khasf* of *Baydā'* is considered one of the definite signs of the advent, and many narrations refer to this matter. The *Khasf* in the other cases, such as the *Khasf* of Baghdad, the *Khasf* of Basra, the *Khasf* of the East, and the *Khasf* of the West, the *Khasf* of *Jābīyah*, and the *Khasf* of *Harastā* are considered non-definite signs of the advent.

Based on narrations, *khasf* will occur in different places:

- The *Khasf* of *Jābīyah*. *Jābīyah* in Arabic means a basin where water is collected for camels to drink. In terminology, it is a city in Sham (Syria) where, according to a narration, *Khasf* will occur before the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ). There is a narration about the *Khasf* of *Jābīyah* where Imam *Bāqir* says: "...And a village from the villages of Sham called *Jābīyah* will sink..." (Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 279)

- The *Khasf* of *Harastā*. *Harastā* was a large city, more than a league away from Sham (Yāqūt Ḥimawī, 2001 AD/1380 SH: 2, 241). It is one of the places where, according to a narration, *Khasf* is supposed

to occur before the advent of Imam Mahdi (AS). In this regard, there is a narration from Imam *Bāqir* (AS), quoting Amir al-Mu'minīn, who says: "...So look for the sinking of a village from Damascus called *Harastā*. When that happens, the son of the liver-eater will come out of the dry valley until he stands on the pulpit of Damascus. When that happens, wait for the emergence of the Mahdi." (Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 305 and Tūsī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 461)

- The *Khasf* of the East, the West, and the Arabian Peninsula. Of course, it is possible that the *Khasf* of the East refers to the *Khasf* of Baghdad and Basra, and the *Khasf* of the West refers to the *Khasf* that will occur in the land of Sham, and the *Khasf* of the Arabian Peninsula is the same as the *Khasf* of *Baydā'*, which is considered one of the definite signs of the advent. The narration that mentions the *Khasf* in the East, the West, and the Arabian Peninsula is narrated from the Messenger of God (PBUH): "...And at that time there will be three sinking; a sinking in the East, a sinking in the West, and a sinking in the Arabian Peninsula..." (Ibn Bābawayh Qummī, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 1, 251) In this regard, there is a narration that considers it one of the signs of the Day of Judgment (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 431).
- The *Khasf* of *Baydā'*. It is considered one of the definite signs of the advent, and there are relatively many narrations on this matter

AD/1407 AH: 8, 310). In this regard, there is a narration from Imam *Bāqir* (AS) who says: "For that, there are signs, among them a call from the sky, and a sinking in the East, and a sinking in the West, and a sinking in *Baydā'*." (Azdī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 15, 206)

A little earlier, it was mentioned that: "It is possible that the *Khasf* of the East refers to the *Khasf* of Baghdad and Basra, and the *Khasf* of the West refers to the *Khasf* that will happen in the land of Sham, and the *Khasf* of the Arabian Peninsula is the same as the *Khasf* of *Baydā'*, as in the last narration, the *Khasf* of *Baydā'* is mentioned alongside the *Khasf* of the East and West instead of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, the content of the last narrations will be the same as the previous narrations." The mentioned *Khasfs*, whether they have occurred or not, can be a sign of the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ), or they can be a divine punishment and a consequence of the spread of sin and impurities, as Imam *Sādiq* (AS) said in one of the previously mentioned narrations.

- The *Khasf* of Baghdad and Basra. Another region that, according to the narration, will be subject to *Khasf* is Baghdad. In this regard, Imam *Sādiq* (AS) says: "The people will be warned before the advent of the *Qā'im* (AS) from their sins by a fire that will appear in the sky, and a redness that will cover the sky, and a sinking in Baghdad, and a sinking in the city of Basra..." (Mufid, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 2, 378)

In analyzing the narrations related to *Khasf* in different places,

including Baghdad and Basra, two basic points must be considered: first, the use of the word "*Khasf*" in the Quran and the Sunnah has various connotations and instances and is not always limited to the physical sinking of the earth. Rather, it can be a symbolic reference to decay, the fall of authority, or broad social changes. Second, a comparison of the narrative structure of the *Khasf* of Basra with other *Khasfs* mentioned in hadith texts shows that many of these signs lack the certainty of occurrence or a specific timeline. More than anything, they have a warning and cautionary function. In the opinion of the author, focusing on a literal interpretation and a quick application of these narrations to historical or contemporary events is contrary to the method of ijtihad and scientific precision. It is necessary to conceptualize the mentioned signs within the broad system of Mahdavi signs as a "Warning Siren" for religious communities and a caution against deviations or a distance from values. Such an analysis strengthens the awakening and educational role of these signs, instead of being rigid about their literal meaning. It also prevents hasty applications that cause theological deviation from finding a place in Mahdavi studies. Ultimately, a message-centered analysis and attention to educational warnings have more originality than a purely historical and informational view and make the pathology of incorrect application possible.

In conclusion, the mentioned narration, being a "*Mursal*" (interrupted) narration, does not possess sufficient credibility in

terms of its chain of narrators and cannot be relied upon, despite its inclusion in the book "*al-Irshād*." Based on the aforementioned points, it can be stated that the "*Khasf* of Basra" is one of the specific signs of the reappearance, mentioned in some Shi'a hadith sources, particularly in *Shaykh Mufid*'s "*al-Irshād*," and subsequently quoted in secondary sources like "*Bihār al-Anwār*" and "*Kashf al-Ghumma*." However, a thorough examination of the narration's chain of narrators reveals that, due to the incomplete mention of the chain and the presence of unreliable or unknown individuals, the narration is considered "*Mursal*" from a *Rijālī* (biographical evaluation of narrators) perspective, and consequently lacks the necessary credibility for definitive reliance. Furthermore, discrepancies in the names of narrators (such as "*al-Husayn ibn Zayd*" and "*al-Hasan ibn Yazīd*") also indicate the existence of variations in the chain of narrators and the weakness of this narration. From a denotative perspective, the narration refers to the occurrence of a series of events in Iraq, including the sinking in Baghdad and Basra, fire and a red sky, the falling of blood, and the destruction of houses, all of which are presented in a general manner without specifying a timeframe or detailing the location. This ambiguity in meaning makes a definitive and reliable analysis of the narration's content difficult. Additionally, the word "*Khasf*," which means sinking into the earth, although it has precedent in the Quran and narrations, its application in this narration without a clear interpretive sign cannot be definitively applied to a specific event. In reality, although the sinking of Basra is mentioned as one of the

signs of the reappearance, it does not have the necessary probative force for definitive reliance, neither in terms of its chain of narrators nor its denotation. Therefore, caution in relying on such narrations in Mahdavi studies and avoiding historical or geographical interpretations without reliable support is considered a scientific and religious necessity.

6. Reading the Letter Declaring Disavowal of Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS)

One narration mentions two signs for the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ), stating that before his rise, two declarations will be read in Basra and Kufa, both disavowing Imam Ali (AS).

1) Text and Content

"...And the *Qā'im* will not rise until two letters are read: one in Basra and one in Kufa, with the disavowal of Ali." The only source that has narrated this tradition is the book *al-Ghaybah* by *Nu'mānī*. Other sources such as *Ithbāt al-Hudāt bi al-Nuṣūṣ wa al-Mu'jizāt* (Hurr al-Āmilī, n.d.: 3, 168), *Hilyat al-Abrār fī Aḥwāl Muḥammad wa Ālih al-Āthār* (Bahrānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 5, 331-333), *Bihār al-Anwār* (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 361), and *Bishārat al-Islam fī 'Alāmāt al-Mahdi* (Kazemi, 2007 AD/1428 AH: 190-191) have all cited from *Nu'mānī's* *al-Ghaybah*.

In analyzing this narration, it should be noted that the reading of a **24** letter of disavowal of Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS) in Basra and Kufa

symbolizes the peak of doctrinal and social deviation on the eve of the era of advent. From a content perspective, it is a serious warning to the Shi'a community about the danger of adversarial movements infiltrating and distorting authentic beliefs. However, the weak chain of transmission and the limited number of narrations of this tradition in reliable sources prevent it from being cited definitively. Therefore, the correct approach is to emphasize the educational and insightful aspect of the narration and to avoid hasty and superficial interpretations, in order to preserve the integrity of the Mahdavi discourse.

2) Examination of the Chain of Transmission (*Sanad*)

- *Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'īd*. *Najāshī* has authenticated him (*Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 94). *Shaykh Tūsī* also authenticated him (*Tūsī*, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 86).
- *Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyā*. His full name is "Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyā ibn Shaybān Abū 'Abdullāh al-Kindī al-'Allāf," and *Najāshī* has authenticated him (*Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 442).
- *Yūnus ibn Kulayb*. He is unknown.
- *Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī*. He is considered one of the leaders of the Waqifiyya, who is described as extremist (*Ghālī*) and a liar (*Kashshī*, 1970 AD/1390 AH: 36).
- *Abū Baṣīr*. His name is "Abū Baṣīr Yaḥyā ibn Abī al-Qāsim," and *Najāshī* has authenticated him (*Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 441). He was a companion of Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) and is considered reliable. **25**

Result of the *Sanad* examination indicates that a detailed review of the chain of transmission for this narration shows that the presence of individuals such as *Yūnus ibn Kulayb* (of unknown state) and *al-Hasan ibn Alī ibn Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā’iñī* (accused of extremism and lying) severely compromises its reliability. Although some narrators are authenticated by biographical scholars, the weakness in key links of the chain renders the narration unsuitable for scholarly citation. Therefore, by the standards of the science of *Rijāl* and the principles of hadith criticism, this narration lacks the necessary credibility for reliance in Mahdavi discussions, and scholarly or jurisprudential reliance on such a narration would be contrary to academic and religious caution.

3) Examination of the Semantic Import (*Dalālah*)

A prominent point in analyzing narrations about the signs of advent, especially the one about the reading of two letters of disavowal of Amir al-Mu’minīn (AS) in Basra and Kufa, is to consider the semantic context, the narrative purpose, and the cognitive and even sociological challenges embedded within the narration itself.

This short narration raises several questions for the researcher: ‘Who will undertake such declarations and what will be their motives?’ ‘Why is the focus on disavowal of Imam Ali (AS) highlighted?’ ‘And what is the ultimate message and function of this content within the system of the signs of advent?’

At the outset, it must be admitted that the narration lacks clear details about the identity of those who will carry out this act and their historical or social motivations. The reading of letters disavowing a figure like Ali (AS), who holds a distinguished position of faith, knowledge, and political authority in Shi'a teachings, cannot be a simple political action. Rather, it is a sign of the peak of intellectual and cultural decay and the deep-rooted presence of hypocrisy and hostility toward authentic Alawi values. From this perspective, such an event is a serious warning to the religious community that even on the verge of the advent and in a predominantly Islamic environment, there is a possibility for the re-emergence of distorting and hostile movements.

A second point is the connection of this sign with the historical ups and downs of the followers of Imam Ali throughout the Islamic centuries. The disavowal of Ali (AS) in the midst of Islamic societies is a recurring tragedy, evidence of which can be found in the early days of Islam and subsequent eras, especially in the official policies of the Umayyads, which aimed to isolate the movement of imamate. A re-examination of this narration recalls the continuation of the same policy in a new and more extreme form, even before the rise of the global state of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), and draws attention to the resistance of the front of falsehood, even until the final moments of the era of occultation.

Given this, it must be emphasized that the purpose of the narrations of the signs of advent, especially such signs, is not merely to provide a **27**

tool for literal application to specific events. Rather, they carry an educational, social, and cautionary message for the Islamic community. To oversimplify and reduce these signs to "news of the future" or to try to blindly apply them to contemporary events is not only contrary to contemplating the intentions of the impeccable Imams (AS) but also carries the risk of straying from the truth of the Mahdavi teachings.²⁵

If such a development—the embodiment of hostility toward Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS) in a social context—is considered a warning about the sensitivity of the Islamic community in the era of advent, its educational function becomes clearer: "The community of believers should not be deceived by the superficial religiosity of some movements and should always uphold the teachings of the imamate."

In conclusion, the mentioned narration is not only seriously questionable from a documentary standpoint and cannot be considered a definite sign, but from a semantic perspective, it also carries a more insightful message for the Islamic community during the era of occultation. Paying attention to the sociological, pathological, and historical aspects of this content deepens our understanding and provides new dimensions, showing that the intention of the impeccable Imams (AS) were to raise awareness and warn about the danger of hidden and overt waves of deviation, an issue that must be taken seriously in every era, even on the verge of the advent.

7. The Destruction of Basra

28 In a narration derived from the event of the night of the Ascension

(*Mi'rāj*), the Prophet (PBUH) mentions some events related to the end of time, which some have placed among the signs of the advent.

1) Text, Content, and Sources of the Narration

First narration is: "...At that time, there will be three collapses; a collapse in the east, a collapse in the west, and a collapse on the Arabian Peninsula, and the destruction of Basra at the hands of a man from your progeny, who will be followed by the *Zanūj*, and the rise of a man from the lineage of *Husayn ibn Ali*, and the appearance of the *Dajjāl*." (Ibn Bābawayh Qummī, 1974 AD/1395 AH: 1, 252) This narration was first mentioned by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'mah*. The rest of the sources, such as *Muntakhab al-Anwār al-Muḍī'ah fī Dhikr al-Qā'im al-Hujjah* (Nili, 1981 AD/1360 SH: 48), *Ithbāt al-Hudāt bi al-Nuṣūṣ wa al-Mu'jizāt* (Hurr al-Āmilī, n.d.: 5, 346), *Bihār al-Anwār* (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 51, 70), *Rīyāḍ al-Abrār fī Manāqib al-A'immah al-Āthār* (Jazāyīrī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 3, 33), and *Ilzām al-Nāṣib fī Ithbāt al-Hujjat al-Ghā'ib* (Ha'iri Yazdī, 2001 AD/1421 AH: 1, 191) have all cited from *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni'mah*.

A critical analysis of the narration about the destruction of Basra at the hands of a person from the Prophet's progeny (PBUH) and accompanied by a group known as the "*Zanūj*" reveals several key points:

First, the narration is *Marfū'ah* (incomplete chain of narrators), and the lack of a complete and reliable chain reduces its credibility from the perspective of *Rijāl*, making definitive hadith-based reliance

difficult. However, a weak or incomplete chain does not mean the absolute rejection of the narration's content. Its meaning might be strengthened by internal textual evidence, historical context, or corroboration from parallel narrations. Therefore, the correct approach in evaluating such texts is to pay simultaneous attention to the chain, the content, and the broader context of the Mahdavi signs, to properly assess its place in the system of the signs of advent and to study its potential relation to the events leading up to the advent through comparative analysis.

Second, the ambiguity in the meaning of concepts like "A man from your progeny" and the "*Zanūj*" has opened the door to different interpretations and even historical applications. For example, some scholars have applied this event to the *Zanūj* Rebellion in the third century AH, but a more accurate reading shows that the narration, while being one of the signs of the advent, lacks clear temporal or specific details. The central message of this narration should be sought in its warning about the recurrence of strife and social crises before the advent and the necessity for the religious community to be vigilant. Thus, scholarly reliance on its content requires analytical caution and the use of principles for hadith authentication.

2) Examination of the Chain of Transmission (*Sanad*)

The chain of transmission for the above narration is mentioned as follows: "Narrated to us by *al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Idrīs*, may God be pleased with him, who said: "Narrated to us by my father," who **30** said: "Narrated to us by *Abū Sa‘īd Sahl ibn Zīyād al-Ādamī al-Rāzī*,"

who said: "Narrated to us by *Muhammad ibn ȴadam al-Shaybānī* from his father *ȴadam ibn Abī ȴyās*," who said: "Narrated to us by *al-Mubārak ibn Faddālah* from *Wahb ibn Munabbih*," who raised it from *Ibn ȴabbās*, who said: "The Messenger of God (PBUH) said when I was ascended to my Lord, may His glory be exalted..."

As mentioned in the narration's chain of transmission, this narration is *Marfū‘ah* (raised), and for this reason, it lacks sufficient credibility and cannot be cited. A narration transmitted with the phrase "raised it" (*Rafa‘ah*) from *Wahb ibn Munabbih* from *Ibn ȴabbās*, which ends with the Messenger of God (PBUH), suffers from a fundamental weakness from the perspective of hadith science due to being *Marfū‘ah*. This is because one or more links in the chain of narrators are either unknown or have been omitted, which makes it impossible to evaluate the trustworthiness of the narrators and the connection of the chain. In addition, the presence of individuals such as *Wahb ibn Munabbih*, who are generally not fully trusted by Shi'a scholars, further compromises the narration's credibility. Therefore, such a narration lacks definitive value for proving the signs of the advent and must be viewed with great caution in scholarly research.

3) Examination of the Semantic Import (*Dalālah*)

Who is meant by "A man from your progeny"? Who is meant by the "Zanūj"? It means a person from the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minīn who will be accompanied by a group of slaves. It is worth noting that throughout history, a person named Ali ibn Muhammad revolted against the Abbasid Caliph in 255 AH and was accompanied by a

number of slaves, causing a massacre that eventually ended in his defeat. It is possible that the destruction of Basra in the aforementioned narration is the same destruction that occurred during the *Zanj* Rebellion in 255 AH.

Of course, given that the destruction of Basra is mentioned among the signs of the advent in this narration, it is not far-fetched that this destruction of Basra is not related to the *Zanj* Rebellion in 255 AH and that we will witness the destruction of Basra before the advent.

Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Sadr's opinion is that "This sign has already happened due to the *Zanj* Rebellion."

Critique of Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Sadr's theory; the same objection raised against Ayatollah Sadr's theory regarding the *Zanj* Rebellion also applies here. How can they apply the destruction of Basra at the hands of a person from the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minīn, which is mentioned in the narration as one of the signs of the advent, to the *Zanj* Rebellion? Perhaps we will witness such an event close to the advent, where the destruction of Basra occurs at the hands of a person from the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minīn who is supported by his slaves.

Ayatollah Kūrānī's opinion: "The narrations of the destruction of Basra are of three types; destruction by drowning, destruction by the *Zanj* Rebellion, both of which occurred during the Abbasid era, and the third type, which is the destruction of Basra by a collapse, is one of the signs of the advent that has not yet occurred."

Critique of Ayatollah Kūrānī's theory; the same objection that was

raised against Ayatollah Sadr's theory regarding the Zanj Rebellion also applies to Ayatollah Kūrānī's theory. How can they apply the destruction of Basra at the hands of one of the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minīn, which is mentioned in the narration as one of the signs of the advent, to the Zanj Rebellion? It is possible that we will witness such an event in the near future before the advent, where the destruction of Basra occurs at the hands of one of the progeny of Amir al-Mu'minīn who is supported by his slaves.

Second Narration; A narration from Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS) states that before the rise of Imam Mahdi (AJ), events will occur, one of which is the destruction of the city of Basra.

4) Text, Content, and Sources of the Narration

"From *Abū 'Abdullāh Ja'far ibn Muḥammad* (AS) that Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS) narrated things that would happen after him until the rise of the *Qā'im* ... when Basra is destroyed..." (Nu'mānī, 1976 AD/1397 AH: 274-275)

This narration was first mentioned in the book *al-Ghaybah* by Nu'mānī. The rest of the sources, such as *Bihār al-Anwār* (Majlisī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 52, 236), *Rīyād al-Abrār fī Manāqib al-A'immah al-Āthār* (Jazāyirī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 3, 173), and *Ilzām al-Nāṣib fī Ithbāt al-Hujjat al-Ghā'ib* (Ha'iri Yazdī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 107) have all cited from Nu'mānī's *al-Ghaybah*.

5) Examination of the Chain of Transmission (*Sanad*)

- *Ali ibn Aḥmad*; this person is unknown.

- *Ubayd Allah ibn Mūsā al-‘Alawīyy*. This person is unknown and not known among biographers.
- *‘Abdullāh ibn Hammād al-Anṣārī*. *Najāshī* refers to him with the phrase "From the Shaykhs of our companions." (*Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 218)
- *Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Ubayd Allah ibn al-‘Alā’*. *Ibn Ghadā’irī* refers to him as a corrupt person (*Wāsiṭī Baghdādī*, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 1, 38).
- My father (*‘Ubayd Allah ibn al-‘Alā’*): He is unknown.

The aforementioned narration is unknown from a documentary standpoint, lacks sufficient credibility, and cannot be cited.

6) Examination of the Semantic Import (*Dalālah*)

Is the destruction of Basra mentioned in the second narration different from the destruction of Basra by the *Zanj* leader mentioned in the first narration? Generally, many things are mentioned in the second narration, one of which is the destruction of Basra, which is mentioned vaguely and does not lead us to a correct conclusion.

Considering the evidence and observations mentioned, it can be concluded that the issue of the destruction of Basra, although it has been raised in some narrative sources as a sign of the era of advent, faces deep challenges and deficiencies from the perspective of hadith authentication and semantic analysis.

First, the first narration in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s book *Kamāl al-Dīn wa Tamām al-Ni‘mah* is transmitted as *Marfū‘ah*, which clearly reveals its fundamental weakness in terms of the connection of the chain and

the evaluation of the trustworthiness of the narrators. This is because in a *Marfū‘ah* narration, a part of the chain of transmitters is either intentionally or unintentionally omitted, which eliminates any possibility of biographical reliance or validation. The second narration, although it appears in the reliable book *al-Ghaybah* by *Nu‘mānī*, a biographical review shows that a significant part of its narrators are either of an unknown state or have fundamental issues with their trustworthiness. Therefore, its chain also lacks the systematic backing of hadith scholars.

Beyond the weakness of the chain, the content and meaning of these two narrations also add to the ambiguities and interpretive difficulties. The most important content challenge is the lack of clarity in the names and identities of the main characters of the narration—including "A man from your progeny" and the group "*Zanj*"—which in historical and hadith studies have taken on different and even contradictory meanings. For example, some researchers have applied "A man from your progeny" to an Imam from the lineage of Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS), while others have applied it to rebellious figures of the Abbasid period, such as the leader of the *Zanj*, or as a symbol of the leadership of a cultural religious movement. Regarding the "*Zanūj*," one group has applied it to the East African slaves who settled in Basra, while another group has considered it symbolic for the lower classes or marginalized forces in the apocalyptic conflicts. This diversity and sometimes contradiction in meaning, without precise biographical criteria and analysis of the historical context of the narration, eliminates the possibility of a uniform interpretation and

creates a fertile ground for conflicting interpretations or even ideological and incorrect uses of the text.

On the other hand, the application of these events by some narrative commentators to the *Zanj* Rebellion in the third century AH is mostly based on verbal and superficial similarities—such as the accompaniment of the "*Zanīj*" and the destruction of Basra—without the chain of the narration having a reliable connection or historical evidence being provided that accurately aligns the time, place, and actions mentioned in the text with the documented events of the rebellion. This lack of biographical backing (due to the narration being *Marfū‘ah* and the presence of unknown or questionable narrators) and the lack of content-based evidence that aligns with contemporary historical sources means that such an application does not have sufficient academic weight. In reality, the mere presence of a few superficial elements in common, without establishing temporal, spatial, and semantic consistency, cannot provide a reliable basis for accepting a definitive link between the narration and the *Zanj* Rebellion. Therefore, such interpretations remain at the level of a hypothesis, and their evidentiary value is limited within the framework of critical hadith and historical studies.

In a final summary, it can be said that the destruction of Basra, as mentioned in the two narrations discussed, faces serious challenges from both a documentary and a semantic standpoint. From a documentary perspective, the

Marfū‘ah nature of the first narration and the presence of unknown or unreliable narrators in the second narration's chain of transmission

significantly reduces the necessary biographical credibility for definitive citation. From a semantic perspective, the ambiguity in the identity of the characters, the diversity and sometimes contradiction in historical and interpretive understandings, and the lack of clear temporal and spatial evidence, eliminates the possibility of a certain application to specific events.

Thus, these texts cannot be used as a basis for doctrinal deduction or historical application as "Definite and reliable signs of the advent" of Imam Mahdi (AJ). The main danger in the unquestioning acceptance of such narrations is the formation of incorrect understandings, the distortion of the semantic context of the Mahdavi signs, and the creation of a basis for hasty and ideological applications. The correct path for research in this field is to adhere to a two-sided critique of the chain and content, use parallel narrations and reliable historical evidence, and stick to the methodological principles of hadith science. Only in this way can the discourse of expectation be prevented from deviation and the salvific teachings of Islam be preserved in their authentic context, providing a scientific and reliable framework for the future-oriented analysis of events before the advent.

7) The Role of Chain and Semantic Criticism in Validating Narrations about the Signs of the Advent of Basra

Assessing the credibility of narrations about the signs of the advent, especially those related to the Basra region, is neither possible nor defensible in the field of hadith and Mahdavi studies without employing the scientific methods of chain and semantic criticism. **37**

Chain criticism (examining the chain of narrators) and semantic criticism (analyzing the content and meaning of the narration) are two fundamental pillars in producing reliable knowledge and purifying narrative sources from untrustworthy data.

In the area of chain evaluation, narrations related to the signs of the advent of Basra often face serious problems, including being *Mursal* (incomplete) or *Marfū‘ah* (raised) or having narrators of an unknown state or who are unreliable in the chain of transmission. These weaknesses mean that such narrations cannot meet the necessary criteria for hadith credibility and severely cast doubt on their entry into the realm of scholarly citation. The science of *Rijāl*, by using the criteria of trustworthiness and chain connection, is a reliable tool for distinguishing the authenticity or weakness of narrations. The studies conducted in this article show that none of the sources that narrate the signs of the advent of Basra have been able to fully provide these essential indicators, a fact that doubles the importance of caution in accepting these texts.

On the semantic level, analyzing the structure and meaning of the narrations has a prominent importance in assessing their credibility. Many of the narrations focusing on Basra are expressed with ambiguous words and characters, specific symbolism, and even ambiguous concepts, which increases the possibility of error in interpretation and misunderstanding. For example, the phrase "A man from your progeny" in a narration about the destruction of Basra has been applied by some to an impeccable Imam (AS) and by others to

rebellious figures like the leader of the *Zanj*. Similarly, the term "*al-Zanīj*" has sometimes been attributed to African slaves living in Basra and sometimes symbolically to the lower classes and rebellious forces. Furthermore, some meanings conflict with firm theological principles—such as the impermissibility of attributing illegitimate actions to an impeccable Imam (AS)—or with a documented historical process, such as the order and sequence of events leading up to the advent. These instances show that without a systematic approach to semantic criticism, not only will the ambiguities not be resolved, but the likelihood of incorrect application of narrations, the emergence of doubts, and even the creation of superstitious views on Mahdavi topics will increase.

Therefore, a comprehensive critical analysis based on chain and semantic criticism is not only a remedy for academic deficiencies in dealing with the narrations of the signs of the advent of Basra, but also a precise criterion for purifying and validating the Shi'a narrative heritage. Any neglect of these principles opens the way for weak news, common misconceptions, and semantic distortions, and distances research from methodological soundness and academic integrity. Accordingly, the findings of this article indicate the absolute necessity of paying attention to a precise and comprehensive chain and semantic criticism in studies related to the signs of the advent, especially the Basra narrations. Without its realization, no claim about the credibility and meaning of these narrations will have academic legitimacy.

Conclusion

The topic of the signs of the advent, especially in relation to regions such as Basra, is one of the most central Mahdavi topics in the Shi'a narrative heritage and has always attracted the attention of commentators, hadith scholars, and contemporary researchers. This research, by focusing on four well-known narrations related to Basra—including the collapse of Basra, its destruction, the reading of a letter of disavowal of Amir al-Mu'minīn (AS), and the role of a person from the Prophet's progeny in its destruction—sought to evaluate the academic credibility of these texts with a combined approach of chain, biographical, and semantic criticism.

The findings showed that all four narrations face serious weaknesses in their chains of transmission: some are transmitted as *Marfū'ah* or *Mursalah*, which compromises the chain's connection; some have narrators of an unknown state or who are unreliable; and in some cases, there is confusion and contradiction in the narration. From a semantic perspective, the existence of ambiguous expressions and characters, multi-layered symbolism, and sometimes a potential conflict with firm theological principles or undisputed historical processes, prevents any certainty in interpretation. Examples such as the different interpretations of "A man from your progeny" and the "*Zanūj*," or the attempt to apply the destruction of Basra to the *Zanj* Rebellion, show the wide but unstable range of interpretations and the danger of confusing historical evidence with narrative texts.

narrations in question lack the necessary criteria to be considered reliable and definite signs of the advent of Imam Mahdi (AJ). Adherence to a precise evaluation of the chain and meaning, the use of authentic sources, and the avoidance of hasty applications are the only ways to ensure academic soundness and prevent the distortion of Mahdavi teachings. Disregarding these principles exposes research to the risk of mixing with common misconceptions and deviating from the framework of reliable hadith.

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A Psychological Analysis of the Characteristics and Pathologies of a Healthy Human Being in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*

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Abstract

The concept of a "Healthy Human Being" in the Islamic tradition is a multilayered one that goes beyond purely biological or psychological approaches. It is a concept that encompasses the intellectual, ethical,

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and spiritual dimensions of a person in connection with their divine nature. Given the shortcomings of modern psychological theories in providing a comprehensive understanding of human beings, it is essential to examine authentic Islamic sources on this topic. The present study aims to identify the characteristics of a healthy person and the pathologies that threaten them within the framework of religious teachings, by analyzing the prayers of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*. The research method is descriptive-analytical. Data was collected through a thematic analysis of the *Sahīfa*'s prayers and analyzed using the metrics of Islamic psychology and anthropology. The results indicate that, from the perspective of Imam *Sajjād* (AS), a healthy person is God-oriented, rational, humble, responsible, and possesses mental, ethical, and social well-being. In contrast, traits like envy, greed, arrogance, heedlessness, and weakness of will are identified as pathologies that threaten a person's inner balance and cause the collapse of their spiritual health. The analysis of these teachings shows that *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* presents a comprehensive and educational spiritual model of a healthy human being. This model can interact with contemporary theories, and while evaluating and correcting some of them, it can also open up new horizons in the fields of mental health, spiritual therapy, and personal development.

Keywords: *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, Healthy Human Being, Spiritual Health, Imam *Sajjād* (AS), Islamic Psychology.

Introduction

46 In the Islamic system of knowledge, a human being is a multi-

dimensional entity composed of intellect, soul, will, and body. Their movement toward perfection is contingent upon the balance and harmony among these dimensions (Motahhari, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 28). Unlike the reductionist approach of modern schools of thought that limit health to physical or psychological dimensions, the Islamic monotheistic perspective views health as the spiritual, intellectual, and ethical integrity of a person in relation to their divine nature, servitude to God, and ethical rationality. The Holy Quran describes a sound heart ("*Qalb Salīm*") as a condition for salvation: "Only he who comes to Allah with a sound heart." (al-Shu‘arā': 89) It also considers mental and ethical health to be directly linked to faith and the purification of the self (al-Shams: 9).

Within this framework, *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* is a prominent source that offers a comprehensive view of a healthy human being and their existential characteristics from a monotheistic and educational perspective. This collection of supplications and prayers, in addition to its spiritual richness, contains profound concepts in the fields of anthropology, ethics, and mental health. In various parts of the *Sahīfa*, Imam *Sajjād* (AS) mentions characteristics such as reliance on God, humility, rationality, piety, patience, and responsibility as attributes of a healthy person.

The main question of this research is 'What characteristics constitute a healthy human being in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* and what pathologies threaten them?' Given the precarious state of mental health, the spread of existential anxieties, and the crisis of meaning in

the modern world, the need for re-examining authentic Islamic sources in this area is felt more than ever before.

1. Literature Review

Research on the healthy human being in religious texts, especially the Holy Quran and hadith sources, has previously been the subject of attention for a number of researchers. In his article "The Healthy Human Being in the Holy Quran," (1998 AD/1377 SH) Sayyid Heydar Alavinejad concludes that a healthy person from the Quran's perspective is a perceptive and thoughtful individual who chooses their life path based on rationality and reflection, not imitation. He emphasizes that human health is rare in the Quran and only a minority of people achieve this rank.

In his article "Anthropology in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*," (2005 AD/1384 SH) Abdolhamid Farzaneh attempted a descriptive analysis of the anthropological dimensions of Imam *Sajjād*'s (AS) prayers. He believes that Imam *Zayn al-Ābidīn* (AS) used the language of prayer to convey educational and epistemological teachings about humanity, including servitude to God, humility, fighting injustice, and truthfulness.

In her article "The Healthy Human Being from the Perspective of the Quran and Hadith," (2007 AD/1386 SH) Shamsi Eftekharzadeh, focusing on the role of the intellect, considers a healthy person to possess the essence of rationality and interprets physical and mental health in the light of the proper use of intellect.

Healthy Human Being in Razes' Ethical System," (2010 AD/1389 SH) takes a philosophical approach to the issue of human health, and by focusing on Razes' theory, he introduces rationality as the basis of health. He seeks signs of health in moderation, the sufficiency of needs, and the rational evaluation of pleasure and pain.

Tala'at Hasani Baferani and Masoud Azarbajani, in their article "The Healthy Human Being and Its Characteristics from the Perspective of Viktor Frankl," (2011 AD/1390 SH) examine Frankl's view of a healthy person and emphasize that in Frankl's view, health means satisfaction with life, but the purpose of life is beyond pleasure.

Hadi Shamilpour, in his article "The Healthy Human Being from the Perspective of the Holy Quran," (2016 AD/1395 SH) focuses on the inherent dignity of human beings based on the verses of the Quran and explains the need to identify factors that enhance human status.

Mahdi Fani, Morteza Abdoljabbari, Forouzan Atashzadeh Shurideh, and Marzieh Karamkhani, in their article "The Criterion for a Healthy Human Being from the Perspective of Religious Texts," (2017 AD/1396 SH) emphasize the importance of spiritual health alongside physical health and conclude that spiritual health precedes physical health and is the main criterion for evaluating a person's condition from a religious perspective.

Despite the efforts made to explain the concept of a healthy human being from the perspective of the Quran, Hadith, and psychology, most studies have either had a one-dimensional approach or have simply described the textual propositions. Studies related to *Sahīfa* 49

Sajjādīyya have also been mostly partial and lacking structural and pathological analyses.

Asghar Aghaei, in his book "The Theory of a Healthy Human Being," (2018 AD/1397 SH) by reviewing different views in psychology, introduces a healthy human being as a prelude to a perfect human being and emphasizes the distinction between the two.

Other articles, "Explaining the Attributes of a Healthy Human Being with an Approach to Monotheistic Anthropology in the Words of Imam Ali (AS)" (2021 AD/1400 SH) and "The Components and Indicators of a Healthy Human Being according to Nahj al-Balāghah," (2024 AD/1403 SH) have made valuable contributions in introducing the components of a healthy human being in religious texts.

In the meantime, there is a gap for an interdisciplinary study that comprehensively and integrative analyzes the concept of a healthy human being in the *Sahīfa*. This article, by simultaneously using the teachings of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* and psychological approaches, presents a new perspective. This means that, by moving beyond the traditional framework of prayer studies, it pursues a holistic and analytical structure in understanding the healthy human being within the intellectual system of Imam *Sajjād* (AS) and establishes an effective link between the spiritual teachings of the *Sahīfa* and modern concepts of mental health. The purpose of this research is to extract the characteristics of health and the existential pathologies that threaten human beings from the teachings of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*. These components are highlighted in various prayers in the form of concepts such as "Health of the Soul," "Strength of Will," "Balance of Intellect

and Lust," and "Sincerity in Servitude."

The theoretical framework of the research is based on the connection between monotheistic anthropology and Islamic mental health theories. In this framework, a healthy person is an individual who is rational and pure, balanced in behavior, relies on the remembrance of God, and is on the path of servitude and their innate growth. The research findings will show that *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* not only provides a spiritual and ethical model of a healthy human being but can also be the basis for indigenous theorizing in the field of mental health, personal development, and interdisciplinary studies of religion and psychology in the contemporary era.

2. Methodology

This research was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method with an emphasis on library sources. Data was collected by examining the prayers of *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*, focusing on concepts related to human health. First, relevant prayers related to mental health, spirituality, and human attributes were identified through thematic prayer search. Then, they were categorized into two main axes, "Characteristics of a healthy human being" and "Threatening pathologies," using a thematic analysis method. The analyses were conducted with an inductive approach based on intra-textual concepts. Out of the 54 prayers in the *Şahīfa*, 24 prayers that contained components such as intellect, soul, ethical attributes, sin, and growth were purposefully selected and analyzed.¹

1. For more and detailed information, cf. Zarei, Hasan, The Healthy Person in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*, Master's thesis, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Supervisors, Ebrahim Nouri and Hadi Zeini, 2010 AD/1399 SH.

3. Main Discussion and Findings

In this section, the research findings are organized into two main axes: first, the characteristics of a healthy human being from the perspective of *Šahīfa Sajjādīyya*, and second, the pathologies that threaten human health. These analyses were carried out based on the concepts extracted from the selected prayers and in light of a spiritual and psychological approach.

3-1. The Conceptual Framework of a Healthy Human Being from a Religious and Psychological Perspective

From a religious perspective, a person's self-knowledge is a prelude to their journey toward perfection and achieving true happiness. Imam Ali (AS) says: "The highest degree of knowledge is that a person knows their own worth," (Laythī Wāsiṭī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 349; Tamīmī Amidī, 1946 AD/1366 AH: 469) and also, "The greatest ignorance is a person's ignorance of their own worth." (Laythī Wāsiṭī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 118; Tamīmī Amidī, 1946 AD/1366 AH: 233)

In another hadith, Imam Rīdā (AS) was asked about the limits of humility, and he replied: "...I said: "What is the limit of humility, which if a person does, they become humble?" He said: "Humility has degrees, one of which is for a person to know their own worth, so they place it in its proper position with a sound heart." (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 3, 321)

The importance of anthropology lies in the fact that all religions and schools of thought have addressed questions such as a human being's place in existence, their destiny, and their relationship with

determinism and free will. A person's view of themselves also determines the direction of theories in the humanities. For example, if a human being is considered to have a divine nature and to seek perfection, the educational goals will be different from a materialistic perspective (Vaezi, 1998 AD/1377 SH: 15). In short, a correct understanding of a person is the key to understanding the world, the meaning of life, and determining their path of growth and education. And ignoring this knowledge is the source of many crises for contemporary human beings.

Human health is considered a multi-dimensional and holistic concept that goes beyond the absence of disease and includes physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions. Health, in its simplest sense, refers to the avoidance of physical, mental, and spiritual harm. The word "Health" in English comes from the old word "Hale" meaning "Free from defect" and "Wholeness" meaning "Completeness."¹ In the World Health Organization's definition, health is not just the absence of disease but a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (World Health Organization, 1946: 1). Perhaps this is why the biomedical view, which only focuses on physical components, has gradually been replaced by the bio-psycho-social model, which takes into account the interaction of various factors in the formation of human health (Hasani Baferani, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 2).

1. Oxford English Dictionary. (2023). *Health*. Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://www.oed.com>

In total, the opinions of researchers on the dimensions of health are as follows:

1) Physical health

It includes physical fitness, proper organ function, and disease prevention. Since performing religious rituals also requires physical health, Islam pays special attention to it. Components such as proper nutrition, exercise, stress management and avoiding harmful substances are signs of physical health (Safikhani, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 236).

2) Mental health

It is not only dependent on the proper functioning of the nervous system but also on mental balance, self-actualization, and adaptation to the environment. Both psychological systems and religion emphasize the importance of mental health, but it is often neglected in different societies (Hasani Baferani, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 4).

3) Social health

It relates to the ability to establish human relationships and take responsibility in society. Concepts such as respect, empathy, justice, and ethical interaction with others are indicators of this dimension. Also, poverty, ignorance, and violence are threats to social health, for which religion has provided solutions (Safikhani, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 239; Fathi et al., 2012 AD/1391 SH: 225-243).

3-1-1. Health in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*

54 In the following sections, we will discuss the healthy human being in

the *Sahīfa* in detail, but here, as a final point in the theoretical discussion of health, it is necessary to emphasize that in the *Sahīfa*, health is also a general concept and not limited to a specific component. This is in line with modern views on health, the Quran, and the *Sahīfa*, although in the Quranic and *Sahīfa* system, this complexity has an extensive system that can lead to the development and redefinition of the concept of health.

In the twenty-third prayer, Imam (AS) directly and in detail addresses the issue of health, considering well-being (*'Afīyat*) as a divine blessing that must continue in both this world and the hereafter: "And do not separate me from Your well-being in this world and the hereafter." (Prayer 23) In this prayer, Imam *Sajjād* (AS) introduces health not just as a physical state but as a context for servitude, religious security, inner insight, and obedience to God: "And safety in my religion and my body... and strength for what You have commanded me to do." (Prayer 23) He asks God for a comprehensive, ever-increasing, and healing well-being that protects life from any disease and danger: "A sufficient, healing well-being... that generates well-being in my body." (Prayer 23)

Another important part of the prayer is dedicated to gratitude and the remembrance of God. The Imam (AS) considers the tongue as a tool for thanks and the heart as the place for understanding religion: "And make my tongue speak with Your praise and gratitude... and **55**

expand my heart for the guidance of Your religion." (Prayer 23) Also, in the final parts of the prayer, the Imam asks for well-being in the form of refuge from all apparent and hidden evils, enemies, and calamities and requests mental, social, and spiritual security from God. This prayer clearly shows that in the Islamic perspective, physical and spiritual hearths are necessary and complementary to each other. Modeling the prayers of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, especially in the field of mental health, provides a complete model for strengthening tranquility, reliance on God, insight, and inner satisfaction, because these prayers are not merely a means of supplication, but also a platform for self-education and self-knowledge.

3-2. Characteristics of a Healthy Human Being in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*

A review of the prayers in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* shows that Imam *Sajjād* (AS) paints a coherent picture of a healthy human being; a person who has achieved balance and growth in their psychological, spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions and whose behavior is based on intellect and servitude in their relationship with God, themselves, others, and existence. The following characteristics are extracted from the frequently repeated themes of the prayers:

A) God-consciousness and Monotheism

56 In many prayers of the *Sahīfa*, a direct link is established between

faith in God and a person's inner peace. In the first prayer, a healthy person is someone who draws strength from reliance on God, fear of God, hope in God, and the remembrance of God to give meaning to life (Prayer 1). This God-consciousness is not merely a mental belief but an active, guiding, and healing state. God-consciousness, with the focus on praising blessings, encompasses both the spiritual and material aspects of a person (Fadlullāh, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 1, 29). According to the *Sahīfa*, God created human beings with special and superior characteristics compared to other creatures, bestowed a special favor upon them (Prayer 1), and included them in His grace and favor (Prayers 16¹, 49², 51³). He also promised to provide for them (Prayer 29⁴). Even with a person's multiple acts of disobedience, He did not withhold His grace from them (Prayer 49⁵) and promised to

- 1."You are the one whose mercy and knowledge encompass all things... And you are the one who has given every created being a share in Your blessings, and You are the one whose forgiveness is higher than His punishment, and You are the one whose mercy precedes His wrath."
2. "And praise be to God, who, if He had withheld from His servants the knowledge of praising Him for the continuous blessings He has bestowed upon them and the abundant favors He has showered upon them, they would have made use of His blessings without praising Him and would have indulged in His sustenance without being grateful to Him. And if they were like that, they would have gone outside the bounds of humanity..."
3. "O! God, You created me sound, You raised me as a child, and You provided for me sufficiently. O God."
4. "O! God, You have afflicted us in our sustenance with an evil suspicion and in our lifespan with a long hope, until we sought Your sustenance from those who were already provided for."
5. "My God, You guided me, but I was heedless; You admonished, but I hardened my heart; and You did good, but I disobeyed."

answer their prayers (Prayers 11¹, 12², 51³).

This close, two-way relationship between God and His servant is shown by multiple prayers, such as Prayers 20⁴, 21⁵, 28⁶, 50, and

1. "And when the days of our lives are over, and the periods of our ages are finished, and Your summons, which is inevitable and must be answered, is at hand for us, then bless Muhammad and his family."
2. "O! God, there are three traits that hinder me from asking of You, and there is one quality that drives me to it: An matter You commanded, but I was slow to perform, prohibition You forbade, but I hastened to it, and a blessing You bestowed upon me, but I was deficient in giving thanks for it. And what drives me to ask of You is your favor upon those who turn to You with their faces and come to You with their good expectations, as all Your goodness is a favor, and all Your blessings are a new beginning. So here I am, O! My God, standing at the gate of Your might like a humble, submissive person, and asking of You, with my shame, the question of a needy, dependent person. I acknowledge to You that I did not submit at the time of Your favor except by turning away from my disobedience... And fulfill my need, and make my request successful, and forgive my sin, and secure my soul's fear. Indeed, You have power over all things, and that is easy for You. Amen, Lord of the Worlds."
3. "You are the one who answers the call when in distress..."
4. "O God, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, and let me enjoy a righteous guidance that I do not replace, and a path of truth from which I do not stray, and a righteous intention about which I do not doubt... O God, bless Muhammad and his family, and suffice me from the burden of earning."
5. "O! God, O You who are sufficient for the weak individual, and who protects from the feared matter, my sins have left me alone, so I have no companion, and I have become weak in the face of Your wrath, so I have no supporter."
6. "O! God, I have become sincere by severing my ties to everything except You..."

others, which indicate the innate inclination of a healthy person to seek God in difficult and urgent situations. Based on the explanation of *Allamah Faḍlullāh*, monotheism, in the comprehensive structure of the body and soul, plays the role of the central core of a healthy personality. In contrast to the existential anxiety raised in the thought of thinkers like Frankl, Imam *Sajjād* (AS), by providing a God-centered image, places a foundation of meaning, security, and tranquility in the psychological structure of a healthy person. Frankl believes that the spiritual void and lack of meaning in the life of modern human beings are among the most important causes of anxiety, aimlessness, and identity crisis (Frankl, 2006: 111).

In contrast to this situation, the revealed teachings, including the prayers of Imam *Sajjād* (AS), show that connection to a transcendent source can strengthen the sense of meaning and psychological integrity.

Research in the psychology of religion also shows that spiritual health and mental health act synergistically. Religious and spiritual beliefs can reduce anxiety and increase resilience and hope for life (Pargament, 2007: 98-101; Koenig, 2012: 8). Therefore, in the religious perspective, mental health and spirituality are not separated from each other but act in an integrated way in the formation of a healthy personality.

B) Humility and Self-awareness of Limitations

In multiple prayers, including prayers 20¹, 31², and 44³, the believing person, through the language of prayer and seeking forgiveness, always distances themselves from self-conceit and arrogance. A

1. "And employ me in what You will question me about tomorrow, and dedicate my days to what You created me for. And make me sufficient, and expand my sustenance, and do not tempt me with looks (from others). And grant me honor and do not afflict me with arrogance. And make me a servant to You and do not → ← corrupt my worship with vanity. And let goodness flow from my hands for people and do not destroy it with meanness. And grant me high morals and protect me from pride. O! God, bless Muhammad and his family, and do not raise me among people a single degree unless you lower me an equal amount in my own estimation, and do not grant me any apparent honor unless You create in me an inner humiliation of equal measure in my own estimation."
2. "And O! You with whom the reward of the righteous is not lost, and O! You who are the end of the fear of the worshipers, and O! You who are the limit of the awe of the pious! This is the position of one, whom the hands of sins have exchanged, and the reins of mistakes have led, and whom Satan has overpowered. So he fell short of what You commanded due to negligence and committed what You forbade due to self-deception, like one ignorant of Your power over him, or like one who denies the grace of Your favor to him. Until the eye of guidance was opened for him, and the clouds of blindness were dispersed from him. He counted what he had wronged himself and contemplated what he had disobeyed his Lord, so he saw his great disobedience as great, and his significant transgression as significant."
3. "O! God, bless Muhammad and his family. If we are inclined to deviate, set us right. If we err, straighten us out. And if Your enemy, Satan, takes hold of us, rescue us from him. O God, fill it with our worship of You, and adorn its times with our obedience to You. And help us during its day to fast, and during its night to pray and humble ourselves before You. And to be submissive to You and lowly before You, so that its day may not bear witness against us with heedlessness, nor its night with negligence. O God, and make us like this during all the other months and days as long as You give us life."

healthy person is someone who neither considers themselves self-sufficient nor becomes arrogant from their false powers. Instead, they are constantly re-evaluating themselves and remembering their existential poverty before God. Humility in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* is introduced not as a passive reaction to failure or weakness, but as a cognitive-ethical virtue that is formed with the awareness of a person's existential position before God. This concept is expressed in the prayers of Imam *Sajjād* (AS) in such a way that humility not only curbs narcissism but is also a prerequisite for spiritual growth and a person's connection to the transcendent reality.

From the perspective of humanistic and existential psychology, the ability to accept one's limitations is also considered one of the important indicators of mental health. Carl Rogers considers this acceptance to be "Respect for the real self," through which an individual achieves acceptance and inner integration (Rogers, 1961: 156). Rollo May also believes that humility before existence is an essential condition for authenticity and existential self-awareness (May, 1958: 110). Such a perspective shows that in both systems, religious and psychological, humility is considered a psychological and spiritual strength, not a weakness.

C) Rationality and Thinking

Prayer 17¹ and the well-known Prayer 27¹ emphasize the importance

1. "O! God, whatever falsehood he (Satan) entices us with, make it known to us, and when you make it known to us, protect us from it. And make us see what we can→

of thinking, learning from examples, and contemplation in life. Imam *Sajjād* (AS) introduces the intellect as a tool for discernment, guidance, and a factor for connecting to reality. In Imam *Sajjād*'s (AS) view, the intellect is not just a cognitive ability; it has an epistemological and ethical responsibility. A healthy person in the *Sahīfa* is an individual who, in addition to benefiting from their intellect, uses it for faith, ethics, and correcting their life path. From a scientific perspective as well, this interaction of intellect and faith is a prominent example of inner balance and mental health (Sternberg, 2000: 45; Fowler, 1981: 23).

D) Emotional Balance and Psychological Calmness

In prayer 23², which is about peace and the removal of anxiety, Imam *Sajjād* (AS) asks God for the soothing of the heart, the removal of fear, the elimination of obsessions, and tranquility. In contemporary

←use to overcome him, and inspire in us what we can prepare for him. And awaken us from the sleep of heedlessness by our reliance on him, and make our help against him good with Your assistance."

1. "O! God, empty their hearts of security, and their bodies of strength, and distract their hearts from scheming, and weaken their foundations from fighting men, and make them cowardly in facing heroes. And send upon them an army of Your angels with a force from Your force, like what You did on the Day of Badr, by which You will cut off their roots, and harvest their power, and disperse their numbers."
2. "O! God, bless Muhammad and his family, and clothe me in Your *Āfīyah* (well-being), and cover me with Your *Āfīyah*, and fortify me with Your *Āfīyah*, and honor me with Your *Āfīyah*, and enrich me with Your *Āfīyah*, and grant me Your *Āfīyah* as charity."

psychology, psychological calm is often associated with mental control, meditation practices, and stress management (Fredrickson, 2001: 345; Kabat-Zinn, 1990: 12). However, Imam *Sajjād*'s (AS) view, which sees calm as coming through faith, remembrance of God, and submission to the divine will, is consistent with spiritual psychological approaches that connect mental health beyond individual skills to a person's existential connection with the absolute and transcendent origin (Pargament, 1997:78). This perspective shows that psychological health, unlike purely individual-centered and mind-centered views, is achieved in a deeper and more stable way within the context of spirituality and profound self-knowledge.

E) Social Responsibility and Praying for Others

Prayer 24 (for parents) and Prayer 27 (for neighbors) show that a healthy person is not a solitary or self-centered individual but is responsible and engaged with the sufferings and rights of others. Especially in a person's relationship with their parents, as one of the commentators states, "Because the matter is an emotion in exchange for an emotion," (Fadlullāh, 1999 AD/1420 AH: 1, 621) it indicates that in the system of creation, responsibilities are reciprocal and are the result of an emotional transaction.

In the *Sahīfa*, individual health is directly linked to collective health. A healthy person does not only settle for reforming themselves but lives in such a way that their goodness reaches society as well. In

the view of Imam *Sajjād* (AS), praying for others is an exercise to get out of self-centeredness and a step toward social balance.

The effect of social support derived from religious teachings on the mental and social health of religious people can be analyzed based on the prayers of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*. Social psychology studies show that social support plays an important role in reducing stress and increasing people's resilience (Cohen & Wills, 1985: 310). Social support is divided into two main categories: spiritual support and practical social support (Pargament, 1997: 90).

Spiritual support includes strengthening a person's connection with God, which creates a sense of security and peace. Practical social support includes mutual relationships and mutual aid among members of society, which leads to improved mental and social health (Ellison & Levin, 1998: 158; Koenig, 2012: 45).

This religious-social approach strengthens mental health not only at the individual level but also at the collective level.

3-2-1. Types of Social Support in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*

1) Financial Support

Such as paying *Khums*, *Zakāt*, charity, and giving gifts, which are emphasized in Prayer 44¹ of the *Sahīfa*. These supports are expressed with a spiritual and monotheistic approach, in a way that connects a

1. "O! God, bless Muhammad and his family, and help us during it (the day/month) to observe the times of the five prayers according to the limits you have set..."

person to the original source of wealth, God, and makes them self-sufficient from relying on others. This financial behavior is considered not only material support but also a tool for spiritual elevation.

2) Behavioral-Social Support

Such as empathy, benevolence, maintaining family ties, good character, and well-intentioned advice, which strengthen social relationships, mental peace, and individual health. These concepts are mentioned in prayers such as Prayer 22¹ and 9² of the *Sahīfa*, and the purpose of mentioning them in the form of prayer is to institutionalize correct behavioral patterns through repetition and contemplation of the text of the prayer.

Therefore, the model of a healthy human being in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* is a monotheistic, ethical, rational, and community-oriented model. This image, unlike reductionist approaches to health, simultaneously shows mental health, spirituality, ethics, and social responsibility in an intertwined structure. This perspective can be a basis for theorizing about the comprehensive health of human beings in the Islamic tradition.

1. "O! God, I have no strength for hardship, nor patience for tribulation, nor power over poverty, so does not withhold my sustenance from me."

2. "So support us with Your success..."

**Table 2: Classification of a Healthy Human Being's Characteristics in the *Şahīfa*
Based on Four Existential Dimensions**

Existential Dimension	Characteristics (based on the <i>Şahīfa</i> prayers)	Related Prayer Examples
Intellectual	Rationality, contemplation, learning from examples, self-critique	Prayer 32, 31
Psychological / Emotional	Inner peace, emotional balance, balanced hope and fear	Prayer 23, 13, 5
Ethical	Humility, contentment, seeking forgiveness, sincerity of intention, fairness	Prayer 20, 34, 44
Social / Relational	Praying for others, rights of parents and neighbors, serving people	Prayer 24, 27, 25

This table, by classifying the components of a healthy human being in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* based on existential dimensions - namely intellect, psyche, ethics, and society - shows that Imam *Sajjād* (AS) has a holistic view in designing the human personality. Unlike views that reduce health to the domain of the mind or behavior, in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*, every human dimension plays a fundamental role in shaping a healthy personality. This approach is consistent with holistic models of health in Islamic psychology and ethics and can be a suitable basis for indigenous modeling in the field of spiritual and mental health.

3-3. Pathologies Threatening a Healthy Human Being in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*

In addition to portraying the model of a healthy human being, *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* prominently addresses the afflictions and pathologies that

66 hinder a person's psychological, ethical, and spiritual growth and

balance. These pathologies are expressed in the form of psychological abnormalities, behavioral disorders, or epistemological gaps and threaten a person's inner structure.

A) Envy and Rancor

In Prayer 20 and Prayer 32, envy is severely condemned as a vice that disrupts a person's inner peace and poisons social relationships. Imam *Sajjād* (AS) asks God to cleanse his heart of envy and replace destructive competition with sincere intention. Envy, as an effective factor in mental erosion and spiritual suffocation, has also received widespread attention in contemporary psychology. Research shows that envy is accompanied by a decrease in self-esteem and negative comparison patterns, which can lead to mental disorders such as anxiety and depression (Smith & Kim, 2007: 23). From an ethical and psychological perspective, envy is considered an inner pathology that originates from self-centeredness and the inability to accept the realities of life (Salovey & Rodin, 1998: 52). In religious texts, and especially in *Šaḥīfa Sajjādīyya*, envy is raised not only as a psychological abnormality but as a disease of the heart and ethics that is rooted in a lack of submission to God's decree and destiny and harms a person's spiritual health (Pargament, 1997: 115). This view shows the deep connection between mental health and spiritual health and emphasizes that the treatment of envy requires the correction of ethical attitudes and the strengthening of the soul as well.

B) Arrogance and Conceit

In prayers 31, 44, and 47, arrogance is introduced as one of the greatest obstacles to self-knowledge and servitude to God. Imam *Sajjād* (AS) strongly warns against a person falling into self-conceit and a false sense of self-sufficiency from the Lord, and he considers it the source of downfall.²⁵

Arrogance, as a veil over the intellect, prevents learning, repentance, and personal growth. In psychological literature, narcissism, which is an aspect of arrogance, is associated with a lack of empathy, denial of personal flaws, and hidden aggressive behaviors (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001: 211). Research shows that narcissism can prevent the acceptance of feedback and behavioral correction, thereby limiting psychological growth (Campbell & Miller, 2001: 44). In *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, humility is introduced as the path to salvation and arrogance as the root of deviation. This is because arrogance prevents a person from self-reflection and inner transformation and causes them to remain in an unhealthy psychological state (Pargament, 1997: 123). This view emphasizes that mental health and spiritual growth require overcoming arrogance and embracing humility.

C) Greed and Avarice

In several prayers, including Prayers 4, 18, and 25, Imam *Sajjād* (AS) asks God to remove greed from his heart and replace it with contentment and reliance on God. Avarice is introduced as one of the

obstacles to contentment, peace, and faith in God's provision. Greed, as a constant dissatisfaction and a driver of inner restlessness, is recognized in contemporary psychology as an effective factor in creating chronic anxiety and self-dissatisfaction (Carver & Scheier, 1998: 255). This psychological state results from continuous dissatisfaction and the endless search for more demands, which endangers mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 68). Greed is rooted in a lack of trust in God's promises and destabilizes a person's spiritual health (Pargament, 1997: 135). Contentment is raised not only as an economic virtue but as the main condition for mental peace. Contentment leads to satisfaction with the present situation and reduces inner anxiety (Emmons, 2005: 142). This approach shows the emphasis on mental health within an ethical and spiritual framework that is based on acceptance and trust in the transcendent source.

D) Heedlessness and Weakness of Will

Prayers 13¹ and 34² consider heedlessness to be the main factor in a person's downfall from the path of servitude and awareness. Imam *Sajjād* (AS) repeatedly asks God to save him from the sleep of heedlessness and from heedlessness regarding death, the afterlife, and

1. "And whoever turns to any of Your creatures with their need, or makes them a means for its success instead of You, has exposed themselves to deprivation and has deserved the loss of kindness from You."

2."And do not brand us with heedlessness of You, for we are inclined toward You and repentant of our sins."

the reality of existence. Heedlessness in the *Sahīfa* does not only mean forgetfulness but refers to intentional inattention to a reality that a person should always be aware of (Baumeister & Vohs, 2016: 210). In psychology, this concept is directly related to weakness of will and sluggishness in self-reformation. In contemporary psychology, continuous unawareness of the motivations and goals of life is considered one of the indicators of a disorder in the "Self-regulation" and "Loss of meaning" process (Steger, 2012: 225). Such disorders reduce the quality of life and mental health and indicate a lack of focus on spiritual and ethical growth (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 75). Therefore, the view of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* on heedlessness is consistent with the findings of modern psychology that emphasize the importance of continuous awareness and attention to oneself and the goals of life.

A structural analysis of the *Sahīfa*'s prayers shows that Imam *Sajjād* (AS), with a deep understanding of the human psyche, raises pathologies that prevent inner balance, spiritual growth, and healthy interaction with others. These pathologies are destructive not only on an ethical level but also on a psychological level and prevent a person's comprehensive health. In the Imam's view, these pathologies can only be controlled and inner health can be restored through "Self-knowledge, prayer, contemplation, and a continuous

Table 3: Correspondence between Psychological Pathologies and Therapeutic Solutions in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*

Psychological or Ethical Pathology	Treatment and Counteraction from the <i>Şahīfa Sajjādīyya</i> Perspective	Related Prayer Example
Envy	Praying for a pure intention, recognizing God's grace in the distribution of blessings	Prayer 20, 32
Arrogance and Conceit	Seeking forgiveness, confessing ignorance and poverty, remembering death	Prayer 44, 31
Greed	Asking for contentment, strengthening reliance on God, asceticism in the world	Prayer 18, 25
Heedlessness	Remembering death, constant mindfulness, contemplating the consequences of actions	Prayer 13, 54
Despair and Hopelessness	Hope in God's mercy, balanced hope and fear	Prayer 5, 35

The third table shows that Imam *Sajjād* (AS) does not only describe pathologies and vices of the soul but also recommends a specific solution, prayer, or action for each ethical or psychological disorder. This simultaneity between recognizing the pathology and providing the treatment demonstrates a treatment-oriented approach in the literature of prayer, where prayer is not just an expression of need **71**

but a tool for a person's psychological and spiritual education and reformation. Thus, *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* can be considered as an educational text with spiritual therapy applications in the interdisciplinary studies of religion and psychology.

4. Critique and Analysis of Western Approaches to the Healthy Human Being and Comparison with the Model of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*

In modern psychology, the concept of a "Healthy Human being" has become a central concept, especially after the mid-20th century. Humanistic Psychology and Positive Psychology are considered two main currents in explaining this concept. Theorists such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Gordon Allport, and Viktor Frankl have each tried to present an image of the human psyche that goes beyond a disease-centered approach. This section compares the most important components of Western views with the components extracted from *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*.

A) Maslow's Theory of Self-Actualization

Maslow introduces a healthy person as someone who, after fulfilling their biological needs, safety, love, belonging, and esteem, has reached the stage of self-actualization and is in search of meaning and creativity (Maslow, 1943: 82). The characteristics of a self-actualized

satisfaction (Maslow, 1954: 22).

A comparison with *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* shows that Imam *Sajjād*'s (AS) view also emphasizes human growth, but the fundamental difference is in the source of meaning. In the *Şahīfa*, human perfection is not just about individual fulfillment (Such as: Kirkpatrick, 2005: 330); rather, it is defined in terms of drawing closer to God, servitude to God, and gaining divine satisfaction. Therefore, from a monotheistic perspective, self-actualization is dependent on the purification of the self and a spiritual connection with God, not merely the flourishing of natural talents (Pargament, 2007: 144). This approach shows the integration of mental health and spirituality, which has been less addressed in contemporary psychology.

B) The Logotherapy Approach (Viktor Frankl)

In response to the spiritual void in the modern world, Frankl presented his theory of "Logotherapy," which emphasizes the importance of meaning in mental health. He believed that the lack of meaning is the main cause of many psychological disorders and that a healthy person is someone who has found the meaning of life and deals with suffering with an inner responsibility (Frankl, 1963: 99).

In comparison, in *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*, meaning is not just a human mental construct; rather, it is a divine discovery that is obtained through a connection with God. Imam *Sajjād* (AS) repeatedly asks God for wisdom in hardships and patience in the face of calamities. **73**

While Frankl's view is based on the inherent responsibility of the human being, the *Sahīfa*'s view emphasizes divine responsibility and a sacred purpose. This difference distinguishes the monotheistic approach from existentialist logotherapy.

C) The Approach of Self-Acceptance and Unconditionally in Humanistic Psychology

Carl Rogers bases mental health on "Unconditional positive regard." This means that a healthy person must be able to accept themselves without judgment and inner criticism (Rogers, 1961: 35). In *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, although divine mercy is comprehensive, self-acceptance is not accepted without the struggle of the self and inner self-reckoning. A healthy person is always in a state of mindfulness, repentance, and self-correction. Concepts such as "Despair of the self," "Heedlessness of the afterlife," and the "Delusion of sufficiency" are considered obstacles to spiritual growth. Therefore, in Imam Sajjād's (AS) view, self-acceptance must be accompanied by responsibility and mindfulness, not complete release.

Thus, although Western psychology has valuable achievements in understanding the mechanisms of the human psyche, in redefining the human telos, it has fallen into the reduction of meaning to "Individual Fulfillment," "Inner Satisfaction," or "Ethical Self-centeredness". In contrast, the model presented in *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* puts a transcendent, devotional, and afterlife-oriented goal before human beings. In other

words, in the Islamic view, a healthy person is not only responsible for them but is also accountable to God, creation, and existence.

Table 4: Comparative Comparison of the Components of a Healthy Human Being in Western Views and *Šahīfa Sajjādīyya*

Component / Approach	Modern Psychology	Šahīfa Sajjādīyya
Source of Meaning and Perfection	Self-actualization, personal meaning-making (Maslow, Frankl)	Drawing closer to God, servitude, divine satisfaction (Prayers 1, 20, 31)
Criterion for Mental Health	Self-acceptance, reduction of anxiety, self-esteem, self-actualization	Inner peace through reliance on God, seeking forgiveness, remembrance of death, intimacy with God (Prayers 23, 13)
Relation to Suffering and Crisis	Giving meaning to suffering, resilience in crisis (Frankl)	Suffering is a tool for growth, a reminder, and purification of the self on the divine path (Prayers 5, 54)
Core Characteristic of a Healthy Person	Creativity, autonomy, positive thinking (Maslow, Rogers)	Humility, monotheistic rationality, ethical mindfulness, social responsibility (Prayers 44, 27, 32)
Relation to Others	Respecting personal boundaries, empathy without social commitment	Praying for others, respecting rights, fairness, social reform (Prayers 24, 27)
Ultimate Goal of Human Growth	Individual satisfaction, meaning in life, creativity	Salvation in the afterlife, divine pleasure, being God's vicegerent (Prayers 45, 47, 35)
Approach to Ethical	Accepting weakness as part	Rejecting self-conceit, con-

Component / Approach	Modern Psychology	Şahīfa Sajjādīyya
Weaknesses	of the "self"	tinuous seeking of forgiveness, fighting against arrogance and heedlessness (Prayers 20, 31, 44)

This table shows that in Western psychology, the focus is on individual fulfillment and intrapsychic function, while *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* sees a human being as an entity connected to God, creation, and the afterlife. Therefore, the model of a healthy person in the *Şahīfa* presents not only a "Healthy Mind" but also an intertwined "Healthy Heart," "Healthy Action," and "Healthy Direction." This table shows that while Western psychology, especially in humanistic and meaning-oriented approaches, has tried to move from a disease-centered approach toward a model of growth and meaning, it still remains in a state of ambiguity or individualistic humanism in determining the telos of human existence. In contrast, *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*, by placing "Servitude to God" as the center of meaning, provides an image of a healthy person that is definable not only on the intrapsychic level but also on the ethical, social, and metaphysical levels. Thus, the ontological purposefulness in Imam *Sajjād*'s (AS) model establishes a deep connection with spiritual health that transcends many secular models.

5. Matching the Concepts of *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya* Prayers with Positive Psychology Indicators

76 The texts of *Şahīfa Sajjādīyya*'s prayers have significant overlap with

the indicators of Positive Psychology; therefore, they are examined in a separate comparative section. Positive Psychology, as a new approach, emphasizes strengthening virtues, meaning, resilience, hope, gratitude, and human flourishing (Seligman, 2011: 75). In contrast, the *Sahīfa* provides a rich collection of spiritual and psychotherapeutic teachings whose goal is the purification of the self, inner peace, and the promotion of a good life.

Gratitude, which plays a key role in promoting lasting happiness in Seligman's theory (Seligman, 2011:103), is not only a reaction to blessings in the *Sahīfa* but an ontological insight. For example, in Prayer 45 of the *Sahīfa*, gratitude is presented as a continuous duty in relation to understanding a person's place in existence and is a multifaceted and complex issue.¹ This alignment shows the precedence of the *Sahīfa* in presenting concepts that Positive Psychology has addressed.

Hope, as a mechanism for coping with suffering, emphasizes will and purpose in Snyder's hope theory (Snyder, 2002: 255). In the seventh prayer of the *Sahīfa*, hope in God's mercy is highlighted in a way that frees a person from helplessness.

Meaning in life, in Frankl's Logotherapy theory, is introduced as the source of motivation and mental health. In the *Sahīfa*, prayers 20² and 32 also refer to the meaning of life in the shadow of the knowledge of servitude to God and the purposefulness of creation.

1. To understand the conceptual and practical explanation of gratitude, cf. Salehi, Zakiyah, *A Conceptual and Practical Analysis of Gratitude in Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, Master's Thesis, University of Sistan and Baluchestan. Supervisor: Hadi Zeini, 2021 AD/1400 SH.

2. "...and bring my faith to the most complete faith..."

Forgiveness, one of the components of Positive Psychology that reduces anger and anxiety (Fredrickson, 2004: 210), is requested as a divine character trait in the *Makārim al-Akhlāq* prayer of the *Şahīfa*.

Self-awareness and self-correction, which are pillars of self-regulation in Positive Psychology (Carver & Scheier, 1998: 82), are seen in the twenty-fifth prayer of the *Şahīfa* in the form of confessing shortcomings and asking for correction.

In total, this overlap shows the high capacity of religious texts to provide integrated theories in spiritual mental health and an endogenous model for promoting resilience, meaning, and flourishing within the Islamic cultural framework.

Table 5: Matching *Şahīfa* Concepts with Positive Psychology Indicators

Positive Psychology Indicator	Equivalent or Emphasis in <i>Şahīfa Sajjādīyya</i>	Related Prayer Example
Optimism / Hope	<i>Raja</i> (Hope), trust in God's mercy, belief in forgiveness	Prayers 5, 35
Meaning in Life	Servitude, sincerity, drawing closer to God	Prayers 1, 47
Resilience	Patience in calamity, submission to divine will	Prayers 54, 5
Gratitude	Confessing blessings, praising God, paying attention to hidden gifts	Prayers 46, 3
Positive Relationships	Praying for others, respecting social rights	Prayers 24, 27

Conclusion

This research, by analyzing the prayers of *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya* regarding the characteristics of a healthy person and an integrated approach, has provided a comprehensive and multi-dimensional image of a healthy person that goes beyond the common concepts of modern medicine and psychology. In the view of Imam *Sajjād* (AS), a healthy person is an entity that is in balance among intellect, self, soul, and behavior, and their spiritual, ethical, mental, and social health are interconnected.

The key characteristics of a healthy person in this sacred text include deep God-consciousness, humility, rationality, psychological peace, and social responsibility, each of which plays a fundamental role in an individual's growth and perfection. On the other hand, psychological and ethical pathologies such as envy, arrogance, greed, and heedlessness are introduced as the main obstacles to a person's balance and health, which deeply harm a person's inner structure and threaten their spiritual and mental health. These pathologies are rooted in the inability to reflect, weakness of will, and the denial of existential truth, and as a result, they require continuous mindfulness and self-improvement.

Therefore, *Sahīfa Sajjādīyya*, as an authentic and unique source in the Islamic tradition, provides spiritual characteristics of a healthy person that can complement modern theories of mental health and

spiritual therapy. Re-examining and using these characteristics in the interdisciplinary studies of religion, psychology, and religious anthropology can pave the way for the development of indigenous and practical theories in the field of spiritual and mental health and provide answers appropriate to contemporary needs. This research emphasizes the importance of addressing religious sources in strengthening a person's comprehensive health and improving the quality of individual and social life.

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From *Murāqaba* to Mindfulness: Comparative Perspectives on *Nahj al-Balāghah* and Contemporary Psychology

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Abstract

Murāqabah (self-vigilance) —the conscious guarding of the self and continuous supervision over one's thoughts, intentions, speech, and actions —is one of the foundational concepts of ethics, Islamic mysticism, and Islamic education, and has been widely discussed across all spiritual traditions and religions. In Islamic tradition,

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Murāqabah is intrinsically linked to the concept of God-consciousness and is presented as a multidimensional strategy for safeguarding physical health, purifying the soul, refining intentions, and fulfilling social responsibilities and rights. Despite scattered references to this concept in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, no systematic study has yet comprehensively examined the physical, spiritual, personal, and social dimensions of Murāqabah in the teachings of Imam ‘Alī (AS) and compared them with contemporary psychological theories. The study used a descriptive-analytical approach, examining Sermons, Letters, and Aphorisms in *Nahj al-Balāghah* via conceptual frequency and relevance criteria, and then comparing these findings with modern psychological theories. The results were grouped into four domains: (1) physical *Murāqaba*; preserving bodily faculties and health; (2) spiritual *Murāqaba*; controlling thoughts, intentions, and cultivating inner presence; (3) individual *Murāqaba*; time-management, self-assessment, and self-discipline; and (4) social *Murāqaba*; upholding others' rights and collective responsibility. Imam Ali's teachings on *Murāqaba*, anchored in piety, extend beyond secular meditation and psychological constructs such as mindfulness and self-regulation, offering a framework that integrates moral growth, well-being, and social responsibility. This highlights both the overlaps and unique aspects of *Nahj al-Balāghah* compared to modern psychology, and suggest that such a framework can guide self-care programs and interventions for spiritual elevation, resilience, and social cohesion.

Keywords: Murāqaba, Piety, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Mindfulness, Self-regulation, Contemporary Psychology, Islamic Ethics.

Introduction

Murāqaba means "Watching Over" or "Guarding." It refers to the deliberate supervision of one's inner and outer life: thoughts, intentions, words, and actions. In Islamic thought, it is tied to *piety* (God-consciousness) and the pursuit of moral integrity (Rāghib İsfahānī, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 361; Țabāṭabā'ī, 1974 AD/1393 AH: 18, 136). The Qur'ān uses derivatives of the root *Raqaba* many times. These words convey meanings such as vigilance, anticipation, protection, observance of others' rights, and piety (Q 59:18; 26:88–89; 2:225; 98:5; 18:110; 22:46; 7:179). These passages emphasize both divine supervision and the believer's responsibility to exercise foresight and moral self-monitoring¹. Prophetic traditions and sayings of the Imams (AS) describe *Murāqaba* as a discipline. It restrains the lower self (*Nafs Ammāra*) and opposes base desire (*Hawā'*). Imam Ali (AS) says: "Blessed is the one who attends to his Lord, examines his deeds, opposes his lower self, and regards his desire as falsehood." (Majlisī, 1983–1984 AD/1403 AH: 74, 423) Such statements highlight that *Murāqaba* is not only personal vigilance. It is also a divinely oriented practice of self-reform. *Nahj al-Balāghah* is a treasury of the teachings of Imam Ali. It offers a comprehensive view of *Murāqaba*.

1. The Qur'ān repeatedly emphasizes the necessity of inner watchfulness. Verses such as "*O! You who believe, be mindful of God, and let every soul consider what it has sent forth for tomorrow*" (Q 59:18) and "*He knows the treachery of the eyes and what the hearts conceal*" (Q 40:19) underscore that divine awareness penetrates both outward actions and hidden intentions. Within this framework, *Murāqaba* functions as a discipline that aligns human agency with divine omniscience.

This text presents *Murāqaba* as an integrated ethical-spiritual practice. It unites bodily preservation, spiritual purification, individual discipline, and social responsibility within one framework. It connects inner vigilance to outward conduct and community welfare (see, e.g., Sermons 176, 193; Aphorisms 289, 349; Letter 53).

1. Background

In Islamic ethical and mystical terminology, *Murāqaba* commonly signifies the presence of the heart and continuous attention to God, accompanied by an internal monitoring of thoughts, intentions, and actions to prevent deviation and sin (Majlisī, 1983–1984 AD/1403 AH: 70, 327). Some moralists treat *Murāqaba* as the prerequisite of self-assessment: "Prior to action, the seeker reflects on the consequences for both this world and the hereafter, evaluating each deed against the criterion of divine pleasure." (Narāqī, 1995 AD/1415 AH: 1, 69)

Early exemplars of this practice appear in the conduct of the *Ashāb al-Suffa* and the ascetics of the early centuries (Qushayrī, 1995 AD/1374 SH: 72–75; al-Kulaynī, 1987–1988 AD/1407 AH, vol. 3: 550). The ultimate aim of this orientation is nearness to God and the purification of the soul by which the human being is recognized as both Servant and Vicegerent of God. Principal practices include heartfelt and verbal remembrance, *Muḥāsabah*, seclusion for God, contemplative study of sacred verses, and presence of heart in worship (Ghazzālī, n.d.; Majlisī, 1983–1984 AD/1403 AH: 70, 225–235). In this orientation, impure thoughts are cleansed and replaced by remembrance of God and sanctified meanings. This vigilance is

patience, and compassion, while preventing moral negligence and heedlessness.¹

Scholarly attention to *Murāqaba* has often been indirect, as it appears within broader discussions of Islamic ethics, mysticism, or Qur'ānic spirituality. For instance, classical exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) and al-Rāghib al-Īsfahānī (d. 5th/11th century) emphasize its Quranic roots, interpreting vigilance as both divine supervision and human responsibility. Furthermore, later Sufi manuals, such as *al-Qushayrī*'s *Risāla* and *al-Ghazālī*'s *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, develop *Murāqaba* as a station on the spiritual path and closely link it to *Muḥāsaba*. These works, in turn, highlight its role in cultivating sincerity and restraining the lower self. In the modern context, Islamic studies address *Murāqaba* mainly in relation to Sufi practice or Quranic exegesis. However, a systematic analysis of its ethical, psychological, and social dimensions in *Nahj al-Balāghah* remains limited. While a few studies examine Imam Ali's teachings on self-control, they often treat the concept descriptively, rather than comparatively.

By contrast, many modern Western meditation forms derive from Eastern religious traditions, mainly Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism. In the twentieth century, these were adapted into secular programs focused on well-being, relaxation, and cognitive performance. These practices use

1. Working Definition. Drawing on lexical, devotional, and comparative sources, this study defines *Murāqaba* as a conscious, continuous process of monitoring thoughts, intentions, speech, and actions with the twin aims of gaining divine approval and preventing moral error—thus encompassing both the personal (self-regulation, purification) and the social (respect for others' rights, communal accountability).

breath awareness, body scanning, mantra repetition, and cognitive and emotional control to guide behavior. In contemporary psychology, several constructs share affinities with *Murāqaba*: "Mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003) emphasizes nonjudgmental awareness of the present moment; self-regulation theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981) explains how individuals monitor and adjust their behavior toward goals; and cognitive-behavioral therapy (Beck, 2011) uses thought monitoring and stimulus control." Broader models, such as Engel's (1977) biopsychosocial framework and prosocial development theories (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998), also reflect vigilance over body, mind, and social relations. Nevertheless, these approaches are largely secular and individualistic, often lacking the theological grounding, eschatological orientation, and communal responsibility stressed in Islam. For Imam Ali, vigilance is not just a strategy for psychological well-being, but also a holistic program for soul purification, refinement of intention, social justice, and accountability before God.

Recent psychological research has further highlighted the importance of attentional control, emotional regulation, and goal-directed behavior (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007; Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). However, despite these advances, the frameworks continue to overlook the transcendent and collective dimensions central to Islamic sources. Over the past decade, interdisciplinary studies have begun to bridge this gap by exploring how Islamic practices of self-discipline intersect with psychological well-being (e.g., Rothman & Coyle, 2018; Kaplick &

Skinner, 2017). Nevertheless, few works have systematically compared *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* with contemporary psychological theories. Therefore, this lacuna underscores the need for a study that not only analyzes the textual foundations of *Murāqaba* but also situates them within current debates on mindfulness, resilience, and moral psychology.

2. Methodology

This study is descriptive-analytical and employs a library-based methodology to extract and explicate the dimensions of *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and to compare them with contemporary psychological theories. The sermons, letters, and aphorisms of Imam Ali, as compiled by *Sharīf Raḍī* (d. 406/1015), were subjected to systematic analysis, with passages on *Murāqaba* identified according to two criteria: "Frequency and conceptual relevance. Data were gathered through searches in the Noor software complemented by repeated manual readings of the corpus, and the extracted material was organized into four primary domains: physical *Murāqaba* (protection of bodily health and faculties), spiritual *Murāqaba* (vigilance over thought, heart, and intention), individual *Murāqaba* (time management, self-regulation, and self-assessment), and social *Murāqaba* (protection of others' rights and collective interests)." Each domain was then mapped onto contemporary approaches in health, cognitive, and social psychology to delineate points of convergence and divergence and to highlight the distinctive contributions of Imam Ali's paradigm relative to secular models; the study's novelty lies in presenting an integrated framework grounded in authentic Islamic sources that align

with recent scientific findings on self-care and mental health.

3. Dimensions of Human *Murāqaba*

The analysis of *Nahj al-Balāghah* identified four interrelated domains of *Murāqaba*: "Physical, spiritual, individual, and social." Together, these domains form a comprehensive model that encompasses bodily health, spiritual purification, personal discipline, and communal responsibility.

3-1. Physical *Murāqaba*

In the Islamic perspective, the body and its faculties are a divine trust for which the human being is accountable. Physical health and the soundness of the senses are prerequisites for worship, moral action, and social duty. Imam Ali employs both the language of wonder at created structure and pragmatic admonitions to preserve bodily faculties. His perspective aligns with an ethical framework that treats sensory inputs and outputs as morally significant. It should be noted, however, that *Nahj al-Balāghah* is an ethical and spiritual manual rather than a compendium of medical prescriptions; specific clinical guidance falls within the realm of medical and juridical literature. Nonetheless, the Imam's exhortations imply practical rules—moderation in consumption, protection against injury, and attention to hygiene—that resonate with contemporary public-health principles (Letters 31, 53; Sermons 135, 222). In several aphorisms, Imam Ali warns against indulgence and negligence, urging believers to guard their senses, appetites, and physical strength. For example, he states: "The

eyes are the scouts of the heart; guard them from what is unlawful." (Aphorism 349) Such passages frame the body not as an autonomous entity but as a gateway to the soul, requiring vigilant supervision.

The main components of physical *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* include:

- Care for the eye (vision);
- Care for the ear (hearing and discernment of auditory input);
- Care for the tongue (ethical speech and restraint);
- Care for the abdomen and sexual organs (dietary moderation, chastity, and control of desires).

Each is treated in the text with both a physiological register (recognition of bodily fragility and function) and an ethical register (moral and communicative consequences of sensory use).

In Aphorism 8, Imam Ali strikingly recalls the delicate structure of key organs:

"Marvel at this human who sees by means of a bit of fat (*Shahm*), speaks by a piece of flesh (*Lahm*), hears by a bone, and breathes through a narrow aperture."

This statement underscores both the fragility of bodily organs and the ethical responsibility to preserve them. Later commentators expand on the biological references (ocular tissues, muscular structure of the tongue, ossicles of the ear, airways) to underline how fragile these systems are and why they require protection (Ibn Maytham, 2007 AD/1428 AH; Makarim Shirazi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 5, 45–48).

A. The Eye

The eye is identified as an extremely sensitive and frequently employed organ requiring vigilant care. Imam Ali's reference to *shahm* (transparent fatty tissue) emphasizes structural delicacy and suggests preventive measures against physical harm. Traditions attributed to the Imam—for example, in *Ghurar al-Hikam*—recommend washing hands before and after meals, noting its benefit for eyesight (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 2, 325–332). This hygienic emphasis broadly aligns with contemporary public health guidance (American Academy of Ophthalmology, 2022). From an ethical standpoint, the eye serves as a gateway between the body and the soul. Unchecked, impure gazes can corrupt spiritual well-being, whereas contemplative sight—such as gazing upon God's signs in nature—nurtures faith and inner tranquility. The Qur'ān explicitly enjoins believers to guard their sight (Q 24:30). Similarly, in Sermons 176 and 193, Imam Ali warns against illicit or intrusive looks, linking them to moral failings, and identifies the guarding of one's gaze as a defining trait of the pious (Makarim Shirazi, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 2, 158). Thus, the Imam's guidance concerning the eye encompasses two complementary dimensions: Physical preservation (preventing injury and avoiding harmful illumination or contaminants) and Spiritual-ethical safeguarding (disciplining visual intake to protect moral and spiritual integrity).

B. The Ear

The ear, described in *Nahj al-Balāghah* with the phrase "And he hears with

96 a bone," draws attention to the auditory ossicles—the smallest bones in the

body—and underscores both the structural delicacy of hearing and its moral significance. Imam Ali frames hearing as a dual faculty: physiologically fragile yet spiritually decisive. From a physical perspective, his words imply the need to protect the ear from harm, including noise-induced injury and infection, a concern echoed in modern medical guidance (WHO, 2008). From an ethical perspective, the ear serves as a conduit to the heart and intellect; what is heard shapes one's beliefs, emotions, and conduct. The Qur'ān warns against listening to falsehood (Q 31:6; 25:72) and praises those who incline their ears to truth (Q 39:18). In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the Imam cautions against gossip, slander, and vain talk (Sermons 153, 176; Aphorism 349), while urging attentiveness to wisdom and divine remembrance. Thus, *Murāqaba* of the ear entails both the preservation of auditory health and the ethical discipline of listening, summarized as an “ethics of listening” that includes awareness of the impact of hearing, avoidance of corruptive speech, and receptivity to beneficial counsel.

C. The Tongue

Physiologically, the tongue is a delicate muscular organ enabling speech, swallowing, and taste. In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, it is treated as the principal indicator of intellect and character. Commentators interpret the phrase "And he speaks with flesh" as a reference to the tongue's delicate muscular tissue, underscoring both its fragility and its immense influence (Makarim Shirazi, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 5, 47). **97**

From a health perspective, oral hygiene—including the use of the tooth brush—is linked to both physical well-being and spiritual benefit, facilitating Qur’ānic recitation and divine remembrance (Kulaynī, 1987–1988 AD/1407 AH: 6, 495; Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 2, 457–463). From an ethical perspective, the tongue is the mirror of one’s character. Imam Ali declares: "Man is hidden under his tongue" (Aphorism 148), and "The tongue of the wise is behind his heart, while the heart of the fool is before his tongue". (Aphorism 40) These sayings establish the moral primacy of measured speech, enjoining honesty, prudence, and silence when appropriate, while prohibiting lying, backbiting, and slander. Thus, *Murāqaba* of the tongue integrates oral health with the ethics of speech, linking bodily care to social harmony and personal integrity.

D. The Abdomen and Genital Organs

Dietary restraint and sexual self-control receive sustained emphasis in *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Imam Ali repeatedly warns against gluttony and excess, which weaken bodily strength and moral resolve, and treats uncontrolled sexual appetite as a source of social disorder and spiritual distraction (Sermon 176; Letter 31; Aphorism 47). He counsels moderation in eating, avoidance of harmful substances, and chastity, noting that even lawful food should be consumed with moderation (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 2 73–78, 164–168). In one aphorism,

98 Imam warns: "Guard your stomach and your private parts, for

calamity and troubles originate from them." (ibid: 1, 385) His counsel to avoid immediate over-drinking after meals and to adopt periodic fasting further exhibits an integrated ethic where bodily care serves spiritual ends (Hurr al-‘Āmilī, 1996 AD/1416 AH: 1, 354). These teachings align with contemporary findings that link diet and sexual health to psychological and somatic outcomes (WHO, 2008), although the Imam's concern is primarily framed in terms of moral discipline and divine accountability.

Physical *Murāqaba* combines ethical, spiritual, and physiological dimensions. It safeguards the body as a sacred trust, disciplines appetites to preserve moral clarity, and situates health within a broader vision of God-conscious living. In this way, the body's faculties are portrayed as entrusted responsibilities requiring vigilant care, such that *Murāqaba* encompasses both the preservation of health and the regulation of sensory and bodily functions, affirming that spiritual life is sustained through bodily discipline and that moral integrity is inseparable from physical stewardship.

3-2. Spiritual *Murāqaba*

The second dimension of *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* concerns vigilance over the inner life—the regulation of thoughts, intentions, and spiritual orientation. The Qur’ān presents inner vigilance and sincerity not as optional virtues but as conditions for the acceptance of faith and deeds (Q 59:18; 26:88–89; 2:225; 98:5; 18:110; 22:46; 7:179). Although the term **99**

"*Spiritual Murāqaba*" does not appear verbatim in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Imam Ali repeatedly emphasizes three essential practices: (1) self-assessment, (2) reflection on creation, (3) purification of intention.

A. Vigilance over Thought

Thought is the origin of intention and action. Imam Ali describes it as "a clear mirror that reflects truth" (Aphorism 349). Spiritual *Murāqaba*, therefore, requires monitoring cognitive inputs, avoiding corrupt or distracting ideas, and cultivating beneficial reflections. He warns that excessive preoccupation with sinful pleasures leads to entrapment (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 6, 345). Conversely, careful thought produces insight, clarity of vision, and motivation for righteous deeds (ibid: 1, 534; 2, 455).

Practical steps include:

- **Purifying inputs;** refraining from hearing or seeing falsehoods that taint the mind (Sermon 176);
- **Healthy intellectual nourishment;** seeking the company of the wise and engaging with knowledge (Letter 31);
- **Reflection on divine signs;** dedicating time to contemplate creation as a source of spiritual awakening (Sermon 185).

Thus, vigilance over thought is the first stage of spiritual *Murāqaba*, laying the foundation for a sound heart.

B. Vigilance over the Heart

The heart is portrayed in the Qur'ān and *Nahj al-Balāghah* as the **100** locus of faith, intention, and moral evaluation (Q 22:46; 7:179;

Aphorism 338). Spiritual *Murāqaba*, therefore, entails purifying the heart from vices such as envy, hypocrisy, and malice, while strengthening sincerity and avoiding hardness of the heart. Imam Ali counsels daily self-assessment (Letter 31), warns against hidden sins that nullify outwardly good deeds (Sermon 193), and emphasizes nourishing the heart with remembrance and supplication (Aphorism 222). He also cautions: "When you feel more secure in your soul than ever, be more cautious of its stratagems," (Aphorism 223) underscoring the need for vigilance even at moments of apparent spiritual strength. Commentators note that a "Sound Heart" is one emptied of grudges and duplicity, filled instead with remembrance of God and oriented toward the Hereafter (Majlisī, 1983–1984 AD/1403 AH: 67: 644; Makarem Shirazi, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 246).

C. Dhikr as the Instrument of Vigilance

Remembrance of God sustains vigilance at three interrelated levels: "Verbal recitation, heartfelt or inner remembrance, and practical remembrance." Lexically, *dhikr* denotes reminder, admonition, invocation, and learning, and its derivatives appear frequently in the Qur'ān (e.g., Q 33:41; 7:205; 41:4). In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, *dhikr* is described as illumination of the heart (Aphorism 222), a guard against forgetfulness, and the foundation of gratitude, repentance, and patience (Sermon 64; Aphorisms 82, 87).

Verbal remembrance is a recitation of the Qur'ān, supplications, and transmitted invocations. Verbal remembrance acts as a constant **101**

reminder, preventing negligence and preparing the heart for sincerity. Imam Ali calls repentance "The weapon of sinners and the greatest means of seeking the Lord's refuge". (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 1, 204; Aphorism 417)

Heartfelt remembrance is continuous remembrance without tongue movement, maintaining the presence of the heart. Imam Ali states: "The remembrance of God enlightens and awakens the heart" (Aphorism 222). This includes *Khawf* (fear of God) and *Rajā'* (hope in His mercy), which together form the two wings of spiritual progress (Sermon 114; Aphorisms 81, 237).

Practical remembrance is orienting behavior toward divine will through obedience and abstention from sin. Its pillars are repentance, patience, and gratitude. Imam Ali teaches: "Persist in patience, for it is the head of faith upon the body, and faith without patience is like a body without a head." (Aphorism 82) Gratitude, in turn, is expressed by using blessings in accordance with God's commands (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 1, 42).

Together, these three forms of remembrance create a cycle that cleanses, fortifies, and sustains spiritual growth, ensuring that vigilance is not only verbal or emotional but embodied in action.

Spiritual *Murāqaba* integrates cognitive vigilance, intentional purity, and divine consciousness. It transforms the believer's inner life into a disciplined space where thoughts are filtered, intentions purified, and presence with God sustained. While psychology affirms

the benefits of attentional control, *Nahj al-Balāghah* situates this discipline within a transcendent framework, where inner vigilance is both a path to self-mastery and a means of drawing nearer to God.

3-3. Individual *Murāqaba*

The third dimension of *Murāqaba* translates inner vigilance into disciplined personal conduct. It entails the systematic regulation of behavior, habits, and decision-making processes so that the rhythms of daily life remain in harmony with overarching moral and spiritual objectives. Functioning as an intermediary dimension, it links spiritual *Murāqaba*—concerned with inner purification—with social *Murāqaba*—oriented toward responsibility for others—thereby ensuring that ethical principles are not merely abstract ideals but are concretely embodied in lived practice. Imam Ali presents the self not as a passive entity but as a field of struggle, requiring constant evaluation and correction.

Key elements emphasized in *Nahj al-Balāghah* highlight several practices:

1) Self-Discipline

Imam Ali stresses the wise use of time and energy. In Aphorism 390, he counsels that "The believer's day is divided into three parts: "One for worship, one for livelihood, and one for permissible pleasures." This structured approach reflects a holistic vision of life, balancing spiritual devotion, worldly responsibility, and restorative leisure, and **103**

situates *Murāqaba* as a discipline that organizes the believer's daily rhythm in accordance with divine priorities; complementing this, Aphorism 73 underscores that one must first impose duties upon oneself before seeking to correct others, thereby linking self-discipline with moral authority. Finally, Aphorism 21 reminds believers to cherish opportunities before they vanish, likening them to fleeting "Spring Clouds," thus reinforcing the importance of vigilance over time as a sacred trust.

2) Order

Beyond personal regulation, Imam Ali emphasizes the structuring of affairs as the foundation of inner tranquility and communal stability. In his testament, he instructs: "I advise you to observe order in your affairs." (Letter 47) Here, order extends the principle of discipline outward; highlighting that spiritual integrity is inseparable from disciplined organization in both personal and social life.

3) Self-assessment

It means the regular reflection on one's deeds to identify faults and correct them. Imam Ali consistently urges believers to scrutinize their actions before they are judged by God. This principle transforms *Murāqaba* into an active practice of moral auditing, in which successes are reinforced and failures corrected. As he declares: "Whoever examines himself profits, and whoever is heedless of himself loses." (Aphorism 89)

applying physical and spiritual teachings in daily life. Through self-assessment, self-discipline, time management, and personal growth, the individual becomes balanced, purposeful, and prepared for social responsibilities. In the *Alawī* perspective, such a person not only benefits himself but also contributes to society. Mastery of thought, heart, and personal habits equips the believer to extend vigilance into the social sphere, where justice, respect for others' rights, and collective well-being are realized.

3-4. Social Murāqaba

The outward dimension of *Murāqaba* concerns vigilance in social interaction. For Imam Ali, moral responsibility extends beyond the self to the rights, dignity, and welfare of others. *Nahj al-Balāghah* presents this as indispensable for justice, solidarity, and communal trust. The Qur'ān likewise emphasizes justice and benevolence as foundations of social life (Q 2:83; 16:90). The Imam denounces oppression in all its forms and demands fairness and protection of public resources. He urges believers to avoid suspicion, gossip, and slander and praises modesty as a shield for faults. As a ruler, Imam Ali exemplified vigilance in leadership, combining compassion with strict accountability and transparency.

A) Justice and Governance

In his celebrated Letter 53 to *Mālik Ashtar*, Imam Ali instructs the governor to exercise constant vigilance in ruling justly: "Watch over **105**

yourself in what is hidden from the people, for the witness of the unseen is the judge over you". This passage illustrates that *Murāqaba* is foundational to ethical leadership, requiring rulers to act with integrity even when unobserved. Social *Murāqaba* thus functions as a safeguard against corruption and tyranny. In the same letter, Imam Ali commands filling the heart with mercy for the people and treating them with justice, reminding *Mālik* those subjects are either "Your brothers in religion or your equals in creation." He also warns against oppression, which he categorizes into unforgivable, punishable, and reparable forms (Sermon 214). His vigilance is exemplified in his strict protection of public funds: when his daughter borrowed a necklace from the treasury as a secured loan, he immediately ordered its return and reprimanded her (Hurr 'Āmilī, 1996 AD/1416 AH: 28, 292). In another case, when his brother *'Aqīl* requested an unjust share of the treasury, the Imam heated a piece of iron and brought it near his hand, warning that the fire of the Hereafter is far more severe (Sermon 224). Such episodes demonstrate that *Murāqaba* in leadership is not abstract piety but a lived ethic of justice, accountability, and incorruptibility.

B) Responsibility Toward Others

Beyond governance, Imam Ali counsels respect for kinship ties, neighbors, and parents. He emphasizes that the believer's vigilance must extend to interactions with family, neighbors, and society as a whole. He declares: "The best of people is the one who benefits others." (Āmidī, ibid: 2, 397) Here, *Murāqaba* is framed not only as inward discipline but also as outward service, ensuring that one's conduct contributes

positively to the community. In Letter 31, he exhorts his son *Hasan* to honor relatives, describing them as "Wings with which you fly, roots to which you return, and hands with which you strike." In his will, he emphasizes: "By God, take care of your neighbors! Your Prophet described them and constantly advised regarding them until we thought he would assign them a share of inheritance." (Letter 47) Such teachings highlight that social *Murāqaba* is not only personal but also communal and political in nature.

C) Safeguarding Dignity and Reputation

Imam Ali places a high value on personal and communal honor. He exhorts: "Guard yourself from situations of suspicion," (Aphorism 159) "Modesty veils defects" (Aphorism 223), and "Whoever conceals his secret holds his destiny." (Aphorism 162) He warns that safeguarding honor is as vital as protecting life and wealth, declaring: "It is a sign of nobility for one to sacrifice his life and wealth for the sake of his honor." (Āmidī, 1990 AD/1410 AH: 4, 242)

In his discourses, he outlines proactive and prohibitive measures for preserving dignity:

- Modesty as a cloak for faults (Aphorism 223);
- Discretion in keeping secrets (Aphorism 162);
- Forgiveness and forbearance as guardians of honor (Aphorism 211);
- Avoiding quarrels to protect dignity (Aphorism 354);
- Refraining from suspicion to maintain communal trust (Aphorism 159).

These principles establish the foundation of trust, cohesion, and well-being in society.

3-5. Comparative Analysis and Discussion

The fourfold framework of *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah*—physical, spiritual, individual, and social—offers both points of convergence with contemporary psychological theories and distinctive features that set it apart.

3-6. Physical Vigilance and the Health Psychology

Imam Ali's exhortations to guard the senses, the tongue, and bodily desires resonate with modern theories of stimulus management and self-regulation. Cognitive-behavioral models view avoidance of harmful stimuli as crucial in preventing maladaptive thoughts (Beck, 2011). Empirical Research on sensory regulation confirms that visual and auditory hygiene promotes concentration and lowers anxiety (Kaplan, 1989; Sweller, 1988; WHO, 2008). Similarly, studies on linguistic regulation suggest that careful control of language can diminish interpersonal conflict and foster trust (Pennebaker, 2011). Dietary moderation and sexual restraint are likewise recognized as vital components of physical and psychological well-being; what distinguishes Imam Ali's paradigm, however, is its theological orientation: "These practices are not merely instrumental strategies for health or psychological balance but are framed as obligations arising from the divine trust. In this respect, the domain of bodily regulation parallels health psychology and stimulus-control techniques in CBT, yet it departs from them in its underlying rationale. Whereas modern

108 approaches typically construe bodily care as a biomedical or

psychological necessity, the *Alawī* model situates it within a broader ethic of stewardship, in which the body is entrusted by God and must therefore be preserved through disciplined self-regulation."

3-7. Spiritual Vigilance and Cognitive–Affective Models

The triadic cycle of thought monitoring, heart purification, and remembrance parallels mindfulness and self-monitoring techniques in psychology. Mindfulness-based interventions encourage non-judgmental observation (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), whereas self-determination theory emphasizes intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Yet Imam Ali grounds these processes in piety, integrating psychological resilience with eschatological accountability. For instance, while mindfulness encourages nonjudgmental awareness, Imam Ali insists that awareness must be evaluative, distinguishing between pure and impure thoughts, and directed toward the remembrance of God. This combination of self-awareness, ethical evaluation, and theological orientation differentiates the Islamic model from secular counterparts; the balance of fear and hope functions similarly to expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), but with the distinctive aim of nearness to God. Thus, while the modern approach emphasizes psychological well-being and adaptive functioning, spiritual *Murāqaba* situates these within a teleological horizon oriented toward eternal salvation. Together, these teachings demonstrate that the essence of spiritual *Murāqaba* lies in regulating **109**

one's inner state before any outward act. Vigilance over thought and heart underpins all other pious actions, ensuring that intention and consciousness align with divine will.

3-8. Individual Vigilance and Theories of Self-Regulation

From a psychological perspective, practices such as daily self-assessment, disciplined time use, and structured living resemble strategies emphasized in self-regulation theory (Carver & Scheier, 1981) and are supported by research demonstrating that continuous evaluation of one's behavior enhances performance (Snyder, 1974), that self-discipline strongly predicts academic and professional achievement (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005), and that structured time management reduces stress while improving productivity (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990). Contemporary productivity frameworks echo these findings: "Covey's "Importance–Urgency Matrix" highlights the prioritization of significant but non-urgent tasks to maximize long-term impact (Covey, 1989: 151), while Newport's Deep Work underscores the value of structured scheduling and distraction-free focus for cognitive efficiency." (Newport, 2016: 44) These insights resonate with Imam Ali's emphasis on order, planning, and the optimal use of opportunities, most explicitly articulated in his final testament (Letter 47). His insistence on order anticipates modern evidence that structured daily practices enhance concentration and life satisfaction. Yet the *Alawī* framework diverges from secular models in its grounding principles: whereas psychology and productivity theory

frame self-regulation as a pragmatic strategy for performance and well-being, Imam Ali situates these practices within a spiritual ethic of stewardship, where the individual is not merely a manager of personal goals but a servant of God whose bodily and temporal order constitute obligations of divine accountability with eternal implications.

3-9. Social Vigilance and Prosocial Behavior

Modern psychology has extensively examined prosocial tendencies, empathic responsiveness, and cooperative behavior as central to social cohesion (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Research in this field demonstrates that empathy motivates altruistic action that prosocial norms sustain trust within groups, and that cooperative behavior enhances both individual well-being and collective stability. Theories of procedural justice emphasize that perceptions of fairness in decision-making processes increase legitimacy and voluntary compliance with authority (Tyler, 1990). Similarly, the concept of social capital highlights the role of trust, reciprocity, and civic engagement in strengthening institutional performance and societal resilience (Putnam, 2000). Complementary to these perspectives, models of social support emphasize the protective function of interpersonal networks, demonstrating that supportive relationships buffer stress and promote psychological well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Together, these frameworks converge on the idea that empathy, fairness, and trust are indispensable for sustaining both personal flourishing and effective governance.

Nahj al-Balāghah articulates parallel principles, but embeds them **111**

within a theological and eschatological framework. In Letter 53 to *Mālik Ashtar*, Imam Ali instructs the governor to "Watch over yourself in what is hidden from the people, for the witness of the unseen is the judge over you." He provides a normative charter for leadership, commanding rulers to exercise mercy, equity, and vigilance in the administration of public affairs. Sermon 214 categorizes forms of oppression, thereby offering taxonomy of injustice that anticipates modern concerns with systemic and interpersonal harm. His insistence on accountability in financial matters—illustrated in the incidents of the necklace and the heated iron—demonstrates that ethical governance requires transparency and restraint in the use of public resources. Moreover, his exhortations regarding kinship, neighbors, and parents (Letters 31, 47; Sermon 23) extend the ethic of responsibility beyond political institutions to the intimate fabric of communal life.

The analytical comparison reveals both convergence and divergence. On the one hand, modern psychology and Imam Ali alike underscore the indispensability of compassion, fairness, and communal trust for the flourishing of individuals and societies. On the other hand, the *Alawī* framework diverges in its ontological grounding: "Whereas psychology and social theory typically frame these virtues as pragmatic strategies for enhancing performance, legitimacy, or well-being, Imam Ali situates them within a spiritual ethic of stewardship. Protecting human dignity is not merely a social utility but

inseparable from the rights of God. Thus, while contemporary theories emphasize the instrumental benefits of prosociality and justice, *Nahj al-Balāghah* reorients these same practices toward eternal accountability and the cultivation of a God-centered moral order."

3-10. Toward an Integrative Model

Taken together, these comparisons reveal that the *Murāqaba* framework anticipates many constructs now studied in health, cognitive, and social psychology, yet it does not fragment the human being into discrete domains of body, mind, and society. Instead, Imam Ali's paradigm integrates these dimensions within a unified theological–ethical telos: "Piety and nearness." His model weaves physical discipline, cognitive vigilance, and social responsibility into a holistic fabric oriented toward God-consciousness. This integrative vision parallels contemporary psychological insights but transcends them by situating human flourishing within an eschatological horizon. In doing so, it provides conceptual resources for developing culturally grounded and spiritually sensitive intervention models that respect both the psychological and spiritual dimensions of human well-being.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study is textual and conceptual; it does not test the empirical impact of self-assessment practices on psychological outcomes. Future research could operationalize specific practices (e.g., heart-purification exercises, daily self-assessment, and remembrance routines) and examine their effects on resilience, stress reduction, and

social behavior through empirical studies.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that *Murāqaba* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* is a multidimensional practice encompassing physical, spiritual, individual, and social domains. While these domains parallel concepts in health psychology, mindfulness, self-regulation, and prosocial research, their distinctive character lies in their theological foundation in piety and their orientation toward accountability before God. Imam Ali's paradigm does not treat the body, mind, and society as separate spheres but as integrated components of a single theocentric model of human development. The findings of this study suggest that Imam Ali's framework of *Murāqaba* provides a holistic model of self-care, discipline, and social responsibility that can inform both personal development and institutional practice across diverse contexts. Practical applications include:

Clinical psychology and counseling: "Techniques such as daily self-assessment, vigilance over thoughts and desires, and *dhikr* may enrich therapeutic programs by strengthening self-regulation, reducing stress, and enhancing resilience."

Health promotion: "Emphasis on bodily vigilance, dietary moderation, and restraint of harmful impulses aligns with preventive health strategies and contributes to psychological and physical well-being."

Education and character formation: "Training in time management, order, and ethical speech can foster responsibility, moral integrity, and effective

Leadership and governance: "Imam Ali's insistence on justice, transparency, and stewardship of public trust anticipates modern concerns with ethical leadership and institutional accountability, offering insights applicable to both religious and secular societies."

Social cohesion: "The integrated ethic of empathy, fairness, and communal trust highlighted in *Nahj al-Balāghah* converges with modern psychological theories of prosocial behavior, while transcending them by grounding these values in a broader moral-spiritual horizon."

Taken together, these applications indicate that *Murāqaba* is not limited to a single cultural or religious setting but offers conceptual resources for developing intervention models that are both culturally sensitive and universally relevant. The novelty of this study lies in presenting a systematic comparison between Imam Ali's multidimensional model of *Murāqaba* and contemporary psychological theories, thereby offering a fresh interdisciplinary contribution.

Table 1. Comprehensive comparison of *Murāqaba* in Imam Ali's teachings and psychology

Dimension of Murāqaba	Definition / Core	Qur'anic-Hadith Evidence	Moral-Ethical Implication	Psychological Alignment
Physical Murāqaba	Safeguarding the senses and bodily powers (eyes, ears, tongue, stomach, genitals).	Q 24:30; Sermon 176; <i>Ghurar al-Hikam</i> 1585.	Self-control of senses and desires; foundation of spiritual and behavioral health.	Mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003); conscious attention to stimuli to reduce reactivity; ego depletion (Baumeister et al., 2007); Using

Dimension of Murāqaba	Definition / Core	Qur'anic–Hadith Evidence	Moral–Ethical Implication	Psychological Alignment
				willpower judiciously for sustained restraint.
Spiritual Murāqaba	Purification of thought and heart, sustained through dhikr.	Aphorism 349 & 222; Letter 31; Q 26:88–89; Q 13:28.	Purified mind, sound heart and constant remembrance of God.	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (Beck, 2011): restructuring negative automatic thoughts; Self-Determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000): Intrinsic motivation and quality of behavior; relaxation response (Kaplan, 1989): Reducing anxiety and inducing physiological calm.
Individual Murāqaba	Self-monitoring, personal discipline, time management and continuous growth.	Aphorism 89, 73, 357; Letter 31.	Turning values into a purposeful, balanced lifestyle.	Self-Monitoring (Snyder, 1974): Recording and evaluating behavior for positive change; Covey's Urgency-Importance Matrix (1989): Prioritizing tasks; Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2006): belief in lifelong learning.
Social Murāqaba	Observance of others' rights, justice, avoidance of oppression and corruption.	Q 2:83; Q 16:90; Letter 53 & Sermon 214.	Manifestation of values in social interactions and fair structures.	Social Capital (Putnam, 2000): Prosocial Development (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998): Empathy and cooperation as key foundations of social cohesion.

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The Genealogy of a Newly Discovered and Very Ancient Manuscript of *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*

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Abstract

The book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, authored by *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH), is one of the most important Shi'ite hadith collections, yet no detailed research has been conducted on its manuscripts. Recently, a manuscript of this book with the date 579 AH was acquired by the National Library of Iran. After the manuscript in the Waziri Library of Yazd, dated 574 AH, it is the oldest identified manuscript of this book. This article is a codicological study of this newly discovered

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manuscript. By examining the similarities and differences between this manuscript and other manuscripts of the book, it attempts to uncover the relationship between this manuscript and the Yazd manuscript. It is revealed that the genealogy of these two manuscripts is very close, to the point that both were apparently copied from the same exemplar or with at most one intermediary. This finding changes our perspective on the variant readings common to these two manuscripts. It has also become clear that this manuscript has significant similarities with the text of *al-Kāfi* that cannot be the result of a scribe's error or personal interpretation, and other manuscripts of *Faqīh* do not possess this feature. Therefore, it might raise the possibility that this manuscript represents a different recension of the existing text of *Faqīh*. It also appears that *Fayd Kāshānī*, unlike *Majlisī*, likely had access to more manuscripts of *Faqīh*, some of which shared a genealogy with this manuscript.

Keywords: *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, Manuscripts of *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, National Library of Iran, Newly Discovered Manuscripts, Manuscript Genealogy.

Introduction

The book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*,¹ written by *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Bābawayh*, known as *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH), is one of the

1. It is worth noting that by reflecting on the words of Shaykh Ṣadūq in the introduction (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 2), the phrase "Book" is part of the name of this book; therefore, it is more accurate to write the entire phrase "*Kitab Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*" in italics.

most important Shi'ite hadith books. In the hadith heritage of this school, it is considered the second most important book among the *al-Kutub al-Arba 'ah* (the Four Books), after *al-Kāfi*. The most important edition of this book published to date was prepared by Ali Akbar Ghaffari, a prominent contemporary editor, who, with great effort and alone, meticulously collated various manuscripts of the book, producing an edition that was the best of its time.

However, despite his valuable efforts, it must be noted that he had access to only a limited number of manuscripts, which were often very late. Moreover, his work was individual, and given the large number of manuscripts of this book, there is a need for a team effort to process them, as some contemporary researchers have also pointed out (e.g., Malekiyan, 2023 AD/1402 SH).

Therefore, it is quite clear that an institution must address this major shortcoming. By the grace of God, in recent years, the *Dār al-Hadith Institute* has undertaken this task and has been collecting various manuscripts of this book, selecting and editing them, and also researching the chain of transmission and the text of the hadiths with a team of manuscript and hadith researchers. In the course of this work, the collation of one of the oldest manuscripts of the book was assigned to the author of these lines. After some time, upon encountering meaningful similarities and differences between this manuscript and some other manuscripts of *Faqīh*, as well as with some other hadith books, it was decided to compile these points in a well-organized article.

The manuscript in question was copied in 579 AH in the handwriting of a person named "*Muhammad ibn Bundār ibn Muhammad*," who was also its owner. This manuscript has 96 folios and contains only the second of the four parts of the book, from the beginning of the book of *al-Zakāt* to just before the book of *al-Qadāyā wa al-Ahkām*. Each page of this manuscript has about 24 lines. From now on, in this article, this manuscript will be referred to by the symbol "Q" for brevity.

In the colophon of this manuscript ("Q" manuscript, p. 194)¹, the scribe stated that he copied it from an ancient manuscript dated 395 AH, which is a date very close to the author's death in 381 AH (e.g., *Najāshī*, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 389). This manuscript was recently sold from a private library to the National Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, where it is now preserved. It is worth mentioning that among the identified manuscripts, the "Q" manuscript is the oldest manuscript of *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, with only one manuscript being older: the manuscript from the Waziri Library of Yazd, which was copied in 574 AH (more details about the Yazd manuscript will be provided later).

1. The page numbering of the "Q" manuscript corresponds to the image folder of the National Library itself, in which the image of the back cover is also counted as two pages, and in reality, the first page of the manuscript is the third page in the numbering of this folder.

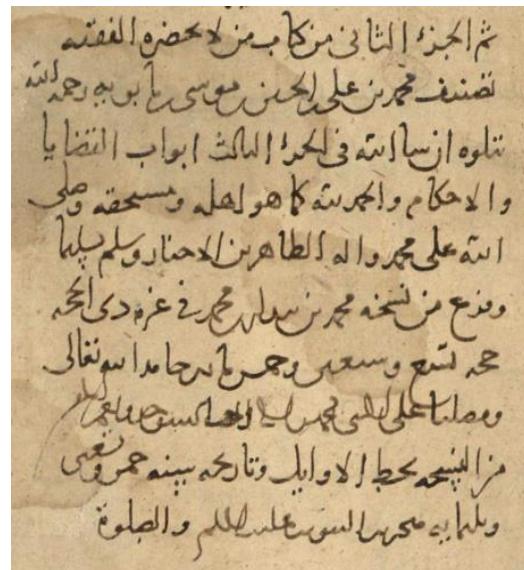


Image 1: The colophon of the newly discovered manuscript of *Man Lā Yāḥḍuruhū al-Faqīh*, transferred to the National Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran ("Q" manuscript, p. 194).

The present study aims to answer the question of what is the relationship of the "Q" manuscript with other manuscripts of *Faqīh* and also with the book *Kāfi* through codicological analysis of the "Q" manuscript.

Before we begin, it must be said that a point that codicologists generally state about the importance of manuscript genealogy is that it is one of the components used to identify the most original manuscript of a book and to use it as the base text for editing, while considering other manuscripts as supplementary and secondary (for example, Haroun, 1998: 37; Munjid, 1987: 13).

However, it seems that this genealogy can have other important 127

implications. For instance, in genealogy, it is not always necessary to discover that two manuscripts have a mother-child relationship. If it is revealed that both were copied from the same exemplar and belong to the same family, it can influence our view on their variant readings compared to other variant readings of the same book. In such a case, the importance of their shared variant reading with other manuscripts would be different.

To explain this, if we have, for example, several manuscripts of a book and we find that manuscript A and B were copied from the same exemplar, but manuscripts C, D, and so on were copied from other exemplars, a shared variant reading in manuscripts A and B does not have the same importance as a shared variant reading between manuscripts C and D. This is because the shared reading in A and B might be the result of a mistake in their parent manuscript, but in manuscripts C and D, which are not from the same family, the possibility of this mistake occurring in both of their parent manuscripts is less likely, and in some cases, it is non-existent.

Another benefit of this is that when it is proven that among the various manuscripts of a book, two manuscripts were copied from exactly the same exemplar, if we come across a word or phrase that would naturally be assumed to be a scribe's error or an interpolation based on their own judgment (e.g., if the original had no diacritical

from the same family also has the exact same reading, the possibility of a scribe's error is eliminated or greatly reduced, and the possibility of a personal interpretation is also reduced. Overall, this strengthens the probability that this reading was in the parent manuscript and was reflected in both descendant manuscripts. Of course, it is still possible that an error or interpretation occurred in the parent manuscript itself and was reflected in both of these manuscripts, but that is a different matter. However, this much becomes clear: the two descendant manuscripts did not make a mistake or an interpretation on their own. In the following, we will show a practical example of this benefit.

Another benefit of genealogy is a technical one that is not a scientific benefit like the previous ones. This benefit is accelerating the critique of existing editions. That is, when we know that among the manuscripts used by an editor for their research, two manuscripts are from the same family, but a very clear and meaningful variant reading (i.e., a variant reading that is not just the result of differences in diacritical dots or teeth of letters, but involves completely different words) is mentioned only in one of these two manuscripts, it is noteworthy to check the other manuscript from the same family to see if this variant reading was not present in it, or if it was present but was overlooked by the editors; and it happened to the author when editing the "*Q*" manuscript and collating it with the reported variant readings of "*T*."

1. Background

It should be noted that the "*Q*" manuscript is not mentioned in the catalogs of manuscripts (e.g., Sadraei Khoei et al., 2005 AD/1384 SH: 6, 19-20; Derayati, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 26, 42-43). Even in the last two years, some researchers were unaware of the "*Q*" manuscript when introducing the oldest manuscripts of the book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh* (e.g., Malekiyan, 2023 AD/1402 SH). The reason for this is clear: as mentioned, this manuscript is newly discovered and has recently been transferred from a private library to the National Library. Therefore, it is natural that no researcher was aware of its existence before.

Apart from the "*Q*" manuscript being newly discovered, we do not even see any research that has addressed the genealogy of the various manuscripts of *Faqīh* and compared them with each other. In most manuscript catalogs, only a brief introduction of the manuscripts of this book is provided, and no further explanation is given (Sadraei Khoei et al., 2005 AD/1384 SH: 6, 19-20; Derayati, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 26, 42-43); just as the breadth of the scope of these catalogs leaves no room for such precise and detailed studies. Yes, in some research, there has been a focus on a specific manuscript of *Faqīh* in the handwriting of *Mullā ‘Abdullāh Shūshtarī* and its numerous collations (Malekiyan, 2022 AD/1401 SH), but even in that, there is no mention of the genealogy of that manuscript and its relationship with other manuscripts; only the aspects of its importance are

"Q" manuscript and a comparison of its family line with another manuscript of this book, as well as a comparison of its text with some other hadith sources from the time of *Shaykh Șadıq* and some later sources.

2. The Close Kinship of Manuscript "Q" with Manuscript "T"

As mentioned, among the identified manuscripts, the only one older than the "*Q*" manuscript is the one in the Waziri Library of Yazd, which we will henceforth refer to with the symbol "*T*." The scribe of "*T*" stated in its colophon that he finished copying it in 574 AH. Part of the scribe's name has been erased, and only "*Abū al-Ridā Burayd(?) ibn*" is legible (manuscript "*T*", p. 454). Unfortunately, the scribe of "*T*", unlike the "*Q*" manuscript, did not report the date of the exemplar from which he copied.

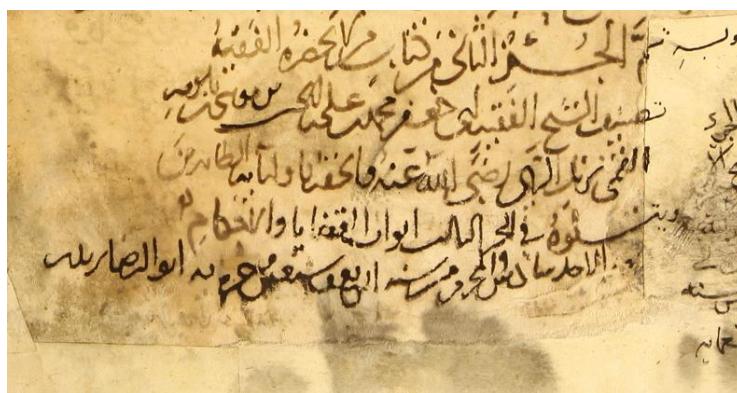


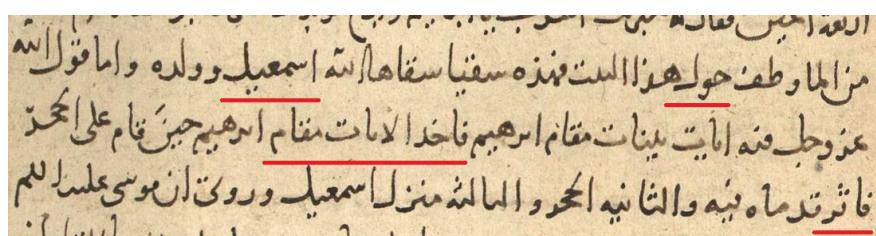
Image 2: The colophon of the oldest identified manuscript of *Man Lā Yahdūruhū al-Faqīh*, transferred to the Waziri Library of Yazd ("T" manuscript), p. 454 (Some words appear to have been darkened later by readers or subsequent owners due to fading).

During the collation of the "*Q*" manuscript and the entry of its variant readings into the *Dār al-Hadīth* project, the author gradually realized that

almost everywhere the "T" manuscript differs from the other manuscripts, the "Q" manuscript has exactly the same difference, and these two manuscripts share this commonality in most cases.

Here are some examples of the meaningful similarities between these two manuscripts:

- In the phrase: "... And go around this house, for this is a drink that God gave to *Ismā'īl* and his children. And as for the saying of God Almighty: "In it are clear signs, the station of Ibrahim," one of them is that when Ibrahim stood on the stone, his feet left an impression on it," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 234) in the "Q" and "T" manuscripts, it is: "... And go around this house, for this is a drink that God gave Ismail and his children. And as for the saying of God Almighty: "In it are clear signs, the station of Ibrahim," one of the signs is the station of Ibrahim, when he stood on the stone, his feet left an impression on it." This is while none of the other manuscripts have such a difference, and only in the margin of one of the manuscripts (the "Hā" manuscript) is "*Hawla*" instead of "*Bi Hādhā*" mentioned.



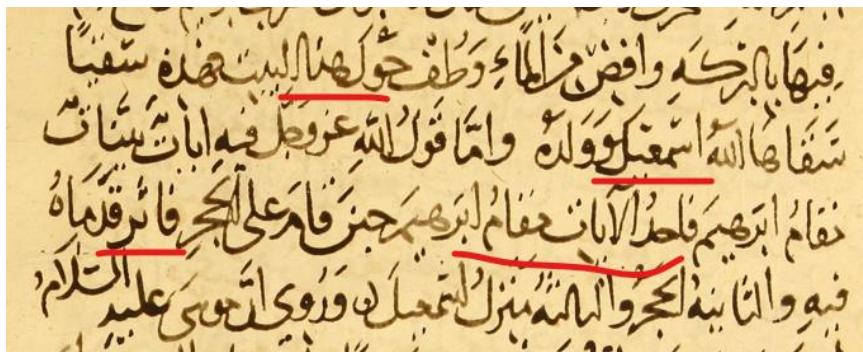


Image 4: "T" manuscript, p. 180

- In the phrase: "And beware of traveling in the early part of the night and travel in the late part of it, and beware of raising your voice in your journey," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 298) in all manuscripts, it is "from the early part of the night and travel in the late part of it"; but in "T" (p. 235) and "Q" (p. 111): "From the early part of the night until its end" is written.

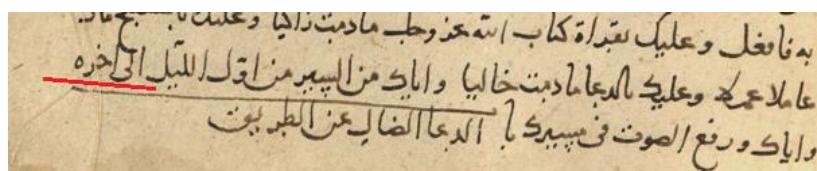


Image 5: "Q" manuscript, p. 111

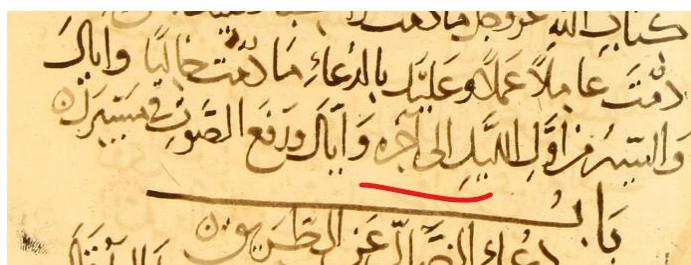


Image 6: "T" manuscript, p. 235

- In the phrase: "Whoever enters it is safe. He said: Whoever enters the Haram seeking refuge in it, he is safe." (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 251) Among the manuscripts, only in "T" (p. 195) and "Q" (p. 92), after "Amnan," there is this addition: "*al-Bayt wa al-Haram*." It is noteworthy that in the text of the same hadith in *al-Kāfi* also, the addition "*al-Bayt 'annī am al-Haram*" exists (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 112), which is very similar to these two manuscripts.

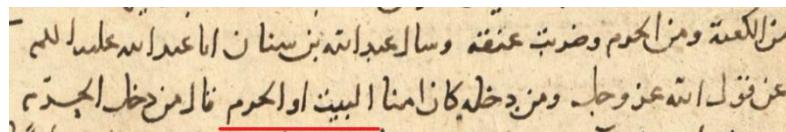


Image 7: "Q" manuscript, p. 92

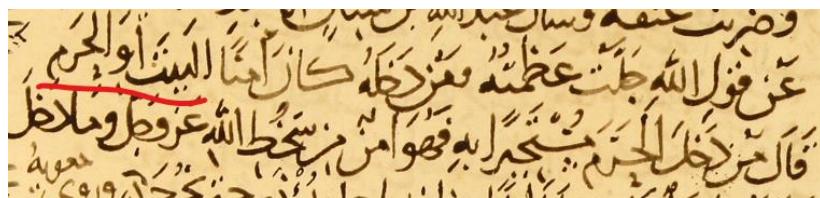


Image 8: "T" manuscript, p. 195

- In the phrase: "*Lā Yushrab wa lā Yusqā wa lā Yu'wī hattā Yakhruju min al-Haram*," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 205) in all manuscripts, "*Lā Yu'dhī*" (not to be harmed) is written instead of "*Lā Yu'wī*" (not to be sheltered); but in manuscripts "T" (p. 159), "Q" (p. 73), and Ghaffari's edition: "*Lā Yu'wī*" is written. Also, "*Lā Yushrab*" (not to be given to drink) does not exist in either

هذا العبد وسريره
كان معنا في الدنيا والآخرة وروى أن من حنا حنا يهتم به جمال الحمد لم يقمع عليه الحمد
ولابطعه ولا يُسقى ولابو واحتي بخرج من الحرم فنفأه عليه الحمد فما زلت الحمد في الحمد
لله رب العالمين

Image 9: "Q" manuscript, p. 73

أعنوا في الدنيا والآخرة وروى لأن من حنا يهتم بالحمد
الحمد يقمع عليه الحمد ولا يطعه ولا يستوي ولا ينفعه ولا ينفعه
فيفأه عليه الحمد فما زلت الحمد في الحرم لله رب العالمين

Image 10: "T" manuscript, p. 159

- In the phrase: "So when you throw the pebbles, God will write for you for every pebble ten good deeds for the rest of your life," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 203) only in manuscripts "T" (p. 157) and "Q" (p. 72), the phrase "Yaktub laka limā" is used instead of "Fīmā." However, since a few words before, the phrase "Kataba Allah Laka" is used, it seems that "Yaktub Laka" here is an error and cannot be correct. Given this shared reading in "T" and "Q," it becomes clear that this mistake was in the parent manuscript of these two and was transmitted from there to both of these manuscripts, and it was not a scribe's error on the part of the scribes of these two manuscripts.

و زيد العبر لغفرانة لك و اذا رميتك ايجار كتب الله لك بكل حصبة عشر
حسنات يكتب لك لما يستقل من عبادك فاذ ادحت هديتك او بخرت بدنك

Image 11: "Q" manuscript, p. 72

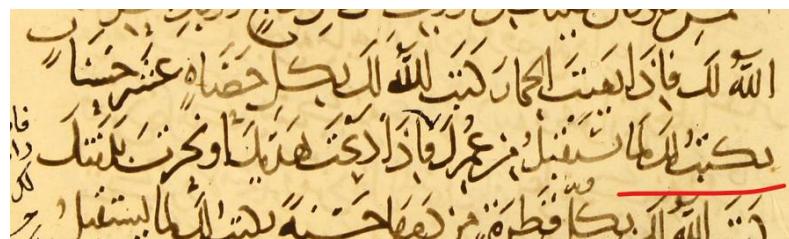


Image 12: "T" manuscript, p. 157

- In the phrase: "From then on, the believer who performs hajj to the House is granted the remission of sins for four months," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 198) among the manuscripts, only in "Q" (p. 70) and "T" (p. 153): "Misk" (remission) is missing. It is noteworthy that in the text of the same hadith in *Kāfi* also, "Remission" is missing (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 185).

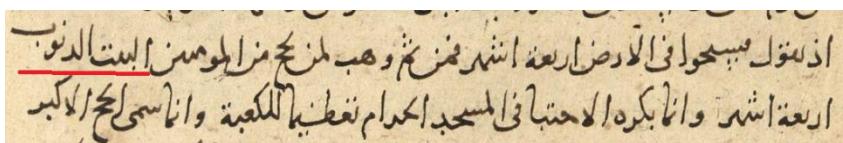


Image 13: "Q" manuscript, p. 70

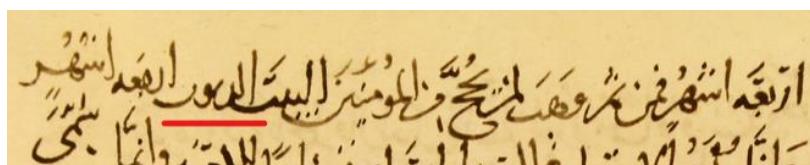


Image 14: "T" manuscript, p. 153

Fayd Kāshānī also explicitly stated here that in some manuscripts, "Remission" is not present, and he considers the phrase without it to be more correct (cf. *Fayd Kāshānī*, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 12, 205). If,

based on this evidence, we accept that this word was not really in *Sadūq*'s original book, and then this could be evidence of the greater accuracy of manuscripts "Q" and "T" compared to other manuscripts of the book.

Here, one of the benefits of genealogy mentioned in the introduction becomes clear. That is, given the various pieces of evidence that were mentioned and will be mentioned later, we know that these two manuscripts "Q" and "T" are from the same family. We also see that the word "remission" is missing in both of them, which weakens the possibility that this word might have been accidentally omitted in the "Q" manuscript.

- In the phrase: "Indeed, Adam is the one who built the House and laid its foundation," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 235) only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 67) and "T" (p. 181), the word "al-Banīh" is used instead of "al-Bayt."

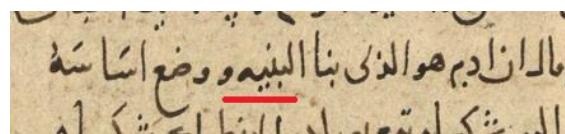


Image 15: "Q" manuscript, p. 67

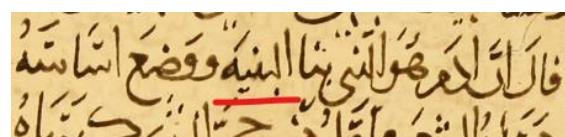


Image 16: "T" manuscript, p. 181

- In the phrase: "Cut what has entered upon you and do not cut what 137

has not entered your house upon you," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 255) in all manuscripts, it is "‘Alayk (upon you)." But only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 94) and "T" (p. 197), the word "‘Alayh (upon him)" is used, and among other manuscripts, only in the margin of "T" is "‘Alayh (upon him)" also mentioned.

- In the phrase: "It is that it is not to be milked and not to be ridden except from the left side," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 291) in most manuscripts, it is either only "Lā Tahlab wa lā Tarkab (Not to be milked and not to be ridden)," or it is "Lā Tahlab wa lā Tahmal (not to be milked and not to be burdened)." But only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 108) and "T" (p. 229), it is: "not to be milked, not to be ridden, and not to be burdened."

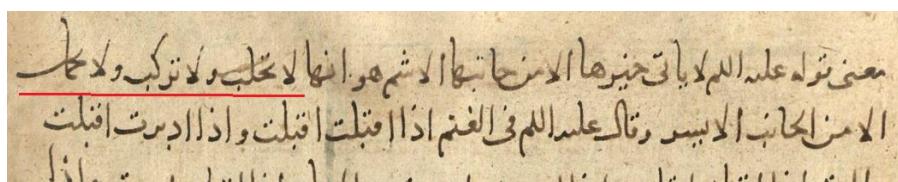
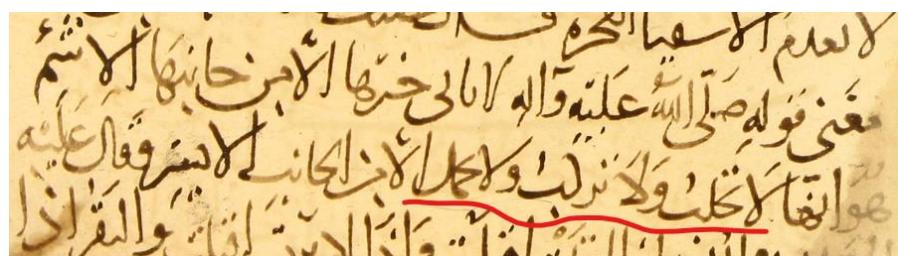


Image 17: "Q" manuscript, p. 108



- In the phrase: "Set on the level of perfection and the gathering of greatness and majesty, God created it before the expanse," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 250) only in manuscripts "T" (p. 194) and "Q" (p. 92), the word "*al-Jalāl* (Majesty)" is missing.
- In the phrase: "God will write for him the reward of what is between his walking barefoot and wearing shoes" (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 218), only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 78) and "T" (p. 167), the word "God" is missing. In the "T" manuscript, "God" was initially written and then crossed out, which clearly shows that the scribe did not omit this word but rather removed it because it was not in the original manuscript.
- In the phrase: "Then go out to it and brand it," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 325) in all manuscripts, it is "*Ilayhā* (To it)," but only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 120) and "T" (p. 251): "*‘Alayhā* (Upon it)" is written.
- In the phrase: "Indeed, when I mention you, I mention your grandfather, the Messenger of God (PBUH)," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 275) only in manuscripts "T" (p. 217) and "Q" (p. 102) is "*Jaddukum* (your grandfather)" missing.
- In the phrase: "From *Abī ‘Abdillāh* (AS) who said: He used to say: "Accompany someone by whom you are adorned" (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 278), in all manuscripts, it is "*Yaqūl* (he says)." But only in "T" (p. 219) and "Q" (p. 103), it is "*Yuqāl* (it is said)." 139

- In the phrase: "If you argue once falsely, you owe the blood of a sheep; and if you argue twice falsely, you owe the blood of a cow; and if you argue three times falsely, you owe a camel," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 329) unlike other manuscripts where "Falsely" is mentioned all three times, in both manuscripts "T" (p. 255) and "Q" (p. 123), "Kādhiban (falsely)" is missing the third time. This is also one of the points of agreement mentioned in the introduction. Here, the author, upon not seeing "Falsely" in "Q," initially thought it was probably a scribe's error, but when he saw that it was exactly the same in the "T" manuscript, he realized that it could not be a mistake. However, the readers of the "T" manuscript later thought it was an omission and noted it in the margin.

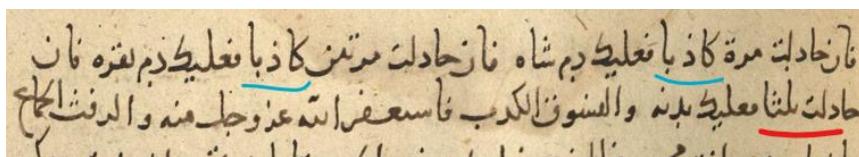
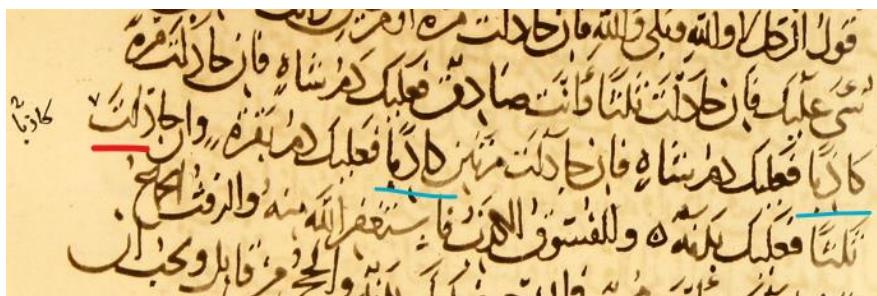


Image 19: "Q" manuscript, p. 123



- In the phrase: "I said to *Abī 'Abdillāh* (AS) about a man in a state of ihram who ties a money belt around his waist. He said: Yes, and what is good after his expenditure?" (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 346) among the manuscripts, only in "*Q*" (p. 127) and "*T*" (p. 263) is "He ties a money belt around his waist," and also only in these two manuscripts is "(*An*) about" missing.

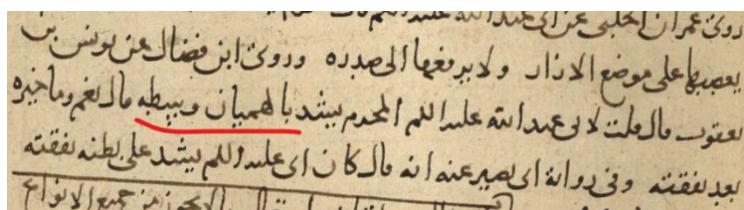


Image 21: "*Q*" manuscript, p. 127

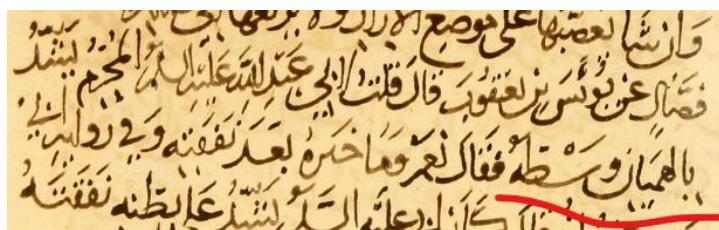


Image 22: "*T*" manuscript, p. 263

Here it must be noted that the examples presented in this article focus more on meaningful similarities and avoid mentioning cases where the variant reading is only due to a change in a dot or a tooth of a letter, to be more tangible for the reader. Although it must be known that cases where manuscripts "*Q*" and "*T*" have shared minor variant readings (i.e., only with a change in a dot or a tooth, etc.) are also very numerous, and when the number of these minor shared readings 141

becomes large, it can naturally serve as another piece of evidence for the author's claim (i.e., an evidence other than meaningful similarities) that these two manuscripts are from the same family.

3. The Relationship of "Q" with the Text of *al-Kāftī*

We know that a number of hadiths are found in common in *Kulaynī's* *al-Kāftī* and *Ṣadūq's* *Man Lā Yahduru hū al-Faqīh*. However, it is noteworthy that among the various manuscripts of *Faqīh*, the "Q" manuscript seems to have multiple and meaningful similarities with the text of *al-Kāftī*. Here are some examples of this:

- In the phrase: "al-Mut'ah, by God, is better, and the Quran was revealed with it, and the Sunnah has been established with it until the Resurrection," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 315) only in manuscript "Q" (p. 117) and *al-Kāftī* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 276) is "until the Resurrection" missing.
- In the phrase: "He said: "Indeed, God Almighty has made it a sign, so it should not be taken away," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 244) among the manuscripts, only manuscript "Q" (p. 88) has a "Qāla (said)" after "Nādi (call out)," and exactly in the text of this hadith in *al-Kāftī* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 106), there is the same "Nādi." It should be known that in manuscript "T" (p. 187) as well, "Nādi" is missing. It is interesting that Ghaffari, in his footnote to this hadith in *Faqīh*, given that he did not have access to the "Q" manuscript, stated: "The commentators have gone to great lengths to

explain the meaning of this phrase, and it seems that there is an omission in the phrase; but in the phrase of *al-Kāft*, "Nādi" exists, in which case the meaning of the phrase is sound without any difficulty." (e.g., Ghaffari, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 244, footnote 1)

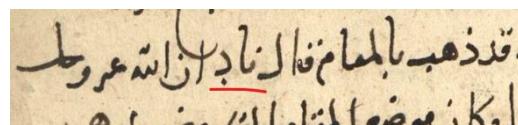


Image 23: "Q" manuscript, p. 88

- In the phrase: "Bad luck for the traveler on his journey is in six things" (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 268), in all manuscripts of *Faqīh*, it is "Six," and only in manuscript "Q" (p. 98) is it "Five" and in "T" (p. 210): "Five things." In *al-Mahāsin* (Barqī, 1951 AD/1371 AH: 2, 348), it is "Five things," and in *al-Kāft* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 15, 704), it is also "Five things."

But what is interesting is that *Shaykh Şadūq* himself mentioned this hadith in *al-Khisal* with the phrase "Five" (Şadūq, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 272), and more importantly, as the son of *Fayd Kāshānī* noted in the margin of *al-Wāft* (Fayd Kāshānī, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 12, 357), *Shaykh Şadūq* mentioned it under the chapter "Five Qualities," which eliminates the possibility that something other than "Five" was in this hadith and a mistake occurred in the manuscripts of *al-Khisal*. Furthermore, in the continuation of the hadith where the several items of bad luck are counted, the "Q" manuscript is also similar to *al-Kāft* in another phrase. In all manuscripts of *al-Faqīh*, "the crow that caws

from his right and the dog that wags its tail" is written, but in the "Q" manuscript, like *al-Kāfi*, the phrase the "*al-Kalb* (Dog)" is not mentioned, in which case the "*al-Nāshir* (Wagging)" becomes an adjective for the crow, and the number of items of bad luck is reduced.

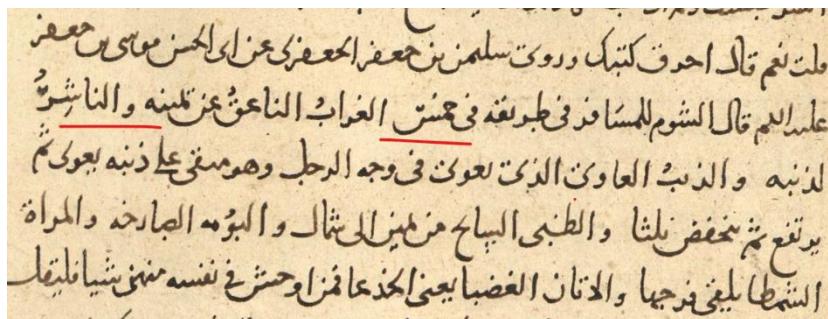


Image 24: "Q" manuscript, p. 98

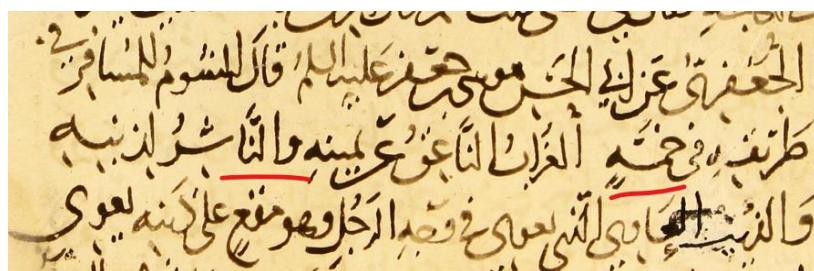


Image 25: "T" manuscript, p. 210

- In the phrase: "O! My son, travel with your sword and your shoe and your turban and your ropes and your waterskin and your threads" (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 282-283), in all manuscripts, it is "*Hibālik* (your ropes)"; but in manuscript "Q" (p. 104) and *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 15, 680) and *al-Mahāsin* (Barqī, 1951 AD/1371 SH: 2, 360): "*Khabā'ik* (your tent)" is written (the scribe usually did not write *Hamzas*). Even in the "T" manuscript, it is "*Hablik* (your rope)" (p. 233).

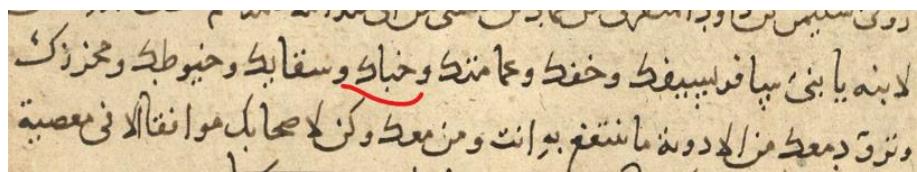


Image 26: "Q" manuscript, p. 104

- In the phrase: "He said: "Give charity for every day with a mud of wheat or with a *Mudd* of dates," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 154) in manuscript "Q" and *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 7, 586), instead of "With a *Mudd* of dates," the "Price (*Thaman*) of a mud" is written. In "T" (p. 119), which is the closest manuscript to "Q," the "Price of a mud" is also written. Of course, to be fair, "Dates (*Tamar*)" and "Price (*Thaman*)" are written very similarly in manuscripts, and their conversion to each other is completely natural. However, in any case, "Q" is still closer to *al-Kāfi* than "T".
- In the phrase: "Narrated by *Khālid ibn Abī al-‘Alā’ al-Khaffāf" (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 334), in all manuscripts, it is " *Khālid ibn Abī al-‘Alā’* "; but only in manuscripts "T" (p. 257), "Q" (p. 124), and *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 392): " *Khālid Abī al-‘Alā’* " is written. On the other hand, *Rijālī* sources also confirm this reading (without "Ibn") in the biography of *Khālid* (e.g., Najāshī, 1986 AD/1365 SH: 151; Tūsī, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 133, 198).*

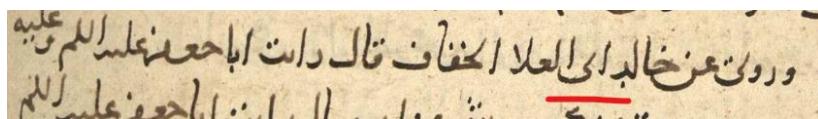


Image 27: "Q" manuscript, p. 124

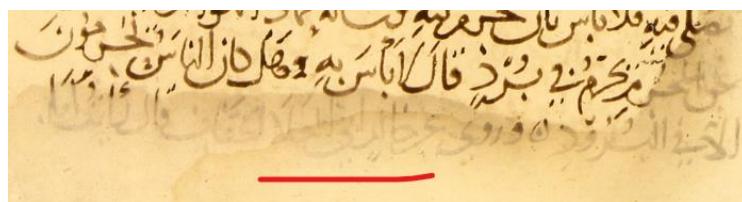


Image 28: "T" manuscript, p. 257 (fading due to moisture at the bottom of the pages)

- In the phrase: "God will forgive all his sins and take care of the worries of this world and the hereafter," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 204) the word "All" is not in *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 150), and among the manuscripts of *al-Faqīh*, it is not in manuscript "Q."
- In the phrase: "He said: "If you do that, then be certain of a great amount of wealth," (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 218) the word "Dhālika (that)" is not in any of the manuscripts of *al-Faqīh* except for "Q"; just as it is not in *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 181).
- Also, earlier, three other examples were mentioned (i.e., the variant readings of "Remission of sins," the "House or the Haram," and "Do not befriend") in which "Q" alone or along with "T," contrary to most other manuscripts of *al-Faqīh*, had a meaningful similarity with *al-Kāfi*.

At the end of this section, it is also necessary to point out that the examples mentioned were only those in which a completely meaningful similarity was seen, and many other smaller similarities

146 were not mentioned, such as the following similarities:

- In the phrase: "I entered with my brothers (*Ikhwānī*) to *Abī 'Abdillāh* (AS) and we said to him," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 317) only in manuscript "Q" (p. 117) and *al-Kāfi* (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 279) is the word "*Ikhwātī*" used instead of "*Ikhwānī*" (in a different form). It is interesting, however, that in the Dar al-Hadith edition, despite the numerous manuscripts of *al-Kāfi*, no variant reading—however minor—for this word is mentioned here (Kulaynī, 2008 AD/1429 AH: 8, 279). As was mentioned earlier about "T," these minor similarities are not, by themselves, important pieces of evidence; but when their number becomes large and they are combined with the tangible similarities that were mentioned at the beginning, they can give us more certainty about the meaningfulness of these similarities.

In analyzing the reason for these similarities between the "Q" manuscript and *al-Kāfi*, it must be said that the possibility that the scribe compared the text of the hadiths with the hadiths of *al-Kāfi* and corrected them using *al-Kāfi* is non-existent. This is because the scribe copied very hastily and in some cases did not even notice the misplacement of folios in the original manuscript and the incompatibility of the continuation of the text with the previous lines (for example, see: "Q" manuscript, p. 103, image no. 29). On the other hand, he was not a scholar, as his gross grammatical errors and obvious mistakes in reading the parent manuscript are a testament to

this, which the author of these lines has evaluated in detail in another article—which has not yet been published—and here he only mentions it briefly.

Perhaps this possibility comes to mind: that this manuscript was a separate recension of *al-Faqīh* in which *Shaykh Ṣadūq* compared the text of the hadiths with *al-Kāfi* or the sources of *al-Kāfi* and made some changes—albeit very minor—in *Faqīh*. However, it seems unlikely that the volume of evidence mentioned would be able to prove such a thing. In addition, there is evidence to the contrary: as was mentioned earlier, it was proven that the "T" manuscript has a close kinship with the "Q" manuscript. Therefore, since in some of the similarities between "Q" and *al-Kāfi*, the "T" manuscript does not have that degree of similarity with *al-Kāfi*, this strengthens the idea that in some of the cases mentioned, the similarity between the "Q" manuscript and *al-Kāfi* might have been the result of a scribe's error in "Q" or some other action.

Of course, it must be said again that in many cases, the "Q" manuscript along with the "T" manuscript have a meaningful similarity with *al-Kāfi* that is not negligible and requires a separate study. In addition, in some cases where the "Q" manuscript was similar to *al-Kāfi* but the "T" manuscript did not have that similarity, the possibility of an error or omission in the "T" manuscript is completely serious; for example, the existence of "call out" in the "Q"

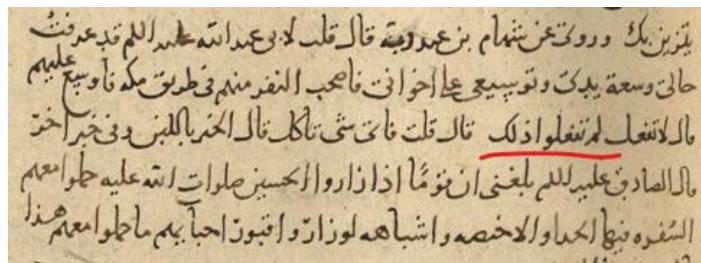


Image 29: "Q" manuscript, p. 103.

This picture is an example of the misplacement and mixing of two different hadiths in the scribe's copy. The phrases before the red line belong to (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 278) and the phrases above and after the red line belong to another hadith three pages later! (i.e., Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 281), and it seems that the reason for this was the misplacement of some folios in the parent manuscript, which the scribe of the "Q" manuscript did not notice at all, resulting in this strange mix-up.

4. The Similarity of "Q" with *al-Wāfi*

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that in some cases, significant similarities are also seen between "Q" and *Fayd Kāshānī*'s *al-Wāfi*. The author initially thought that these similarities indicated a meaningful closeness of *al-Wāfi* with the "Q" manuscript, but after examination, it became clear that although this is the case in some instances, in many of them, this similarity is due to the same similarity of the "Q" manuscript with *al-Kāfi* (for example, see: *Fayd Kāshānī*, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 12, 385, 433, and 435), and the similarity of *al-Wāfi* with the "Q" manuscript is due to the

dependence of *al-Wāfi* on *al-Kāfi*.

To explain this, in many cases where *Fayd Kāshānī* quotes the same hadith from *al-Kāfi*, *al-Faqīh*, and *al-Tahdhīb*, or two of these three books together, he reports no differences (for example, see: *Fayd Kāshānī*, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 10, 33; 11, 52, 59; 12, 84; 14, 1147). However, we know that it is impossible for there to be no difference in a single dot or tooth of a letter in any of the words of the hadith in any of these books. This shows that *Fayd* usually based his work on one text (apparently the text of *al-Kāfi*) and only pointed out differences in its text with *al-Faqīh* or *al-Tahdhīb* where there was a clear difference in meaning. Therefore, it is clear that *Fayd*'s report in *al-Wāfi* cannot necessarily be considered a variant reading in *al-Faqīh*, unless he explicitly states that the text of *al-Faqīh* is different.

However, it must be said that in some examples, the similarity of *al-Wāfi* with "Q" is not due to the dependence of *al-Wāfi* on the text of *al-Kāfi*; for example, in the phrase: "When Moses (AS) performed hajj, Gabriel (AS) came down to him and said to him," (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 235) only in manuscripts "Q" (p. 67), "T" (p. 180), and *al-Wāfi* (*Fayd Kāshānī*, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 12, 244), the word "'Alayh (to him)" is missing. *Fayd* only quoted this hadith from *al-Faqīh*, and it is not in *al-Kāfi* at all, so we cannot assume that *Fayd* brought the text of the hadith in the same way as "Q" because of his **150** reliance on the text of *al-Kāfi*.

Another point worth mentioning is that some evidence shows that *Fayd*—unlike *Majlisī* the father—had access to manuscripts whose genealogy was close to "Q"; for example, the example of "*Misk al-Dhanūb* (remission of sins)" that was explained earlier. *Majlisī* here only points out that this is a scribe's error and makes no mention of the existence of such a variant reading, which indicates his lack of access to manuscripts "Q" and "T" or their family members (*Majlisī*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 4, 31; idem, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 7, 45). But *Fayd* explicitly states that in some manuscripts of *al-Faqīh*, "remission" is missing (as mentioned earlier).

Another example of this kind is in the phrase: "For everything there is a fruit, and the fruit of kindness is hastening it." (Şadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 2, 57) In the "Q" manuscript (p. 21) and also the "T" manuscript (p. 37), instead of "*Ta'jīlah* (hastening it)," the phrase "*Ta'jīlah al-Sarāh* (hastening the release)" is written. But *Majlisī* did not see such a difference in his manuscripts of *al-Faqīh* at all and only considered what was in *Faqīh* to be "hastening it" (*Majlisī*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 3, 174); but *Fayd* saw "Hastening the release" in some manuscripts of *Faqīh* (*Fayd Kāshānī*, 1986 AD/1406 AH: 10, 458).

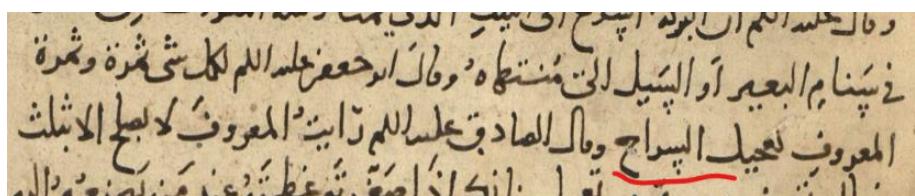


Image 30: "Q" manuscript, p. 21.

Conclusion

The National Library manuscript (the "Q" manuscript) has meaningful similarities with the text of the book *al-Kāfi* that are not seen in any of the other manuscripts, and only sometimes does the Waziri Library manuscript of Yazd ("T") share these similarities with *al-Kāfi*. In analyzing the source of these similarities, it must be said that the possibility that the scribe of "Q" compared the hadiths of *Faqīh* in this manuscript with the similar hadiths in *al-Kāfi* and corrected and changed them using *al-Kāfi* is completely out of the question. This is because the scribe did not have much knowledge and was also hasty in his copying, and given these pieces of evidence, it is clear that he had neither the patience, the time, nor the ability to collate this manuscript with the similar hadiths found in *al-Kāfi*. However, the possibility of whether this manuscript was copied from a different recension of *Faqīh*, that is, a recension in which *Shaykh Sadūq*, using *al-Kāfi* or the sources of *al-Kāfi*, made changes—albeit very minor—in *Faqīh*, is a hypothesis worthy of investigation that must be addressed elsewhere.

It also became clear that *Fayd Kāshānī*—unlike *Allamah Muhammad Taqī Majlisī*—had access to manuscripts of *Faqīh* whose genealogy is closer to this National Library manuscript. It also became clear that the large number of meaningful similarities between the National Library manuscript and the Yazd manuscript indicates that the genealogy of these two manuscripts is much closer to each other

compared to other manuscripts of the book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*. It is even likely that both of them were copied from the same parent manuscript or (with a weaker probability) one more intermediary. This can be reflected in the variant readings of the book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*. That is, when we see that these two manuscripts have the same reading among the numerous manuscripts of this book, its value is different from when two other manuscripts of this book that have two different parent manuscripts have the exact same reading. This is because manuscripts "Q" and "T" were copied from exactly one parent, but those two other manuscripts have two different parents, and when we see that they both have the same reading, it can, in some ways, create more certainty. However, this point varies in different cases.

Thanks and Appreciation

The author is extremely grateful to the *Dār al-Hadīth* Institute. This institute has undertaken the great project of editing the book *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, which, God willing, will soon be published. A part of the research costs for this article was also, in fact, provided by this very institute. It is also appropriate to thank this institute and especially Mr. Soleimani Ashtiyani for making the images of the manuscripts available. It is also necessary to point out here that in the editing of this book, after extensive review, ten manuscripts were selected from among hundreds and used as the basis for the work, and

the other manuscripts were set aside for various reasons, including: being of very poor quality, being very late, their genealogy leading back to these ten manuscripts, etc. Since the editing of this book is still in progress, the author is not allowed to provide more details and must suffice with this brief mention here.

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The Scope of Responsibility in Social Education Based on Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*

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Abstract

One of the most crucial pillars of social education is the concept of responsibility. This subject has received significant attention in narrative teachings. Social responsibility, as a key dimension of social education, entails an individual's commitment to their surrounding environment and can be considered an edifying value that counteracts self-centered tendencies such as hedonism and the pursuit of power. The concept of social responsibility encompasses both attention to the

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welfare of others and the pursuit of personal goals without disregarding or transgressing the legitimate expectations of others. This research seeks to utilize the teachings of Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, as one of the authoritative hadith sources, employing a descriptive-analytical method to examine the components of social responsibility from the perspective of Imam Ali (AS). In this study, the components of social responsibility refer to a set of interconnected elements that, through dynamic interaction with one another, guarantee the fulfillment of an individual's responsibility towards society. The findings of this research indicate that Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* refers to components of social responsibility, including awareness of one's time, benevolence, wisdom in speech, the correlation between capability and accepting responsibility, charitable giving, forgiveness, and the social division of labor. This letter addresses individuals' responsibilities in interactions with friends, family, relatives, and opponents, revealing important aspects of the nature of responsible relationships.

Keywords: Social Responsibility, Social Education, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

1. Introduction

Human social existence requires the development of social skills, primarily through learning and socialization processes. Central to this

awareness of others' needs and expectations—forming the basis of social responsibility (Talebi and Bahripour, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 38). Social interaction imposes obligations that do not arise in isolation, making responsibility the core of social education. This study argues that social responsibility forms the link between individual aspirations and societal traditions, impacting both historical continuity and future relationships in any society (Bagheri, 2000 AD/1379 SH: 385). Thus, discussing social responsibility is fundamentally about how individuals relate to the past, present, and future of their societies.

It is noteworthy that in a society, each individual, in addition to fulfilling their own needs, also has a role in meeting the needs of others. In other words, each individual simultaneously contributes to the favorable advancement of their own life and the lives of others, or rather, to the favorable advancement of a society. This role-playing creates a sense of responsibility in the individual, highlighting the necessity of focusing on responsibility within the ongoing educational process. The most general definition of responsibility is the ability of a person to fulfill the commitments they have undertaken (Habibnia et al., 2015 AD/1394 SH: 3).

In the Islamic perspective, special attention is also paid to the issue of responsibility. Imam Ali (AS) stated: "Fear God regarding His servants and His lands, for you, is accountable even for the land and the animals." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 167) According to the Islamic view, humans are responsible not only to God and themselves, but also to society and their surrounding environment. The Islamic

worldview instills a sense of responsibility in humans. It is for this reason that it gives spirit, meaning, and purpose to life and existence, consequently placing humans on a path of perfection that does not stop at any defined limit. It also offers humans vitality and encouragement, and thus it is the only worldview in which the commitment and responsibility of individuals towards one another find meaning and significance (Motahari, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 89). Given the importance of responsibility in social education, this research, focusing on Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, seeks to answer the question: 'How is the scope of responsibility in social education delineated?'

It is worth mentioning that Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* was written in 37 AH and has been narrated through two chains. One narration is from *Ibn Shu'bah Harrānī* in *Tuhaf al-'Uqūl* and from *Shaykh Kulaynī* in *Rasā'il*, and the other is a testament to *Muhammad ibn al-Hanafīyyah*, which *Shaykh Tūsī* and *Shaykh al-Najashi* included in their indexes (Shoushtari, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 8, 301). *Ṣadūq* also narrated it through two chains in the chapter on *Nawādir* in *Man Lā Yahduruhu al-Faqīh*. The first chain, with its *Isnād*, is reported from *Aṣbagh ibn Nubāṭa al-Mujāshi'ī*, who states that the Imam wrote this testament to his son, *Muhammad ibn Hanafīyyah*. The second chain, with a complete teacher-student link, reports that this testament was narrated from *Aḥmad ibn Abī al-Thalj* to *Aṣbagh ibn Nubāṭa*, and then from *Aṣbagh ibn Nubāṭa* to *Muhammad ibn Hanafīyyah* (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 3, 556; 4, 386 and 392). *Abū*

Aḥmad 'Askarī, in *al-Zawājir wa al-Mawā'iz*, as reported by *Ibn Tāwūs* in Chapter 163, narrated this testament through four chains, which indicates the reliability and strength of the hadith, adding that the testament of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* to his son contains wisdom that should be written with liquid gold (cf. Ḥusaynī Khaṭīb, 1988 AD/1367 SH: 3, 297). Overall, the chains that identify the recipient of this testament as Imam *Hasan Mujtabā* (AS) are more numerous.

2. Research Background

Given its importance, prior research on responsibility includes:

Hosseini et al. (2018 AD/1397 SH), in "Investigating the Social Dimension of Responsibility from the Perspective of the Quran and Islam," found that responsibility encompasses both creedal and individual aspects, as well as social and environmental dimensions. Social life gives rise to specific rights and duties that promote social justice and equity. Social responsibility is inherent in all and must be realized.

Rostamiyan (2014 AD/1393 SH), in "Responsibility and Duty-Consciousness from the Perspective of the Quran and the Narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)," concluded that human responsibility arises from divine trust, which humans alone accept. Responsibility requires the foundations of piety and faith.

Salar (2013 AD/1392 SH), in "Educating a Responsible Citizen from the Viewpoint of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS)," stated that responsibility is not mere conformity to traditions. Rather, Nahj al-

Balāghah teaches that a responsible citizen learns to build correct relationships with people and God to gain divine satisfaction, including social skills.

Yaqubi et al. (2011 AD/1390 SH), in a study titled "Examining the Teachings, Hadiths, and Interpretation of the Quran and Studies in the Field of Social Responsibility," showed that in the conceptualization of this term, each individual is responsible for their own actions and behavior and decides their own destiny. In the teachings of Islam, individuals and groups are responsible for their actions and behavior. Components such as affection, brotherhood, and cooperation pave the way for social responsibility in Islamic society, and Islamic teachings outline the scope of responsibility as encompassing oneself, God, and others. In this research, the author aims to utilize the teachings of Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, as one of the sources of Islamic education, to answer the two research questions concerning the scope and methods of responsibility in social education. This will complement other activities conducted in various fields of education, focusing on the dimensions of human life, and provide the necessary groundwork for guiding students freely and consciously towards achieving the ultimate goal of social responsibility.

3. Research Method

Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* is, in fact, an educational charter replete with instructions for the life of a Muslim individual and the best roadmap for the educational system of an Islamic society, coming

ethics. This letter is among the most famous testaments of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS). This research focuses exclusively on those parts of the letter that discuss social education and responsibility. As mentioned, the most fundamental part of social education consists of the norms, traditions, rules, patterns, and ideals that guide an individual's behavior in their interactions with others. The method of this research is applied in terms of purpose and qualitative in terms of approach. Regarding data collection, an analytical method is used to identify concepts within the data. In this research, the study environment is Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and propositions containing concepts related to responsibility are identified and selected through purposive sampling. The data collection method in this research is documentary, and the data collection tool involves taking notes (excerpting) from textual data.

4. Concepts

4-1. Social Responsibility

"Social Responsibility" is a concept that has garnered attention across various branches of science, including organizational management, sociology, political science, economics, educational sciences, psychology, and others. Based on the principles and assumptions of each of these disciplines, differing definitions have been provided; consequently, a single, specific definition cannot be uniformly applied. For instance, according to Schwartz's theory of basic human values, social responsibility can be considered a self-transcendence

value, like benevolence or universalism, positioned in opposition to self-enhancement values such as hedonism, achievement, and power (Schwartz, 1992: 12). In his view, self-enhancement values are associated with the promotion of selfish interests, whereas benevolence focuses on concern for the welfare of close others in everyday interactions.

From Bierhoff's perspective, social responsibility consists of two fundamental parts: first, ensuring the welfare of others in daily life, or in other words, consideration for others, and second, moving towards personal goals without ignoring or violating the legitimate expectations of others (Bierhoff, 2016 AD/1395 SH: 87).

Weber, concerning social responsibility, believed that humans, as social beings in their collective life, are responsible to others and must respect their rights. These "Others" can be divided into two types: general and specific. Specific responsibility involves the actor's responsibility towards others with whom they have an emotional relationship, such as family and friends. However, social responsibility pertains to the actor's relationship with those with whom they have a non-emotional, contractual connection, such as all members of society as citizens—for example, helping those who are injured or respecting the rights of others by keeping one's neighborhood clean (Weber, 2023 AD/1402 AH: 53).

From an Islamic perspective, in the relationships we establish with **164** others, we have mutual rights, but with every right comes

responsibilities and duties. These two are like the two pans of a scale, the balance of which must be maintained. Therefore, just as we have rights, we are also responsible for them. On the other hand, a sense of responsibility in any society regulates social and human relations. That the teachings related to this matter are learnable and acquirable is a clear point, and the divine prophets have outlined the main contours of this responsibility. In the Islamic view, humans face external obligations and imperatives. The individual must act upon these "Musts" and "Must nots" with an imperative arising from within and feel responsible for them. In the educational process, this principle must be applied as a general rule to guide educational methods and approaches (Bagheri, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 150). In other words, by virtue of being human, one has specific responsibilities towards God, oneself, other humans, and the universe. By attending to, accepting, and cultivating all of these, human life assumes a desirable order, and the individual is guided towards their appropriate perfection (Javadi Amoli, 2012 AD/1391 SH: 55). In the present research, with this view, the social responsibilities of humans are considered non-suspendable, and commitment to these responsibilities necessitates social responsibility.

Imam Ali (AS) censures the spirit of *Tawākul* and *Takhādhul* (meaning leaving matters to each other and shirking responsibility), emphasizing that the spread of this spirit will lead to social degeneration. He rebuked the people of Kufa for such acts of

negligence (*Nahj al-Balāghah*, Sermon 27). Ultimately, this process guides members of society from a passive and irresponsible state towards becoming capable, committed, and active members. However, the realization of this, as one of the necessities of modern society, depends on enhancing individuals' knowledge, insight, and understanding of the necessity of cooperation in both micro and macro social spheres. Reflection on the '*Alawid* legacy shows that numerous propositions are found regarding a wide spectrum of responsibilities. This category of narrations can be considered as evidence for inferring the necessity of responsibility as one of the requisites of social education.

4-2. Social Education

Socialization and the social development of the learner are objectives pursued in "Social education." Theories of "Social learning" (Olson et al., 2021 AD/1400 SH: 493) are based on the influence of the social environment on the formation of the learner's personality and behavior, aiming to direct the individual's social actions toward educational goals.

From an Islamic perspective, social education is the process of actualizing humans' innate inclination for collective life and other-orientation, and nurturing them for adaptation, convergence, brotherhood, justice, beneficence, and mutual sympathy, with the aim of achieving the good life and forming the unified Islamic Ummah (A

Education has various dimensions, and attention to all these dimensions seems essential for humans. However, many Western schools of thought focus on and consider only one or a few dimensions of human existence as amenable to education. For example, structuralists, behaviorists, cognitivists, etc., each focus their educational efforts on the development of one human dimension, such as the social, behavioral, physical, intellectual, etc., believing that the development of other human dimensions is a function of the development of that specific dimension (cf. Seyf, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 75-90; Shabani, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 85-97); but from an Islamic viewpoint, humans are created as the noblest of creatures and God's vicegerents on Earth. Occupying this status and position requires attention to and the education of all aspects of their being, because neglect of any aspect of human existence will lead to a lack of education and the creation of abnormalities in that dimension. With this explanation, the Islamic perspective on human education is comprehensive and coherent.

In a general classification, humans have both individual and social dimensions. The Islamic view also recognizes these two dimensions, but despite attention to individuality and providing instructions for individual growth, it seems to pay greater and more special attention to the social dimension, to the extent that it sometimes considers individual growth dependent on social growth or possible only within a social context. In other words, Islam is the only religion whose

foundation is based on society, and the matter of society has been considered in all its aspects (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 4, 94).

This is because, following the formation of society, forces and properties emerge that are very powerful and, in times of conflict and contradiction, overpower individual forces and properties (ibid: 97).

From the perspective of researchers, in the system of the unified Ummah, moving away from individualism and personal preferences is necessary. Responsibility, emerging from the confines of egotism, committing to others, and subsequently providing the ground for social growth, is an effect of the unified Ummah, and the value of individual actions increases upon entering this system (Kermani, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 17).

5. Components of Responsibility in Social Education

Responsibility, directly or indirectly, impacts the individual and social life of humans, and all individuals benefit from its fruits. This concept, in religious literature, is considered a very important indicator of social capital. The component of responsibility, at the micro level, establishes a relationship within the domain of relational action indicators because it is actualized in connection and interaction with others. At the macro level, this component is situated more within the sphere of social expediencies (Mohases, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 126). A sense of responsibility is a conceptual precondition for desirable social behaviors. Attributing responsibility elicits emotional reactions, which

are themselves the primary factor in promoting positive social behaviors (Bierhoff, 2016/1395 SH: 229). Accepting any responsibility is only possible if the individual or society possesses the necessary maturity to accept and fulfill that responsibility (Vatandoust, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 71). The root of social responsibility can perhaps be found in its role as a prerequisite for creating and developing individual independence. This enables the person to achieve self-perception and self-knowledge. In a complex society, individuals who possess individual independence and pursue goals stemming from their mental structure about realities are more successful than those who simply surrender themselves to circumstances. In fact, if a person acts based on a system of self-control and responsibility, they can utilize their capabilities more effectively (Bierhoff, 2016/1395 SH: 227). In the Islamic intellectual framework, every human being is held accountable for their actions, whether small or large, apparent or hidden (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 27). They are responsible both for themselves and for others because they value their own work, consider it good and normative, and thus invite others to do the same (Motahhari, 1993 AD/1372 SH: 101).

In this research, the intended meaning of the components of social responsibility is a set of interconnected elements that, through dynamic interaction with one another, ensure the realization of an individual's responsibility towards society. The components of social responsibility, as the fundamental units of the responsibility system,

provide a framework for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating social behaviors.

These components in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* are as follows:

5-1. Contemporary Awareness

One of the key elements of political insight is awareness of the times.

Here, "Times" refers to the historical situation of society and the prevailing temporal conditions and requirements. Different historical periods have specific characteristics and laws (Shoa' Hoseini, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 263). Imam Ali (AS), in one of his advice to Imam *Hasan* (AS), stated: "He who feels secure from the vicissitudes of time will be betrayed by it; he who attributes greatness to time will be disgraced by it; he who gets angry with time will be thrown down by it; and he who seeks refuge in time will be surrendered by it." (Majlisī, 1969 AD/1390 AH: 77, 213) His Eminence also says in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"I intended to begin your education by teaching you the Book of Allah, the Mighty and Glorious, and its interpretation, the laws and injunctions of Islam, its halal and haram, and not to go beyond that for you. But I feared that the diverse desires and opinions confusing the people might overwhelm you, just as they had overwhelmed them. Therefore, I considered it more beloved to me to make you aware of it, even though I disliked alerting you to it, rather than leaving you to a

from for you."

From the perspective of the commentators of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the expressions of the Imam (AS) in this part of the testament emphasize once again that the Imam is not speaking here in his capacity as Imam, and Imam *Hasan* (AS) not as his successor, but rather as a concerned father speaking to a son in need of instruction and education. This is because, as previously mentioned, Imam Hasan (AS) was over thirty years old at that time. Is it possible that the Imam (AS) had not taught him the Quran until then and made him aware of false opinions?! (Mughnīyah, 1967 AD/1387 AH: 4, 425)

From attention to these narrations and similar cases, it is inferred that a Muslim must be familiar with the conditions of their society. This is because, according to the tradition of the perpetual conflict between truth and falsehood, society is always pregnant with various seditions and doubts that mix truth and falsehood to such an extent that, for a healthy passage through these seditions, the individual needs insight to distinguish the right from the wrong. This is only possible by the individual gaining awareness of the conditions of their time. In other words, the cornerstone of insight is awareness. To the extent that this awareness is directed towards truth and reality, the individual's insight and, consequently, their action towards truth will be more powerful. Therefore, one of the most important responsibilities that each individual has, both towards themselves and

towards the rest of society, is to become aware and to make others aware—in other words, clarification. In fact, in this part of Letter 31, Imam Ali (AS) has recommended insight and political maturity. An insightful person, with the knowledge they possess about events and current issues in society on various subjects, is less prone to error and more likely to distinguish right from wrong and move towards the truth.

5-2. Benevolence

Benevolence is one of the moral virtues frequently recommended in the Quran and narrations; it leads to righteousness in this world and the hereafter. *Khayr* means goodness, benefit, and advantage. Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) said in a narration: "It is incumbent upon a believer to be a well-wisher for [their brother] believer, whether in their absence or presence." (Kulaynī, 1978 AD/1399 SH: 2, 208)

In another statement, he said: "Upon you is to be an advisor to Allah regarding His creation, for you will never meet Him with an action more virtuous than that." (‘Āmīlī, 1953 AD/1373 AH: 16, 382) *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* (AS) also says in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* to his son:

"O! My son, make yourself a measure between you and others. So, desire for others what you desire for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself. Do not oppress, just as you do not like to be oppressed. Do well, as you would like to be treated. Consider bad for yourself whatever you consider bad for others. Be content for

From consideration of all these narrations, it is concluded that benevolence is necessary, essential, and indeed universal. It encompasses all situations and times and is not subject to suspension. In these statements, *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) advises the addressee to reform their behavior with people by making themselves the criterion for measurement between themselves and others. The reason Imam (AS) used the word "Measure" (*Mīzān*) metaphorically for his son is so that he would act justly between himself and others, like a scale (Ibn Maytham, 1955 AD/1375 AH: 5, 40). From the Islamic perspective, one of the fundamental rights a brother has over another is precisely this benevolence, which should not be neglected. Therefore, corresponding to this right, a responsibility is placed upon each individual, which they must diligently fulfill.

Sometimes, benevolence is so profound that the recipient is not necessarily aware of it, such as when it is extended towards children or someone who is uninformed about the matter in question. However, the recipient's lack of awareness does not negate the individual's rights in this regard, and the responsibility remains intact. It should also be noted that according to Islamic teachings, every good or bad deed a person performs reverts to them; the Quran states: "If you do good, you do good for your own souls. And if you do evil, [you do it] against them."

Benevolence is no exception to this general rule, and the benevolent person benefits from the outcome of the action in both this

world and the hereafter. In other words, attention or inattention to this responsibility impacts society.

5-3. Wisdom in Utterance

The ability to speak is one of the great blessings of the Lord and a characteristic of humans. However, despite its many benefits for human growth and development, it can also be the source of numerous physical and spiritual harms for the individual themselves, those around them, and even society, distancing humans from happiness. Therefore, there are many recommendations and instructions in Islam regarding guarding one's tongue and speech. Imam Ali (AS) says in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"Do not say what you do not know, even if what you know is little."

Sometimes a person's lack of awareness regarding their words can be harmful to others or society. For example, in producing or spreading rumors, creating doubts, or promoting incorrect statements that lead to the disrespect of another Muslim, etc. In this case, the person not only distances themselves from happiness but also provides the means for misleading others. Therefore, individuals' responsibility for their speech is very serious. One of the causes of human happiness or misery is this very tongue; thus, paying attention to this responsibility and being careful to avoid speaking without knowledge is highly important. It should be noted that this advice does not mean

that individuals are granted a license to remain silent on various social matters under the pretext that their knowledge is insufficient for commenting. Rather, simultaneously, a Muslim is obliged to strive to gain sufficient knowledge on matters where expressing an opinion can somehow impact society and to then offer their view. This is because, in such cases, silence is not always equivalent to social benevolence and can sometimes cause social harm and loss.

Proportionality of Capability and Accepting Responsibility

In Islam, responsibility is a divine trust, and for every responsibility a human undertakes, there is accountability. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) has also stated many points regarding social responsibility, one of which is in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"Do not place on your back a burden beyond your capacity, lest the weight of it become a punishment for you."

According to this advice, accepting a responsibility that is beyond one's capacity will bring punishment upon the person during reckoning. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) in Letter 5 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, addressing *Ash'ath ibn Qays*, one of his agents, says:

"Indeed, your position is not a morsel [for you to enjoy] but a trust upon your neck."

Thus, the ability and competence of officials play a key role in the selection of managers. This is to the extent that someone like *Abū Dharr*, who was a great companion of the Prophet (PBUH) and a close companion of Imam Ali (AS), was prohibited by the Prophet

from holding any administrative position. This principle also applies to smaller responsibilities at lower levels of management. Because, from a general perspective, if a person accepts a responsibility they cannot fulfill, they have actually created a flaw in its execution and diverted the action from achieving its goal, which contradicts responsibility. Therefore, one of the components of responsibility can be considered the knowledge of one's capabilities and capacity in performing tasks, and consequently, accepting responsibility within one's limits. Of course, the effort to increase one's capacity and ability has not been overlooked in Islam, and every Muslim is also obliged to increase their ability and acquire more skills. Sometimes, the complete and correct performance of assigned responsibilities itself provides the means for increasing one's capacity, and in a way, the path of individual growth is precisely the performance of responsibilities within one's capacity at any given time and place.

5-4. Giving Charity

Infāq (giving charity) is one of the most important and practical social recommendations in Islam, with numerous benefits that follow. In the common usage of the Quran and religious texts, *Infāq* technically refers to giving wealth or something else in the way of God to the needy and other divine causes (Jurjānī, 1991 AD/1370 SH: 1, 53). Imam Ali (AS) also speaks about the benefits of *Infāq* in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

176 "Increase your charity from it [your wealth] while you are capable of it."

"And consider it a gain when someone borrows from you in your time of plenty, so that its repayment may be for you on the day of your hardship."

Among the beneficial effects of spreading *İnfâq* in society is its significant role in enhancing the security and well-being of society, to the extent that it is considered a necessity of social life. The importance of *İnfâq* in Islamic culture is so great that commentators interpret the "Ruin" mentioned in verse 195 of Surah *al-Baqarah* as the dominance of enemies over Muslims due to refraining from spending wealth in the way of jihad and generally abstaining from giving charity for God's pleasure, which ultimately leads to the weakness of Muslims and the spread of insecurity in society (Tabatabâ'i, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 2, 64). Given that striving to preserve the stability, survival, and security of a society is a public duty incumbent upon each and every member of society, and considering the mentioned points, it seems that utmost effort should be made in this regard. Additionally, considering the impact of *İnfâq* in achieving this important goal, it can be considered a crucial component of social education responsibility.

5-5. Forgiveness and Clemency

At first glance, forgiveness and pardon appear to be individual recommendations in Islam with little social aspect. However, upon closer examination of human nature, it is understood that all humans have faults and make mistakes. Because humans are constantly

engaged in the struggle between animal instincts and higher human inclinations, it is natural that one cannot expect all individual behaviors to be correct and free from error and mistake. However, in many cases, the harm caused by these errors and mistakes is not limited to the individual themselves, but also affects others. Under these conditions, if every wrongdoer were to be punished and everyone were to retaliate and seek revenge for harm suffered, human life would be filled with anger, rancor, and hatred. This is where the social effect of forgiveness and pardon becomes apparent, leading us to view it as a social responsibility. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) also says in this regard in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"Be gentle with whoever is harsh with you, for it is likely that they will soon become gentle with you. And take [revenge] upon your enemy by showing excellence (forgiveness), for it is the sweeter of the two victories."

Many people, when faced with harshness, choose the path of harshness, and hostilities escalate exponentially, sometimes reaching dangerous levels. But if a person controls themselves and, through willpower and decision, restrains themselves in the face of harshness and chooses gentleness instead of harshness, not only do the hostilities end, but they are replaced by friendship, affection, and gentleness, just as the Holy Quran emphasizes this meaning and recommends good in return for evil, considering goodness a means of attracting friendship.

In the subsequent sentence, which emphasizes the previous advice,

178 Imam Ali (AS) says, "You might overcome your enemy through

severity and harshness, or you might overcome them through showing affection and friendship; certainly, the latter is sweeter and has a better outcome." This is because in the future, you will have no fear of harshness, whereas if you prevail through harshness, you will always expect new harshness from the enemy. In other words, in the first method, the enemy remains an enemy, while in the second method, the enemy transforms into a friend. And this is indeed the two victories that are achieved (Makarem Shirazi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 9, 653).

With this viewpoint, Islam, while preserving individuals' rights to claim their rights, promotes and recommends forgiveness, pardon, and clemency. Imam Ali (AS) in his covenant to *Mālik Ashtar* says: "Let people benefit from your forgiveness and pardon in the same way you would like God to benefit you from His forgiveness and pardon."

5-6. Social Division of Labor

Humans' various needs and their inability to fulfill them alone lead to the formation of society. In the interaction between humans within a society, each individual, based on their talents, interests, and abilities, undertakes a specific task. This necessitates the division of labor and its expansion in societies. It is clear that the absence of division of labor and engagement in various tasks not only yields no success but also leads to the waste of resources, facilities, and time, resulting in a lack of necessary efficiency. Conversely, the division of labor enhances skill and initiative, leading to the flourishing of both the individual and society (Majidi, Mogherri, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 102). **179**

Imam Ali (AS) says in this regard:

"Assign each of your servants a specific task for which you hold them accountable, for this is more likely to prevent them from neglecting their duties towards you and being slack in your service."

Considering these statements and examining similar cases, the division of labor and its acceptance can be considered one of the most crucial components of responsibility in public interactions within society. This is because, practically speaking, collective life would be disrupted, and the daily affairs of people and society would not be managed without it. On the other hand, almost all sociologists who have explained the system of social inequality have mentioned the division of labor as one of its fundamental causes. Furthermore, the division of labor is one of the most important principles of management because, without it, people often wait for others, shifting responsibilities onto them. When work is left undone, they excuse themselves to the employer by saying they thought others would do it, and if others are asked, they offer the same excuse. However, when tasks and responsibilities are divided, everyone knows they are responsible for their own work and strives to perform it.

This advice shows that Imam (AS) was fully aware of the principles of management and advised his son accordingly (Makarem Shirazi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 9, 700).

5-7. Role-Modeling

180 One type of human learning is observational learning. Based on this

type of learning, one of the most important and widely used educational methods is education through role models. This method gains importance due to humans' innate desire for perfection and their tendency to emulate, as humans naturally seek out models superior to and more perfect than themselves in their interactions, thereby drawing closer to perfection. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) also emphasized this importance in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, stating:

"And know, my son, that the most beloved part of my advice for you to adopt is the fear of God, restricting yourself to what God has made obligatory upon you, and adhering to the practice upon which your predecessors—your forefathers and the righteous among your household—have passed."

If noble models are not introduced to a person, and the individual errs in identifying true perfection and emulates incorrect models, they distance themselves from genuine happiness and spend their life traveling down the wrong paths. Conversely, the closer the models are to true perfection—or, in other words, the more perfected they are—the greater the degree and depth of their impact on the emulator will be. This is why *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) also says in Sermon 97 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"Look at the household of your Prophet. Proceed in the direction they are going and follow their footsteps, for they will never lead you out of the path of salvation nor return you to ruin. If they halt, you halt, and if they rise, you rise. Do not precede them, for you will go astray, and do not lag behind them, for you will be destroyed."

6. Types of Social Responsibility

Through a detailed examination of the scope of responsibility in social education based on the teachings of *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, we will reach an understanding. In other words, if an individual is able to implement these matters in their interactions, they are considered responsible from the Islamic perspective. The recommendations Imam Ali (AS) makes regarding social responsibility in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* fall into three general categories:

1. Individuals' responsibilities in interactions with friends;
2. Individuals' responsibilities in interactions with relatives;
3. Individuals' responsibilities in interactions with opponents.

Individuals' Responsibilities in Interactions with Friends

Friendship and friendly interactions in Islam do not refer exclusively to an intimate relationship between two or more people; rather, it has a broader definition and are referred to as a relationship of brotherhood, which, in addition to intimacy, entails specific rights and duties. In fact, Islam has elevated the level of the bond of friendship among Muslims to such an extent that it likens it to the closest bond two humans can have in social relations, based on equality, which is the connection and affection between two brothers. Based on this important Islamic principle, Muslims of every race, tribe, language, and age share a deep sense of brotherhood among themselves. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) says in Letter 31

"When your brother cuts off relations, you maintain them. When he turns away, be kind and conciliatory. When he withholds, be generous. When he distances himself, draw near. When he is harsh, be gentle. When he wrongs you, offer an excuse [for him], as if you are his servant and he is your benefactor. But beware of placing this [behavior] in an inappropriate place or doing it for someone who is undeserving."

"Do not let your brother be stronger than you in severing ties, nor be stronger in doing wrong than you are in doing well."

In this advice, Imam (AS) cautions his son against reciprocating the harshness and lack of affection from friends and instead recommends responding with the opposite in such cases. This is because reciprocation can jeopardize the foundation of a friendship and lead to the loss of friends. However, if one responds to a lack of affection with affection and to wrongdoing with goodness, the friend will soon realize their mistake, feel ashamed, and seek to make amends, thereby strengthening the foundations of friendship more than before. Since some base-minded and shortsighted individuals might exploit such behavior, Imam (AS) makes an exception for this group, saying:

"But beware of placing this [behavior] in an inappropriate place or doing it for someone who is undeserving."

The difference between the phrases "Placing it in an inappropriate place" and "Doing it for someone who is undeserving" is that the second phrase refers to undeserving, stubborn, and spiteful individuals

for whom goodness in return for their evil only increases their audacity and boldness—it is like showing mercy to a sharp-toothed leopard. The first phrase, however, refers to those who do not have such a character, but repeated kindness in the face of their coldness might cause them to err and think they have done something good. The use of the imperative "Carry" (*Ihmil*) at the beginning of this advice indicates that being good in the face of evil, though difficult for a person, must be imposed upon oneself (Makarem Shirazi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 445).

Amīr al-Mu'minīn (AS) says: "If you befriend the enemy of your friend, you have wronged your friend and spent your humility and affection in the wrong place. In this case, you have not managed your inclinations and tendencies correctly and have practically fallen into a kind of carelessness and lack of principle in observing rights." (Taherzadeh, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 355) *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) says in a passage of Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*:

"Do not take the enemy of your friend as a friend, lest you become an enemy to your friend."

From the commentators' perspective, this is a hypocritical act—to be friends with both one's friend and the enemy of one's friend. This is the method of those who lack sincere friendships and whose aim is to benefit from everyone, without shying away from contradictory actions along this path. Of course, this applies when the enemy's enmity is unjust, not when

enemies. Additionally, this saying applies when the goal of proposing friendship with a friend's enemy is not to reconcile them. If this action is for the purpose of reconciliation, it is not only not ugly and reprehensible but is a very worthy deed. This point is true not only for individuals but also for groups, nations, and governments, even though in today's world there are many governments that propose friendship to both sides of a conflict without intending peace or reconciliation; rather, their goal is to use both to secure their personal interests (Makarem Shirazi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 452).

One of the most important reasons for creating strength and continuity in friendship is benevolence and heartfelt concern. Islamic and ethical teachings frequently address this matter, and almost all Imams and religious leaders have emphasized it. *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) also says in his testament to his son:

"Offer your brother sincere advice, whether it is good [to hear] or bad."

"And if you intend to sever relations with your brother, leave a remnant [of friendship] within yourself for him to return to, should he wish to do so someday."

From the Islamic perspective, it is not only fitting to behave with utmost concern and benevolence towards those with whom we have a pact of friendship and brotherhood, but this is also a kind of responsibility that each individual has in their friendly interactions and relations towards others. For example, one should overlook the mistakes of friends, and if we notice a mistake, we should remind **185**

them and try to rectify it. Likewise, if we see a good deed, we should praise them from the depths of our heart and, as much as we are able, assist our friends in acquiring perfections to provide for their growth and happiness. In other words, each individual is responsible for creating and helping the growth path of those around them, specifically their friends. In this regard, *Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (AS) says: "Offer your brother and friend your sincere advice and concern; whether in good or evil [matters], be sincerely concerned and benevolent for him, and be his supporter and helper in all circumstances."

7. Individuals' Responsibility in Interacting with Relatives

One of the ethical directives of religious teachings is proper and desirable social interaction with relatives. Kinship is a means through which individuals connect with their past and future and understand their family history. Therefore, it is these very kinship bonds that form the basis for expectations, obligations, and commitments, and they also play a significant role in shaping individuals' identities (McCarthy, 2011/1390 SH: 464). Imam Ali (AS) in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah* reminds us of this important matter and states:

"Honor your kin, for they are your wings with which you fly, your root to which you return, and your powerful hand with which you strike."

From the perspective of the noble religion of Islam, maintaining **186** and sustaining kinship relations is part of divine commandments, and

the responsibility associated with them is considered on par with upholding divine sanctity. Almighty God says: "And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs (kinship ties). Indeed, Allah is ever, over you, an Observer." (al-Nisā': 1)

In the field of social sciences, a topic called "Social Capital" is discussed, which refers to the social framework that facilitates relationships among individuals (Coleman, 2011 AD/1390 SH: 77). This definition encompasses concepts such as order, trust, cooperation, and mutual relations among members of a group in society working towards a common goal. Sociologists believe that the kinship network serves as a source of social capital for families, which can be effective in resolving family problems. A healthy family needs emotional support, stable housing, access to services, and other essential resources; these issues are often better addressed through kinship relations. By visiting relatives, families discuss their life issues and problems, which represents the minimum level of emotional support that reduces depression and tensions to some extent. Consultation and seeking advice in matters, using experiences, and gaining useful information for family life are among the known benefits of these meetings.

8. Individuals' Responsibility in Interacting with Opponents

The world is the arena of constant confrontation between truth and falsehood. With this assumption, Islam has always had, and continues

to have, various groups of opponents. On the other hand, religions have always introduced themselves as responsible for guiding all human beings, considering this responsibility non-suspendable. Therefore, correct interaction with opponents becomes important, as these interactions can provide the means for guiding individuals, as well as many groups and nations, which is a lofty goal of the Abrahamic religions. Imam Ali (AS) also recommends this and states:

"Deal with your enemy with favor (grace and benevolence), for it is the sweeter of the two victories (revenge or forgiveness)."

The Imam (AS) says that in confronting your enemy, adopt the path of virtue and forgiveness and show magnanimity, because if victory over him is sweet for you, this type of conduct is sweeter and more victorious. This is because, through this behavior, the deepest innate layer is satisfied and flourishes, and one attains a capital that many humans do not achieve. It is true that you are permitted to react harshly to people's enmity, equip your force, defeat him, achieve victory over him, satiate your anger, and reach the sweetness of victory over the enemy. But there is another way that is sweeter, and that is showing favor and magnanimity towards the enemy. Choose this second option to reach a much higher horizon (Taherzadeh, 2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 374). In reality, the Imam considers forgiveness preferable because it paves the way for growth, elevation, and guidance for both the forgiver and the forgiven. Human potential is actualized in this interaction, and the human being becomes aware of

horizons that transcend revenge or retaliation. This type of interaction makes one conscious of a sublime power, and if there is a potential for transformation and guidance in the enemy, he will be transformed.

From the viewpoint of the commentators of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, in this section, the Imam (AS) has advised the addressee to interact with the enemy in a virtuous manner and has drawn his attention to the best way, which is a requirement for one of the two victories [revenge - forgiveness]. This is because victory has two paths and two means: one is frightening and brings the enemy to his knees through force and dominance, which is very clear. The second way is to show affection and kindness to him, thereby taming him and winning his agreement. The phrase "For it is the sweeter of the two victories" is the minor premise of an implied syllogism, and the major premise is also considered as such: whatever one of the two victories applies to is worthy of being done (Ibn Maytham, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 5, 85). In this interpretation, it is as if the individual has a choice between two victories, and the Imam recommends the second state. In other words, the Imam says that victory over the enemy is possible in two ways: "Either through domination and overcoming or through doing well to him. And, of course, subduing the enemy with kindness and benevolence is sweeter than defeating him and is more commendable in the method of magnanimous people." (Sarakhsī Neyshaburi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 251)

Conclusion

This article, by examining the scope of responsibility in social

education based on Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, has analyzed the concepts and methods of responsibility from the perspective of Imam Ali (AS). This research demonstrates that social responsibility is not only a moral necessity but also a religious and social obligation that plays a central role in both individual and collective human interactions. From Imam Ali's (AS) perspective, responsibility is not limited to individual commitments, but also encompasses human obligations towards God, oneself, others, and the surrounding environment. This comprehensive view of responsibility strengthens the foundations of social education in Islamic society, helping individuals preserve their individual identity while acting as active and responsible members of society.

In this article, drawing on the teachings of Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, key components of social responsibility—including awareness of the times, benevolence, wisdom in speech, proportionality of capability and acceptance of responsibility, charitable giving, forgiveness, and division of social labor—are examined. These components are not only introduced as strategies for improving social interactions but are also considered tools for achieving a good life and forming a unified Islamic Ummah.

Imam Ali (AS), in Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, emphasizes the importance of responsibility in interactions with friends, relatives, and even opponents, showing that social responsibility extends beyond

190 friendly relations to encompass all human interactions. This

comprehensive view of responsibility enables individuals to behave responsibly and ethically in every situation, whether interacting with friends or confronting adversaries.

According to the content of Letter 31 of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, social education based on responsibility not only helps improve social relations and increase societal solidarity but also acts as a fundamental strategy for realizing social justice and achieving individual and collective happiness. Therefore, attention to hadith teachings in the field of social responsibility can be used as a practical model and help form a responsible and committed society.

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Trans-denominational Narration in the Imami Hadith Tradition: A Re-examination of the Role of "*Mohammad ibn Ahmad Asadī Qazwīnī*" in the Narrative System of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*

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Abstract

Shaykh Ṣadūq, a preeminent Imami hadith scholar of the 4th century AH, began a new phase of his academic life by traveling to Rayy. On the

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other hand, Rayy had become a prominent hadith center due to the presence of Imami and Sunni scholars from across the Islamic world. The city's religious diversity, relative political freedom, and favorable economic conditions were also conducive to its growth. An examination of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works reveals that scholars from the hadith school of Qazwin were also active in Rayy. Therefore, the presence of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in Rayy and his meeting with *Qazwīnī* scholars in this region adds to the significance of this study. "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*" is a Sunni hadith scholar from Qazwin whose name and memory are only found in *Ṣadūq*'s hadith writings. The appearance of the narrations from *Abul Hasan Asadī Qazwīnī* suggests that he was a Shi'i hadith scholar. However, with the lack of data about him in Shi'i biographical sources on the one hand, and the existence of rare information about him in Sunni narrative sources on the other, his activities and background can be identified. This article, using a descriptive-exploratory method, identifies the Sunni denomination of *Abul Hasan Asadī*, studies this active *Qazwīnī* scholar in Rayy, and critically examines the consequences and reasons for his presence in the city. The transmission of Sunni narrations from Qazwin to Rayy and the influence of this *Qazwīnī* scholar on the scholarly foundation of *Ṣadūq* are among the most important consequences of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s presence in Rayy.

Keywords: Qazwin, Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī Qazwīnī, Shaykh

Introduction

The 4th century AH was the golden age for the compilation of the Imami hadith legacy and the formation of important academic schools in the Islamic world. During this period, the city of Rayy, as a major hub for scholarly interaction between Islamic denominations, hosted great hadith scholars, including *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH). Knowing the masters and narrative sources of this renowned hadith scholar has always been a fundamental topic in hadith research. Some of these masters were Imami narrators residing in Qom and Rayy, while others were Sunni scholars from various cities, including Qazwin. This article seeks to examine the role and position of one of Ṣadūq's lesser-known masters—*Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī Qazwīnī*—in his narrative system. The importance of this research lies in its ability to, on the one hand, re-examine the links between the hadith schools of Qazwin and Rayy and, on the other, to illustrate a model of inter-denominational scholarly interactions in the 4th century AH.

1. Statement of the Problem

The region of Rayy in the 4th century AH, due to the strong presence of scholars from different denominations, had a unique academic environment compared to other hadith schools (Mustufī, 1913: 52; Muqaddasī, 1978: 2, 582-583) and provided a suitable ground for the presence and activity of Shi'i and Sunni thinkers (Kremer, 1996: 80-82). Among the notable masters whom *Shaykh Ṣadūq* met in Rayy and from whom he narrated a significant, albeit limited, number of traditions is "*Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*."

His name's mention in the chains of narration of *Ibn Bābawayh* raises the possibility that he was one of his Imami masters. However, multiple clues indicate that he was one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s Sunni masters. More importantly, due to his *Qazwīnī* origin and narration of hadith in Rayy, he can be considered a connecting link between the two hadith schools of Qazwin and Rayy. Research on him, in this respect, becomes doubly important.

Studying the masters of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, especially those who were Sunni, can reveal hidden aspects of religious and scholarly interactions in the 4th century. To know *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* more accurately, two categories of sources are available: first, Shi'i sources, led by *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s own works; and second, Sunni sources, which can supplement his biographical and hadith analysis. Since *Shaykh Ṣadūq* is the first to mention him in Shi'i sources, the first step is to examine *Ibn Bābawayh*'s reports in his works.

The most comprehensive report from *Asadī* in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works is as follows:

"*Haddathanā Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī* in Rayy in Rajab of the year three hundred and forty-seven." (Ibn Bābawayh. n.d.: 233)

This report contains key elements for identifying his biographical and hadith identity (cf. Assessing the Trustworthiness of *Muhammad 200 ibn Ahmad Asadī*, this article).

Given that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* narrated hadith from him, he can be considered one of *Ibn Bābawayh*'s important masters, especially since Sunni biographical sources also provide valuable information about him. Based on this, it can be assumed that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, by utilizing *Asadī*'s narrations, established a bridge between the hadith heritage of Qazwin and the region of Rayy, and in doing so, contributed to strengthening the Imami hadith tradition.

The present study aims to; by analyzing the type of hadith narrated from *Asadī*, evaluating the existing data in *Ibn Bābawayh*'s works, and examining the biographical reports of Sunni scholars, highlights the role of this narrator in linking the two schools of Qazwin and Rayy. Finally, this research, while emphasizing the limitations of data about him, considers this scarcity not a weakness but an opportunity to expand the study of *Ṣadūq*'s Sunni masters and the model of interaction between Shi'i and Sunni academic schools in the 4th century.

2. Research Background

Studying hadith masters is an important and often neglected part of hadith history that can lead to the discovery of influential movements in the formation of narrative systems. In the early Islamic centuries, prominent hadith scholars with different intellectual leanings settled in various parts of the Islamic world, thus giving rise to different hadith schools. In this context, the hadith school of Qazwin, with the presence of prominent Sunni scholars, played an undeniable role in transmitting

hadith knowledge to other regions, including Rayy and Qom.

Shaykh Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) is a famous hadith scholar whose hadith interactions with Sunni masters, especially those from Qazwin, are evident in his texts. A precise understanding of these masters can help better comprehend *Ibn Bābawayh*'s sources of knowledge and narrative system.

One of the contemporary studies that has addressed a part of this topic is an article titled "*Qazwīnī* Masters of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and Their Role in the Formation of His Narrative System" written by Hossein Sattar (2023 AD/1402 AH). In this article, the author has attempted to provide a general picture of the Qazwin Hadith School and its influence on *Ṣadūq* by briefly introducing a number of *Qazwīnī* masters who are mentioned in *Ṣadūq*'s works with the attribution "*Qazwīnī*" or "bil Qazwin." However, the innovation of the present research lies in identifying and introducing one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s hidden *Qazwīnī* masters named "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*," which, unlike other *Qazwīnī* masters, has no geographical attribution of Qazwin in his narrative identity. This has caused him to be overlooked by some researchers.

The present study, by simultaneously using Shi'i sources (such as the works of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *Kashshī*, *Najāshī*, and *Tūsī*) and Sunni biographical sources (such as *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, *Tarīkh Baghdād*, and **202** *Tadhkirat al-Huffāz*), attempts to, while identifying this obscure

narrator, outline and explain the hadith system that connected Qazwin and Rayy.

Some related studies, although not primarily focused on *Qazwīnī* masters, have implicitly addressed the transmission of narrations from Qazwin to other schools. For example, research on *Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan Qatṭān Rāzī* and masters like *Abū Aḥmad ‘Aṣkārī*, *Zīyād ibn Ja‘far Hamdānī*, and *Husayn ibn Muḥammad Ushnānī* shows that the Rayy school, due to its extensive connections with neighboring regions, especially Qazwin, played an important role in gathering hadith. The present research, following the ibid path, aims to explain his role in shaping *Sadūq*'s scholarly character and providing a part of the Imami hadith heritage by emphasizing the link between Qazwin and Rayy and analyzing *Sadūq*'s reports about *Asadī* and the biographical descriptions about him.

It should also be noted that existing biographical sources, while useful in identifying chains of narration and the classes of narrators, are sometimes unable to determine the geographical identity of some masters. This research, by an intertextual reading of biographical, hadith, and geographical data, attempts to, with a new approach, shed light on one of these dark spots.

In summary, studies on local hadith schools like Qazwin are still in their early stages. Extensive research has been conducted on the hadith schools of Baghdad, Kufa, Medina, and Qom, but the Qazwin School **203**

and its connection to prominent hadith figures like *Sadūq* require supplementary research. This study, as the first independent research on the role of one of *Sadūq*'s Sunni *Qazwīnī* masters, is a step towards completing Shi'i biographical research and gaining a more accurate understanding of the academic environment of Rayy in the 4th century AH.

3. Research Methodology

The method of this research is descriptive-exploratory with a historical-biographical approach. In the first stage, the research, by direct and documented reference to original Shi'i and Sunni biographical sources, such as the works of *Ibn Nadīm*, *Najāshī*, *Shaykh Tūsī*, *Ibn Hajar*, *Dhahabī*, as well as biographical sources like *Tarīkh Baghdād*, *Tarīkh Qazwīn*, and *Tabaqāt al-Muhaddithīn*, identifies and re-identifies the biographical and hadith identity of an unknown hadith scholar named "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*"; a person who played a narrative role in the hadith sources of *Shaykh Sadūq*, but has not yet had a comprehensive biography provided in biographical research.

In the second stage, based on the method of content analysis of *Sadūq*'s hadith sources, especially in works such as *Man Lā Yahduruhū al-Faqīh*, *al-Khiṣāl*, 'Ilal al-Sharā'i', and *Ma 'ānī al-Akhbār*, descriptive data are extracted, and by analyzing the chains of narration and the frequency or description, his influence on the formation of *Shaykh Sadūq*'s intellectual

The exploratory feature of the research is not merely in re-identifying this narrator, but in discovering the ecological contexts of the Qazwin School and analyzing its position in *Şadūq*'s intellectual system. This analysis, beyond a purely biographical approach, seeks to uncover the logic behind *Şadūq*'s selection of masters, the nature of his scholarly interaction with Sunni scholars, and the reciprocal influence of the Qazwin and Rayy regions on the compilation of his narrative heritage.

From this perspective, the research method is also historical-genealogical in addition to being data-driven; meaning that while identifying lesser-known narrators, it also attempts to outline how the institution of narration was formed in Qazwin and how it was transmitted from Qazwin to Rayy.

Thus, the present research has attempted to, by combining descriptive, historical-analytical, and biographical data retrieval approaches, highlight the contribution of one of the neglected figures of the Qazwin School to the formation of *Shaykh Şadūq*'s scholarly character and to emphasize the necessity of re-evaluating the role of local schools in the production of Shi'i hadith.

4. *Abul Hasan Asadī*: A Narrator in the Hadith System of *Shaykh Şadūq*

Among the masters with few narrations whom *Shaykh Şadūq* used is *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*, whose fame and

presence in the history of Shi'i hadith is primarily due to *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s narrations. A careful examination of *Ṣadūq*'s words in his various works indicates the use of different phrases and titles to refer to this narrator, the analysis of which can help to better understand his identity, status, and scholarly-geographical location. *Shaykh Ṣadūq* mentions him in his hadith writings in the following various forms:

1. *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 227, 233, 312, and 385);
2. *Abul Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 7, 28, 73, 79, 161, and 199);
3. *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali Asadī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 253);
4. *Abul Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*, known as *Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 2, 461);
5. *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali Asadī*, known as *Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7);
6. *Abul Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali Asadī* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1940:191, 322, 323);
7. Sometimes he narrates from him indirectly, through his father, *Ali ibn Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Bābawayh*, who was his direct teacher (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 28).

This variety in titles, especially the combination "*al-Ma'rūf bi Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī*," indicates a geographical and family identifier.

The title *al-Bardha 'ī* refers to the region of *Bardha'* in the vicinity of

Qazwin region, which was one of the important hadith exchange centers during *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s lifetime. The title "*Ibn Jarādah*" could also be a reference to one of his ancestors or an unofficial family nickname, which is sometimes very crucial in comparative biographical identification.

An analysis of all the narrations from him in *Ṣadūq*'s works shows that the *Shaykh* used *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* for various topics, such as ethics, education, the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, exegesis, and the characteristics of the Shi'a. *Ṣadūq* also carefully selected hadith that were consistent with Imami theological principles and, in doing so, selectively narrated *Asadī*'s hadith within specific content frameworks.

An important point to consider in biographical analysis is the absence of any expression of mercy or praise for *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* by *Ṣadūq*. While *Ṣadūq* usually shows respect for his trustworthy and close masters with phrases like "*Raḍī Allah ‘anhu*" (may God be pleased with him) or "*Raḥimahu Allah*" (may God have mercy on him), such phrases are not found for *Asadī*. This issue could indicate the degree of his trustworthiness, the intensity of their relationship, or the time gap in receiving the narrations, which will be discussed in detail in the biographical analysis section.

A statistical analysis of this narrator's presence in *Ṣadūq*'s works can also clarify the quantitative aspects of his relationship with *Ṣadūq*.

The following table shows the frequency of his hadith narrations:

No.	Book Title	Number of Narrations
1	<i>Amālī</i>	4 times
2	<i>Khiṣāl</i>	9 times
3	<i>Faḍā'il al-Shī'a</i>	1 time
4	<i>Ma'ānī al-Akhbār</i>	3 times
	Total	17 times

An important distinguishing point is that one should not confuse *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Ṣalt* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 10) with *Asadī*. Although they have the ibid name, there is a clear distinction between them in terms of their grandfather's attribution. Such precision in biographical analysis is a fundamental step in accurately identifying *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s sources and distinguishing between his different masters.

Since none of the non-*Ṣadūq* Imami sources mention *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*, it becomes clear that the only channel for the transmission of hadith from this narrator to us is *Shaykh Ṣadūq* himself. This fact highlights *Ṣadūq*'s central role in transmitting narrations from the Qazwin School and shows the influence of *Ṣadūq*'s scholarly journeys and the link between the Rayy region and other hadith schools.

4-1. The Scholarly Network of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s Masters: An Analysis of Influence and Hadith Connections

208 A perusal of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works shows that *Muhammad ibn Ahmad*

Asadī narrated from numerous and diverse masters. This diversity includes not only famous and prominent masters like *Muhammad ibn Jarīr Tabarī* but also many who were unknown or of little note in the Shi'i and Sunni academic and hadith circles. The wide range of his masters indicates the extensive scholarly and hadith connections that *Asadī* established in various cities, especially Rayy and Qazwin.

Among his masters mentioned in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s hadith sources are the following individuals:

- *Ruqayya bint Ishāq ibn Mūsā ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abī Tālib* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 39; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 253; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7)
- *Ya'qūb ibn Yūsuf ibn Hāzim* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 227)
- *'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Marzubān* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 322)
- *Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Hasan al-Āmīrī* (ibid, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 73, 79; 2, 641)
- *Muhammad ibn Abī Ayyūb al-Nahrawī* (ibid: 233, 385 Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 28, 161)
- *'Abdullāh ibn Zaydān* (ibid: 199)
- *Ali ibn al-'Abbās al-Bajilīyān* (ibid: 199; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 323)
- *Muhammad ibn Jarīr* (ibid; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 178)
- *al-Hasan ibn 'Urwa* (ibid.)

- *‘Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Wahbī* (ibid; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 178)
- *Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Wāsiṭī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 312)
- *‘Abdullāh ibn Sulaymān* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 385; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 161)
- Aḥmad ibn ‘Umayr (ibid.)
- Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣūfī (Ṣadūq, ibid: 6)
- ‘Umar ibn Abī Ghaylān al-Thaqafī (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 177)
- ‘Īsā ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Qurashī (ibid.)
- Ubay (ibid, p. 28; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 323)
- al-Ḥasan ibn Ali ibn Naṣr Ṭūsī (ibid: 232)
- Muḥammad ibn Abī ‘Imrān (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 51)
- Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Hārūn ibn Yazīd (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 191)

Many of these individuals are defined within the Sunni tradition, and this, along with the tone of some narrations and specific names, strengthens the hypothesis of *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*'s Sunni denomination.

On the other hand, by referring to Sunni sources, one can also identify a number of *Asadī*'s masters. For example, some reports from *Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’* state:

"He heard from Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb, Abā al-Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarīyy, and Ibn Jawṣā'." (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH:12, 277; vol. 16, pp. 233-234).

"*Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ* narrated from him" (al-Rāfi‘ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 246)

"*Muhammad ibn Abī ‘Imrān*" (ibid.).

In the book *Nuzhat al-Nāzir*, his masters are also listed as follows:

"He heard from *Abā al-Qāsim al-Baghawīyy*, *Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd*, *Abū Muhammad ibn Sa‘īd*, *Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb*, *Abū ‘Umar ibn al-Nahhās*, *Abā al-Hasan ibn Jawṣā‘*, and many others." (Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115)

Other hadith evidence also clarifies the identity of his masters:

In a narration, it is stated:

"*Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf ibn Bundār Qazwīnī* narrated from *Abī al-Hasan ibn Ḥarārah Asadī* who said: ..." (al-Rāfi‘ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 130-131)

Also, in another report, it is stated:

"I was informed by *Ishāq ibn Muhammad ibn Marwān* that his father narrated to them ... *Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Barda‘īyy* in Qazwin informed us ..." (ibid: 1, 188, 240)

From this evidence, it can be inferred that *Asadī* had an active presence in the hadith circles in the cities of Qazwin and Rayy and was connected to the academic circles of both cities. Some of his masters who were based in Qazwin transmitted the hadith circles of this city to Rayy, and in this regard, played a significant role in the movement and spread of hadith heritage between these two cities.

It is worth noting that the fame of some of his masters (like *Tabarī*)

alongside the obscurity of most of the others and the lack of an explicit Shi'i denomination in Shi'i biographical sources, has led some researchers to consider his Sunni denomination probable based on a collection of cumulative presumptions.

4-2. Analysis of the Role of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s Students in the Imami and Sunni Narrative System

One of the effective methods for understanding a narrator's scholarly status and influence is to examine the circle of his students and narrators. Regarding *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*, the available sources, although providing brief information about his life and masters, explicitly name only a limited number of his students. However, through a study of narrative chains and hadith works, a relatively clear picture of the circle of his students and narrators can be obtained.

According to Shi'i hadith sources, the most important and well-known student of *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* is *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ḥusayn ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī* (*Shaykh Ṣadūq*). He narrates hadith from Asadī repeatedly in his works. A noteworthy point is that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* sometimes refers to him only as "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*," and sometimes he mentions him alongside other masters with phrases like "*Akhbaranā*" and "*Haddathanā*," which indicates a direct scholarly and hadith connection between them.

For example, in his book *al-Khiṣāl*, *Ṣadūq* writes:

212 "*Haddathanā Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*, from *Muhammad ibn*

Abī 'Imrān, from *'Abdullāh ibn al-Faḍl*, from *al-Hasan ibn Maḥbūb..*" (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 51).

In the book *al-Amālī*, there are also examples of *Ṣadūq*'s hadith narrations from *Asadī*, and their repetition suggests that *Asadī* was a frequently narrated and trusted master of *Ṣadūq*.

In addition to *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, Sunni sources also mention the narration of hadith from *Asadī* by some individuals. For example, *Abū Sa'īd al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ* is introduced as a narrator from *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* in *Akhbār Qazwin* (Rāfi'i, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 246). Also, *Muhammad ibn Abī 'Imrān* is another Sunni narrator whose name is found in the chains of narration from *Asadī*.

This evidence shows that the circle of *Asadī*'s students was not limited to a specific denomination, and figures from both hadith traditions—Shi'a and Sunni—narrated hadith from him.

Furthermore, the narration of hadith in the mosques of Qazwin, such as the narration of *Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Būndār Qazwīnī* from *Asadī* in the mosque of "Abī Bakr al-Ustādh" (Rāfi'i, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 130), as well as the narration of *Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Bardha'i Qazwīnī* from him (Rāfi'i, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188), indicates that *Asadī* had an active presence in the academic environment of Qazwin and that a circle of local narrators had also formed around him, although the old sources rarely refer to the names of these individuals directly.

Given the geographical spread and denominational diversity among *Asadī*'s students, it can be concluded that he played a key role in the

transmission of hadith traditions, especially in the region of Qazwin and Rayy, and that his influence on the formation of the hadith tradition of Qom and Rayy, through a student like *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, is undeniable.

4-3. Assessing the Trustworthiness and Denomination of *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*

Shaykh Ṣadūq's special attention to Sunni masters is an undeniable issue (Sattar, 2014 AD/1393 AH: 209). This approach in hadith interactions provided a ground for the presence of some Sunni masters in the Shi'i narrative heritage. In the process of compiling hadith works, hadith researchers sometimes encounter names for which there is no trace in Shi'i biographical sources and catalogs. This absence indicates that some narrators were not fundamentally discussed in Imami biographical sources, and one must look for their biographies in Sunni sources.

One of the prominent examples in this regard is "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*," for whom no precise information is available in Shi'i biographical sources, and no clear name or trace has been reported. It seems that he was one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s non-Imami masters and was considered a hadith narrator in Qazwin. The proof of this claim is the following chain of narration, which mentions a hadith narration by him in Qazwin:

"... *Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Barda*‘īyy in Qazwin informed us,

214 *Ishāq ibn Muhammad ibn Marwān* informed me that his father ..." (al-

Rafi‘ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188 and 240)

The narration of hadith from such a person by Shaykh Ṣadūq cannot be without reason and must have been based on logical and scholarly motivations and reasons. Among the clues that are noteworthy in understanding the hadith status of Muḥammad ibn Ahmad Asadī, known as Abul Hasan Asadī, is his benefit from hadith and history knowledge, which resulted from his studentship under figures like Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy and Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277; Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 178).

In some Sunni sources, *Abul Hasan Asadī* is praised with prominent descriptions. For example, he is introduced as follows:

"The Imam, the *Hāfiẓ*, the Traveler, *Abul Hasan Muḥammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad, Asadī al-Barda‘īyy*." (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277)

And it is also stated:

"And this *Muḥammad* was a great *Hāfiẓ*, a critic, and a prolific narrator." (Ibn 'Imad al-Hanbali, n.d.: 4, 255)

There are also views on the title "*al-Barda‘īyy*." It is said that "*Barda‘īyy*" is the name of a land in Azerbaijan:

"And *al-Barda‘īyy*: with a *Fathā* on the *Bā’* and a silent *Rā’*, is related to *Barda‘ā*, a city in Azerbaijan. Thus in the original and printed: "*al-Barda‘īyy*" and in *Tadhkīrat al-Huffāz* (3/971) and *Tabaqāt al-Huffāz* p. (387): "*al-Bardha‘ī*" with a *dhal*." (Ibn 'Imād al-Hanbālī, n.d.: 4, 255)

Each of the titles used to describe *Abul Hasan Asadī* reflects his

scholarly dimensions and hadith status. The title "*Hāfiẓ*" in the Sunni hadith culture is a key term with a special meaning that, from the 3rd and 4th centuries AH onwards, was used to refer to hadith scholars with the ability to widely memorize hadith chains, narrators, and texts (al-Suyūṭī, 1979 AD/1399 AH: 1, 30-32).

The title "Imam" is another term that indicates the individual's trustworthiness and precision in hadith knowledge and is often used to introduce the most prominent Sunni hadith scholars. For example:

"That the *Hāfiẓ*, the Imam, *Taqī al-Dīn Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī*, the resident of Damascus, came." (al-Suyūṭī, 1979 AD/1399 AH: 1, 44)

"And as for the *Musnad* of the Imam *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal...*" (ibid: 1, 187)

The title "*Rahhāl*" (traveler) also indicates the dynamic and hardworking character of *Abul Hasan Asadī* in his pursuit of knowledge. His presence in various cities such as Iraq, Egypt, and Syria (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277) confirms this characteristic. Rashid al-'Attār also recalls his extensive travels as follows:

"And he had a journey in which he gathered between Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and other regions and countries." (Rashīd al-'Attār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115)

He is also introduced as one of the famous hadith memorizers and prolific great scholars:

"One of the famous hadith memorizers and the prolific great ones."

Among other available information about him is the name of his father, who was known as "*Harārah*," and *Asadī* himself was sometimes called "*Ibn Harārah*":

"His father is known as *Harārah*" (ibid; Ibn 'Imād al-Hanbali, n.d.: 4, 255);

"*Ibn Harārah*" (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 233).

Noteworthy points are also mentioned about his memory. For example, it is said:

"He narrated from memory more than thirty thousand hadith in Qazwin and Rayy, and he had no paper with him." (ibid.)

These reports indicate his astonishing memory power; he would narrate more than 30,000 hadith from memory without using any written text. It is clear that such a status could not be insignificant in the hadith environment of Rayy and Qazwin, where *Shaykh Ṣadūq* was also present.

Finally, the year of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s death is also mentioned in some sources:

"He died in Qazwin in the year three hundred and forty-eight" (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 234; Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115).

His death occurred in 348 AH in Qazwin. This time and place, along with other evidence, can provide a basis for a more accurate analysis of the probable meeting between *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and him.

4-4. Shaykh Ṣadūq's Direct Meeting with Abul Hasan Asadī in Rayy

Our knowledge about the academic life and hadith activities of *Abul* **217**

Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī is limited to a few brief and scattered reports. Only some of this data is subject to biographical analysis. In Shi'i sources, especially *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s writings, there is only a small but unique report of his encounter with *Abul Hasan Asadī* in Rayy. This specific report is found only in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works, and other authors of biographical and hadith books have not mentioned such a meeting. However, *Ṣadūq*'s narration in *al-Amālī* clearly indicates a face-to-face meeting and listening to hadith from *Abul Hasan Asadī*:

"*Haddathanā Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī* in Rayy in Rajab of the year three hundred and forty-seven." (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 233 and 385)

In the sixty-first session of *al-Amālī*, which was held on a Friday in the year 368 AH (ibid: 384), *Shaykh Ṣadūq* narrates a hadith from *Abul Hasan Asadī*. The third narration of that session is a narration that *Ṣadūq* recited in the presence of the people of Nishapur and explicitly states that he obtained it from *Abul Hasan Asadī* in the city of Rayy in Rajab of the year 347 AH. The 21-year time gap between receiving the hadith and narrating it shows *Ṣadūq*'s precision and scholarly integrity.

From the chain of narration's structure and the terms used, several points can be inferred:

1. The term "*Haddathanā...bil Rayy*" suggests a face-to-face meeting, especially since the place of narration is also specified.
2. The use of the formula "*Haddathanā*" clearly indicates an audible

narration, not through an *Ijāza* (permission) or correspondence.

3. Given *Shaykh Sadūq*'s method of hadith narration and his effort to receive hadith directly from trustworthy masters, this type of encounter adds to the weight of the narration and gives it greater documentary credibility.
4. The term "*Haddathanā*," which is formally used in face-to-face hadith narration, also confirms direct listening from the master.

4-5. Determining the Time of the Meeting and Hadith Reception

According to the report in *al-Amālī*, the meeting between *Shaykh Sadūq* and *Abul Hasan Asadī* took place in the city of Rayy in the year 347 AH (ibid: 233 and 385). This encounter indicates the simultaneous presence of two prominent figures in the city of Rayy. On the other hand, Sunni biographical sources have stated the year of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s death as 348 AH (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 234). Also, *Shaykh Sadūq*'s father is considered one of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s students. Since *Ali ibn Bābawayh* died in 329 AH, it can be guessed that his meeting with *Abul Hasan Asadī* occurred in the final years of his life and that he was in a generation preceding his son.

The synthesis of these clues suggests that *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Bābawayh*'s meeting with *Asadī* took place in the last year of this prolific hadith scholar's life—i.e., 347 AH. After this meeting, the possibility of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s return to Qazwin is high, as sources like *Nuzhat al-Nāzir* have reported his death in Qazwin (Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115). Therefore, it can be assumed that

his presence in Rayy was temporary or that he was in transit between Rayy and Qazwin. It is also not far-fetched to assume that *Shaykh Šadūq*, upon learning of his presence in Rayy, went to him to listen to hadith.

The content of the hadith and the manner of its recording confirm that *Šadūq*, from what he heard from him, selected and reflected in his works what was compatible with Imami theological principles. This encounter can show a part of *Šadūq*'s *Ijtihādī* (independent reasoning) process in selecting hadith.

4-6. The Dissemination of the Qazwin Hadith School in Rayy by *Abul Hasan Asadī*

The city of Rayy in the 4th century AH, with its open and relatively free academic environment provided a suitable ground for intellectual and hadith interactions. The cultural context of this city, due to the absence of bigoted movements and the presence of a healthy academic atmosphere, provided a suitable ground for the entry of scholars from different denominations. The presence of *Shaykh Šadūq* and his hadith activities, on the one hand, and the arrival of hadith masters from Baghdad (cf. Mużaffar, n.d.: 86), Qazwin, Nishapur, and other academic centers, on the other hand, indicate Rayy's important status in the exchange of hadith heritage.

Among these figures is *Abul Hasan Asadī*, a prominent Sunni hadith scholar and a native of Qazwin. With extensive travels to different parts of the Islamic world, he had gained a wide circle of

hadith connections, but his longest stay was in Qazwin and Rayy. His temporary interaction with *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, which seemingly occurred only once, not only led to the transmission of hadith but also probably influenced *Ṣadūq*'s desire to begin his scholarly journeys (*Rihlāt 'Ilmīyya*). At that time, *Ṣadūq* was still at the beginning of his journey, and such meetings could have encouraged him to connect with other masters.

Undoubtedly, *Ṣadūq* took a part of his ethical and theological teachings from *Asadī*; and although this meeting was short, it is considered one of the important channels for the transmission of the Qazwin hadith heritage to Rayy. This transmission, albeit limited, played a significant role in establishing Rayy's position as one of the hadith hubs.

The analysis of these interactions is a part of the unknown history of hadith. The communication network that *Ṣadūq* established in Rayy was able to spread the hadith of various hadith scholars from the East to the West of the Islamic world and played a role like the flow of blood in the body of Islamic culture. A part of these efforts is due to *Ṣadūq*'s own scholarly character, and another part is due to the environment that Rayy provided for him.

Ultimately, the meeting with *Abul Hasan Asadī* can be considered the starting point for a strong line of communication between Qazwin and Rayy in the field of hadith. Thus, the city of Rayy can be considered a mirror reflecting the hadith heritage of Qazwin in this **221**

era; a city where various religious leanings found a chance to emerge and *Şadūq* was able to benefit from this diversity for the sake of the Imami tradition.

4-7. Analysis of the Chains of Narration of *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*

4-7-1. In the Works of *Shaykh Şadūq*

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijālī Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Şadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations and Chain Analysis
1	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad (al-Bardha'ī)	al-Amālī	p. 227	Virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)	Direct (hearing), narrated in Rayy
2	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 233	Manners and Ethics	Direct, date of narration: Rajab 347 AH in Rayy
3	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 312	Exegesis	Direct
4	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 385	Sermons	Direct
5	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 7	Characteristics of the Shi'a	Direct
6	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 28	Knowledge	Indirect, through Şadūq's father (Ali ibn Ȣusayn)

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijali Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations and Chain Analysis
	al-Asad Asadī					
7	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 73	Reward of Deeds	Direct
8	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 79	Imamate	Direct
9	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 161	History of Prophets	Direct
10	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 199	Ethics	Direct
11	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asadī	(Probably the ibid)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 253	Merits	Narrates from Ruqayya bint Ishāq
12	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī al-Ma'rūf bi Ibn Jarādah al-Bardha'ī	ibid (with full title)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 2, p. 461	Occultation	Direct
13	Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali al-Asadī al-Ma'rūf bi	ibid	Faḍā'il al-Shi'a	p. 7	Virtues of the Shi'a	Direct

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijali Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations and Chain Analysis
	Ibn Jarādah al-Bardha‘ī					
14	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asadī	ibid	Ma‘ānī al-Akhbār	p. 191	Exegesis	Direct
15	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asadī	ibid	Ma‘ānī al-Akhbār	p. 322	Imamate	Direct
16	Abulhasan Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asadī	ibid	Ma‘ānī al-Akhbār	p. 323	Exegesis	Direct
17	(Through his father)	(Indirect)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 28	Knowledge	Indirect (Ijāza/correspondence), narrated from Ṣadūq's father who narrated from Asadī

4-7-2. In Sunni Sources

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
1	Name and Titles	al-Dhahabī, Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā‘	"The Imam, the Ḥāfiẓ, the Traveler, Abul Ḥasan Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad, Asadī al-Bardha‘īy"	Muhammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī	Confirmation of identity, the titles "Ḥāfiẓ" and "Imam" indicate his high status among Sunnis.
2	Description and Virtues	Ibn ‘Imād al-Ḥanbalī, Shadharāt al-Dhahab	"And this Muhammad was a great Ḥāfiẓ, a critic, a prolific narrator"	ibid	Emphasizes his extensive memorization, criticism, and prolific narration.
3	Masters (Teachers)	al-Dhahabī, Sīyar	"He heard from Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb;	1. Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb;	Connection with major and well-

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
		A‘lām al-Nubalā’	Shu‘ayb, Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarīyy, and Ibn Jawṣā’"	2. Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy; 3. ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarī; 4. Ibn Jawṣā’	known Sunni masters.
4	Masters (Teachers)	Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, Nuzhat al-Nāzīr	"He heard from Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd, Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd, Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb, Abu ‘Umar ibn al-Naḥḥās, Abul Ḥasan ibn Jawṣā’, and many others"	1. Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy; 2. Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd; 3. Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd; 4. Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb; 5. Abū ‘Umar ibn al-Naḥḥās; 6. Abul Ḥasan ibn Jawṣā’	A much more extensive and important list of masters, showing his wide connections.
5	Students	al-Rāfi‘ī, Akhbār Qazwin	"Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ narrated from him"	Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ	One of his students who was himself a Ḥāfiẓ.
6	Students	(Indirect report via chain)	Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī narrated hadith from him in the mosque of "Abī Bakr al-Ustād" in Qazwin.	Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī	Indicates his teaching activity in Qazwin and having a hadith circle.
7	Students	(Indirect report via chain)	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bardā‘īyy Qazwīnī narrated from him.	Muhammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bardā‘īyy Qazwīnī	Indicates his local students in Qazwin.
8	Place of Activity and Narration	al-Rāfi‘ī, al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwin	"Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bardā‘īyy in Qazwin informed us..."	-	Explicitly states his hadith narration in the city of Qazwin.
9	Travels (al-Rahḥāl)	Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, Nuzhat al-Nāzīr	"And he had a journey in which he gathered	-	Confirms the title "al-Rahḥāl" and his travels to Iraq, Syria, and Egypt

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
			between Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and other regions and countries"		to acquire hadith.
10	Memory and Prolific Narration	al-Dhahabī, <i>Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'</i>	"He narrated from memory more than thirty thousand hadith in Qazwin and Rayy, and he had no paper with him"	-	A testimony to his extraordinary memory and narration of more than 30,000 hadith from memory.
11	Nickname and Father's Attribution	ibid	"His father is known as Ḥarārah" and "Ibn Ḥarārah"	His father was known as "Ḥarārah."	Information for comparative identification and distinguishing from homonyms.
12	Death	ibid	"He died in Qazwin in the year three hundred and forty-eight" (348 AH)	-	Important: The date of his death (348 AH), which is key for comparison with Ṣadūq's meeting date (347 AH).
13	Death	Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, <i>Nuzhat al-Nāzir</i>	Ibid	-	Confirmation of the death date in other sources.

5. Analysis of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s Chain Data

5-1. Examination of Omissions, Changes, and Distortions of Names

1) Distortion of names. The most important case is the distortion of his geographical attribution. In Shi'i sources (*Sadūq*), he is mainly referred to by the relation of "Asadī" or "al-Barda'īyy." An examination of Sunni sources shows that the correct nisba is "al-Barda'ī" (relative to the region of "Barda'a" in Azerbaijan). This difference may be due to a scribe's error or a change in pronunciation over time.

2) Omissions in the chains of narration. In *Sadūq*'s chains, his name is sometimes abbreviated to "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*," which the omission of his grandfather's name ("Ali") and his full relation of ("al-Barda'iyy") can lead to a *homonymy* with other narrators (such as *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Salt*). This highlights the need for precision in accurately identifying narrators based solely on their kunya and father's name.

3) Distortion in the names of masters. In Sunni sources, the name of one of his masters is mentioned as "*Ibn Jawṣā'*," while it may be narrated differently in some Shi'i chains. This issue requires a precise comparative analysis of all his chains in both traditions.

5-2. Analysis of Direct and Indirect Narrations and an Examination of Masters and Students

1) Direct narrations (listening). The vast majority of *Sadūq*'s narrations from *Asadī* is direct and is narrated with explicit phrases such as "*Haddathanā... bil Rayy*." This indicates a face-to-face meeting and the high credibility of these narrations with *Sadūq*.

2) Indirect narration. There is only one case of indirect narration where *Sadūq* narrates from *Asadī* through his father (*Ali ibn Husayn*) (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 28). This shows that *Sadūq*'s father was also one of *Asadī*'s students, and this scholarly connection goes back a generation.

Asadī's masters (based on Sunni sources). His network of masters is very extensive and consists of prominent Sunni figures:

- *Hamīd ibn Shu‘ayb*
- *Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy* (one of the greatest Sunni hadith scholars)
- *Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd* (son of the author of *Sunan*)
- *‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarī*
- *Ibn Jawṣā’*
- *Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd*
- This list shows that *Asadī* benefited from the purest hadith sources of the Sunni tradition.

3) *Asadī's students:*

- *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (his most important Imami student)
- *Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Hāfiẓ* (one of the prominent Sunni *Huffāz*)
- *Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Būndār Qazwīnī* (a local narrator in Qazwin)
- *Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Bardā‘īyy Qazwīnī* (a local narrator in Qazwin)
- This combination demonstrates his role as a connecting bridge between the two sides.

Despite *Asadī* being Sunni, the vast majority of the narrations narrated from him by *Ṣadūq* revolve around purely Shi‘i concepts such as the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, the Imamate, and the characteristics of the Shi‘a. This demonstrates *Ṣadūq*'s intelligent and purposeful selection.

5-3. General Narrative Status of *Ṣadūq* in Relation to His Works

228 - Trans-denominational narration. *Ṣadūq*, with great prudence, used

trustworthy Sunni masters to strengthen and support Imami theological principles.

- Using memorized narrations. *Sadūq*'s narration from *Asadī*, who knew "Thirty thousand hadith from memory," shows that *Sadūq* had access to memorized narrations that were in the memory of hadith scholars (not just in books).
- Emphasis on direct chains. *Sadūq*'s insistence on mentioning the exact meetings ("*Bil Rayy fī Rajab* of the year three hundred and forty-seven") indicates his critical and precise approach in the science of hadith.

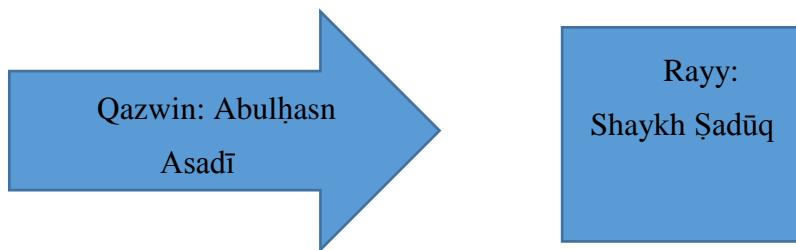
5-4. *Asadī*'s Role in *Sadūq*'s Narrative System

In the narrative system of *Shaykh Sadūq*, *Abul Hasan Asadī* played the following key roles:

- 1) A bridge for the transmission of the Qazwin heritage to Rayy.** He was the link between two important hadith schools, and *Sadūq* gained access to a treasure trove of *Qazwīnī* Sunni hadith through him.
- 2) A source for strengthening Shi'i concepts.** *Sadūq*, through careful selection of narrations, used him as a Sunni source for narrating hadith that directly benefited the Imami tradition. This work gave the narrations additional weight and credibility in inter-denominational debates.
- 3) A model for scholarly interaction.** *Sadūq*'s interaction with *Asadī* is a practical example of scholarly interaction based on fairness and

documentation in the 4th century; in which an Imami scholar, in search of truth, goes to a trustworthy and pious Sunni scholar.

4) Providing a part of the biographical network infrastructure. The identification of *Asadī* and his masters' helps in better understanding the vast narrative network that *Ṣadūq* used.



6. Consequences of the Presence of *Abul Hasan Asadī Qazwīnī* in the Region of Rayy: Scientific and Cultural Impacts on the Rayy Hadith School

The presence of *Abul Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*, a Sunni *Qazwīnī* narrator, in the city of Rayy and his meeting with *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, although limited, had significant consequences in the field of scholarly interactions and the transmission of narrations between the two hadith regions of Qazwin and Rayy. An examination of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works shows that he carefully selected from the narrations transmitted by *Asadī* those that were consistent with Imami principles. For example, in *al-Amālī*, *Ṣadūq* explicitly states that he heard these narrations from *Asadī* in the year 347 AH in the city of Rayy (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 233, 385). This limited but important interaction had several scholarly and cultural

6-1. *Ṣadūq's Methodical Interaction with Sunni Masters and Avoiding Unsubstantiated Narrations*

Given the limited number of *Ṣadūq*'s narrations from *Asadī* (about 17 narrations in various works such as *al-Khiṣāl*, *al-Amālī*, *Ma 'ānī al-Akhbār*, and *Fadā'il al-Shi'a*) and the absence of any expression of mercy or praise for him in the narrations, it becomes clear that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* had a methodical and selective approach in his interaction with this narrator (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; idem, n.d.: 191). The selection of these hadith only occurred when their content was compatible with Imami theological and narrative criteria. This method is a manifestation of the rationality and hadith caution reflected in *Ṣadūq*'s hadith-writing character (Sattar, 2013 AD/1393 AH: 210).

6-2. The Transmission of Narration from the Qazwin School to Rayy by *Asadī*

In Sunni biographical sources, including *al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwin*, it is stated that *Abul Hasan Asadī* narrated in Qazwin and held sessions (al-Rāfi'i, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188 and 240; 2, 130). Also, *Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* describes him as a "*Rahhāl*" who was also present in various cities such as Baghdad, Syria, and Egypt (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277). His presence in Rayy in the year 347 AH, when *Ṣadūq* received narrations from him, indicates the direct transmission of *Qazwīnī* hadith knowledge to Rayy through him.

6-3. An Example of Inter-denominational Interactions in the Open Academic Environment of Rayy

The open academic environment of Rayy in the 4th century, especially 231

during the Buyid rule, allowed scholars from different denominations to engage in dialogue and narration alongside each other (Musavi and Sattar, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 125). *Ṣadūq*'s acceptance of narrations from narrators like *Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Qaṭṭān* and *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* is an example of this interaction. Although the number of these narrations is small, it shows a path that *Ṣadūq* was pursuing to benefit from the Sunni scholarly heritage within the framework of Imami criteria.

6-4. The Content-Based Influence of *Asadī*'s Narrations in *Ṣadūq*'s Works

An analysis of the content of *Asadī*'s narrations shows that their themes are often ethical, educational, and relate to the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). For example, narrations in *Faḍā'il al-Shi'a* and *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār* are transmitted that directly address the characteristics of believers and the virtues of the Family of Muḥammad (PBUH) (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7; Ma'ānī al-Akhbar: 322). *Ṣadūq* cautiously and selectively incorporated these narrations into his works to preserve the Imami theological framework while benefiting from the Sunni tradition (Isma'ilizadeh, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 156).

6-5. The Highlighting of Interaction between the Two Hadith Schools of Qazwin and Rayy

Although the data about *Asadī* is limited, this very data shows that he was a part of a wider scholarly network that formed the connecting link between Qazwin and Rayy. *Asadī*'s scholarly travels, the narrations transmitted in Qazwin, and the face-to-face meeting with

232 *Ṣadūq* in Rayy is evidence of this connection (Rashīd

al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115). This interaction shows that in the 4th century AH, the flow of hadith was not limited by religious boundaries but was based on scholarly criteria and inter-denominational dialogue.

In summary, a precise analysis of *Abul Hasan Asadī*'s role in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works, although based on limited sources, provides a valuable opportunity for a re-examination of a part of the hadith interactions between Sunni and Imami schools; an interaction that bore fruit in the scholarly context of the city of Rayy and played a role in preserving the Shi'i narrative heritage.

Conclusion

This study is an attempt to re-examine one of the lesser-known narrators in the Imami hadith tradition, namely *Abul Hasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*; a Sunni Qazwīnī narrator whose name is recorded in a limited but significant way in the hadith works of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (*Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummi*). A precise examination of biographical and hadith data in Shi'i and Sunni sources showed that this narrator was not only one of the prominent Sunni hadith scholars in the 4th century AH but also played an important role in the transmission of the Qazwin hadith heritage to the city of Rayy and in indirectly influencing the narrative structure of *Ṣadūq*'s works.

In the first instance, an analysis of the presence of *Asadī*'s name in *Ṣadūq*'s works showed that he is mentioned in a collection of hadith texts such as *al-Amālī*, *al-Khiṣāl*, *Ma ‘ānī al-Akhbār*, and *Faḍā’il al-* 233

Shi'a, with various titles and nicknames, and a total of about 17 narrations are transmitted from him. Although this number seems relatively small, a qualitative analysis of these narrations revealed that their main themes are in the fields of ethics, the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, exegesis, and theological issues; fields in which the discursive intersection between Shi'a and Sunni is more than in other topics. This very fact shows that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, in narrating these narrations, acted selectively and with a specific purpose, not by coincidence.

From a biographical perspective, this article also proved that *Abul Hasan Asadī* was never addressed with terms of mercy such as "*Raḍī Allah 'anhu*" or "*Rahimahu Allah*" in Shi'i sources, which itself can indicate the denominational distance between him and *Ṣadūq*. On the other hand, in Sunni biographical sources such as *Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, and *Nuzhat al-Nāzir*, he is praised with important titles such as "*al-Hāfiẓ*, *al-Rahhāl*, *al-Naqqād*, *al-Imam*," and there are even reports of his high memorization power in narrating more than thirty thousand hadith without using a written text. These descriptions not only highlight his status in the Sunni tradition but also justify why a prominent Shi'i hadith scholar like *Ṣadūq* would refer to him.

Another important point addressed in this research is the special geographical and academic position of the city of Rayy in the 4th century AH. The open and pluralistic academic environment in Rayy, especially during the Buyid period, provided a context for interaction

Ṣadūq to meet with non-Imami narrators like *Abul Hasan Asadī* and to benefit from their knowledge within a specific framework. *Ṣadūq* not only narrated from *Asadī* but also his manner of narration (with the phrases "*Haddathanā ... bil Rayy*," explicitly in the year 347 AH) shows that this encounter was face-to-face and audible and had high biographical importance.

In the local studies dimension, the article clarified that *Abul Hasan Asadī* was a native of Qazwin, but in sources, he is also known by the title "*al-Barda īyy*," which refers to a region in Azerbaijan. However, numerous hadith and biographical pieces of evidence showed that he had an active presence in Qazwin and Rayy and that his hadith sessions were held in both cities. *Ṣadūq*'s narration from him in Rayy is a strategic point in the transmission of the Qazwin Sunni tradition to the Shi'i scholarly and narrative context of the city of Rayy. This point also proves that the role of the Qazwin School in the formation of *Ṣadūq*'s scholarly character is greater than being limited to Imami masters.

Another achievement of the article was the precise identification of *Asadī*'s masters and students, which showed that he had an active position in a network of extensive scholarly connections in the Islamic world of that time. Among his prominent masters are *Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy* and *Muhammad ibn Jarīr Tabarī*, and among his students are *Abū Sa'd al-Sammān* and *Shaykh Ṣadūq* himself. This diversity in scholarly connections not only adds to his narrative credibility but also shows a kind of link between the Sunni and Shi'i hadith traditions.

Nevertheless, this very case study was able to provide a model for

re-examining *Sadiq*'s other obscure masters and reconstructing the forgotten scholarly network between the Sunni and Imami hadith schools in the 4th century AH. This article showed that even narrators with a small volume of narrations can be key links in the flow of knowledge, inter-denominational interactions, and the intellectual structure of great Imami hadith scholars.

It is suggested that future research, using more precise document analysis methods, should examine other Sunni narrators in *Sadiq*'s works to shed more light on the hidden dimensions of scholarly interactions in the early Islamic centuries.

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