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The Study of Early Shi‘ī *Ḥadīth*: Sources and Methodology
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Abstracts (in order of presentation)

Edmund Hayes (Leiden University):

Imam Jawād’s *Khums* Letter: Between Implementation and Legislation

Ṭūsī’s *Tahdhīb* cites a letter carried by ‘Alī b. Mahzyiār from Imam Jawād, in which the Imam mentions some of his followers in the Jibāl who took large amounts of wealth in a battle against Khurramiyya. The letter mentions the imposition of *zakāt*, *khums* and the “gains and benefits” (*al-ghanā’im wa al-fawā’id*). These categories do not appear to correspond to classical Imami fiqh, nor to hadith statements ascribed to earlier Imams. The anomalous nature of this letter was noted not only by later jurists of the Occultation period, but even during the lifetime of Imam Hādī. I propose that to understand the peculiar contents of this hadith, we should note 2 factors. (1) During the lifetimes of the Imams the law was not finally fixed and limited to a finite corpus of hadith. Instead, Imamic law worked on the basis of precedent, in which the opinions of earlier Imams were extremely important, but could be developed by succeeding Imams. (2) In this letter, the Imam was aiming not to legislate, but to implement the law. It should be seen as a tax-demand letter, rather than a definition of the tax to be paid. However, because of the great prestige of Imamic statements, the letter retrospectively came to be seen as carrying potential legislative force. When viewed as a source of law-making, rather than law-enforcing, later jurists came to see it as problematic.

Mohsen Alviri (Bagher al-Ulum University, Qum)

Some Methodological Considerations for studying the "history" in Early Shi‘ī *Ḥadīth*
In the name of Allah (SWT)

Abstract

Regarding to impressive increase of *Ḥadīth* studies in recent decades, now investigating the historical events as an important part of ignored content, which is cited in Shiite narrations, should be interesting for Shiites, historians, and Hadith scholars alike, because it can open up new horizons in their studies and researches. Since these studies are in their early stages, the methodological considerations should lead to a better and more appropriate review process and organizing.

In an intra-Shiite perspective and with the aim of identifying the domain, capacity, importance and value of Shiite historical narrations and in response to the current academic needs, this article **_as an idea_** tries to pay attention to the following eight methodological considerations in this regard:

1. Prioritizing the question of being on the question of how; it means the necessity of engaging in descriptive surveys and descriptive analysis before engaging in interpretive analysis and explanatory analysis or Textual Criticism and the like.
2. Defining the approach of examining the historical contents of narrations as "content" of narrations or "representation" of history in Shiite narrations.
3. Time domain of historical events in Shiite narrations.
4. Diversity of historical issues in Shiite narrations.
5. Physical and metaphysical dimensions of the reflection of historical events in Shiite narrations.
6. Goals of dealing with historical events in Shiite narrations.
7. Considering the historical propositions of the Shiite narrations as an important part of Shiite historiography.
8. The necessity of using new research methods and techniques of social sciences such as content analysis, thematic analysis, comparison technique and the like in discussing the historical propositions of Shiite narrations and also choosing the combined approach for methods in researches and particularly in intensive researches related to historical events in Shiite narrations.

The paper ends with a proposal to set up a comprehensive database for history in Shiite narrations.

Gurdofarid Miskinzoda (Institute of Ismaili Studies, London)

The use of *ḥadīth* in the *Kitāb al-Irshād* of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) on the example of the life of the Twelfth Imām

The *Kitāb al-Irshād* of al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) is one of the chief sources on the early history of Shi‘i Islam containing the lives of the twelve Imams in one book. It consists of twelve sections, each devoted to the life of one of the twelve Imams of the Twelver (Ithnā ‘Asharī) tradition. Some of these are then further divided into sub-sections on various topics related to the life of that particular Imam. Although mainly perceived as a collection of Shi‘i traditions (*ḥadīths*), this work has had tremendous impact on the way early Shi‘i history has been perceived and studied by the tradition itself as well as by Western academia. However, little attention has been paid to the internal subtleties of the *K. al-Irshād* and to how its author builds his arguments, constructing the fundamental elements of Twelver Shi‘i doctrine and its main historical narrative, relating in particular to the doctrine of twelve Imams and the occultation of the twelfth and last Imam in Twelver Shi‘i Islam. Little attention has also been paid to the narrative structure of this work and the way in which the author weaved the core Shi‘i doctrines into that narrative, further shaping and systematizing them. In fact, one could even say that he used narrative as a principal tool of historical discourse to articulate and further refine those very core doctrines.

In this paper, I focus only on one section of the book, namely the last section devoted to the life of the Twelfth Ithnā ‘Asharī Imam Muḥammad al-Mahdī. In analysing this section, I will address the following question: how does al-Shaykh al-Mufīd use *ḥadīths* to build the narrative and narrativity in constructing the biography of the Twelfth Imam as well as in articulating the history of the Shi‘i Imams up until the 4th/11th century? In addressing this question, I also investigate how the juxtaposition of variant reports serves to create the assumption of a narrative in this section of the *Kitāb al-Irshād*, and how does the author use the *ḥadīths* from the Prophet as well as the earlier Imams to argue for Muḥammad al-Mahdī’s position as the designated Imam and as the Mahdī who is yet to appear.

Morteza Maddahi (Jama'at Al Mustafa, Qum)

The Role of Four Deputies (Nuwwāb Arba'ah) of Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in Shi'a Hadith Literature

Hadith, after the holy Qur'an is the second source in respect of authority and the first in respect of extent. Contrary to Qur'an, hadith is prone to manipulation and forgery; as the Prophet (p.b.u.h) warned about that and history witnessed. During the time of present Imams many hadiths presented before them and they conducted by denying their authenticity or correcting or explaining the meaning of them. Sheikh Saduq (d. 381/991) has gathered many of them in his *Maāni al-akhbār*. On the other hand, the most important Shi'a hadith books were compiled after the occultation of Imam. The time of the Minor occultation was a crucial time in Shi'a history. Now the question is regarding hadith compiling what course of action did the *Nowāb arba'eh* take? What was their duty in this respect? This article with a historical and analytical approach studies the identity and the conditions of the Four Deputies and their role in guiding the Shi'a community by instructions on hadith. Their stance against the ahadith of false claimers like *Shalmagāny* (d. 322/933) is dealt. Their relation with the scholars of Qom is studied. Also, the question why *Al-Kāfi* was not presented to them to get the approval of Imam Mahdi (p.b.u.h), in addition the relationship of *Kulayni* (d. 329/941) with them is covered.

Robert Gleave (University of Exeter)

Ibn al-Musayyib and the early development of Shī'i legal hadith material

Early Shi'ite law is, supposedly, a reflection of the opinions of the Imams. These opinions on a range of legal topics are contained in the early Shi'ite hadith material. The views over where to place Shi'ite law in the history of early Islamic law in European and North American secondary literature have produced various answers. Some think of Shi'ite law as primarily Kufan in character; other Medinan or even Meccan. Yet others, view it as an internally generated legal system which was independent of the regional schools. In this paper, I first outline the current theories about the origins of Shi'ite law, and then present some of my own research concerning the close links between the emergence of Shiite law – as found in the Shiite hadith material - and the other legal schools. In particular, there appears, occasionally at least, to be a crossover between the views of the great Medinan jurist *Sa'īd Ibn al-Musayyib* (or sometimes, *Ibn Musayyab*) (d.93/715) and some early, unique Shi'ite legal views. Whilst the evidence is not entirely straightforward, there is sufficient evidence for us to explore different conceptions of the development of early Shiite law.

Mohammed Ghandehari (University of Tehran)

In search of the historical Sulaym ibn Qays

Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays al-Hilālī has been considered as the oldest surviving Shī'i book¹ and one of the rare written works of the Umayyad period.² Although the difficulties regarding the book go beyond a mere disagreement on its authenticity, one of the most fundamental challenges concerning this book is about the historical identity of the author of the book: Is *Sulaym b. Qays* a real person besides *Abān b. Abī 'Ayyāsh* (the only transmitter of the book)? Is his name a pseudo-name or a real-name? Several studies have recently paid attention to the work³, but have never touched upon this question. As the alleged author *Sulaym b. Qays* seems

¹ Ibn Nadim, *al-Fihrist*, 307

² Modarresi, *Hussein, Tradition and Survival*, 83.

³ Robert Gleave, *Early Shiite hermeneutics and the dating of Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays*, Maria Dakake, *Loyalty, Love and Faith*; Patricia Crone, *Mawālī and the prophet's family*; Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *Note bibliographique sur le Kitāb Sulaym b. Qays*; Tamima Bayhom-Daou, *Kitāb Sulaym ibn Qays revisited*.

to be virtually unknown outside the corpus of *Abān*, modern scholarship has repeatedly assumed that this character is fictitious.⁴

Yet, the corpus, when examined in detail, does not lend itself to such a definite conclusion. Analyzing all the traditions relating to the *Sulaym* in Shī'i and Sunni hadith literature, however, one finds substantial evidence that there must be a historical figure behind the book, and "*Sulaym*" may be a pseudo-name. No matter what the dating of every hadith of *Kitāb Sulaym* maybe, if we look at isnāds from all available sources relating *Sulaym*, following the methodology of Motzki, we will come to the conclusion that there must be a *Sulaym's corpus* circulating at the end of the seventh century, mostly transmitted through *Abān*. On the other hand, one cannot find any invented *Shaykh* amongst alleged teachers of *Abān*; So it would not be unreasonable to assume that by naming "*Sulaym*", he was referring to a real person in his time. However, the hitherto ignored question that has not yet been addressed is who the individual to whom *Abān* referred was?

In this presentation, I try to address this question by suggesting some liberating assumptions. First of all, we will see that *Kitāb Sulaym* is written in forms of combined reports, generated from fusion of several distinctive short ḥadīths without isnād into a unique long version, often accompanied by a later introduction, a process which was prevalent among the early *Akhbaris*. So, we can conclude that the hadiths of *Kitāb Sulaym* should be mostly *Mursal* (narrated with omitted intermediaries). That is, the author may have narrated them from via other people indirectly; That is, he may not have been himself a companion of Ali. So, the author of the book should be in a generation of *Akhbaris* who lived in the second half of the seventh century. On the other hand, following the methodology of regionalism, proposed by Behnam Sadeghi⁵, I will reconsider the birthplace of the author. While Kufa is the region in which the author is commonly assumed to have flourished, I will show that *Kitāb Sulaym* has distinctly Basran contents and features; consequently, the historical *Sulaym b. Qays* should have strong Basra connections too.

Considering these new assumptions, we can find a historical figure: *Abū Sadiq al-Azdī*, a prominent Shī'i ḥadīth narrator who shares much in common with the author of *Kitāb Sulaym*, including the *kunya*⁶, estimated time of death, authorities, exclusive narrations (with same wording), many sociopolitical tendencies, etc.

Kumail Rajani (University of Exeter)

Negotiating Historicity of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's (d. 363/974) Sources: A Case Study of an Early Shī'i Ḥadīth Collection, *al-Kutub al-Ja'ariyya*

This study examines the historicity of an early hadith source consulted by the most versatile Fatimid jurist, al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 363/974). Soon after the Fatimids established their hegemony over North Africa, al-Nu'mān was tasked with the responsibility of compiling a work of law that would serve as an authoritative point of reference for jurists, judges and bureaucrats in the burgeoning Ismaili state. It is evident that he had to have recourse to earlier collections of hadith as he cites them consistently in his writings and incorporates them into his works. His first voluminous legal work, *al-Īdāh*, survived in the form of a small fragment, cites several early hadith collections that were used to formulate and systematise various aspects of Ismaili belief and practice. Although the extant fragment of this work offers some valuable information on its sources, studying *al-Īdāh* is beset by serious challenges to its historicity, given that many of the original sources on which it was based are no longer extant. One such source is *al-Kutub al-Ja'ariyya*, also known as *al-Ja'ariyyāt* and *al-Ash'athiyāt*

⁴ For example, see: Modarresi, *ibid*.

⁵ Behnam Sadeghi, *The Travelling Tradition Test; A Method for Dating Traditions*

⁶ They are the only narrators named "Abū Sadiq" in the first century of Islam.

believed to have been composed in Medina before it travelled to Baghdad and North Africa to be incorporated in the larger hadith collections of Twelvers and Ismailis. It is detailing the trajectory of this early Shi'i hadith collection and examining its role in the emergence of Ismaili hadith literature my study is primarily concerned.

Muhammad Hadi Gerami (Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Tehran)

Hermeneutics of Early Shi'i Ideas: Social Networks as Active Actors in Hadith

As some scholars have pointed out, there are already significant paradigmatic obstacles to the study of early Shī'ism and early Islam, in general. Gleave argues that the latest research on Shī'ism shows that there is still disagreement about issues such as source interpretation methodology, source verification methods, and the basics of sociological methods in history. This makes the field both exciting and demanding. He observes that even basic introductory texts are poor in this area and can rarely be used for students at the beginning of their journey. An outsider may, therefore, see this large difference of opinion as a sign of weakness and immaturity of the field.⁷

This problem involves both the reliability of the sources and the approaches to interpreting and understanding the primary sources. As for the source criticism, it seems that the skeptical/sanguine duality, that a number of researchers alluded to it, is still the core paradigmatic dispute. Skeptical scholars believe that since our records on early Islam are minimal, and dated back to at least the second century onwards, they cannot be in use for the study of the early Islamic era. But, contrary to the previous paradigm, sanguine researchers consider the internal sources of Islam valid, and use them to reconstruct the history of Islam.⁸ Regarding the approaches of interpreting primary sources, the most significant dialogue is between "phenomenology" and "historicism."⁹ This dialogue is very serious, especially in Shī'ī studies. A comparable example of this controversy is between Hossein Modarresi and Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezi. That's why the views of the two scholars on early Shī'ism are very different.

However, the discussion is yet somewhat ambiguous, and does not offer adequate responses to the variety of historical queries. Certainly, this paper is not a philosophical work with great epistemological claims, but at least it attempts to propose a new way of understanding and hermeneuticizing the texts, centered on a decade of study practice. My proposal tries to recognize and then study the role of intra-sectarian social networks in Ḥadīth representations. Playing role in Ḥadīth representation means that Ḥadīth is, not only at the time of being invented, but also at the time of being chosen, paraphrased,¹⁰ distorted,¹¹ etc., dependent on the network biases of those who transmitted them.

Of course, examining social networks is not in itself a novel idea, as considering these networks is a long tradition in the camp of historicism and classical orientalism; Josef Van Ess, Wilfred Madelung, Hossein Modarresi, and Tamima Bayhom-Daou have dealt with these intra-Shī'ī networks, especially Hishām b. Ḥakam and his followers.¹² But what is being proposed here is

⁷ Gleave, Robert, "Recent Research into the History of Early Shiism," *History Compass*, 2009: 1602.

⁸ Berg, Herbert. "Competing paradigms in the study of Islamic origins: Qur'ān 15: 89–91 and the value of Isnāds." *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins* (2003): 261.

⁹ Refudeen, Mohammed Awais. "Phenomenology versus Historicism: The Case of Imamate." *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 15, no. 2 (1998): passim.

¹⁰ *naql al-ma'nā*.

¹¹ *tahrīf*.

¹² This network has just been addressed in few studies. Madelung, as a pioneer in this field, has discussed *Imāmah* doctrine in thought of Hishām as well as his most important role in establishing the Imami conception of Imams' Infallibility (See: Madelung, W., "Hishām b. al-Ḥakam Abu Muhammad",

a bit more than a fleeting discussion, underlining that any attempt to study early Shī'ī ideas without considering the role these networks played, would be misleading, and unlikely to help understand the early thoughts, as were understood by its early proponents.

This article, taking into account the early Shī'ī networks such as Hishām b. Ḥakam, Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī, Mufaḍḍal b. 'Umar, etc., demonstrate that some of the researches, not including these networks in study, either erred in interpreting the early Shī'ī ideas, or have failed to come up with a comprehensive and coherent proposal for historical evidences. As an example, in tafsīrī ideas, it will be seen, considering the network patterns of the second century AH, *bāḥīn/ḡāhīr* vs. *ta'wīl/tanzīl* were two counter-discourses upheld by different networks in early Shī'ism.

in: *EP*. Brill, 2009). To E. Kohlberg, Faḍl b. Shādhān, among Hishām's adherents, was who developed the idea of God's corporeality according to the circle's specific reading. As he suggests, Faḍl did not believe in some classical esoteric standpoints, such as revelation to the Imams, adopted by the Shī'ī community of his period. Besides, he had admitted the legitimacy of applying *qiyās* in legal reasoning (See: Kohlberg, Etan, "Faḍl b. Sadan Nisapuri Azdi, Abu Mohammad," in: *Encyclopedia Iranica*, 1999). When it comes to J. Van Ess, he has addressed some philosophical and natural ideas attributed to Hishām. In addition, he has dealt with Hishām's doctrines concerning the God's attributes and speech, beside discussing his conception of *raj'ah* (the second coming to this world). He has ignored, or at least has not focused on, the Hishām's theological opinions concerning the *Imāmah* and his legal methodology (Van Ess, J., *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*. Berlin/New York, vol.1, 1991-1997, pp.349-382). Tamima Bayhom-Daou, as the most focused scholar on the this figures, indicates how Imams' knowledge was considered by Hishām b. Ḥakam and Faḍl b. Shadhan, refuting the possibility of revelation to Imams after the prophet death, and which was differ from the Imāmī classical standpoint (See: Bayhom-Daou, Tamima, "Hisham b. al-Hakam and his doctrine of the imam's knowledge," in: *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. 48(1), 2003, p. 71; Id, "The Imam's Knowledge and the Quran according to al-Faḍl b. Shadhan al-Nisaburi," in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 64, no. 2, 2001, pp.198-199). Even though there have been some studies on these fguers, most of them seem to have ignored the fact that they had the sense of belonging to each other, and shaped a "continuous historical network" with "distinct social identity" over about three centuries.