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Biography of the Compiler

Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id ibn Hammad ibn Mihran al_Ahwazi (epithet Abu Muhammad) 1 was originally from al-Kufah 2 but he moved with his brother al-Hasan ibn Sa'id to al_Ahwaz 3 and thus he became popular by the city's name (i.e. al_Ahwazi). (His brother) al-Hasan was known by the nickname "Dandan" and the two brothers were amongst the (descendents of the) companions of 'Ali ibn Al-Husayn [a.s].4

Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id lived in the times of Imam al_Ri®a, al_Jawad and al_Hadi [a.s], and he narrated traditions from them. For this reason, he is enumerated amongst their companions as can be found often in the books of biographies and of people who narrated traditions.

He has been praised and lauded by all the companions and scholars who have written concerning him; and they have extolled him as being trustworthy. For example, al_Shaykh al_Tusi has extolled him in his two books *al_Rijal* and *al_Fihrist* as has *al_'Allamah al_Hilli* in his *al_Khulasah* describing him as: "very trustworthy and illustrious." Abu Dawud also described him as: "trustworthy, of an exalted nature."

Ibn Nadim said (of him): "al-Hasan al-Ahwazi and Al-Husayn al-Ahwazi, the two sons of Sa'id are from the people of al-Kufah... most well-versed in their era in the knowledge of jurisprudence, traditions, virtues and other subjects from the sciences of the Shi'ah."

Al_Majlisii has mentioned him in one of his books with the words: "... a principle amongst the main supports of the traditionists is the trustworthy Shaykh Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id al_Ahwazi; he is also the author of the Book of Asceticism (*Kitab al_Zuhd*) and the Book of the Believer (*Kitab al_Mu'min*)."5

As mentioned earlier, the two brothers moved from al_Kufah to al_Ahwaz at one point in their lives in order to disseminate the teachings of the progeny of the Messenger of Allah and the children of Fatimah the Chaste [a.s] from whom Allah has removed all impurities and purified with a thorough purification.6

The two brothers authored many books concerning the lawful and the forbidden as well as primers in various other sciences. Al_Kashi reports fifty books by al-Hasan alone and al_Najashi mentions thirty books between the two, saying: "The sons of Sa'id compiled excellent and useful books, and they are

thirty in number."

Al-Husayn joined hands with his brother al-Hasan in writing the thirty books but Al-Husayn is more renowned for them than his brother; and these books are:

- 1. *Kitab al-Wu***u**' (The Book of Ablutions)
- 2. *Kitab al-Salat* (The Book of Prayers)
- 3. *Kitab al-Zakat* (The Book of Alms)
- 4. *Kitab al-Sawm* (The Book of Fasting)
- 5. *Kitab al-Hajj* (The Book of Pilgrimage)
- 6. *Kitab al-Nikah* (The Book of Marriage)
- 7. *Kitab al-Talag* (The Book of Divorce)
- 8. *Kitab al-`Itq wa'I-Tadbir wa'I-Mukatabah* (The Book of Manumission of Slaves, Management and Correspondence)
- 9. *Kitab al-Ayman wa'l-Nudhur* (The Book of Oaths and Vows)
- 10. *Kitab al-Tijarat wa'l-ljarat* (The Book of Trade and Leasing)
- 11. *Kitab al-Khums* (The Book of Islamic Tax)
- 12. *Kitab al-Shahadat* (The Book of Testimonies)
- 13. Kitab al-Sayd wa'l-Dhaba`ih (The Book of Game and Slaughtered Animals)
- 14. *Kitab al-Makasib* (The Book of Earnings)
- 15. *Kitab al-Ashribah* (The Book of Drinks)
- 16. *Kitab al–Ziyarat* (The Book of Pilgrimages)
- 17. *Kitab al-Taqiyah* (The Book of Dissimulation)
- 18. *Kitab al-Radd `Ala'l-Ghulah* (The Book of Refuting the Extremists)
- 19. *Kitab al-Manaqib* (The Book of Virtues)
- 20. *Kitab al-Mathalib* (The Book on Slandering)
- 21. *Kitab al-Zuhd* (The Book of Asceticism)

- 22. *Kitab al-Muru'ah* (The Book of Chivalry)
- 23. *Kitab Huquq al-Mu'minin wa-Fadhlihim* (The Book concerning the Rights and Excellencies of Believers)
- 24. *Kitab Tafsir al-Qur'an* (The Book of the Exegesis of the Qur'an)
- 25. *Kitab al-Wasaya* (The Book of Bequests)
- 26. *Kitab al-Fara'idh* (The Book of Obligations)
- 27. *Kitab al-Hudud* (The Book of Legal Punishments)
- 28. *Kitab al-Diyat* (The Book of Blood Money)
- 29. *Kitab al-Malahim* (The Book of Battles)
- 30. *Kitab al-Du'a*` (The Book of Supplications)

Al-Husayn ibn Yazid al_Surani used to say: "al-Hasan is a partner to his brother Al-Husayn in all of the latter's chain of narrators except concerning Zur'ah ibn Muhammad al_Harami and Faralah ibn Ayyub, where Al-Husayn used to narrate through his brother from these two."7

Their maternal uncle, Ja'far ibn Yahya ibn Sa'd al_Ahwal, was amongst the companions of Abu Ja'far al_Thani (Imam al_Jawad [a.s]). Thus, the members of this household were known for their profound faith in Allah, the Most High, and their sincerity towards Him; and also their true love for the Messenger of Allah and his pure progeny [a.s]. They were also well known for their prolonged striving for righteous actions and defending the truth against the ruling `Abbasid rulers of their ages, who used to banish or hound the believers amongst the Shi'ah of 'Ali and Al-Husayn [a.s].

Despite all the obstacles, the two brothers were active in all venues, fearing none in matters concerning Allah, and not giving a free rein to others. Courageously, they defended the rights of the pure chosen ones from the family of Muhammad [a.s], with words and actions, in a most evident manner.

From the treasures of the Ahl al_Bayt's knowledge, Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id propagated their teachings treating them like a precious and rare commodity. Thus did he do with a lofty spirit and sincere intention for the sake of the Honorable Lord that the number of those who love them and understand their trusteeship may multiply. In doing so, he became deserving of what has been narrated from the Ahl al_Bayt [a.s]:

"May Allah have mercy on the person who keeps our affairs alive."

By reaching the message to others, he actually influenced a number of people and introduced them to Imam al_Risa [a.s] and thus their right path was completed and their perception and understanding were more balanced and equitable concerning the Book (i.e. Qur'an), the Holy Prophet and his family [a.s]. This was after they had been heedless of them or inimical, and opposed to following their path and in fact a comrade to their enemies.

Amongst these personalities that he influenced were: Ishaq ibn Ibrahim al_Ha®ini, 'Ali ibn al_Rasan, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar, 'Abd Allah ibn Muhammad al_Ha®ini and others. In due course, they began being of service and authored many books. All this was by the grace of Allah that He made him (Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id) the cause in a community's guidance. Due to Allah was his achievement and upon Allah rests his reward!

Finally, Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id, the great traditionist, migrated to Qum where he put up with al-Hasan ibn Aban, and there he died. May Allah have mercy on him the day he was born, the day he passed away and the day He brings him back to life! May Allah resurrect him with those he loved. Amen, O' Lord of the Worlds!

Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al_Muwahhid al_Abtahi al_Isfahani

- 1. Rijal al-Najashi 46
- 2. Al-Barqi: al-Mahasin 54, Ibn al-Nadim: al-Fihrist 104 and Abu Dawud: al-Rijal No. 473.
- 3. Ibn al-Nadim: al-Fihrist 104.
- 4. Ibid.
- 5. Al-Majlisi: Bihar al-Anwar 1/16.
- 6. As in Qur'an, 33:33.
- 7. Rijal al-Najashi 46.

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