

Development of History and Hadith Collections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Let us read the following tradition very carefully and judge for ourselves if we can ever give a possibility that such words have been uttered by the messenger of Allah. The tradition is in Sahih Muslim, and is written in the section of necessity of joining to the majority of people, and is as follows:

Narrated Hudayfh Ibn al-Yaman:

Prophet said: "There will come rulers after me who do not guide to my guidance and do not practice my Sunnah, and the hearts of some them are the hearts of Satans but they are in the body of human." I said: "What should we do at that time?" Prophet (S) said: "You should just listen to them and obey those rulers. No matter if the hurt you and take your wealth, you should follow them and obey them."

Sunni reference: Sahih Muslim, Chapter of al-Imaarah (chapter 33 for the Arabic version), Section of necessity of joining the majority, 1980 Edition, Arabic version (Saudi Arabia), v3, p1476, Tradition #52.

This is the Arabic text of the above tradition narrated by Sahih Muslim:

يكون بعدي أئمة لا يهتدون بهدائي ولا يستنون بسنتي، وسيقوم فيهم رجال قلوبهم قلوب الشياطين، في جثمان إنس، قال قلت: كيف أصنع يا رسول الله إن أدركت ذلك؟ قال: تسمع وتطيع، وإن ضرب ظهرك وأخذ مالك فاسمع وأطع

The above was just one example. There are more than 12 traditions similar to this in the same section of Sahih Muslim. Who sold such traditions as Sahih (authentic) to us? Aren't they those who wanted to make their kingdom strong and away from any possible opposition? Any complaint is against the above alleged word of prophet, and those people are sentenced to death. In another tradition in the following section in Sahih Muslim, prophet has ordered to kill those who disobey these unjust rulers. Let us see

where the origins of these books are, and who controlled the writing of them.

Muawiyah was the first one who turned his attention to write the history and collecting the fabricated Hadiths (traditions). He got a history of the ancients written by a person in the name of Ubayd whom he called him from Yemen.

Marwan who had been exiled by the Prophet for his anti-Islamic activities and who had a great influence with Uthman, was the implacable foe of 'Ali. His son, Abdul Malik ascended the throne in year 65 AH, reestablished himself in year 73, and died in year 86. Abdul Malik was the one under whose funding finally a set of Islamic History, Hadith (tradition), and Tafsir (interpretation of the Qur'an) was provided. al-Zuhri was the first historian who wrote the history of Islam under the direct order and fund of Abdul Malik. He also wrote Hadith collection. The works of al-Zuhri was one of the main source for al-Bukhari. al-Zuhri was attached to the royal family of Abdul Malik, and was the tutor of his sons. (See "al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah," by Shibli who is a great Sunni historian, part I, pp. 13-17).

Among the students of al-Zuhri, two persons, namely Musa Ibn Uqbah, and Muhammad Ibn Ishaq became famous historians. The former was a slave of the house of Zubair. Although his history is not available today, it had been the most popular work on history for a long time. You will find its references in many history books on different subjects.

The second student, Muhammad Ibn Ishaq is the most famous historian for Sunnis. His biography of the Prophet, called "Sirah Rasul Allah", is still the accredited authority on the subject in the shape that was given to it by Ibn Hisham, and is known as "al-Sirah of Ibn Hisham".

al-Zuhri is the first who compiled the Hadith also. (See "al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah," by Shibli, part I, pp. 13-17). All Sunni History and Hadith books written afterwards by other people were in great influence of these works.

The above gives evidence to the following facts:

- 1- Sunni Hadith and History books were first compiled under the direct order of Umayyah Kings,
- 2- The first authors were al-Zuhri, and his two students Musa and Muhammad Ibn Ishaq,
- 3- These authors were attached to the royal family of the Umayyah kings.

The hatred of the house of Umayyah against Bani Hashim (the house of Prophet and 'Ali) is well-known. The wars of Abu Sufyan and his son Muawiyah against Prophet and 'Ali respectively, also the horrible massacre of the grandson of prophet at Karbala by the grandson of Abu Sufyan, are only some of top items among the long list of such crimes. These are the criminals who FIRST wrote the history and Hadith books. (The books written afterwards by other people were in great influence of these works.) They fabricated many traditions to justify their deeds, and to say that prophet has ordered us to obey them even if they are unjust. What I quoted above was just one example of such traditions.

Who was the first one that used the term "Ahlussunnah and al-Jama'ah"? If one searches through the history books, he will find that they agreed to call the year in which Muawiyah seized the power as "The Year of al-Jama'ah" meaning the majority of people. It was called so, because the nation had already become divided into two factions after the death of Uthman: The Shi'a of 'Ali and the followers of Muawiyah. When Imam 'Ali (as) was martyred and Muawiyah took over the power, the year was called "al-Jama'ah". Out of these two parties, the majority leading by Muawiyah won the throne, and the other party was considered as a dangerous rival.

Therefore the name of "Ahl al-Sunnah and al-Jama'ah" indicates the Sunnah of Prophet merged by the innovations by Muawiyah, and the agreement on his leadership.

The Imams and members of Ahlul-Bayt who are the descendants of the Prophet, know more than anybody else about the Sunnah of their grandfather and what it entails, for as the proverb goes: "The people of Mecca know its paths better than anyone else". But the majority of people did/do not follow the 12 Imams whom prophet has mentioned their numbers (see Sahih al-Bukhari) and their names (see Sunni books like "Yanabi'ul Mawaddah" by al-Qunduzi al-Hanafi). Despite the acknowledgment of al-Bukhari and Muslim about 12 Imams, they always stop at the four Caliphs.

Shi'a-Sunni And Scrutinizing Hadith

One major difference between the Shi'a and the Sunnis is that Sunnis accept any tradition from any companions no matter if these companions fought each other, abused each other, rebelled against their righteous Caliph, and or innovate new things in to the religion.

The Shi'a, however, believe that all the narrators in the chain of a document should have been just. If they have done any injustice in the history (such as those mentioned above) their narrations are void for us unless the same tradition has been narrated with another chain of narrators who all of them are proven to be trustworthy.

One of the Wahhabi friends said that Shi'a, when narrating a Hadith, only say the Imam so and so said, one of our friends said...Now how we can authenticise the Hadith?

If a person has heard something directly from the 12 Imams, and that person is trustworthy for the Shi'a and his narration is not against Qur'an, then the tradition is authentic for us, since we believe in the infallibility of Imams as well as Prophets. The knowledge of Imam has been derived from the knowledge of their fathers and forefathers up to the Prophet (S).

However, the chain of narrators should be evaluated. If the chain turns out to be broken (i.e., one element in the chain is missing), then the tradition is considered weak in Isnad. Thus all the narrators should be named, and this is the case for the majority of Shi'i collections of traditions.

Nevertheless, there are only a number of traditions in Usul Kafi in which the last element in the chain is

missing, i.e., the name of the person who reported to Kulaini in person. In stead of mentioning his name, Kulaini has used the phrase "a group of our associates". But Kulaini has mentioned all other elements in the chain.

The reason for this was that, as I mentioned, Shi'a have always been under prosecution of unjust rulers including the Abbasids. If Kulaini (ra) have mentioned the names of those who reported to him and were still alive, and if the book could have found his way to the officials, then all those reporters would have been killed. To protect them, he did not mention their names and codified it by saying "a group of our associates". However he mentioned the name of those who reported to him but died during Kulaini's life.

But the good news is that since Kulaini knew the regulations of scrutinizing of the traditions by the Shi'a, he told some of his students how the names of the last narrators are codieified. More specifically, it was mentioned that:

I. Whenever you read in Usul Kafi, that "a group of our associates narrated from Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Isa", then the group here means the following five persons:

1. Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Yahya al-Attar al-Qummi
2. 'Ali Ibn Musa Ibn Ja'far al-Kamandani
3. Abu Sulayman Dawud Ibn Kawrah al-Qummi
4. Abu 'Ali Ahmad Ibn Idris Ibn Ahmad al-Ash'ari al-Qummi
5. Abul Hasan 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Hashim al-Qummi.

II. Whenever you read in Usul Kafi, that "a group of our associates narrated from Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Khalid al-Barqi", then the group here means the following four persons:

1. Abul Hasan 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Hashim al-Qummi
2. Muhammad Ibn Abdillah Ibn Udhaynah
3. Ahmad Ibn Abillah Ibn Umayyah
4. 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn al-Sa'd Abadi.

III. Whenever you read in Usul Kafi, that "a group of our associates narrated from Sahl Ibn Ziyad", then the group here means the following four persons:

1. Abul Hasan 'Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim Ibn Aban al-Razi, who is known as Allan al-Kulaini
2. Abul Husayn Muhammad Ibn Abdillah Ja'far Ibn Muhammad Ibn Awn al-Asadi al-Kufi, resident of ray.
3. Muhammad Ibn al-Husayn Ibn Farrukh al-Saffar al-Qummi
4. Muhammad Ibn Aqil al-Kulaini.

IV. Whenever you read in Usul Kafi, that "a group of our associates narrated from Ja'far Ibn Muhammad who narrated from al-Hasan Ibn 'Ali Ibn al-Faddal", then the group here consists of the following person:

1. Abu Abdillah al-Husayn Ibn Muhammad Ibn Imran Ibn Abi Bakr al-Ash'ari al-Qummi.

Thus the narrators of those traditions are known and can be evaluated accordingly. Nonetheless, we do not claim that al-Kafi is an all authentic book of traditions for the Shi'a. There are certain traditions in al-Kafi which are reported by weak narrators who are known to the Shi'a scholars of Hadith.

Imam 'Ali (as) said: Be the enemy of the oppressor and the helper of the oppressed one.

قال الإمام علي عليه السلام: كونوا للظالم خصماً و للمظلوم عوناً

(Nahjul Balagha, the sayings of Imam 'Ali)

Please compare this tradition of Imam 'Ali with the tradition of Sahih Muslim given at the beginning of the article.

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