

Translator's Introduction

It is really perplexing to see how identical were the two characters between whom a hundred and fifty years separate. Whoever investigates the biography of al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din al-'Amili, will verily realize its being complementary to the character of Muhammad ibn Makki, who was martyred in 786 H, and known later as al-Shahid al-'Awwal. No doubt then that al-Shaykh Zayn al-Din be called al-Shahid al-Thani, since both of them experienced identical circumstances, encountering similar conspiracies.

Each one of them was the superior intellectual character at their time, with his life being characterized with many travels among Islamic cities and metropolises. Their only objective was knowledge seeking, till each of them turned to be an encyclopedia in thought and knowledge, leaving behind a voluminous heritage indicating their genius and knowledgeability.

Both were born in Jabal 'Amil, living the same period of time, facing the same bloody fate, being victims of the plots of politicians and covetous people having malicious nature and degraded morals.

They resembled each other to the extent that al-Shahid al-Thani has embarked on studying *al-Lum'ah al-Dimashqiyyah* on *fiqh*, which is authored by al-Shahid al-'Awwal. Then he expounded it under the title *al-Rawdah al-bahiyyah fi sharh al-Lum'ah al-Dimashqiyyah*, after which the original book and the exposition occupied the priority among the curricula of the theological schools despite the succession of numerous centuries.

Al-Shahid al-'Awwal was tried in Damascus, executed, then his body was crucified for several days, stonned and burnt, and transformed then to ashes dispersed by winds. Whereas al-Shahid al-Thani was taken guarded to Qastantine, whereat his fate was to be killed on the shores of the Mediterranean, and his body to be thrown into the sea, and be devoured by the whales.

The only reason behind liquidating them in this tragic way was their holding an opinion contradictory to that of the rulers, and enjoying the masses support, the fact exciting the then rulers' fears.

At last, we have to refer to the fact that the sequence of murder and bloody liquidations is still going on to the present time, inflicting the offspring of the Two Martyrs (al-Shahidayn), as al-'Imam Muhammad

Baqir al-Sadr met his end at the hand of Iraq despot (Saddam) in 1980. After him his sister Aminat al-Sadr, known with the name Bint al-Huda, was martyred, and before them al-Imam Musa al-Sadr disappeared in vague circumstances in 1978.

This being the history of tragedies, initiated from Karbala' of al-Husayn (A), since the moment of 'Ashura', and is still continuing its course toward the age of green peace.

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