Imam Rida's Endeavor Concerning Hadith

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Abstract: *The life of Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-* Rida *- since his birth till his martyrdom – includes very valuable and informative points. The relatively long period of imamate of the Imam from one hand, and the formation of deviated groups and trends and also political events of the time from the other hand, has made his life attention-worthy. In the following, we are studying his attempts to record traditions.*

Keywords: *Ahlul-Bayt, circles of Hadith*

***1*. Emphasis on the spreading Hadiths of Ahlul-Bayt:**

Considering the expansion of "the public Hadith-centered congregations" and the distorted "Kilami-oriented groups" during this period, Imam Rida (AS) recommended Shiite to be wise in receiving the hadith, lest they would not repeat what dishonest narrators قصاص

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مخالفينا or Mutikallims who are strangers with the school of Ahlul-Bayt have been saying, as in fact these narrators are not wise.[1] Imam told his student-companion, Abasalt Hirawi, that رحم الله عبدا احيا امرنا (which means may God have mercy on the servant who revitalizes our traditions.). And Abasalt Hirawi, who is interested in keeping Willayat alive, asked how to do this significant issue and heard:

يتعلم علومنا و يعلمها الناس فان الناس لو علموا محاسن كلامنا لا تبعونا.[2]

In the following, Imam said to Abasalt that knowledge must be obtained from ‘Ulama and in the definition of the ‘Ulama he said:

هم علماء ال محمد الذين فرض الله طاعتهم و اوجب موذتهم.[3]

2. Circles of Hadith

The establishment of numerous “hadithic circles” (gatherance to talk about hadith) by Shiite scholars, and at the head of them, Imam ‘Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (AS) is a feature of this era. In spite of the moves of distorted group of Waghifiyan and their harm to identity and solidarity of Shiite, there are various reports indicating people were referring to imam greatly. These reports indicate that people in Mecca, Medina, Kufa, Mena and Khorasan eagerly attended Imam's meetings.[4]

Imam Rida held meetings in Medina in 194 A.H., in which he narrated the traditions from the holy prophet. The result of these meetings was the book of “**Sahifah al-Rida**”, narrated by Ahmad ibn ‘Amir Tayyi. Another narrator, David Bin Suleiman Ghazi, also participated in these meetings and collected the book of “**Musnad al-Rida”.** In some traditions, even the place of the meetings of the Imam has been mentioned, as an example the Imam in the mosque of Dar Mu‘awiyah [5] in Medina. It is noteworthy that several circles in Hejaz have been formed by the presence of the imam and a large number of people.[6]

The widespread presence of people in Medina and in Khorasan has been reported frequently. Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanti, describing Imam's meeting about Ghadir hold in Madinah like this: " كنا عند الرضا و المجلس غاص باهله فتذاكروا يوم الغدير فانكره

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... بعض الناس ... This report shows the enthusiastic presence of people of all walks of life and even opponents in the meeting. Then Imam expressed one Hadith that the narrator said Bazanti had narrated this narration for more than fifty times in various meetings.[7]

In Khorasan, this population increased even more. In the meetings of Ma'mun, where the Imam was present, this term و المجلس غاص باهله was used precisely the المجلس غاص باهله [8], and even in some cases the number of audience was also reported: " كان على بن موسى الرضا بمدينة مرو و معه ثلاث مانة و ستون رجلا من شيعته من بلاد شتى"[9]

3. Debate sessions:

Many reasonings have been reported from the eighth Imam, most of them on the issue of monotheism and then Imamate. The debate between the Imam and Zanadiqeh [10], debating people like Suleiman Marwazi [11], Muslim scholars [12], the controversial discussions with the followers of the Mu'tazilites [13], the Murji'ah [14], the Sunni commentators [15], or the Thanawiyah [16] and other cases has been reported. Only Tabarsi has reported 38th of imam's debate in Ihtijaj. Among the debates of the Imam, the meeting with Ma'mun about the prophets and their infallibility is very beautiful. This meeting begins with the following statement by the caliph: " يا ابن رسول الله! ا ليس من قولک ان الانبياء معصومون؟" And when he receives positive response of the Imam, he asks: " فما معنى قول الله عز و جل و عصى آدم ربه فغوى؟"

The beauty of this meeting is that Imam responds him by only referring to Quranic verses. This discussion is explicit, bilateral, and long, and at the end Ma'mun can not hide his wonders. Therefore, he says:

يا أبا الحسن و الله ما يوجد العلم الصحيح إلا عند اهل هذا البيت و إليک انتهي علوم آبائک فجزاک الله عن الإسلام و أهله خيرا. [17]

And during the meeting, Ma'mun repeatedly says:

اشهد أنك ابن رسول الله حقا[18]

Ma'mun, known as a knowledgeable Caliphs, has repeatedly defeated by the knowledge of Imam, and at the end of one of these meetings, he told Imam:

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لا أبقاني الله بعدك يا أبا الحسن أشهد أنك وارث علم رسول الله [19]

4. Hadith presentation and teaching how to review Hadith

Of the features of this era was that the forging hadith was being penetrated into the Shi'a under the titles of affection and eulogy or theological issues like Jabr, Tafid and Tashbih. Imam said in this regard:

إنما وضع الأخبار عنا في الجبر و التشبيه الغلاة الذين صغروا عظمة الله. [20]

Ghaliyansغالی who belittled the divine Majesty fabricated narrations in the area of Jabr and Tashbih claiming those are said by us.

Presenting Hadith led to the elimination of many untrue thoughts about Tawhid [21], such as Jabr, Tashbih [22], etc., and also the stories of the prophets, and the like, were refined by the Imam and erased from Shi'a hadith.

5. Writing and dictating hadith

There are various reports that Imam Rida had written the words of the Prophet or his words and prayers down for his companions and sometimes they spelled them to his students. Sometimes they were written for the requesters in their presence, and sometimes in correspondence. Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Nijran said that Imam Rida wrote a hadith from Imam Sajjad to me and then read it:

كتب ابو الحسن الرضا رساله و اقرانيها [23]

The Shi'ites also learned to quote Imam's writings for each other. [24] Husein ibn Sa'id was one of those who received letters sent by Imam to Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, and recite it to his students. [25] Even preparing copies of imam's words and answers to questions were common. In a narration, Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanti said,

نسخت من كتاب بخط ابی الحسن[26]

From Imam Rida, about one hundred and eighty-eight hundred letters have been left, most of them are in the subject of Islamic jurisprudence (about one hundred and twelve). Some of the most important writings ascribed to him are: **the book of jurisprudence [27]**, **the book of causes [28], the text of the prayers of Sajdah [29], the writing of**

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numerous prayers [30], and the Risalah Al-Dhahabiyah.

The late Ayatullah Ahmadi Miyaneji, who gathered the collection of writings of imams in Makatib al-A'imah, categorized Imam's writings as follows:

Tawhid: 8, Imamate and Miracles: 29, Jurisprudence: 111, Medicine: 1 (Risalah Al-Dhahabiyah) [31], Prayer: 13, sermons: 10, Letters to Waghifiyan: 7, Politics: 4, Various Issues: 4.

6. Number of hadiths

Based on the latest research on the collection of the hadiths of the eighth Imam, the number of his narrations in all hadith books is about 2427 traditions. [32] The various topics of these narratives are:

- Islamic jurisprudence: 1038 narrations.
- Beliefs: 794 narrations.
- Ethical narrations and sermons: 61 narratives.
- Traditions of Prayer and debates: 118 narrations.
- Interpretative narrations: 204 narratives.
- traditions about narrators and elites: 212

7. Training students:

Many narrators were among the companions of Imam. Barghi named 62 people [33] and Sheikh Tusi [34] identified 318 narrators. One of the contemporary researchers has named 312 narrators with his narrations. [35] This number of narrators is only taken from the texts, which recorded documented narratives.

Imam's students also knew well to record everything that were going to learn. They carefully monitored and reported Imam's reactions even in speaking and their worship. Narrators have narrated his way of praying, their Tawaf in Hajj [36], how to farewell with Kaba [37], how to pray [38], as well as his pilgrimage to Najaf Ashraf [39].

Some of the most famous narrators of Imam Rida, who have reported the most narratives in the books of the Arbia and Wasa'l al-Shia are the following in order

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of the most tradition-narrator to the least:

Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Nasr Bazanati, Muhammad bin Sinan, Fadl ibn Shadhan, Muhammad bin Isma'il bin Bazi', Hasan bin 'Ali al-Washa', Hasan ibn 'Ali bin Fadal Taymi, Safwan bin Yahya, Yunes bin 'Abdul Rahman, Suleiman bin Ja'far bin Ibrahim Jafari, Ahmad Bin 'Amir Ta'yi, Muhammad bin Fudayl Seyrafi and Mu'ammir bin Khilad. These narrators have reported more than forty percent of the narrations of the Imam.

8. The presence of Shi'i narrators in Khorasan:

The short time of residence of Imam Rida in the Khorasan region caused a number of interested Shiites and narrators of news came to Khorasan from Iraq and Hejaz. The Shiites in Khorasan also benefited greatly from this opportunity, and even from distant areas of Khorasan, such as Transoxiana [40], traveled to Marw and Sarakhs to gain knowledge.

Some of the narrators who have traveled to this area include Ibrahim b. Musa al-Qazaz [41], Hasan ibn Juhm bin Bukayr bin A'yun [42], Hasan bin 'Ali al-Washa'[43], Khalaf ibn Hammad Asadi[44], Musa bin Sayyar, Riyan Bin Salt Ash'ari Qumi [45], Abdul Rahman bin Yahya, Di'bil Khuza'i, Muhammad bin Yahya bin 'Umar bin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib [46],Yazid ibn 'Umayr bin Mu'awiyah Shami [47], Mu'ammar [48] Bin Khilad, Muhammad bin Sinan [49] and...

Endnotes:

1. Ma'ani al-Akhbar, 180.
2. ibid.
3. ibid.
4. Qurb al-Isnad p. 200.
5. ibid 200. It is probably the same Mubahilah mosque or mosque al-Ijabah, belonged to Banu Mu'awiyah bin 'Awf and today it is located near the al-Nabi mosque.
6. Al-Kafi 4/23 From the evidence in the text, one can find that the meeting was in Hejaz, and it is not clear whether it was in Medina or in Mana, Qisas Rawandi, p. 160.
7. Tahdhib al-Ahkam, vol. 6 p. 24 h 9.
8. Al-Ihtijaj, vol. 2 p. 415
9. Al-Mujtani, p. 22. Also, visits to Imam were held at these meetings in Marw: hint: 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 1 p. 124.
10. Al-Tawhid pp. 250, 269

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11. Ibid, p. 254-441.
12. Tuhaf al-'Uqul an Ale al-Rasul 313.
13. Al-Tawhid p. 406.
14. Tafsir 'Ayashi vol.1 p. 18.
15. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 1 p. 149.
16. Al-Tawhid p. 269.
17. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.2 p. 200.
18. Hasan ibn Jahm, who was at the meeting with Shiites along with Imam Rida, was glad of the respect of Ma'mun to the Imam, but the Imam said to him يا ابن الجهم لا يغرنک ما أَلفيته عليه من إكرامی و الاستماع منی فانه سيقتلنی بالسم و هو ظالم لی أعرف ذلک بعهد معهود إلی من ابائی عن رسول الله فاكتم هذا علی ما دمت حيا.
19. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.2 p. 86.
20. Al-Ihtijaj, vol. 2 p. 414.
21. Al-Faqih, vol.1 p. 271
22. Look at 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.1, chaptor 11
23. Basai'r al-Darajat 119 .
24. Look: Musnad al-Imam al-Rida vol.2 p. 165, h 44; pp. 193 h 26; pp. 265 h 38.
25. Tahdhib al-Ahkam, p. 364
26. Al-Kafi: 7 p. 29 h.
27. Tuhaf al-'Uqul an Ale al-Rasul p. 406.
28. Makatib Al-Ae'mmah, vol.5 pp. 95 109 .
29. Muhaj al-Da'wat p. 307.
30. Muhaj al-Da'wat, p. 303, Iqbal al-'Amal, 76.
31. Although this is not perfect, it is the most comprehensive work in this topic.
32. Musnad al-Imam al-Rida, 'Atarudi (2 vols). Of course, this number is with repetition, but the frequencies in this book are very small.
33. Al-Rijal al-Barqi, pp. 127 to 130.
34. Rijal al-Tusi, p. 351370. The narratives of some of the narrators who came in Rijal Tusi are not present in new narrative texts.
35. Musnad al-Imam al-Rida, vol. 2 pp. 511 - 556.
36. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 2/16
37. Al-Kafi 4/529, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 2/17 and 18.
38. Al-Kafi C: 3 p. 320 H 5, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 2, p. 181 H 5.
39. Kamil al-Ziyarat h. 41.
40. Al-Kafi vol.1, p. 88 & al-Tawhid p. 125.
41. Al-Khara'ij vol.1 p. 337 .
42. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida 2 p. 200.
43. Al-Khara'ij vol.1 p. 364.
44. Al-Kafi, vol.6 p. 491.
45. Qurb al-Isnad 198.
46. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 135.
47. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 124.
48. Qurb al-Isnad 198.
49. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida vol.1 p. 263 h. 1.

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