



**In the Name of Allah,
the Entirely Compassionate,
the Especially Merciful**

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- 1- Helping to spread the culture of Ahl al-Bayt (as) research in scientific and research centers;
- 2- Promoting and deepening Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and knowledge;
- 3- Promoting and presenting scientific products of Imam Moibn Research Center;
- 4- Publishing an authentic and reference Quarterly with scientific-research validity in the field of Ahl al-Bayt (as) culture and education.

Quarterly Journal of Ahl al-Bayt (as) Teachings is an open-access, online journal and a peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary publication dedicated to the scholarly study of the Qur'an and Hadith from a wide range of scholarly perspectives, reflecting a diversity of approaches as well as ethical questions and concerns related to scientific research about Qur'an and Ahl Al-Bayt (as) teachings.

The Journal of Ahl al-Bayt (as) Teachings editor in chief appreciates your good efforts to announcing other staffs and students to cooperate as an article author.

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The Engagement of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (as) and Their Shi'a with the Qur'an and It's Sciences

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Mohsen Ghanbari²

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Abstract

This study examines the profound engagement of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (as) and their Shi'a followers with the Qur'an and its sciences, tracing their intellectual and spiritual contributions from the formative centuries of Islam to the contemporary era. The research highlights how Shi'a scholarship developed a comprehensive approach to Qur'anic studies—spanning exegesis (*tafsīr*), recitation (*qirā'āt*), grammar, rhetoric, abrogation (*nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh*), and the study of revelation contexts (*asbāb al-nuzūl*)—while maintaining a firm theological commitment to the Qur'an's authenticity and divine preservation. The article situates the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt (as) as divinely guided interpreters whose teachings form the cornerstone of Shi'a Qur'anic understanding. By exploring both historical narratives—such as Imam 'Alī's compilation of the Qur'an—and doctrinal positions—such as the rejection of *tahrīf* (textual alteration)—the study underscores the distinctive yet integrative character of Shi'a engagement with the Qur'an. It concludes that Shi'a contributions have significantly enriched the broader field of Qur'anic sciences, offering unique hermeneutical, linguistic, and spiritual insights that continue to influence Islamic thought.

Keywords: Imamate, Ahl al-Bayt (as), Qur'anic Sciences, Shia, Twelver Shia.

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Introduction

Qur'ānic studies, known in Arabic as *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, represent a comprehensive field dedicated to the academic investigation of the central religious text of Islam. This discipline extends beyond the mere interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses (*Tafsīr*) to encompass a diverse array of sciences that explore its various facets. These sciences employ a multitude of methodologies, drawing from fields such as philology, textual criticism, lexicography, codicology, literary criticism, and historical analysis. The primary objectives of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* include understanding the original meaning of the Qur'ān, tracing its history of revelation, and examining the processes involved in its recording and transmission. This field also delves into the reception of the Qur'ān throughout history and appreciates its literary qualities independent of its religious significance.

Within this broad academic landscape, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* acts as a detailed index to the numerous branches of learning connected to the Qur'ān, encompassing subjects like *Tajwīd*, *Qirā'āt*, and the study of abrogation (*al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh*). The development of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* as a distinct religious science involved the establishment of a structured curriculum that systematically addressed topics such as the history of the Qur'ān's revelation, the distinction between its Makkan and Madinan portions, the processes of its compilation and reduction to writing, the existence of variant recitations, and its unique stylistic features. The nomenclature of the field as 'sciences' (*'Ulūm*) of the Qur'ān underscores the multiplicity of branches of learning it incorporates.

Problem Statement and Significance

Shi'a are often accused of not caring for the Holy Qur'ān, nor giving it and its sciences special attention. They are even accused of claiming that the circulated Qur'ān has been distorted and of not considering it a source for legislation. It was therefore necessary to examine the heritage of the Shi'a and the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt (as) in this field to demonstrate the contrary.

While books and academic papers have been written on this subject, a researcher may find it difficult to access them due to their dispersion across various works. Furthermore, some writings have overlooked specific areas relevant to this study or have failed to present them within a connected framework that highlights the intended outcome of this research.

Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, relying on classical and contemporary Shi'a sources. It traces historical developments and analyzes scholarly arguments to demonstrate Shi'a engagement with the Qur'an and its sciences.



1. The Qur'ān in Shi'a Intellectual and Theological Tradition

1.1 Centrality of the Qur'ān in Shi'a Theology, Law, and Ethics

Qur'ānic studies hold a position of paramount importance within Shi'a intellectual thought, permeating every aspect of its theological, legal, ethical, and spiritual framework. In Shi'a theology (*Uṣūl al-Dīn*), the Qur'ān is revered as the ultimate source of divine knowledge, providing the foundational principles for understanding Tawḥīd, prophethood, resurrection, divine justice, and the Imamate. Shi'a theologians consistently refer to Qur'ānic verses when establishing and elaborating upon these core beliefs (al-Ṣadr, 1996: 48).

In Shi'a jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), the Qur'ān serves as the primary source of legal rulings and as the ultimate criterion for evaluating the authenticity of *Ḥadīth*. Any narration contradicting the clear meaning of the Qur'ān is deemed invalid. The Qur'ān outlines the general principles of Islamic law, which are then further clarified through the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) and the Imāms (as), alongside rational reasoning (*'aql*) (al-Muẓaffar, 1984: 53).

The Qur'ān also shapes Shi'a ethics (*Akhlāq*) and spirituality (*'Irfān*). It is viewed as a guide for both moral formation and spiritual purification. Shi'a tradition holds that the Qur'ān contains exoteric (*ẓāhir*) and esoteric (*bāṭin*) meanings, revealed more fully through the teachings of the Imāms. The concept of *ta'wīl* provides access to deeper symbolic interpretations of the text, supporting spiritual growth and insight (Makārim al-Shīrāzī, n.d.: 29).

Ultimately, in Shi'a thought, the Qur'ān stands as the supreme authority by which all other forms of knowledge are measured. The teachings and interpretations of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) are considered paramount because of their divinely guided and comprehensive understanding of the Qur'ān (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1352 AH: 11–12).

1.2 Role of the Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt in Shaping Qur'ānic Understanding

Shi'a Islam possesses a rich scholarly tradition rooted in the profound reverence for the Ahl al-Bayt—the family of the Prophet—who are regarded as divinely guided leaders and authoritative interpreters of Qur'ānic revelation (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1352 AH: 11–12). Their teachings form the core of the Shi'a hermeneutical approach, influencing tafsir, jurisprudence, theology, and spiritual exegesis.

The Shi'a perspective emphasizes that the Imāms inherited comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'ān, including its apparent and inner meanings, its historical context, and the divine wisdom underlying its legislation (al-Baḥrānī, 2006: 7–13). Narrations from the Imāms provided



early interpretive foundations that shaped the development of Shi'a Qur'anic sciences.

Despite significant scholarly engagement, contributions of Shi'a scholars to Qur'anic sciences beyond tafsir have often been underrepresented in mainstream academic discourse—particularly in Western scholarship (Takim, 2016: 133–144). Recognizing these contributions is essential for understanding the historical evolution of Qur'anic studies and appreciating the diversity of intellectual traditions within Islam.

The structured nature of *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* makes it clear that Shi'a scholars have long engaged with its various sub-disciplines—including qira'at, grammar, rhetoric, abrogation, and *asbāb al-nuzūl*—offering insights that enrich the broader Islamic tradition.

2. Compilation, Preservation, and Authenticity of the Qur'ān in Shi'a Thought

2.1 Shi'a Perspectives on the Historical Compilation of the Qur'ān

A fundamental aspect of Shi'a understanding of Qur'anic history concerns its compilation and preservation. Unlike the prevailing Sunni tradition that attributes the primary compilation to the era of Caliph 'Uthmān, Shi'a scholars maintain that the Qur'ān was gathered and written during the lifetime of Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) himself. This belief is supported by narrations in both Shi'a and Sunni sources indicating that the Qur'ān existed in written form prior to the Prophet's death (al-Ṭabarsī, 1995: 83).

Shi'a tradition also affirms that Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib possessed a distinct codex of the Qur'ān that included additional contextual information—such as chronological order of revelation, occasions of revelation, and explanatory notes—while preserving the same textual content known to Muslims today (al-'Āmilī, 1992: 64). The emphasis on early compilation reinforces the Shi'a conviction in the Qur'ān's completeness, divine authority, and uninterrupted preservation.

2.2 The Codex of Imām 'Alī: Features and Significance

Following the Prophet's passing, Shi'a narrations describe Imām 'Alī undertaking the task of compiling the Qur'ān into a single codex (al-Majlisī, 1982: 92). This compilation reportedly took six months and was arranged according to the chronological order of revelation—Makkī chapters preceding Madinī ones. It also included contextual details such as *asbāb al-nuzūl* (occasions of revelation), Prophetic explanations, and information regarding abrogating and abrogated verses (Rāmyār, 1990: 370–371).



Shi'a sources report that Imām 'Alī presented this codex to the Muslim community, though it was not officially adopted. Instead, it remained preserved by the Imāms as a sacred trust and a comprehensive record of revelation (al-Majlisī, 1982: 40–48). While the textual content was identical to the standard Qur'ān, the supplementary historical and exegetical elements made his codex unique and valuable for understanding the Qur'ān's interpretive depth.

2.3 The Question of Tahrīf: Historical Debates and Scholarly Consensus

Despite the significance attributed to Imām 'Alī's compilation, Shi'a scholars across history—especially from the 4th century AH onward—have affirmed that the Qur'ān used today is complete and identical to the text revealed to Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). Prominent scholars such as Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, al-Murtada, al-Ṭūsī, and later al-Khoei explicitly rejected the notion of textual alteration (tahrīf) (al-Khu'ī, 1997: 195–257).

Although a minority of early Shi'a scholars cited narrations suggesting omissions or changes, this view gradually diminished as the school's methodological principles matured, emphasizing the Qur'ān's divine preservation¹. Contemporary Shi'a scholarship overwhelmingly upholds the Qur'ān's authenticity, often citing the verse: “Indeed, We have sent down the Reminder, and indeed We will preserve it” (Q 15:9).

Thus, the Shi'a consensus firmly aligns with the belief in the Qur'ān's textual integrity, reinforcing unity with the broader Muslim community and affirming the Qur'ān as the unaltered foundation for theology, law, and spiritual guidance.

3. Shi'a Contributions to Qur'ānic Sciences

3.1 Development of Tafsīr in Shi'a Islam

The history of Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*) in Shi'a Islam begins with Imām 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (as), regarded as the most knowledgeable interpreter of the Qur'ān after the Prophet (pbuh). According to Shi'a tradition, Imām 'Alī possessed comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'ān, including its esoteric meanings, its circumstances of revelation, and its legal implications. His teachings formed the earliest interpretive foundations for the Shi'a approach to the Qur'ān (Nekonām, 2016: 167–178).

The Imāms who succeeded him—particularly Imām Zayn al-'Ābidīn, Imām Moḥammad al-Bāqir, and Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (as)—played a

1. For example: Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (Ibn Babawayh) (d.381 AH), a prominent Shia scholar of the 4th century, explicitly articulated this belief as a core tenet of Imami Shia doctrine in his seminal work *al-I'tiqadat* (al-Ṣadūq, 1414 AH). Similarly, Grand Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim al-Khu'ī (d.1413 AH), a highly influential 20th-century Shia authority, also firmly refuted any claims of alteration or deficiency in the present Quran (al-Khu'ī, 1418, Vol. 50, pp. 195-257).



pivotal role in developing Shi'a *tafsīr*. Their companions documented extensive exegetical narrations, which later scholars transmitted and organized (al-Mūsawī, 2000: 9–11). Early written *tafsīr* works include:

- *Tafsīr al-Qummī* by 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d. 329 AH)
- *Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī* by Moḥammad ibn Mas'ūd al-'Ayyāshī (d. 320 AH)

These commentaries relied primarily on transmitted narrations (*riwāyāt*) from the Prophet and the Imāms. The classical period introduced more systematic and scholarly *tafsīr* works, most notably:

- *Al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (385–460 AH)
- *Majma' al-Bayān* by Shaykh al-Ṭabrisī (468–548 AH)

These works incorporated linguistic analysis, theological reasoning, and comparative interpretation. In the modern era, Shi'a *tafsīr* expanded methodologically and philosophically, producing monumental works such as:

- *Al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* by 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. 1402 AH)
- *Tafsīr Nemooneh* by Nāser Makārem Shirāzi
- *Tafsīr Tasnīm* by Ayatollah Javādi Amoli

3.2 Contributions to *Qirā'āt* and *Tajwīd*

Shi'a scholars have played a significant role in the transmission and development of Qur'ānic recitation. One of the most influential canonical readers, 'Aṣim ibn Abī al-Najūd, whose recitation through Ḥafṣ is the most widespread today, is reported to have been associated with the Shi'a tradition. His teacher, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī, is said to have learned recitation directly from Imām 'Alī (as), placing the Imām at the root of one of the most widely practiced *qirā'āt* (al-Ṣadr, 1996: 346).

Another canonical reader, Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā', also had Shi'a affiliations (al-Ṣadr, 1996: 346). These early connections underscore the foundational role of Shi'a figures in shaping the oral transmission of the Qur'ān.

Shi'a scholarly positions on multiple recitations vary. While many acknowledge the legitimacy of widely transmitted *qirā'āt*, scholars such as Ayatollah al-Khoei argued that the Qur'ān was revealed in a single recitational form but that the Imāms permitted reciting according to the common canonical modes for the sake of communal unity (al-Khu'ī, 1997: 193).

3.3 *Al-Muḥkam wa'l-Mutashābih* in Shi'a Scholarship

The classification of Qur'ānic verses into *muḥkam* (clear, decisive) and *mutashābih* (ambiguous, allegorical) represents a fundamental hermeneutical principle in Islamic exegetical tradition. Shi'a scholarship has paid particular attention to this distinction because of its direct



implications for theology (*kalām*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and the interpretive authority of the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt. Discussions of Q 3:7 in classical tafsīr works—particularly those of al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṭabrisī—highlight the centrality of this division (al-Ṭabrisī, 1995: 47–48, under Q 3:7).

While Sunni and Shi‘a exegetes both acknowledge the Qur’anic division found in Q 3:7, the Shi‘a tradition offers a distinctive interpretive framework grounded in the teachings of the Imams, who are regarded as possessing authoritative knowledge of both the apparent (*ẓāhir*) and inner (*bāṭin*) meanings of revelation—a principle repeatedly emphasized in *al-Kāfi*, esp. in traditions explaining the role of *al-rāsikhūn fī al-‘ilm* (al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH: 213–214).

Shi‘a exegetes—especially al-Ṭabrisī—argue that ambiguity is not inherent but relative, becoming clear when examined through the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (al-Ṭabrisī, 1995: 48).

The Role of the Imams in Interpreting Ambiguous Verses

A defining feature of Shi‘a hermeneutics is the belief that the Imams possess inherited knowledge of the Qur’an, including its obscure and symbolic dimensions. Their role as the *Qur’ān al-nātiq* (“speaking Qur’an”) appears in traditions from Imām al-Bāqir and Imām al-Ṣādiq (al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH: 214–215).

Narrations describing the Imams as the uniquely qualified interpreters of *mutashābihāt* constitute a cornerstone of Shi‘a epistemology, and they are cited consistently in classical works on doctrine, including al-Ṣadūq’s *al-I’tiqādāt* (al-Ṣadūq, 1993: 92–95, on the Imams’ interpretive authority).

This approach differs from Sunni hermeneutics, which rely primarily on linguistic analysis and contextual indicators, whereas Shi‘a readings integrate transmitted esoteric knowledge alongside exoteric interpretive tools (al-Ṭūsī, 1996: 406).

3.3 Abrogation (*Nāsikh wa’l-Mansūkh*) and *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*

Shi‘a scholarship includes early and systematic engagement with the study of abrogation. Shaykh al-Ṭūsī authored discussions on *nāsikh wa’l-mansūkh*, while ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī is also credited with a work on the subject (al-Khu‘ī, 1997: 212). These efforts demonstrate that Shi‘a scholars participated actively in identifying and analyzing abrogated verses according to their jurisprudential principles.

Shi‘a theology frames abrogation as a function of divine wisdom and gradual legal development, not divine reconsideration. Al-Ṭūsī explicitly distinguishes legislative change from any alteration in divine knowledge (al-Ṭūsī, 1996: 13). Ma‘rifah likewise clarifies the difference between *naskh* and *badā’*, emphasizing that abrogation pertains to outward rulings, not eternal divine realities (Ma‘rifah, 2009: 269). This harmonizes with the



broader Imāmī commitment to coherence in revelation and the unity of God’s eternal will.

Regarding *asbāb al-nuzūl*, Shi‘a tradition maintains that Imām ‘Alī’s codex contained detailed contextual information about the circumstances of revelation. Furthermore, narrations transmitted through the Imāms provide essential insights into historical contexts (al-Bahrānī, 2006: 7–13). A notable Shi‘a contribution to this field is the work of Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588 AH), who authored *Asbāb Nuzūl al-Qur’ān*, emphasizing the role of Ahl al-Bayt in understanding revelation (al-Khu‘ī, 1997: 354).

3.4 Early Shi‘a Foundations in Arabic Grammar and Rhetoric

A central Shi‘a contribution to Qur’ānic sciences lies in the development of Arabic linguistic tools. Imām ‘Alī (as) is widely regarded as the founder of Arabic grammar (*naḥw*). He taught the foundational principles—such as the classification of speech into noun, verb, and particle—to Abū al-Aswad al-Du‘alī.

Abū al-Aswad, following Imām ‘Alī’s instruction, became the pioneer of Arabic grammar and introduced diacritical marks to the Arabic script. This innovation was crucial for preserving correct Qur’ānic recitation, particularly as Islam spread to non-Arab populations. His efforts paved the way for the Basran and Kufan grammatical schools (al-Ṣadr, 1996: 40–61).

3.5 Perspectives on Qur’ānic Inimitability (*I‘jāz*)

Shi‘a scholars have contributed extensively to the study of Qur’ānic inimitability. They argue that the Qur’ān’s eloquence, rhetorical power, internal consistency, depth of meaning, and transformative spiritual effect represents undeniable signs of its divine origin (al-Subḥānī, 2008: 243–339; Ma‘rifah, 2009: 103). Key figures include:

- Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413 AH), who authored a treatise on the miraculous nature of the Qur’ān.
- Sayyid al-Murtaḍā (d. 436 AH), who articulated and defended the theory of *ṣarfah*, proposing that humans are divinely prevented from producing a text like the Qur’ān.
- ‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā‘ī (d. 1402 AH), who offered extensive philosophical reflections on *i‘jāz* in *al-Mīzān* and in a separate monograph.

Shi‘a perspectives on *i‘jāz* emphasize both form and meaning: the Qur’ān’s linguistic uniqueness and its profound spiritual and intellectual content (Ma‘rifah, 2009: 216).

4. Defense of the Qur’ān’s Integrity in Shi‘a Scholarship

4.1 Origins of Accusations Against Shi‘a Views on the Qur’ān

The Shi‘a community has historically faced accusations of believing in the alteration (*tahrīf*) of the Qur’ān. These claims, dating back to the second



century AH, allege that the Shi'a hold that the Qur'ān was distorted—typically through omissions concerning the succession of the Prophet or virtues of Imām 'Alī and Ahl al-Bayt (Kohlberg, 2009: 6). Such accusations often emerged during periods of political or sectarian conflict and were used to delegitimize Shi'a beliefs.

Some studies have also noted that certain Shi'a figures were associated with views implying textual alteration, often due to their acceptance of weak narrations or polemical sources (al-Jazā'irī, 2008: 257–258). However, these historical references must be contextualized within broader intra-Muslim intellectual disputes and the evolution of Shi'a doctrinal principles.

4.2 Theological and Scholarly Refutations Across Generations

Shi'a scholars across centuries have firmly rejected the notion of Qur'ānic alteration and emphasized their belief in the complete, preserved Qur'ān used by all Muslims today. Prominent examples include:

- Shaykh al-Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) — who explicitly stated in *al-ʿIṭiqādāt* that the Qur'ān is intact and unaltered, and that any claim of distortion is false (al-Ṣadūq, 1993: 83–86).
- Sayyid al-Murtaḍā (d. 436 AH) — who argued that the certainty of the Qur'ān's preservation matches the certainty of well-known historical realities, dismissing *taḥrīf* allegations as misunderstandings or reliance on unreliable reports (al-Ṭabarsī, 1995: 83–84).
- Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH) — who affirmed in *al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* that the Muslim community—Shi'a and Sunni—unanimously agrees on the absence of additions in the Qur'ān, and that the Shi'a school rejects any notion of omissions (al-Ṭūsī, 1996: 3).
- Ayatollah Abu al-Qāsim al-Khoei (d. 1413 AH) — who provided one of the most detailed rebuttals in modern scholarship through *al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, systematically dismantling every argument for *taḥrīf* and affirming the Qur'ān's integrity (al-Khu'ī, 1997: 195–257).

In their arguments, Shi'a scholars frequently invoke Qur'ānic verses such as: “Indeed, We sent down the Reminder, and indeed We will preserve it.” (Q 15:9)

They also highlight the principle that the Qur'ān is the ultimate criterion for assessing hadith authenticity—an approach incompatible with believing in its distortion. Collectively, these theological and scholarly refutations demonstrate a consistent and overwhelming Shi'a consensus affirming the Qur'ān's textual preservation and integrity.



Conclusion

The Qur'ān has always occupied a central position in the intellectual and spiritual life of Shi'a Islam, shaping its theology, jurisprudence, and mystical traditions. The Imāms of Ahl al-Bayt (as) and their followers approached the Qur'ān not merely as a sacred text, but as a living source of divine guidance whose meanings unfold through both exoteric and esoteric dimensions.

From Imām 'Alī's early efforts in the Qur'ān's compilation and linguistic codification to the elaborate exegetical traditions of later scholars such as al-Ṭūsī, al-Ṭabrisī, and 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Shi'a engagement with the Qur'ān reflects an unbroken continuum of scholarship rooted in reverence, reason, and transmitted knowledge. This tradition has consistently emphasized the Qur'ān's role as the ultimate criterion of truth, shaping Shi'a approaches to theology, law, ethics, and spirituality.

Furthermore, the strong and repeated affirmation of the Qur'ān's textual integrity within Shi'a doctrine demonstrates a deep commitment to the unity of the Muslim community while preserving the distinctive interpretive legacy of the Ahl al-Bayt. Shi'a scholars, both early and contemporary, have rigorously confronted and refuted accusations of taḥrīf, reaffirming the Qur'ān as complete, preserved, and authoritative.

The cumulative contributions of Shi'a scholarship to Qur'ānic sciences—ranging from tafsīr and qirā'āt to grammar, abrogation, and theological reflection—represent an essential and enduring component of Islamic intellectual history. These contributions not only illuminate the richness of Shi'a engagement with the Qur'ān but also deepen the broader Muslim understanding of the divine message.



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Typology of the Exegetical Traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as)
Concerning the Qur'ānic *Qisas*

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Abstract

The exegetical narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) have consistently drawn scholarly attention, and various studies have explored their interpretive approaches. Yet, typological investigations into their engagement with Qur'anic stories (*Qaṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*) remain largely absent, and the independent treatment of this category of verses has not been systematically examined. The Ahl al-Bayt (as), in their interaction with Qur'anic *Qisas*, adopted diverse interpretive strategies: at times they clarified and unveiled the apparent meanings of words; at other times they offered allegorical readings that pointed to deeper, esoteric dimensions; and in certain instances, without assuming the role of formal tafsīr or ta'wīl, they extracted subtle insights and delicate lessons from the stories. In this study, various typologies of ḥadīth in the field of Qur'anic exegesis were examined, and from among them, those types that were relevant to the Qur'anic stories (*Qisas al-Qur'ān*) were selected. By exploring the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), examples were chosen for each type, and a new category of exegetical traditions—exclusive to the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and accorded special importance by them—was introduced. These categories include: Depicting the Context of Revelation, Clarification of Qur'anic Terms (*īdāh al-alfāz*), Clarification of Concepts (*īdāh al-Mafāhīm*), Exemplification (*al-Miṣdāq*), Clarification of Divine Wisdom (*Hikmah*), Purification of the Prophets (*Tanzīh al-Anbiyā'*).

Keywords: Ahl al-Bayt (as), Qur'anic *Qisas*, Exegetical Narrations, *Tafsīr*, Typology.

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Introduction

The traditions of the Infallibles (as) concerning the Qur'ān may be classified into three categories: exegetical, allegorical (*ta'wīlī*), and contemplative (*tadabburī*), each characterized by its own distinctive approach and methodology.

In the first category, the exegetical traditions, the Infallibles (as) elucidate the apparent meaning and lexical sense of Qur'ānic words and expressions. These explanations typically consist of clear and straightforward applications, often presented as explicit commentary on the verses without recourse to complex reasoning or profound allegorical interpretation.

The second category, the allegorical traditions, pertains to the unveiling of the inner meanings and hidden realities of the verses. In these reports, the Infallibles (as) articulate deeper, symbolic significations that transcend the outward wording of the text. Such interpretations are generally grounded in the unique knowledge of the Imamate and their special insight, rather than in the literal or structural features of the verses.

The third category, the contemplative traditions, is devoted to a particular mode of reflection and deliberation upon the Qur'ānic text. These traditions instruct audiences in precise methods of attentiveness to the words and syntactic arrangements of the verses. This corpus not only engages in exegesis or allegory but also provides strategies and paradigms for attaining a deeper understanding of the Qur'ān and deriving greater benefit from its discourse.

This tripartite classification is equally applicable to the traditions concerning the Qur'ānic narratives (*qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*). In the present article, an attempt has been made to extract the exegetical traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) regarding the Qur'ānic stories from the relevant *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* sources, and to undertake a typological analysis of them for the sake of a clearer comprehension.

Qur'ānic Stories (*Qiṣaṣ al-Qur'ān*)

The term *qiṣṣa* (plural: *qiṣaṣ*) denotes narration or the recounting of events in sequential order (Jawharī, 1989). In the Qur'ān, the word appears in the verse: “*We recount to you the best of narratives*” (Q 12:3), signifying the divine act of relating exemplary stories. In literary usage, a *qiṣṣa* may be composed in either poetry or prose, provided that it conveys a coherent and continuous account, whether real or fictional, and is arranged according to the conventions of composition.

Within the Qur'ān, however, *qiṣaṣ* primarily refers to historical accounts and true stories that originate from divine knowledge and are narrated for the purpose of deepening reflection and imparting moral



lessons to the audience. These narratives are presented on the basis of truth, devoid of exaggeration, imagination, or error, and are consistently marked by authenticity and reliability. Thus, the Qur'ānic *Qisas* are accounts that trace and articulate past events and genuine occurrences.

Tafsīr

The term *tafsīr* derives from the root *fasara* and, in its lexical sense, encompasses a range of meanings such as uncovering, clarifying, disclosing, unveiling, elucidating, detailing, and explaining—all of which converge on the notion of making manifest and expressing meaning (Farāhīdī, 1414 ,7:247; Ibn Fāris, n.d,4:504; Ibn Manzūr, 1406 AH,5:55). Some have restricted its sense to “the uncovering of intelligible meaning” (Zabīdī, n.d,7:349; Rāghib, 1412 AH,636), while others have traced its etymology to the root *saḥara* (Zarkashī, 1410 AH,2:163). In the Qur'ān, the word occurs once, in the sense of clarification.

In technical usage, multiple definitions of *tafsīr* have been offered. Ṭabāṭabā'ī defines it as the exposition of the meaning of Qur'ānic verses and the unveiling of their aims and purposes (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1375,71). Ṭabrisī regards it as the elucidation of the difficult expressions of the Qur'ān and the clarification of their intended sense (*Majma' al-Bayān*, Introduction). Zarqānī describes *tafsīr* as a discipline that, to the extent of human capacity, investigates the states of the Qur'ān in terms of its indication of God's intent (Zarqānī, 2001,1:47). Dhahabī likewise considers it a science that examines the divine intent in the Qur'ān within the limits of human ability (Zahabī, n.d,1:15). Jawādī Āmulī defines *tafsīr* as the unveiling of the face of a word or discourse which, according to the conventions of communication and cultural understanding, has been uttered in a manner whose meaning is not immediately apparent.

Taken together, *tafsīr* signifies the clarification of the Qur'ān's meaning and the discovery of the divine intent, approached through human capacity and guided by the rules of language and culture.

Typology

Typology means study of or analysis or classification based on types or categories (Merriam-Webster). A typology is a system of classification used to organize things according to similar or dissimilar characteristics. Groups of things within a typology are known as “types” (Stapley, Emily, 2022). The word *gūneh* (“type”) in Persian is semantically synonymous with terms such as word, kind, manner, color, form, category, and class.

In hadith studies, typology is a scientific approach that categorizes traditions systematically according to defined criteria in order to preserve their thematic coherence. Moreover, in the context of exegetical research,



typology denotes the systematic and thematic classification of Qur'ānic traditions into various types according to the characteristics of their texts.

On this basis, typology of *tafsīr* in the traditions of the Infallibles (as) means identifying and retrieving the different modes of their Qur'ānic exegesis, in accordance with the criteria outlined in the introduction, which are grounded in the distinctions between *tafsīr*, *tadabbur*, and *ta'wīl*. This typology of traditions is thus based on the exegetical function of the reports of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) concerning Qur'ānic stories, and it classifies them according to the type of exegetical role they perform.

Problem Statement

The existence of approximately 150,000 exegetical traditions, together with the infiltration of *Isrā'īliyyāt* into many of these reports, underscores the necessity of typologizing the traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) concerning Qur'ānic narratives. Typology enables scholars to classify traditions according to precise criteria such as chain of transmission, content, function, and origin, thereby distinguishing authentic reports of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) from questionable or Israelite-influenced material.

Moreover, typology provides a systematic and organized framework for analyzing traditions, allowing researchers to employ analytical models that yield reliable and scholarly results. This approach reduces ambiguity and redundancy in exegetical analysis and facilitates the identification and critique of traditions that have entered Islamic heritage from non-Islamic sources.

Thus, the typologization of traditions related to Qur'ānic narratives not only contributes to the organization and classification of the material but also plays a crucial role in safeguarding the authenticity of the traditions and enhancing the quality of exegetical scholarship.

In this study, an exploratory–analytical method has been employed, drawing upon primary Shī'ī sources. Relevant traditions were first selected and then subjected to typological analysis. While typologization of exegetical traditions is not entirely unprecedented, the innovation of this research lies in presenting typologies specifically tailored to Qur'ānic narratives and in highlighting the distinctive exegetical role of the Ahl al-Bayt (as). It should be noted that the verification of the chains of transmission of the cited traditions falls outside the scope of this article and requires a separate investigation. Nevertheless, in selecting the traditions, care has been taken to rely on authoritative sources. Should any weakness in transmission be identified, it does not undermine the typological framework, as alternative traditions can be substituted.



Research Background

Numerous studies have been conducted on the typology of exegetical traditions. Some of these works have addressed the general typology of Shi'ī exegetical reports, such as Mehrīzī (1388) and Vahdatī Shabīrī (1392); others have focused on the typology of traditions attributed to a specific Imam (as), such as Maḥfūzī (1394) and Miṣlā'īpūr Yazdī and Dīmāh Kārgarāb (1388); and yet others have examined the typology of traditions within a particular exegetical work, such as Nāṣih and Bahrāmī (1394), Khushdūnī (1396), Khākpūr (1391), and Khālidī (1396). However, with regard to the typology of exegetical traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) concerning Qur'ānic *Qisas*, no independent study appears to have been undertaken.

Research Findings

The exegetical typologies of the Infallibles (as) concerning the Qur'ānic Qisas are determined in light of the functions performed by their interpretive traditions. In each of these typologies, the Infallible (as) endeavors to unveil meanings and dispel ambiguities from the verses, thereby clarifying the principal intent of the passage through explanatory commentary.

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Depicting the Context of Revelation

Exegetical traditions concerning the Qur'ānic Qisas play a significant role in delineating the context of revelation (*faḍā' al-nuzūl*), thereby contributing to a deeper and more precise understanding of the meanings and messages of the Qur'ān. These traditions clarify the *asbāb al-nuzūl* (occasions of revelation) as well as the historical, social, and cultural circumstances surrounding the descent of the verses, thus sketching the broader atmosphere that prevailed during that period.

While *sha'n al-nuzūl* generally refers to a specific cause or particular event associated with the revelation of one or more verses, the notion of *faḍā' al-nuzūl* is broader, encompassing the general conditions, prevailing ideas, and socio-cultural environment of the people at the time of revelation.

In a tradition transmitted from 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm, concerning the verses about Moses and Pharaoh, the context of revelation (*faḍā' al-nuzūl*) is depicted in a vivid and profoundly impactful manner. The scene is saturated



with Pharaoh's tyranny, which had spread across the land: he divided the people into groups, rendering some weak and oppressed, killing their sons while sparing their women. This portrayal conveys an atmosphere of pervasive fear, insecurity, and severe oppression upon the Children of Israel.

Alongside this, the suffering and affliction endured by Moses and his followers under Pharaoh's persecution further shape the context of revelation. These harsh conditions, marked by hostility and enmity, are presented as analogous to the situation of the Prophet Moḥammad (as) and his family during the period of Qur'ānic revelation. Yet, within this oppressive environment, the divine promise transforms the context into one filled with hope, consolation, and anticipation of a brighter future (Qummī, 1404AH, 2:133).

Clarification of Qur'ānic Terms (*īdāh al-alfāz*)

In Arabic usage, *īdāh* denotes clarification, explanation, or elucidation. When one speaks of *īdāh al-lafz*, the intent is to render the meaning of a word or expression in a clear and precise manner, leaving no ambiguity. Within Qur'ānic exegesis, *īdāh al-lafz* refers to the process of explicating and clarifying the meanings of Qur'ānic words and expressions so that lexical difficulties and ambiguities are removed and the intended sense of the verses becomes manifest. This clarification may involve etymological explanations, semantic analysis, determination of intended meaning, and commentary on individual terms.

On the term *Ḥawārīyūn* (Disciples): Imām al-Riḍā (as), in response to a question concerning the designation of the "Ḥawārīyūn," explained: "*They were called Ḥawārīyūn because they were launderers who purified garments ... through admonition and reminder.*" He noted that among ordinary people, the name was associated with the belief that the disciples were engaged in washing clothes, cleansing them of dirt. The word *ḥawārī* is derived from *ḥuwār*, meaning "white bread" or "purity." From the Imām's perspective, however, the true reason for the designation lay in their spiritual purification: they cleansed themselves from the defilement of sin and strove, through admonition and exhortation, to purify others. Thus, the "Ḥawārīyūn" are understood as those inwardly and outwardly purified, who supported the religion of God through both word and deed (Majlisī, 1403AH, 14:273).

On the term *Fatā* (Youth): Imām al-Ṣādiq (as), in clarifying the meaning of *fatā*, stated: "*May I be your ransom, among us 'fatā' means a young man. Do you not know that the Companions of the Cave were all middle-aged, yet God called them 'fatā' because of their faith? O Sulaymān, whoever believes in God and practices piety is a fatā.*" He



emphasized that although the Companions of the Cave were not young in age, God designated them as *fatā* on account of their faith and piety. Accordingly, *fatā* signifies not merely youthfulness, but rather one who believes in God and adopts divine piety (Majlisī, 1403AH, 14:428).

On the term *Mamdūd* (Extended, Time-bound): In one tradition, the word *mamdūd* is explained as denoting something whose time and duration are fixed and determined. Etymologically, *mamdūd* derives from the root *madd* and *mudda*, signifying extension, prolongation, and temporality. Since every form of wealth acquired by human beings will eventually depart after a certain period, all possessions are described as *mamdūd*—that is, time-bound and finite. In the Qur’ān, this attribute is applied to wealth in order to caution believers not to be deceived by their possessions, but to regard them as temporary and limited, never permanent or everlasting (Majlisī, 1403AH, 30:168).

As observed, the elucidation of words in Qur’ānic narratives has been carried out through explanations of etymology, clarification of meanings, and specification of lexical items. The Ahl al-Bayt (as) played a significant role in this process, contributing effectively to the precise clarification and interpretation of the vocabulary and expressions within the Qur’ānic stories.

Clarification of Concepts (*Īdāḥ al-Mafāhīm*)

Within the exegetical traditions of the Qur’ān, considerable attention is devoted to the clarification of concepts (*īdāḥ al-mafāhīm*), which constitutes one of the major typologies of the interpretive reports transmitted from the Ahl al-Bayt (as). Clarification of concepts refers to the explanation and elucidation of the relationships and meanings embedded in Qur’ānic phrases and sentences, such that the connections among the various components of a verse—or between multiple verses—are made explicit, thereby enabling a more precise comprehension of the divine intent. In their exegetical traditions concerning the Qur’ānic narratives (*qīṣaṣ al-Qur’ān*), the Ahl al-Bayt (as) engaged in conceptual clarification by explicating the deeper meanings and messages concealed within the stories of the Qur’ān. Through this process, they provided audiences with a more profound and practical understanding of the narratives. Through these methods, the Ahl al-Bayt (as) clarified religious, doctrinal, and ethical concepts, thereby transforming the Qur’ānic Qisas into a source of guidance that was both intellectually accessible and spiritually instructive. In the exegetical traditions of the Qur’ānic Qisas, the Ahl al-Bayt (as) employed this method to illuminate profound meanings and hidden messages within the Qur’ānic stories. By using precise analogies and comparisons, they



rendered complex concepts into simple and understandable language for their audiences.

A tradition from Imām al-Hādī (as) illustrates this approach. He highlights the special connection between the role of Āṣif Ibn Barkhiyā and that of Prophet Solomon (as). Imām al-Hādī (as) explains that Solomon did not require the knowledge of Āṣif, but God entrusted this knowledge to Āṣif so that humans and jinn would recognize him as the divine proof (ḥujjah) and guide after Solomon. This was intended to prevent disputes regarding leadership and to provide clarity in matters of guidance. (Majlisī, 1403AH, 14:127).

Also, in the exegetical traditions of the Qur’ānic Qisas, the Ahl al-Bayt (as) employed categorization to clarify concepts in a purposeful and methodical way. By dividing narratives into distinct aspects, they explained each part separately and highlighted its lessons and messages, thereby providing audiences with a deeper and more practical comprehension of the verses. A notable example is found in the words of Imām al-Ṣādiq (as), who classified prophets and messengers into four categories, each with distinct characteristics and missions:

The first category consists of prophets who are prophets only for themselves. Revelation reaches their hearts, but they are not tasked with conveying it to others. Their mission is personal and internal.

The second category includes prophets who receive messages in dreams and hear the voice of angels but do not see them while awake, nor are they sent to any community. Such prophets are under the authority of an Imām whose obedience is obligatory. Imām al-Ṣādiq (as) cites Lot (‘as as an example, who was a prophet but under the leadership of Abraham (as).

The third category comprises prophets who, in addition to dreams and hearing voices, also see angels while awake and are sent to groups of people, whether few or many. They have a mission of preaching and must deliver God’s message to their communities. Imām al-Ṣādiq (as) mentions Jonah (as), who was sent to one hundred thousand or more people to propagate divine law.

The fourth category encompasses prophets who possess all the previous qualities—dreams, voices, angelic visions—and who are also Imāms and leaders. These prophets hold a special status, combining religious and political leadership. Imām al-Ṣādiq (as) identifies them as the *ulu’l-‘azm* prophets, including Abraham (as), about whom God declared: *“Indeed, I will make you an Imām for the people”* (Q 2:124). These prophets not only convey revelation but also bear responsibility for the



comprehensive leadership and guidance of the community (al-Kulaynī, 1365, 1:147).

Exemplification (*al-Miṣdāq*)

In Islamic sciences and Qur'ānic exegesis, exemplification (*bayān al-miṣdāq*) refers to the identification and introduction of particular cases to which a general term or concept applies. This process clarifies the general meaning of a word or expression by presenting it in a concrete and specific form.

The term *jary wa tatbiq* in Qur'ānic exegesis was explicitly introduced for the first time by Sayyid Moḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī in his *Tafsīr al-Mizān*. He employed this expression to articulate a principle whereby Qur'ānic verses, although revealed in specific circumstances and concerning particular individuals, are not confined to that time or those instances. Rather, their rulings and meanings extend to analogous cases across different times and places (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, 1:216).

An example of this method is found in the words of Imam al-Ṣādiq (as), who established a parallel between the story of the “owner of the donkey” and the advent of the Qā'im (as). By employing *jary wa tatbiq*, he interpreted the event of the man's long death followed by his return to life as a prototype for the occurrence of the Qā'im's appearance. The Imam did not claim that the Qā'im (as) is literally the same as the owner of the donkey; rather, by specifying this instance, he conveyed to his audience that just as God has the power to revive a human being after a hundred years, the reappearance of the Qā'im (as) after a prolonged occultation is entirely possible and has precedent in divine tradition.

In fact, through this application, Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) simultaneously pointed to God's power in reviving the dead and to the possibility of the advent of Imam al-Mahdī (as) after a lengthy occultation (Majlisī, 1404 AH, 51:224).

Clarification of Divine Wisdom (*Ḥikmah*)

Shi'i exegetical traditions often address the wisdom behind divine matters and the reasons for rulings, making this one of the significant categories of tafsīr reports. In these traditions, beyond explaining the apparent meaning of the verses, attention is given to the philosophy, wisdom, and rationale behind the legislation of divine commands. According to the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), the Qur'ānic Qisas are not merely historical accounts but contain profound wisdom and lessons for guiding humanity.

On the diversity of prophetic miracles: Imām al-Riḍā (as), in response to Ibn al-Sikkīt's question about the reason for the differences in prophetic miracles, explained that each prophet was sent with miracles



suiting to the circumstances and needs of his time. In the era of Moses (as), when sorcery was widespread, God granted him miracles such as the staff and the shining hand, which nullified the magic of the sorcerers and established proof for the people. In the time of Jesus (as), when severe illnesses were common, God gave him miracles of healing—raising the dead, curing the blind and lepers—thus meeting the needs of his society. The Prophet Moḥammad (as) was sent in an age of eloquence and poetry, so his miracle was the Qur’ān, a discourse of unparalleled eloquence that invalidated the words of others. This diversity of miracles demonstrates divine wisdom: each miracle was tailored to the temporal context and societal needs, ensuring guidance and proof for the people. Imām al-Riḍā (as) emphasized that miracles were not merely for proving prophethood but also for guiding and responding to the specific needs of each era (Majlisī, 1403AH, 11:70).

On the wisdom of Khidr’s rebuilding of the wall: Imām al-Ṣādiq (as), in interpreting the verse about Khidr (as) rebuilding the wall, explained that God revealed to Moses (as): *“I reward sons according to the deeds of their fathers; if the fathers do good, the sons benefit, and if they do evil, the sons suffer.”* He also warned against fornication, teaching that one’s actions will be reciprocated. Khidr’s act of rebuilding the wall was to preserve the treasure of two orphaned and righteous boys until they reached maturity, ensuring their rights were protected. This act exemplified divine mercy and wisdom, showing that God’s decrees safeguard the vulnerable and that some divine matters surpass human comprehension, requiring trust in God’s wisdom (al-Kulaynī, 1365, 5:553).

5-5-Purification of the Prophets (*Tanzīh al-Anbiyā’*)

In the Bible, unlike the Islamic view of the infallibility of the prophets, the prophets and messengers are introduced as chosen human beings, yet clear faults and sins are also attributed to them. This is repeatedly observed in both the Old Testament and the New Testament.



Prophet	In the Qur'an	Islamic Interpretive Explanation	In the Bible	Jewish-Christian Interpretive Explanation
Adam	Eating from the forbidden tree (Q 20:121)	Considered <i>tarq al-awlā</i> (leaving the better option), not an actual sin; infallibility preserved	Disobedience to God's command (Genesis 3)	Seen as the <i>Original Sin</i> ; the beginning of human fall
Noah	Prophet is infallible; no sin mentioned	Complete infallibility	Drinking wine and becoming drunk (Genesis 9:21)	Human weakness; shows need for divine grace
Abraham	Prophet is infallible; no sin mentioned	Infallibility preserved	Introducing Sarah as his sister to save his life (Genesis 12 & 20)	Human error; yet God still chose him
Moses	Killing an Egyptian (Q 28:15) interpreted as defending the oppressed; <i>tarq al-awlā</i>	Not deliberate sin	Killing an Egyptian (Exodus 2:12) and disobedience in the rock incident (Numbers 20:12)	Real sin; prevented entry into the Promised Land
Jonah	Leaving his people without divine permission (Q 21:87); <i>tarq al-awlā</i>	Not actual sin	Fleeing from divine mission (Book of Jonah)	Clear disobedience; required repentance
David	Error in judgment (Q 38:24); <i>tarq al-awlā</i>	Not real sin	Affair with Bathsheba and killing Uriah (2 Samuel 11)	Major sin; but he repented
Solomon	Prophet is infallible; no sin mentioned	Infallibility preserved	Marriages with foreign women and inclination to idolatry (1 Kings 11)	Clear sin; spiritual downfall
Jesus	Prophet is infallible; no sin mentioned	Complete infallibility	In the New Testament, introduced as sinless	Christians regard him as sinless and the Savior



With the emergence of various theological sects in the intellectual tradition of Islamic civilization and the clarification of each sect's doctrinal and ideological boundaries, the issue of their stance on the infallibility of the prophets arose. For example, the Hashwiyya held that both major and minor sins were possible for the prophets. The Mu'tazila maintained that major sins could not be committed by the prophets, though minor sins might occur. From the perspective of the Ash'arite, prophets did not commit either major or minor sins during their mission, but such sins might have occurred before their prophetic calling. The Imamiyya (Twelver Shi'a), however, believed that prophets, from birth until death, never committed either major or minor sins. Exegetes of the Imamiyya never accepted the possibility of major sins for the prophets, though in cases where a slip or lapse was reported, other sects referred to it as a minor sin. Within the exegetical traditions of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) concerning Qur'anic narratives, this category of reports is of particular importance, as it has consistently been a source of disagreement among different sects.

Sect	View on Major Sins	View on Minor Sins	Additional Note
Hashwiyya	Possible	Possible	Did not consider prophets immune from sin
Mu'tazila	Impossible	Possible	Denied major sins, but regarded minor sins as possible
Ash'arite	Impossible during prophethood; possible before mission	Impossible during prophethood; possible before mission	Restricted infallibility to the period of prophethood
Imamiyya (Shi'a)	Impossible throughout life	Impossible throughout life	Prophets are infallible from birth to death; lapses are interpreted as <i>tarq al-awlā</i> (leaving the better option)

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) transmitted traditions affirming the purification (*tanzīh*) and infallibility (*iṣmah*) of the prophets. They emphasized that prophets are free from all sins—major or minor—both before and after their prophetic mission. In theological works such as *Tanzīh al-Anbiyā'* by al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā ('Ilam al-Hudā), extensive arguments are presented to establish the infallibility of prophets and Imams, with the first part of the book devoted specifically to the purification of the prophets.



On the innocence of David (‘a): Imām ‘Alī (as) strongly rejected the claim that David (‘as) married the wife of Uriah or committed adultery. He declared: *“If anyone alleges that David (‘a) married the wife of Uriah, I would punish him with two penalties: one for violating the sanctity of prophethood and another for slandering a believer under Islamic law.”* This statement underscores the absolute innocence of David and the seriousness of attributing sin to a prophet (Majlisī, 1403AH, 14:26).

On David’s judgment: Imām al-Riḍā (as), in a narration from Abū al-Ṣalt al-Harawī, explained the incident in which David (as) hastily judged in favor of the claimant, saying: *“He has wronged you by demanding your ewe to add to his ewes.”* The Imām clarified that David’s error was procedural—he failed to request evidence from the claimant and did not ask the defendant for his response. This was a mistake in judicial conduct, not a moral or sinful transgression as some have alleged. David sought forgiveness from God, and God forgave him. The Imām thus distinguished between an error in legal procedure and the false attribution of sin to a prophet (Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī, 1409AH, 27:216).



Conclusion

This research has demonstrated that the exegetical narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) represent a distinctive and multifaceted contribution to Qur'ānic interpretation, particularly in relation to the narratives of the Qur'ān (qāṣaṣ al-Qur'ān). By identifying and analyzing six principal typologies—depicting the context of revelation, clarification of Qur'ānic terms, clarification of concepts, exemplification, clarification of divine wisdom, and purification of the prophets—the study has shown how these traditions combine linguistic precision, theological depth, and pedagogical clarity. The findings highlight that the Ahl al-Bayt (as) did not merely transmit explanatory reports but developed interpretive strategies that bridged textual meaning with lived experience, thereby transforming Qur'ānic stories into sources of guidance, consolation, and doctrinal affirmation. The introduction of a new category exclusive to the Ahl al-Bayt (as) underscores their unique role in safeguarding and expanding the exegetical heritage of Islam. This article, by introducing the category of *Purification of the Prophets (Tanzīh al-Anbiyā')*, has highlighted the significant role of the Ahl al-Bayt (as) in the exegetical tradition of Islam. As demonstrated, without this body of narrations within the exegetical treatment of Qur'ānic stories, certain teachings from the Biblical tradition might have continued to circulate among Muslims. The study has shown that by identifying and presenting typologies appropriate to each section of the Qur'ān and its narrations, one can discern the position and impact of each category more clearly.

It is hoped that future researchers, through further discoveries and innovative approaches, will continue to advance the recognition of the Ahl al-Bayt's (as) place in Qur'ānic exegesis and contribute to a deeper understanding of the Qur'ānic narratives.



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Elements of Monotheism in *Ziyārat Wārith* and Its Impact on the Pilgrim's Understanding

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Abstract

The fundamental and key principle of religious beliefs is *Tawhīd* (monotheism), and acceptance of other beliefs, including imāmate, is based on the acceptance of *Tawhīd*. Shīʿa Islam considers the connection between imāmate and *Tawhīd* inseparable and believes that entering the fortress of *Tawhīd* and being protected from the torment of Hell is impossible without accepting the guardianship of the *Imām Maʿsūm* (infallible Imām). The emphasis on visiting the *Aʿimma* (*imāms*) is a reflection of this belief, and the *Ziyārat* prayers are evidence of the belief that the Ahl al-Bayt (the progeny of the Prophet) are the gates to God and the callers to *Tawhīd*. *Ziyārat Wārith*, as one of the absolute *Ziyārats* for Imām Ḥusayn, is filled with elements of *Tawhīd* and its various levels. These elements have a direct and reciprocal relationship with the pilgrim's theoretical and practical knowledge. From one perspective, the monotheistic elements of this *Ziyārat* include: divine names and attributes (*asmāʾ wa ṣifāt*), praise (*ḥamd*), glorification (*tasbīḥ*), and exaltation (*tabkīr*) of God, supplication (*Duʿāʾ*), the act of visiting the Imām, the religious acts performed during the visit, mentioning the sincere monotheists (*muwahḥidīn*) and the bearers of the banner of *Tawhīd*, and allegiance (*tawallāʾ*) and disassociation (*tabarrāʾ*). This article first explains the monotheistic elements of *Ziyārat Wārith* and then examines their impact on the pilgrim's understanding, addressing two fundamental questions: 1. What are the monotheistic elements in *Ziyārat Wārith*? 2. What is the impact of these elements on the pilgrim's knowledge and understanding?

Keywords: *Ziyārat Wārith*, Monotheism, Impact, Visitation, Understanding.

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Introduction

Ziyārat Wārith is one of the established *Ziyārats* transmitted from the Imām Ma‘šūm and recorded in reliable sources. One instance of this transmission is narrated by the late Sayyid Ibn Ṭāwūs in *Al-Iqbāl*, quoting Ṣafwān Jamāl. Ṣafwān says: I sought permission from Imām Ṣādiq to visit our master Imām Ḥusayn and asked him to provide me with instructions for the pilgrimage. After describing certain actions, the Imām taught me this *Ziyārat*. (Sayyid ibn Ṭāwūs, 1988CE, vol. 2, p. 64)

The *Ziyārat* prayer is a declaration of the pilgrim’s theological, ethical, spiritual, and political stances, expressed in the holiest of places. In the Shī‘a school of thought, one of the best ways to convey proper Islamic teachings and beliefs is through the *Ziyārats* of the Ahl al-Bayt. It can be said that *Ziyārat* is a classroom of education, and *Ziyārat* prayers are the instructional texts of these classes.” (Jawādī Āmulī, 2013CE, vol. 1, p. 38)

What stands out in *Ziyārat Wārith* is the attention to all theological dimensions, particularly Tawḥīd, prophethood (Nubuwwa), imāmate, and the afterlife (ma‘ād). Tawḥīd, as the essence of belief and the central core of religion, is the primary element of religious adherence, and the Qur’ān considers it the key to salvation:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ. (Qur’an, Āl-e ‘Imrān: 64)

"Say, O People of the Book, come to a word that is equitable between us and you, that we will not worship except Allah, and not associate anything with Him, and not take one another as lords besides Allah."

Ziyārat Wārith contains numerous monotheistic elements, each of which can be categorized under one of the types of *Tawḥīd* (essential, attributive, active, and their subcategories). The most valuable outcome of understanding these elements of *Tawḥīd* is knowledge—first, the knowledge of the Exalted God, which is the highest form of knowledge, as Imām Ḥusayn says in his supplication on the day of ‘*Arafah*: “What has he found who has lost You, and what has he lost who has found You?” And second, the knowledge of the Ahl al-Bayt’s position in existence. (Majlisi, 2013CE, vol. 95, p. 226)



Monotheistic Ziyārat corrects the pilgrim's perspective on the Ahl al-Bayt (as), making them first see God as the true influencer in the universe, and then seek refuge in the sources of divine knowledge with His guidance.

1-1. Tawḥīd

1-1-1. Definition of Tawḥīd in Language and Terminology

In Arabic, *Tawḥīd* is a verbal noun from the *tafʿīl* form of the root *waḥd*, meaning to regard something or someone as having a particular quality. Based on this, *Tawḥīd* is used to mean considering something as one and singular. In theological discussions, it refers to the belief in the oneness and uniqueness of God in His essence, attributes, and actions, and acting accordingly. (Thanawī, Moḥammad 'Alī, 1967CE, vol. 1, p. 528)

The term *Tawḥīd* itself is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān, but its derived forms appear in various contexts. However, in ḥadīths and supplications, the term *Tawḥīd* and its derivatives are used frequently.

1-1-2. Levels and Degrees of Tawḥīd

Prominent scholars such as 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Shahīd Muṭahharī divide *Tawḥīd* into theoretical (*tawḥīd nazarī*) and practical (*tawḥīd 'amalī*) categories. (Motahari, 2020CE, vol. 2, p. 99) This distinction arises from the separation between knowledge and action. Theoretical *Tawḥīd* refers to the firm belief in God's oneness in His essence, attributes, and actions. If this belief deeply penetrates the heart and shapes one's actions and behavior in a monotheistic way, it is called practical *Tawḥīd*. (Ibid., p. 103)

Theoretical *Tawḥīd* is divided into three types: *Tawḥīd dhātī* (monotheism in essence), *tawḥīd ṣifātī* (monotheism in attributes), and *tawḥīd af'ālī* (monotheism in actions).

Tawḥīd dhātī refers to the belief in God's singularity in His essence, implying that He is unique and alone in His essence. (Ṣubḥānī, 2020 CE, vol. 2, p. 11) This can either mean that there is no multiplicity in His essence or that His essence is simple and indivisible. (Ibid.)

Tawḥīd ṣifātī means that God's attributes of perfection are identical to His essence in reality and have no independent existence. This concept is known as the principle of the unity of essence and essential attributes. These attributes, though conceptually distinct from each other and from the essence, are unified in their external reality with the essence and are not separate from it. (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1981CE, p. 243)



Tawḥīd af'ālī means that God is unique and independent in His actions, and all actions in the universe are ultimately attributed to Him alone. No one else participates in His actions, and the agency of others is derived from His permission. In other words, there is no independent cause except God, and any other cause acts only with His permission. (Motahari, (Tawḥīd)2020CE, p. 14)

Tawḥīd af'ālī can be further divided into: Tawḥīd in creation (*tawḥīd fī al-khalq*), Tawḥīd in guidance (*tawḥīd fī al-hidāyah*), Tawḥīd in lordship (*tawḥīd fī al-rubūbiyah*), Tawḥīd in ownership (*tawḥīd fī al-mālikīyah*), Tawḥīd in legislation and governance (*tawḥīd fī al-tashrī' wa Ḥākīmīyah*), Tawḥīd in divinity (*tawḥīd fī al-ulūhīyah*), Tawḥīd in giving life and death (*tawḥīd fī al-ihyā' wa al-imātah*), and Tawḥīd in sustenance (Tawḥīd fī al-rizq). (Ibid., p. 15)

The most important levels of practical *Tawḥīd* include: *Tawḥīd* in worship (*tawḥīd fī al-'ibādah*), *Tawḥīd* in seeking help (*tawḥīd fī al-isti'ānah*), *Tawḥīd* in obedience (*tawḥīd fī al-ṭā'ah*), *Tawḥīd* in love (*tawḥīd fī al-maḥabbah*), and *Tawḥīd* in reliance (*tawḥīd fī al-tawakkul*).

1-1-3. Monotheistic Elements

Anything that influences the formation of something and is a component of a compound is called an element. ('Amīd, Ḥ 1990CE, entry for the word '*Unṣur*.) The monotheistic elements in Ziyārat Wārith refer to those aspects from whose analysis the concepts and instances of Tawḥīd are derived.

1-2. Monotheistic Elements in Ziyārat Wārith

1-2-1. Divine Names and Attributes of Perfection

The word "Allah" is repeated 52 times in *Ziyārat Wārith*, indicating the God-centeredness of this *Ziyārat*. 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī considers the word "Allah" to be a proper and exclusive name for God and states that, since the existence of the Glorious God is the deity of all beings, He Himself guides creation toward His attributes and makes it known which attributes of perfection He possesses. Therefore, the word "Allah" implicitly refers to all of His attributes of perfection, and it is correct to say that the word "Allah" is a name for the essence of the Necessary Being, who possesses all attributes of perfection. (Mūsawī, Moḥammad Bāqir, 1997 CE, vol. 1, p. 29)



Among these attributes are names such as "*Al-Wāḥid*" (the One), "*Al-Aḥad*" (the Unique), and "*Al-Fard*" (the Singular), which follow the name "Allah" in *Ziyārat Wārith*. The word "Allah" is described by these beautiful names (*Asmā' Ḥusnā*), and these meanings explicitly indicate *tawḥīd dhātī* (oneness of essence).

The meaning of *Tawḥīd Dhātī* is the belief that not only is the essence of the Glorious God simple and not composite or multiple, but also that any composition or multiplicity in the divine essence is impossible. (Jawādī Āmulī, 2013 CE, vol. 2, p. 202) *Tawḥīd Dhātī* has two levels: *Tawḥīd Aḥadī* (Singleness) and *Tawḥīd Wāḥidī* (Oneness). The level of *Aḥadī Dhātī* refers to the simplicity of the essence and the negation of any form of composition from the sacred essence of God. This level of *Tawḥīd Dhātī* is also called *Aḥadī al-Dhāt* and *Aḥadī al-Ma'nā*.

The *Aḥadī* monotheism of the Glorious God can be derived independently from the holy verse: "Say, He is Allah, the One" (Qur'ān 112:1), though numerous narrations from the Ma'ṣūmīn (Infallibles) contain the negation of any parts or composition from the Glorious God. (Dhawqī Harīs, Moḥammad, 2013 CE, p. 43) These narrations absolutely absolve God of having any parts and affirm that all forms of composition are negated concerning Him. The *Wāḥidī* monotheism refers to the absence of any equal, peer, likeness, or partner for the essence of the Glorious God, as indicated by the verse:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنذِرٌ وَمَا مِنِّي إِلَهٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ. (Qur'ān 38:65).

"Say, I am only a warner, and there is no deity except Allah, the One, the Supreme." Imām 'Alī explains the meanings of *Aḥad* and *Wāḥid*, saying: (Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, 2006CE. 1, p. 83)



إِنَّ الْقَوْلَ فِي أَنَّ اللَّهَ وَاحِدٌ عَلَى أَرْبَعَةٍ أُفْسَامٍ فَوَجْهَانِ مِنْهَا لَا يَجُوزَانِ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَ وَجْهَانِ يَثْبَتَانِ فِيهِ فَأَمَّا اللَّذَانِ لَا يَجُوزَانِ عَلَيْهِ فَقَوْلُ الْقَائِلِ وَاحِدٌ يَقْصِدُ بِهِ بَابَ الْأَعْدَادِ فَهَذَا مَا لَا يَجُوزُ لِأَنَّ مَا لَا ثَانِي لَهُ لَا يَدْخُلُ فِي بَابِ الْأَعْدَادِ أَمَا تَرَى أَنَّهُ كَفَرَ مَنْ قَالَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَ قَوْلُ الْقَائِلِ هُوَ وَاحِدٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ يُرِيدُ بِهِ النَّوْعَ مِنَ الْجِنْسِ فَهَذَا مَا لَا يَجُوزُ عَلَيْهِ لِأَنَّهُ تَشْبِيهُ وَ جَلَّ رَبُّنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَ تَعَالَى وَ أَمَّا اللَّوَجْهَانِ اللَّذَانِ يَثْبَتَانِ فِيهِ فَقَوْلُ الْقَائِلِ هُوَ وَاحِدٌ لَيْسَ لَهُ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ شَبْهٌ كَذَلِكَ رَبُّنَا وَ قَوْلُ الْقَائِلِ إِنَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ أَحَدِي الْمَعْنَى يَعْنِي بِهِ أَنَّهُ لَا يَنْقَسِمُ فِي وُجُودٍ وَ لَا عَقْلٍ وَ لَا وَهْمٍ كَذَلِكَ رَبُّنَا عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ.

The statement that Allah is *Wāhid* is of four types. Two of them are impermissible for Allah, the Almighty, and two are affirmed for Him. As for the two that are impermissible: one is when a person says that Allah is one intending numerical value, which is incorrect because something that has no second cannot be part of a number. Do you not see that one who says, ‘Third of three,’ has disbelieved? And if someone says, ‘He is one among the people,’ intending a type among a species, this is not permissible because it involves resemblance, and our Lord is exalted above that. However, the two meanings that are affirmed for Him are: when someone says, ‘He is one, having no similarity among things,’ indeed, that is our Lord. And when someone says, ‘He is *Aḥadī al-Ma‘nā*, meaning that He cannot be divided in existence, thought, or imagination,’ that too is our Lord, the Almighty.”

The result is that both having composition and having an equal or partner indicate limitation and need, which are characteristics of creation. Therefore, divine unity is based on negating all forms of limitation from God. In a narration from Imām al-Riḍā, he says:

أَوَّلُ عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَ أَصْلُ مَعْرِفَةِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ اسْمُهُ تَوْحِيدُهُ، وَ نِظَامُ تَوْحِيدِهِ نَفْيُ التَّحْدِيدِ عَنْهُ؛
لِشَهَادَةِ الْعُقُولِ أَنَّ كُلَّ مَحْدُودٍ مَخْلُوقٌ.

“The first act of worship of Allah is knowing Him, and the foundation of knowing Allah, the Exalted, is affirming His oneness, and the system of His oneness is the negation of limitation from Him; for intellects testify that anything limited is created.” (Shaykh al-Mufīd, 1981CE, Session 30; Hadīth 4)



The words *Aḥad* and *Wāḥid*, which appear in *Ziyārat Wārith* and are among the divine attributes, align with these meanings and are considered the most profound and expressive monotheistic elements of this *Ziyārat*.

Ṣamadiyyah (absolute independence) is among the attributes of divine action. ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī writes: “Exegetes have interpreted this term in various ways, but all these interpretations return to this statement: ‘The Master and Lord to whom all direct themselves for the fulfillment of their needs.’” To prove that *Ṣamadiyyah* is exclusively a description of the Glorious God, he adds: “Since the word *Ṣamad* appears absolutely in the verse ‘Allah is He on Whom all depend’ (Qur’ān 112:2), this meaning is correct. Therefore, Allah, the Exalted, is the Master and Lord to whom all creatures in the universe turn for the fulfillment of their needs, and the use of the definite article (‘*al*’) before *Ṣamad* implies exclusivity, indicating that only Allah, the Exalted, is eternal and absolute.” (Mūsawī, Moḥammad Bāqir, 1997 CE, vol. 1, p. 29)

In line with this meaning, the late Kulaynī narrates in *Uṣūl al-Kāfi* through his chain from Dāwūd ibn Qāsim al-Ja‘farī, who says: “I asked Imām al-Jawād about the meaning of *Ṣamad*, and he replied: ‘It means the one to whom all creatures turn for their small and great needs.’” (Al-Kulaynī, Moḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb, 1983CE., vol. 1, p. 123)

Fard (singular) refers to something that is not mixed with anything else, and this word is more specific than *Wāḥid*. *Fard* can be an attribute of God (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, p. 129), as the narration says:

"والفرد فلا ثاني معه" (Shaykh Ṣadūq, p. 526)

“And He is *Fard*, without a second accompanying Him.”

Fard means that there is no partner or associate with Him. The result is that *Fard* and *Wāḥid* have close meanings, and their common point is the negation of any partner from Allah, the Exalted, which is the meaning of *Tawḥīd Wāḥidī*.



In *Ziyārat Wārith*, when the visitor stands at the head of Imām Ḥusayn’s grave, before addressing the Imām, he praises Allah, the Exalted, with attributes such as *Wāḥidiyyah* (Oneness), *Aḥadiyyah* (Singularity), *Ṣamadiyyah* (Self-Sufficiency), and *Fardiyyah* (Singularity). Praising Allah with these attributes means that only His absolute and independent essence is the one who is the absolute Sustainer.

Another aspect of God’s perfection is guidance. *Hādī* (the Guide) is an attribute of divine action, and *Tawḥīd* in guidance, which some consider an aspect of *Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah* (Oneness in Lordship), means that only Allah guides humanity and other creatures, and no one else can serve as a guide except as an intermediary.

The phrases “Praise be to Allah, who guided us to this, and we would not have been guided if Allah had not guided us” (Qur’ān 7:43) and “Who guided me to your guardianship, selected me for your visitation, and made my path to you easy” refer to the impact of divine guidance in accepting the guardianship (*Wilāyah*) of the Ahl al-Bayt (as).

There are two types of guidance: innate (*Takwīnī*) and legislative (*Tashrīṭī*). Innate guidance is beyond human control, while legislative guidance is specific to humans, and Allah guides them through the revelation of scripture and the sending of divine messengers.¹

‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī explains the matter of divine guidance and its relation to the role of the Imām in the following way:



1. Qur’ān: *Namād Ḥayāt Ma’qūl*, p. 120.

He refers to the noble verse:

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ وَكَانُوا لَنَا
عَابِدِينَ. (Qur'an, 21:73)

"And We made them leaders who guide by Our command, and We inspired them to do good deeds, establish prayer, and give *zakāt*, and they were devout worshippers of Us", understanding it as referring to the guidance of the Imām (as), and writes: This guidance is one of the aspects of the Imāmah, and the guidance mentioned in the verse does not merely mean providing direction. The guidance that is the position of the Imām (as) has a meaning beyond simply leading someone to their destination. It signifies a form of *takwīnī* (creative or existential) influence on souls, by which the way is paved for attracting hearts toward perfection and elevating them from one level to a higher level. This type of guidance is an aspect of the Imāmah (as) and involves a creative, inner action. (Mūsawī, Moḥammad Bāqir, 1997 CE, vol. 14, p. 429)

Allāmah further elaborates that guidance by command mentioned in the verse refers to a spiritual effusion and inner station that believers are led to through righteous deeds, being adorned with their Lord's mercy. Since the Imām (as) guides by divine command, it becomes clear that the Imām (as) himself is adorned with this guidance before anyone else, and from him, it spreads to others. From here, we understand that the Imām (as) is the intermediary between people and their Lord in receiving both outward and inward blessings. It becomes evident that the Imām (as) is the proof who guides souls to his stations, just as the Prophet (pbuh) is the proof who leads people to correct beliefs and righteous actions. (Ibid)

1-2-2. Praise, Glorification, and Magnification of Allāh

Praise (*ḥamd*) is describing the Lord with affirmative attributes, glorification (*tasbīḥ*) means to declare Allāh free from that which His essence is exalted above, and magnification (*takbīr*) means that Allāh is greater than anything that can be described. Regarding the importance of beginning with *ḥamd*, Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq (as) said, "Every speech that does not begin with praise is cut off." (Aḥmad ibn Fahd al-Ḥillī, 1988CE. p. 112)



Ziyārat *Wārith* begins with the declarations of *tahlīl* (*lā ilāha illā Allāh*), *taḥmīd* (*al-ḥamdu lillāh*), and *tasbīḥ* of Allāh, with words emphasized by phrases like “greatly,” “abundantly,” and “morning and evening.”

‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī, drawing on Qur’ānic verses, establishes the concept of Tawḥīd (monotheism) in *ḥamd* as follows: "God, the Sublime, says: 'That is Allāh, your Lord, Creator of everything.' (Qur’an, 40:62). He informs us that everything that falls under the term 'thing' is created by Him. He also says, 'Who perfected everything He created.' (Qur’an, 32:7). That God who created everything beautifully, and this beauty is because it is created and attributed to Him. So, beauty is tied to creation, and creation is tied to beauty. Thus, there is no creation except that it is made beautiful by God's benevolence, and no one has beauty except through being created and attributed to Him. And He also says, 'He is Allāh, the One, the Conqueror' (Qur’an, 39:4), and 'All faces will submit to the Living, the Sustainer.' (Qur’an, 20:111). These two verses inform us that He created nothing out of compulsion nor did He perform any act under duress. Rather, everything He created, He did so by His own knowledge and choice. As a result, there is no being except that it is His voluntary act, and thus every act of His is beautiful and praiseworthy. Therefore, from the perspective of action, all praise belongs to Him." (Motahari, (Tawḥīd)2020CE, p. 14)

Shahīd Muṭahharī, in explaining the boundaries between Tawḥīd and Shirk (polytheism), writes: "Statements and actions that express glorification, praise, and magnification, and are directed toward the Absolute Perfect and Absolutely Self-Sufficient Being, fall under polytheism if they are directed to anyone other than Allāh. For it is He who sustains all power, and He is the Absolutely Pure One, free from all deficiency. He is the Absolute Great One, to whom all praise returns."



To clarify further, *ḥamd* (praise), *thana* (glorification), *tasbīh* (declaration of transcendence), and *takbīr* (magnification) mean that one should never attribute any role, at any time or in any action, to anyone other than Allāh. This is the reality of *Tawḥīd*.

Another important point is that the emphasized phrases in these statements serve to prevent any exaggerated thoughts or beliefs about the Ahl al-Bayt (as) and to safeguard the monotheistic belief of the visitor, ensuring that the greatness of anyone other than Allāh is removed from the mind. This means that although attention is directed to the Ahl al-Bayt (as), their exalted attributes should not distract one from the One, Eternal, and Infinite God, leading to deviant beliefs. Moreover, it suggests that the true focus of the *ziyārah* is Allāh, and any other action is valid only when accompanied by attention to Allāh.

1-2-3. The Act of Visiting the Imām (‘a) as a Pillar of Tawḥīd

The term name (*ism*) is often understood as referring to the essence accompanied by a specific manifestation or perfection. (Jawādī Āmulī, 1999 CE. , *ibid.*, p. 150) In the Qur’ān, Allāh says:

و لله الاسماء الحسنی فادعوه بها (Qur’an, 7:180)

“To Allāh belong the Most Beautiful Names, so call upon Him by them.” In a narration, Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī (as) explains that the *asmā’ Allāh* (Names of Allāh) in this verse refer to the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a), stating: "We are the Names of Allāh." (Majlisi, 2013 CE, vol. 27, p. 39)

‘Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī interprets *du‘ā* (invocation) in this verse as meaning worship. (Allameh Tabataba’i, vol. 8, p. 356). Based on the aforementioned narration, this means that true worship of God occurs through obedience to the Ahl al-Bayt (as).

The crucial role of the Imām in actualizing *Tawḥīd* is so profound that Imām al-Hādī (‘a), in *Ziyārat Jāmi‘ah Kabīrah*, refers to the Ahl al-Bayt (as) as the pillars of divine unity and those who are purified in the worship of God. He also says: "Whoever seeks Allāh must begin with you, and whoever affirms His Oneness accepts from you." (*Ibid.*, vol. 99, p. 129).



Thus, the very act of visiting the Ahl al-Bayt (as) is itself a form of connecting with *Tawhīd* and worshipping God through the manifestations of His Most Beautiful Names.

Expressions like Abā ‘Abdillāh (father of ‘Abdullāh), *Thārullāh* (the avenger of Allāh), *Walīyullāh* (friend of Allāh), and similar titles found in the noble *Ziyārat Wārith* reflect this monotheistic path. It is clear that the more one understands the attributes and characteristics of the Imām (as), the greater one's obedience becomes, leading to deeper *Tawhīd* in the worship of Allāh.

The *Ziyārat Wārith* describes the Imāms (as) as the Flags of Guidance, Pillars of the Believers, Word of Piety, Firmest Handle, and Proofs of the Lord, and praises them with divine attributes such as righteous, pious, content, pure, guide, guided, sincere, truthful, and witness.

It is important to note that the Imāms' (as) attributes of perfection are dependent and authorized due to their exalted status in the system of existence, and do not infringe upon the divine unity of attributes.

Reflecting on the phrase, "You obeyed Allāh and His Messenger until certainty came to you," strengthens in the visitor the belief that reaching certainty and proximity to God is only possible through complete obedience to Allāh and His Messenger, aligning oneself within their divine light. The life of Abā ‘Abdillāh al-Ḥusayn (as), along with his martyrdom in the path of Allāh, serves as the highest practical example of *Tawhīd* in obedience for the visitor.

1-2-4. Imam Ḥusayn (as), the Heir of the Sincere Monotheists and the Bearer of the Banner of Tawhīd

The *ḥadīth* of the Golden Chain (*silsilat al-dhahab*) narrated by Imam Riḍā (as) has been reported by both Shī‘ī and Sunni scholars in various versions and with different chains of transmission. Imam Riḍā (‘a) said: “Allah, Glorious is His Majesty, says: ‘There is no god but Allah is My fortress; whoever enters My fortress is safe from My punishment.’” After the caravan passed, Imam Riḍā (as) added: “With its conditions, and I am among its conditions.” (Shaykh Ṣadūq, 2010CE., p. 25)



The phrase *lā ilāha illā Allāh* (There is no god but Allah) is an expression of *Tawhīd* (monotheism). The phrase “with its conditions” refers in some way to prophethood, while “and I am among its conditions” refers to the imamate of the Infallible Imam (as). Since most of Imam Riḍā’s listeners were Sunnis and did not fully recognize the matter of *Wilāyah* (authority), it seems the primary aim of the Imam in this statement was to elucidate the connection between *Tawhīd* and *Imāmate*. However, in the content of the ḥadīth, attention to prophethood as the link between *Imāmate* and the element of *Tawhīd* is also inevitable.

The Holy Qur’an considers *Tawhīd* the core of all prophets’ teachings and introduces Prophet Ibrāhīm (pbuh) as the one who perpetuated the word of *Tawhīd* in the world. The Qur’an says:

(Qur’an 43:28) *وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةً بَاقِيَةً فِي عَقْبِهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يُرْجَعُونَ.*

“And He made it a lasting word among his offspring, so that they may return (to God)”. The Prophet of God, Moḥammad al-Muṣṭafā (pbuh), is also a descendant of Ibrāhīm Khalīl (as), and Ḥusayn (as) is the son of Fāṭima al-Zahrā (as) and the heir, both genealogically and spiritually, of the last divine messenger. The phrase “I bear witness that you were a light in lofty loins and pure wombs, and the impurities of ignorance did not stain you, nor did its dark garments cover you” (from *Ziyārat al-Wārith*) refers to the eligibility of Ḥusayn (as) to be part of this lofty line.

In *Ziyārat al-Wārith*, Imam Abā ‘Abdillāh al-Ḥusayn (as) is introduced as the heir of the prophets of firm resolve and the divine *awliyā’* (friends of God), all of whom were monotheists and sincere individuals who carried the banner of *Tawhīd* and arduously promoted it. This inheritance, on the one hand, recalls the *Tawhīd* in divine legislation and sovereignty, and on the other hand, shows that this critical position of *Tawhīd* has been bestowed upon the divine prophets and their worthy heirs by Almighty God. It is as if the mission of *Tawhīd* of all the great prophets of history has been placed on the shoulders of Imam Ḥusayn (as), manifesting in Karbala as the pinnacle of the historical battle between *Tawhīd* and *Shirk* (polytheism).



1-2-5. *Tawallā* and *Tabarrā*

Tawhīd in love means that the monotheist, in practice, must recognize the only true beloved and the only real object of love in the entire existence as Allah, the Exalted. The Qur'an says: "But those who believe are stronger in their love for Allah" (Qur'an 2:165). According to the Holy Qur'an, love for Allah is inseparable from obedience to the beloved ones of Allah, and loving them is in line with loving Allah and is praiseworthy:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

"Say: If you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (Qur'an 3:31)

That is why Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (‘a) also asks for the love of Allah and the love of Allah’s friends in his prayer, saying: "O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You." (‘Alī ibn Ḥusām al-Dīn al-Muttaqī, 1999CE. : 3718 and 3794).

Tawallā contains the meanings of love, devotion, and affection, and when it is paired with *Tabarrā* (disassociation), it carries even more significance. *Tawallā* (loving the Ahl al-Bayt and their friends) and *Tabarrā* (declaring enmity and dissociation from their enemies) form the central axis of attraction and connection to Allah and serve as a means of drawing near to Him. In other *ziyārāt* (visitation prayers), loving the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, is considered synonymous with loving Allah, and enmity towards them is regarded as enmity towards Allah. It is said: "Whoever befriends you has befriended Allah, and whoever opposes you has opposed Allah, and whoever loves you has loved Allah, and whoever hates you has hated Allah." (Majlisi, 2013CE, vol. 99, p. 129)

Some passages from *Ziyārat al-Wārith* such as: "And those who are friends with your friend," "My heart is in peace with your heart," "My father and mother be sacrificed for you," and "And those who oppose your enemies," as well as phrases like "May Allah curse the nation that saddled horses and prepared to fight you", are just a few examples of the affectionate words of the visitor when addressing Imam Ḥusayn (as).



The pilgrimage of the visitor, the hardships endured to reach the zīyārah, praise to Allah for granting this success, greetings to the prophets, the divine trustees, and the angels, as well as expressing affection for the Imam (as) and the martyrs with him through gentle language, asking permission to enter the sanctuary, expressing grief, renewing allegiance, and showing regret for not being with him—all of these reflect the heartfelt love and hidden divine affection that demonstrate the monotheistic spirit characterizing *Ziyārat al-Wārith*.

1-2-6. *Du‘ā’* (Supplication)

Du‘ā’ is both a ladder to *Tawhīd* and a manifestation of practical *Tawhīd*. The Qur’anic reasoning for this is that the Qur’an regards supplication as worship and says:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ.

(Qur’an, 40: 60)

“And your Lord said, ‘Call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell, disgraced.’” Since worship is essentially the expression of *Tawhīd* by monotheists, the very act of supplication, in any form, is one of the clearest manifestations of practical *Tawhīd*. In *Sūrah al-Ra‘d*, verse 16, Allah says:

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاسِطٍ كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ

وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ.

“To Him alone is the true supplication. Those they call upon besides Him will not respond to them at all, except like someone who stretches his hands towards water, [asking] it to reach his mouth, but it will never reach it.”



The precedence of the phrase “To Him alone belongs the true supplication” affirms that supplication belongs exclusively to Allah, and the continuation of the verse negates supplication from others. Therefore, the only real object of supplication is Allah, and supplication reflects the need and dependence of the one who prays. Naturally, the request is only meaningful when the one being asked is independent and self-sufficient, and based on the principles of Tawḥīd, the only independent being is Allah, the Exalted. (Mūsawī, Moḥammad Bāqir, 1997 CE, vol. 11, pp. 434-435).

Du‘ā’ is one of the manifestations of Tawḥīd in seeking help and has various forms: sometimes it takes the form of intimate conversation, sometimes it is an acknowledgment of Tawḥīd, and sometimes it is in the form of a request. (Ibid).

In *Ziyārat al-Wārith*, before making any specific requests, the visitor first acknowledges Allah's oneness and then asks for matters such as being with Imam Ḥusayn (as) in this world and the Hereafter (“I ask Allah, by the station you have with Him and the position you have with Him, to send blessings upon Moḥammad and the family of Moḥammad, and to make me with you in this world and the Hereafter”), as well as conveying greetings to him (“I send you the best greetings and peace and ask that peace be returned to me from you”), and invoking the curse of Allah on the enemies of the Imam (“May Allah curse the nation that killed you”).

It is worth noting that the visitor attributes the acceptance of supplication and prayer during the *zīyārah* to Allah’s will alone and connects Tawḥīd in supplication with Tawḥīd in *wilāya* (divine authority) (“Accept from me and reward me for this by the best of my hope and expectations in You and Your *wali*, O Protector of the believers”).



1-2-7. Acts of Worship During the *Ziyārah*

Ṣalāh (prayer) is the highest form of remembrance of Allah and the most complete means of worshiping the Lord, embodying the pillars of *Tawḥīd* (monotheism). The Qur'an speaks of its direct connection with servitude to Allah:

إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي. (Qur'an 20:14)

"Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish *ṣalāh* for My remembrance." Furthermore, the actions of *ṣalāh*, such as *sujūd* (prostration) and *rukū'* (bowing), signify *Tawḥīd* in worship, as they demonstrate humility, submission, and the expression of servitude before the One and Only God. Additionally, the invocations within *ṣalāh*, including *ḥamd* (praise), *tasbīḥ* (glorification), *tabkīr* (magnification), and the exaltation of Allah, align with the concept that *ḥamd* and *tasbīḥ* are reserved exclusively for Allah.

The instruction to perform *ṣalāh* during the *Ziyārat al-Wārith* represents the pinnacle of focus on Allah during the *ziyārah*. Moreover, the special supplication recited after the *ṣalāh* of the *ziyārah* ("O Allah, indeed I prayed, bowed, and prostrated for You alone, without any partner, because *ṣalāh*, *rukū'*, and *sujūd* are only for You, as You are Allah, there is no deity except You") is an acknowledgment of the uniqueness of Allah. Particularly, the phrase *lā ilāha illā Anta* (There is no deity except You) emphasizes practical *Tawḥīd*, meaning that no one besides Allah is worthy of worship.

In the advice of Imām al-Ṣādiq (as) to Ṣafwān, it is said: "Before setting out, fast for three days, and on the third day, perform *ghusl* (ritual purification)." He then said: "My father informed me, based on what he heard from his ancestors, from the Messenger of Allah, that my son Ḥusayn will be martyred by the banks of the Euphrates. Whoever visits him after performing *ghusl* with the water of the Euphrates will have their sins forgiven, as if they were newly born." (Makāram, Nāṣir, 1981CE, p. 445) Fasting and *ghusl* are also acts of worship performed during *Ziyārat al-Wārith*, and their monotheistic nature is evident.



The glad tidings given by the Imām regarding the forgiveness of sins after fasting, performing ghusl, and the *ziyārah* allude to *Tawhīd* in divine forgiveness. The Imām himself attests to this in another statement where he says: "Glory be to You, there is no deity except You. Forgive all my sins entirely, for none can forgive sins except You." The emphasis on the exclusive pronouns and the use of *istithnā'* (exception clauses) in the Arabic construction (*lā yaghfiru al-dhunūb illā Anta*) (Majlisi, 2013CE, vol. 86, p. 98) highlight that the only forgiver of sins is Allah, the Almighty.

1-3. The Impact of *Tawhīd* Elements on the *Zā'ir's* Knowledge

The general meaning of *ma'rifah* (knowledge) is absolute awareness, and at times it is used to mean certain and truthful knowledge. In our discussion, the intended meaning of *ma'rifah* is the *zā'ir's* certainty in *Tawhīd* in both thought and action.

The foundation of religion and the purpose of human creation is the knowledge of Allah, the Glorious. (Nahj al-Balāghah, p. 98) "The first principle of religion is His knowledge." According to narrations, divine knowledge is contingent on recognizing and obeying the Imām (as).



For instance, Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (as) said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَلَّ ذِكْرُهُ مَا خَلَقَ الْعِبَادَ إِلَّا لِيَعْرِفُوهُ، فَإِذَا عَرَفُوهُ عَبْدُوهُ، فَإِذَا عَبْدُوهُ اسْتَعْنُوا بِعِبَادَتِهِ
عَنْ عِبَادَةٍ مِثْلِهِ. فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ: يَا بَنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ بِأَبِي أَنْتَ وَأُمِّي فَمَا مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: «مَعْرِفَةُ أَهْلِ كُلِّ
زَمَانٍ إِمَامَهُمُ الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِمْ طَاعَتُهُ».

(Shaykh al-Ṣadūq, 2006CE, p. 9.)

"O people! Indeed, Allah, exalted be His remembrance, did not create the servants except so that they may know Him. If they know Him, they will worship Him. And if they worship Him, they will suffice themselves from worshipping anything besides Him." A man asked him: "O son of the Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you, what is the knowledge of Allah?" He replied: "It is the recognition of the people of each era's Imām, the one whose obedience is obligatory upon them."

The intended meaning of knowing the true right of the Imām (as) is to affirm them and strengthen one's beliefs regarding their *imāmah* and *wilāyah* (guardianship). For this reason, many of the rewards and effects of *ziyārah* are conditional on recognizing the true right of the Imām (as).

The Prophet said:

مَنْ زَارَ الْحُسَيْنَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ عَارِفًا بِحَقِّهِ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ ثَوَابَ أَلْفِ حَجَّةٍ مَقْبُولَةٍ وَأَلْفِ عُمْرَةٍ
مَقْبُولَةٍ، وَغَفَرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ. (Ibn Qūlawayh al-Qummī, 1998 CE, p. 126)

"Whoever visits Ḥusayn (as) knowing his right, Allah will write for him the reward of a thousand accepted *hajjs* and a thousand accepted *‘umrahs*, and He will forgive all his past and future sins."

The knowledge of the Imām must also be reflected in action, and the one who truly recognizes their right is the one who deems obedience to the Imām as obligatory upon themselves in practice. Thus, the greater the knowledge, the greater the level of obedience. (Nīlīpūr, p. 46).

The function of *ziyārah* is to connect knowledge of the Imām with knowledge of Allah, and *ziyārah* texts are among the richest sources of this knowledge.



The elements of *Tawhīd* within *Ziyārat al-Wārith* have a direct impact on both the theoretical and practical knowledge of the *zā'ir*, as we will now discuss. The importance of recognizing the names and attributes of the Necessary Existent and their influence on the *zā'ir*'s practical *Tawhīd* is so significant that it can guide them along the fine line between *Tawhīd* and *Shirk*. Divine *Tawhīd* regards the sacred domain of the Lord as free from any association in His essence, attributes, and actions, describing Him as beyond physicality, composition, and limitation. On the other hand, groups like the Wahhābīs have presented an understanding of *Tawhīd* that reduces the divine domain to the level of a limited, corporeal being, akin to that of humans.

Tawhīd in the Beautiful Names of Allah is the essence and axis of every supplication, and for this reason, the greater the knowledge of the monotheist, the more their supplication will reflect the essence of *Tawhīd*.

What is crucial to note is that "correct knowledge in the realm of theoretical *Tawhīd* lays the groundwork for *Tawhīd* in worship, and although some may theoretically hold to *Tawhīd* in various dimensions, due to stubbornness and arrogance, they may still fall into *Shirk* in worship. A person will not attain *Tawhīd* in *ulūhīyah* (divinity) until they fully know Allah, become acquainted with His unique attributes, and reach *Tawhīd* in *rubūbīyah* (Lordship). "(Alīzādah Mūsawī, 1998 CE. p. 74)

Practices such as fasting, *ghusl*, *ṣalāh*, and *du'ā'* within the *ziyārah* strengthen the belief in the *zā'ir* (i.e. the one who engages in *Ziyārah*) that when seeking help from the Ma'ṣūmīn (14 Infallibles), they should not view them as deities or consider them independent in fulfilling the needs of creation. This would be falling into the pit of *Shirk*. Instead, the *zā'ir* should see them as intermediaries of grace and a means of connection between Allah and creation. If this is the view held, it is not *Shirk* but rather pure *Tawhīd*, for they are the agents of Allah. The request of the *zā'ir* is made in recognition of the authority delegated to them by the Almighty.



The *tawallā* (love) and *tabarrā* (disassociation) present in *Ziyārat al-Wārith* inspire the *zā'ir* with a sense of ideals, longing, and attraction towards Allah. This grants the *zā'ir* a sense of motivation, joy, and reassurance and leads them in practice to follow the Imām, who is the repository of Allah's words and the cornerstone of divine *Tawhīd*, because love leads to obedience.

Practical *Tawhīd* (monotheism) encompasses both individual and social dimensions. It involves a person's unification in worshipping God alone, negating any form of inner worship such as desires, wealth, or status, and the unification of society in monotheistic worship by rejecting tyranny, discrimination, and injustice. (Motahari, 2020CE, p. 117)

When a pilgrim reflects upon the monotheistic qualities of Imām Ḥusayn (peace be upon him) during *Ziyārah Wārith*, including his establishing prayer (*muqīm al-ṣalāh*), giving alms (*mu'tī al-zakāh*), enjoining good and forbidding evil (*āmir bi-l-ma'rūf wa-nāhī 'an al-munkar*), and his obedience to God and the Prophet, he becomes aware of his individual responsibility to purify his soul and embody the noble qualities of the Imām. Additionally, he is reminded of his social responsibility to eliminate manifestations of *Shirk* (polytheism) from society. In the noble verse:



قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ

(“Say: O People of the Book! Come to a word that is equitable between us and you: that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah. But if they turn away, then say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’”) (Qur’an 3:64)

God first invites humanity to monotheism and spiritual freedom and then prohibits them from establishing lordship over one another in society. (Motahari, 2020CE, pp. 110-117) With this understanding, the pilgrim not only refuses to submit to the oppression of tyrants but also takes justice, opposition to discrimination, and the fight against corruption as their guiding principles.

Conclusion:

1. The life of the human soul is sustained by *Tawhīd*, and an informed ziyārah ensures and prolongs this life.

2. According to the writer, there is no segment in the *Ziyārah Wārith* that cannot be explained through the lens of *Tawhīd* and its stages, as guiding humanity to true monotheism is exclusively within the capacity of the Prophets and the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). Undoubtedly, forgetting or neglecting them leads to personal interpretation and the infiltration of *shirk* and disbelief into one’s being.

3. The theoretical and practical elements of divine unity mentioned in this article represent the core manifestations and levels of monotheism.

4. The influence of theoretical *Tawhīd* on practical monotheism is inevitable. A person generally acts according to what he believes. The most significant cognitive impact of belief in the Oneness of God on the pilgrim is the creation of responsibility and commitment in his personal and social life.

5. Undoubtedly, the majority of people undertake pilgrimages with the intention of drawing nearer to God. If a minority lacks a proper understanding of monotheism, he should be taught *Tawhīd* rather than having his pilgrimage labeled as *shirk*.



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**A Cyber-Ethics Framework Based on the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*:
An Approach to Healthy Interactions on Social Networks**

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the ethical challenges of interactions on social networks and to propose an applied model grounded in the teachings of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*. The central problem of the research is the absence of a coherent framework for promoting users' ethical behavior and the insufficient utilization of religious texts in the domain of cyber ethics. Using a descriptive–analytical method and qualitative content analysis, this study extracts ethical principles from the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* and aligns them with contemporary moral issues in digital environments. The findings indicate that principles such as monotheistic orientation, justice, responsibility, self-restraint, and benevolence constitute the foundation of digital ethics, while components such as honesty, courtesy, privacy preservation, patience, constructive participation, and fairness in judgment regulate ethical user behavior. The results suggest that promoting this model through education and the formulation of ethical charters can institutionalize cyber ethics and enhance healthy interactions within digital spaces.

Keywords: Cyber Ethics; Social Networks; Digital Responsibility; Virtual Interactions; Ethical Education in Cyberspace; *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*.



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Introduction

The rapid expansion of communication technologies and the widespread use of social networks have profoundly transformed the structure of human communication and patterns of social action. Alongside the vast opportunities these platforms provide for interaction and information sharing, they have also generated numerous ethical challenges within digital life—such as rumor dissemination, the spread of misinformation, divisive discourse, violations of privacy, and the escalation of verbal conflicts. This situation highlights the need to reconsider the moral foundations of online behavior and to design a coherent framework to guide users' interactions. In this context, drawing upon authentic religious teachings can offer a reliable and human-centered basis for institutionalizing digital ethics.

The *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, as one of the foundational Islamic texts, represents a rich repository of ethical teachings in both individual and social dimensions. It articulates principles such as God-centeredness, justice, responsibility, self-restraint, and benevolence as core elements of faithful conduct. These principles—together with behavioral components such as honesty, courtesy, privacy preservation, patience, constructive participation, and fairness in judgment—provide the conceptual capacity to formulate a comprehensive model for ethical action in virtual spaces. Nevertheless, previous studies have predominantly addressed the general ethical challenges of social networks, paying limited attention to the extraction and alignment of behavioral models derived from religious texts in addressing these challenges.

Accordingly, the present article, titled “Developing a Conceptual Model of Cyber Ethics Based on the Ethical Themes of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, with an Emphasis on Interactional Challenges in Social Networks”, seeks to address the existing gap in cyber ethics by employing qualitative content analysis of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* and examining the real ethical challenges of online interactions. The primary aim of the study is to extract and articulate a conceptual model for enhancing users' ethical behavior. The central research question asks how the ethical principles and components of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* can be operationalized into a practical framework for ethical conduct on social networks.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the transformative role of social networks in facilitating communication and social participation, the ethical quality of interactions within these digital environments has become an increasingly serious concern, as phenomena such as rumor dissemination, misinformation, privacy violations, polarizing discourse, and verbal aggression continue to



undermine trust and social cohesion. Existing approaches to cyber ethics have largely relied on legal, technical, or secular normative frameworks and have paid insufficient attention to the potential of religious moral sources to offer integrated, value-based guidance for online behavior. In particular, although the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* constitutes a profound repository of ethical principles governing individual conduct and social relations, its capacity to inform and structure ethical interaction in virtual spaces has remained underexplored in scholarly research. The absence of a systematic framework that translates the ethical teachings of this foundational Islamic text into operational guidelines for social network interactions represents a significant theoretical and practical gap. Addressing this gap is essential for developing a coherent, human-centered model of cyber ethics capable of promoting responsible, respectful, and constructive engagement in contemporary digital life.

Definition of Key Concepts

Cyber Ethics

Cyber ethics, as a branch of applied ethics, constitutes a conceptual system of principles and values that guide human behavior within the digital realm. According to Spinello, cyber ethics is a structured set of normative principles governing online interactions, emphasizing respect, fairness, and responsibility (Spinello, 2010, p. 61). In Persian scholarship, this concept is similarly defined as a set of behavioral norms for virtual interactions, encompassing privacy protection, the avoidance of harm, and the reinforcement of responsibility (Samieeani et al., 2022, p. 74).

An analysis of related theories indicates that cyber ethics is closely connected with fields such as information ethics and media ethics, and provides a framework for technical and moral decision-making (Sadeqi et al., 2022, p. 38; Pourqahramani, 2015, p. 54). Furthermore, weak moral reasoning and the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms are identified as major challenges to the realization of cyber ethics in digital environments (Shahriari, 2008, p. 68). Consequently, redefining the foundations of cyber ethics is a prerequisite for developing ethical models grounded in religious texts such as the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* (Fathi et al., 2022, p. 74). An analysis of related theories indicates that cyber ethics is closely connected with fields such as information ethics and media ethics, and provides a framework for technical and moral decision-making (Sadeqi et al., 2022, p. 38; Pourqahramani, 2015, p. 54). Furthermore, weak moral reasoning and the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms are identified as major challenges to the realization of cyber ethics in digital environments (Shahriari, 2008, p. 68). Consequently, redefining the foundations of cyber ethics is a prerequisite for developing ethical models



grounded in religious texts such as the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* (Fathi et al., 2022, p. 74).

Interactional Challenges in Social Networks

Interactional challenges in social networks constitute a set of ethical issues arising from human actions in digital environments. Due to characteristics such as anonymity, scale, and the speed of interactions, these challenges have intensified and become more complex (Jamipour, Amiri & Kamarei, 2022, p. 81). Among these challenges are rumor propagation, verbal abuse, privacy violations, dissemination of false information, hasty judgments, and the exposure of personal data. These behaviors not only cause individual harm but also have broad social consequences, including reduced public trust and the weakening of ethical foundations in online relationships. In particular, phenomena such as cyberbullying and unauthorized disclosure of information pose severe threats to human dignity and users' psychological security (Hinduja & Patchin, 2020, p. 186).

Accordingly, social networks have become arenas for testing ethical principles under new conditions, highlighting the necessity of redefining traditional moral norms in light of digital realities and designing coherent ethical frameworks for online interaction.

The Sahifa al-Sajjadiyyah

The *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, as a precious collection of prayers and supplications by Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him), transcends a purely devotional text, serving as a rich repository of ethical and epistemic teachings that present educational and social guidance in a profound, prayerful format (Mughniyya, 2008, Vol. 1, p. 14). Within this work, values such as honesty, justice, respect, responsibility, and the safeguarding of others' rights are articulated in a coherent relationship with monotheism and human dignity. Prayers such as *Makārim al-Akhlāq* and The Supplication for Friends and Neighbors particularly emphasize self-purification and the proper regulation of human relationships. From this perspective, the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, with its systematic structure of values and ethical norms, can provide an inspiring foundation for designing cyber-ethics models that are compatible with the interactional challenges of social networks.

2. Review of Related Theories

Contemporary ethical theories can provide a conceptual foundation for explaining cyber-ethics models based on religious texts. According to virtue ethics, the cultivation of stable moral traits such as honesty, justice, and patience—rather than merely focusing on behavioral rules—constitutes the core of ethical education (Cahn & Markie, 2016, p. 134). In the context



of cyber ethics, this approach strengthens users' internal disposition when confronting communicative challenges.

The digital social contract theory emphasizes mutual commitment among users to respect rights and privacy (Floridi, 2013, p. 168), whereas Habermas's communicative action theory considers rational and respectful dialogue as the foundation of ethical interactions (Habermas, 2013, p. 86). These principles align closely with the ethical teachings of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, particularly the supplication *Makārim al-Akhlāq*.

3.Literature Review

In recent decades, the rapid advancement of communication technologies and the expansion of social networks have given rise to a variety of ethical challenges in cyberspace. These challenges have highlighted the need for scholars in the fields of ethics, education, and information technology to reconsider the foundations of cyber ethics. Pourjafari (2017) examined ethical challenges in educational information systems and emphasized the necessity of systematic digital ethics education, identifying the lack of indigenous and religious frameworks as a major shortcoming. However, the utilization of Islamic sources, particularly supplicatory texts such as the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, has largely been overlooked in most studies.

In the domain of Islamic cyber ethics, Naqdipour and Eslami (2022) proposed principles such as justice, trustworthiness, and avoidance of harm as the foundations of Islamic ethics in digital environments, emphasizing the importance of honesty and responsibility in content creation. Kiekha (2020) also explored students' perspectives on digital ethics and proposed solutions grounded in religious teachings. Nonetheless, none of these studies have established a connection between cyber ethics and the educational themes of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*.

On the other hand, studies focusing on the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, such as Ahmadvand (2011) and Salimi et al. (2018), identified principles such as honesty, humility, respect for human dignity, and an Islamic ethical education model, but did not examine the application of these teachings in the interactive context of social networks. Furthermore, Panahi (2024) analyzed ethical challenges in social networks and offered recommendations based on honesty and mutual respect, yet did not systematically relate them to Islamic supplicatory sources.

The synthesis of these studies reveals three main gaps: the predominant reliance on Western ethical theories, the underutilization of the educational potential of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, and the absence of an indigenous model for guiding ethical user behavior. The present study, through qualitative content analysis of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, seeks to extract



ethical principles relevant to digital life and to propose an Iranian-Islamic model for enhancing ethical conduct in cyberspace.

4. Research Methodology

The present study was conducted using a qualitative content analysis approach, a method suitable for uncovering patterns, concepts, and latent meanings in texts, particularly religious texts (Krippendorff, 2015, p. 178). The aim was to extract ethical themes related to human interactions from the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* and to elucidate their connection with interactional challenges in social networks. Given the metaphorical and rhetorical nature of the supplications, this method aligns well with the research context due to its flexibility and capacity to reveal multilayered meanings (Mayer, 2014, p. 43).

Data were collected from the complete text of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah al-Jami'a li al-Ad'iya* and, after an initial review, passages pertaining to values such as justice, honesty, respect, responsibility, and privacy preservation were selected. Data analysis was then carried out in three stages—open coding, axial coding, and selective coding—to link the final themes with ethical challenges in cyberspace and to develop an Islamic framework for enhancing cyber ethics.

1.1. First Axis: Monotheism and Connection with the Creator in Cyberspace

In analyzing the teachings of the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, three fundamental components were identified regarding human monotheistic connection in the digital environment:

1.1.1. Recognizing God as Present and Observant in Cyberspace

From the perspective of Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him), the foundation of ethics in any domain rests upon the remembrance of God and conscious awareness of His presence. In the Sixth Supplication, the Imam refers to the new day as a “divine witness” testifying to human actions:

"And this is a new and occurring day, and it is a steadfast witness over us; if we do well, it bids us farewell with praise, and if we do wrong, it parts from us with blame" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 56).

This perspective indicates that time and human behavior gain meaning in the divine view, and no action escapes God's observation. Accordingly, interactions in cyberspace are considered part of the realm of worship and are subject to divine oversight. The same supplication continues:

"O Allah, facilitate for the noble scribes our responsibilities, and fill for us from our good deeds our records" (ibid.).

This emphasis serves as a reminder that every message, comment, or share on social networks can be accounted among human deeds. By



fostering ethical self-monitoring, it helps prevent inappropriate behaviors such as mockery, lying, or hasty judgment.

2.1.1. Strengthening the Belief in Divine Presence in Online Interactions

The second component of the monotheism axis in cyberspace is the reinforcement of the belief in God's constant presence in human interactions. From the perspective of Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him), remembrance of God awakens one from heedlessness and deters sin. He states:

"And awaken me for Your remembrance in times of heedlessness, and employ me in Your obedience during days of respite" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 116),

indicating that continual awareness of God's presence is essential for maintaining proper human behavior and speech. In digital environments, this internalized presence can guide users toward responsible conduct and the respect of others' rights, preventing harms such as rumor propagation and slander.

Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him), referencing Qur'anic verses "O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance" and "So remember Me; I will remember you" (Majlisi, Vol. 91, p. 151), considers the remembrance of God as a means of establishing a reciprocal bond between the servant and the Creator. Such a belief facilitates the internalization of monotheistic ethics and softens digital interactions with dignity and respect for oneself and others.

3.1.1. Avoiding Polytheism and Its Manifestations in Cyberspace

The third component of the monotheism axis concerns the skill-based and behavioral dimension of one's relationship with God in cyberspace. In the Forty-Fourth Supplication, Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) states:

"Then purify all of that from the ostentation of the hypocrites and the desire for reputation among listeners; we do not associate anyone with You in it, nor seek any goal other than You" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 211),

expressing the aspiration to be free from ostentation and the pursuit of fame. In social networks, behaviors such as content creation aimed at attracting attention or excessive exhibitionism represent a form of this deviation, akin to "practical polytheism." Imam al-Sajjad's teachings emphasize that faithful users must reassess their motivations and replace the desire for others' praise with the pursuit of divine satisfaction.

Achieving this goal requires the continual cultivation of sincerity in intention and digital behavior, as well as the reinforcement of ethical skills such as self-control, reflection on intentions, and review of the objectives behind media actions. Educational institutions can also facilitate this



approach by modeling and teaching ethically grounded media skills, thereby creating conditions for the development of this ethical orientation among users.

Second Axis: Individual and Social Responsibility Toward Others

The second axis of this study focuses on individual and social responsibility toward others. This axis emphasizes the importance of recognizing duties and responsibilities, fostering empathy and unity in online interactions, and observing the obligation of enjoining good and forbidding wrong in cyberspace as foundational ethical principles for digital relationships.

2.1.2. Recognizing Duties and Responsibilities Toward Others

In Imam al-Sajjad's (peace be upon him) educational framework, recognizing individual and social responsibilities toward others constitutes a fundamental pillar of insight-based ethics. The *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* emphasizes that virtuous interactions are realized when a person possesses a correct understanding of self and others, and structures relationships based on empathy, benevolence, and spiritual brotherhood. In the Twenty-Sixth Supplication, the Imam states:

"O Allah, bless Mohammad and his family, and guide us in this day and this night and all our days to employ good, avoid evil, give thanks for blessings, follow the Sunnah, and avoid innovations" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 57),

indicating the necessity of adhering to divine traditions and ethical values in social relations. In cyberspace, this insight manifests as ethical self-monitoring, respect for others' dignity, avoidance of prejudice and misinformation, forming the foundation for responsible, healthy, and spiritually oriented digital interactions.

2.1.2. Promoting Unity and Empathy in Online Interactions

In Imam al-Sajjad's ethical system, empathy, unity, and mutual support are core values of human and social relationships. In his supplication for the border guards, he states:

"O Allah, bless Mohammad and his family, unite their ranks, manage their affairs, and harmonize among them" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 132),

emphasizing cohesion, coordination, and synergy. This passage illustrates that empathy and cooperation are not merely individual virtues but essential pillars for the stability of a faithful community. In online interactions, this principle translates into avoiding destructive behavior, suspicion, and verbal conflicts, while promoting constructive dialogue, mutual support, and benevolent conduct. From the perspective of a cyber-ethics model based on the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, fostering unity and empathy in digital spaces strengthens user trust, psychological well-being,



and collective belonging. Training users toward unity and empathy lays the groundwork for an ethical and spiritual community whose interactions are rooted in respect, love, and shared divine purpose.

3.1.2. Enjoining Good and Forbidding Wrong in Cyberspace

From the perspective of ethical education in the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, enjoining good and forbidding wrong symbolizes the behavioral and social skills of a believer toward others. In the Sixty-Fourth Supplication, Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) states:

"And may I oppose anyone who backbites me with good remembrance, give thanks for the good, and overlook the evil" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 112),

emphasizing the continuous ethical responsibility of a person at all times. In cyberspace, this obligation manifests in promoting corrective and ethically oriented actions; enjoining good appears through encouraging respectful behavior, sharing beneficial content, and supporting human values, while forbidding wrong is realized by avoiding verbal violence, rumor propagation, and disrespect. The Imam further advises that once enjoining good and forbidding wrong is undertaken, one must accept guidance from others, stating:

"And grant me success... and the following of those who guide me" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 126),

meaning that one should follow those who advise rightly without dismissiveness or humiliation. Accordingly, Imam al-Sajjad encourages users to actively and responsibly participate in preserving the spiritual well-being of the online community.

Third Axis: Self-Control and Purification in Online Interactions

From Imam al-Sajjad's (peace be upon him) perspective, self-purification is a fundamental condition for an ethical society, with the regulation of speech, emotions, and behavior as its key indicators. Three principal components of this axis have been identified: "avoiding futile speech," "managing anger and negative emotions," and "humility in digital interactions," which serve as the pillars of virtue-based ethics in cyberspace.

1.1.2. Insightful Training in Language Management and Avoiding Futile Speech in Digital Life

Controlling one's language and avoiding futile speech is a cornerstone of self-purification in Imam al-Sajjad's teachings. He supplicates:

"O Allah, bless Mohammad and his family, and inspire us so that our tongues speak only what You have exemplified" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 211),

highlighting the significance of divine guidance in speech and its role in individual and social well-being. In cyberspace, neglecting this principal manifest in rumor spreading, backbiting, mockery, or dissemination of



worthless content, which diminishes individual credibility and creates a tense and unhealthy environment. Adherence to avoiding futile speech represents a form of linguistic refinement and internal purification. As Imam al-Sajjad considers the tongue a tool of servitude, controlling speech and writing in digital spaces promotes etiquette, serenity, and spirituality in online interactions. Consequently, a cyber-ethics model derived from the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* identifies language management as foundational for enhancing ethical conduct and responsible engagement on social networks.

2.1.3. Managing Anger and Negative Emotions in Online Interactions

Another dimension of self-purification is the mastery of anger and negative emotions. Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) sincerely prays:

"O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the impulses of greed and the eruption of anger" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 69), and in another supplication: "O Allah, bless Mohammad and his family, and adorn me with the attributes of the righteous, and clothe me with the ornaments of the God-conscious... in restraining anger" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 112).

These passages indicate that controlling anger is a sign of piety and moral maturity. In digital environments, many conflicts, insults, and verbal aggressions arise from users' inability to regulate immediate emotions. Imam al-Sajjad's teachings remind users that mastering anger lays the groundwork for patience, forbearance, and mutual understanding. Given that cyberspace is a venue for rapid exchange of opinions and emotions, this ethical principle teaches users to reflect before responding and to choose wise, deliberate actions instead of impulsive reactions. Thus, a cyber-ethics model based on the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* presents anger management not merely as an individual virtue, but as a social necessity for preserving psychological safety and ethical dialogue in online communities.

3.1.3. Humility in Online Interactions

Humility, the third virtue associated with purification in the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, is considered foundational to all human excellences. In the Twentieth Supplication, Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) states: "O Allah, bless Mohammad and his family, and do not elevate me among people except that You lower me equally in my own self..." (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 110), indicating that true honor is realized through humility before God. In cyberspace, the absence of humility manifests as self-promotion, belittling others, or striving for digital superiority, which undermines empathy. A humble user, by observing respect and fairness, fosters healthy interactions and mutual trust. According to the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*, humility is a marker of self-purification and awareness of one's servitude,



guiding users away from self-centered behavior and toward interactions grounded in honesty, etiquette, and justice. Findings indicate that avoiding futile speech, controlling anger, and practicing humility constitute a triad of digital purification that enhances personal growth and the ethical quality of social relationships.

Fourth Axis: Justice and Fairness in Cyberspace

Justice and fairness are fundamental principles of Islamic ethics, playing a pivotal role in guiding human behavior. Their significance is magnified in cyberspace due to the extensive scale of digital interactions. This axis encompasses observing fairness in information dissemination, impartial judgment, and avoidance of hasty conclusions about others. Findings indicate that a monotheistic perspective on justice, ethical commitment, and refraining from rushed judgments form the foundations for realizing justice in online interactions, thereby enhancing the moral integrity of social networks.

1.1.3. Monotheistic Perspective on Justice

A monotheistic view of justice considers it not merely as a social rule but as a manifestation of divine order and wisdom in the world. Imam al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) presents divine justice as grounded in mercy, benevolence, and forbearance, as illustrated in the supplication: "Your provision is abundant for those who disobey You, and Your forbearance intervenes for those who oppose You... a justice from Your decree in which there is no oppression" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 151). This perspective invites the believer to reflect on their conduct toward others, reminding them that justice is a divine attribute that should be mirrored in human relationships. In digital life, such insight prevents hasty judgments, humiliation of others, and dissemination of unjust statements, ensuring that interactions are fair, respectful, and ethically grounded. As Imam al-Sajjad describes in the Fifth Supplication, divine justice is the embodiment of grace and wisdom; belief in God's justice in cyberspace encourages users to avoid slander, exaggeration, and injustice, even when encountering opponents (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 187). This perspective provides both cognitive and ethical guidance for fostering moral online interactions.



2.1.4. Internal Commitment to Justice and Fairness in Digital Information Sharing

An intrinsic commitment to justice and fairness is a core component of ethical training in digital interactions. A fair individual refrains from hasty judgments, rumor-mongering, and dissemination of false information, recognizing their accountability before God. In cyberspace, this perspective translates into avoiding content that harms or violates the rights of others. In the Forty-Fourth Supplication, it is stated: "Grant us success in... being just to those who wrong us" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 287), emphasizing that fairness must be maintained even toward oppressors. Such a belief lays the foundation for ethical dialogue, reduction of rumors, and enhancement of trust and social cohesion in digital environments.

3.1.4. Practicing Justice in Digital Judgments

The principle of justice and impartiality is among the most fundamental values of Islamic ethics (Naraqī, n.d.: Vol. 2, pp. 225–229) and holds special importance in digital interactions, where anonymity and concealment can facilitate unjust judgments and biased preconceptions. From Imam Ali's perspective, justice entails "placing everything in its rightful place" (Nahj al-Balaghah, Wisdom 437). Imam al-Sajjad further identifies justice as a hallmark of piety and a virtue of righteous servants in the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah*: "Adorn me with the attributes of the righteous... in upholding justice" (Abtahi, 2000 AH, p. 157). These teachings deter individuals from slander, humiliation, and hasty judgments online, guiding them toward responsible and evidence-based evaluation. Justice and fairness in digital interactions are realized through cultivating awareness of others' rights, observing impartiality, and adhering ethically in information sharing. A cyber-ethics model grounded in the *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* provides a moral framework for online interactions, reinforcing trust, ethical security, and responsible behavior.

The table below illustrates the main themes, sub-themes, and Bloom's domains (cognitive, affective/motivational, and psychomotor/behavioral).



Bloom's domains	Sub-Theme	Main Theme
Cognitive – Attitudinal Affective / Motivational Psychomotor – Behavioral	Recognizing God's presence and observation in cyberspace Belief in divine presence in online interactions Avoidance of polytheism and its manifestations in cyberspace	Theme 1: Monotheism and Connection with the Creator in Cyberspace
Cognitive – Attitudinal Affective / Motivational Psychomotor – Behavioral	Awareness of duties and responsibilities towards others Fostering unity and empathy in online interactions Enjoining good and forbidding wrong in cyberspace	Theme 2: Individual and Social Responsibility towards Others
Cognitive – Attitudinal Affective / Motivational Psychomotor – Behavioral	Insight-based self-discipline in managing language and avoiding useless speech in digital life Managing anger and negative emotions in online interactions Humility and modesty in virtual interactions	Theme 3: Self-Control and Purification in Online Interactions
Cognitive – Attitudinal Affective / Motivational Psychomotor – Behavioral	Monotheistic perspective on justice Ethical commitment and fairness in sharing information Fair judgment and avoidance of prejudice towards others	Theme 4: Justice and Fairness in Cyberspace

4. Analysis of Ethical Themes in *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* in the Context of Social Media Interaction Challenges

With the expansion of cyberspace and the growth of digital interactions, users face various ethical and behavioral challenges that can affect the individual and collective well-being of online interactions. This section analyzes the ethical themes of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* in relation to the most prominent challenges in social media interactions and demonstrates how the educational and ethical teachings of Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) can serve as practical guidance for managing these challenges.

4.1. Challenges Related to Identity and Authenticity in Cyberspace

One of the most significant ethical challenges in digital interactions is the issue of identity and authenticity. Users may employ fake identities, engage in inauthentic self-presentation, or seek undue attention, thereby endangering the moral integrity of the online environment. Analysis of the themes in *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* indicates that the teachings of monotheism (tawḥīd) and sincerity (ikhlāṣ) provide effective tools to confront these threats. Sincerity entails the purity of intention, free from any form of



polytheism or duplicity, and the affirmation of God's unity. In the first supplication, Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) states: "Grant him good intention, teach him the path and the traditions, remove ostentation from him, and free him from seeking praise" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 135). This emphasizes the necessity of pure intention and maintaining the authenticity of one's spiritual identity. In the seventeenth supplication, he introduces sincerity as a means to resist deceit and hypocrisy. These teachings enable users to avoid non-divine self-promotion, preserve their true moral identity in cyberspace, and engage in honest and responsible interactions.

4.2. Challenges Related to Communication and Interpersonal Interaction

Cyberspace, due to the speed of information dissemination and the possibility of user anonymity, presents numerous challenges in human interactions. One of the most prominent threats is the neglect of others' rights. Analysis of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* reveals that teachings related to ḥaqq al-nās (the rights of people) offer practical solutions to address these challenges. In the sixth supplication, Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) says: "O Allah, I seek Your pardon for the rights of anyone whose due I owed to a believer and did not fulfill" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 132).

As reported by Fayz al-Islām (1368, p. 132), he advised Ma'lī ibn Khunis: "The least of their rights is that you love for them what you love for yourself and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself." In the digital context, observing ḥaqq al-nās prevents the spread of falsehoods and unjust judgments. Thus, the teachings of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* provide a practical roadmap for ethically managing human interactions in virtual environments.

4.3. Challenges Related to Content and Information

The rapid production and dissemination of content on social media pose serious ethical challenges. False news, content distortion, and unfair judgments undermine public trust and threaten the integrity of interactions. The principles of truthfulness and honesty in *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* offer practical guidance for the responsible creation, sharing, and consumption of content. Imam al-Sajjād (peace be upon him) repeatedly emphasizes justice and fairness in his supplications:

"O Allah, grant me a truthful tongue among those who are absent, a lasting mention among others, and fulfill for me the promise of the first ones" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 237).

Adhering to these principles in cyberspace requires accuracy, verification, and trustworthiness in producing and resharing content, ultimately fostering trust and healthy interactions among users.



4.4. Challenges Related to Privacy and Security

Maintaining privacy and the security of personal information is one of the most significant ethical challenges on social media, as cyberspace enables intrusion and data misuse. Analysis of *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* shows that teachings such as *satr* (concealment) and refraining from exposing weaknesses, combined with polite interactions, provide practical guidance to address these issues:

“O Allah, since You have concealed me with Your forgiveness... protect me from the disgrace of the abode of permanence” (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 123).

In the digital context, these principles imply refraining from sharing confidential information, respecting users’ privacy, and maintaining the ethical security of interactions. Furthermore, the teachings of monotheism, sincerity, *ḥaqq al-nās*, justice, and fairness in *Ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādīyah* provide effective tools for ethically managing online behavior. These teachings enable users to preserve their true identity, engage responsibly and positively, and prevent ethical harm resulting from misinformation, unjust judgments, and violations of privacy.

Related Ethical Teachings	Challenge Domain	Challenge
Monotheism (Tawḥīd) and Sincerity (Ikhḷās)	Identity and Authenticity	Fake identities, hypocrisy, self-promotion, and seeking undue attention
Rights of People (<i>Ḥaqq al-Nās</i>), Enjoining Good and Forbidding Wrong, Empathy, and Self-Control	Communication and Interaction	Offensive behavior, spreading falsehoods, unjust judgments, and neglect of others’ rights
Justice and Fairness	Content and Information	Dissemination of false news, content distortion, information bias, and unfair judgments
Concealment of Secrets, Avoiding Exposure of Weaknesses, and Polite Interaction	Privacy and Security	Intrusion, disclosure of secrets, and misuse of others’ information



5. Conceptual Model of Cyber Ethics Based on the Themes of Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah

Given the importance of human interactions in cyberspace and the necessity for users to adhere to ethical frameworks, this section focuses on designing a conceptual model of cyber ethics based on the teachings of Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah. This model, grounded in fundamental ethical principles and behavioral components, provides practical and educational guidance for social media users and enables them to engage responsibly with interactional challenges.

5.1. Fundamental Principles of the Cyber Ethics Model

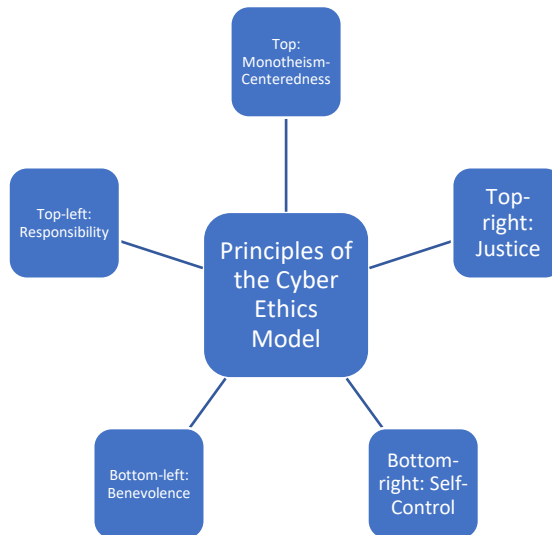
Principle of Responsibility: Every message or shared content carries ethical responsibility (Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah, Supplication 20).

Principle of Justice: This principle aims to uphold fairness and improve social relations, preventing discrimination and the spread of hatred (Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah, Supplication 27).

Principle of Self-Control: It encompasses regulating emotions, avoiding impulsivity, and controlling digital language and expression (Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah, Supplication 45).

Principle of Benevolence: This serves as the foundation for healthy interactions, promoting useful content and preventing ethical harm (Şahīfah al-Sajjādīyah, Supplication 24).

These five principles constitute the pillars of the cyber ethics model and provide solutions to the challenges encountered in social media interactions.



5.2. Behavioral Components of the Cyber Ethics Model

Behavioral components are the observable manifestations of cyber ethics in digital environments. Based on the foundational principles derived from Sahifa Sajjadiya, these components include honesty and transparency, respect and courtesy, responsibility, privacy protection, constructive participation, patience and forbearance, and justice and fairness.

5.2.1. Honesty and Transparency in Identity and Interactions

Honesty and transparency in intention, speech, and action form the foundation of ethical interactions and religious identity. Imam Sajjad (as) emphasizes "sincere intention" in his supplications: "O Allah, send blessings upon Mohammad and his family, and strengthen me with a sincere intention and constant patience" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 131). This passage indicates that sincerity of intention is a prerequisite for any ethical action. In cyberspace, this translates to producing authentic content and avoiding deception and rumor-mongering. Honesty in speech is also emphasized: "O Allah, send blessings upon Mohammad and his family, and adorn me therein with the virtues of the righteous, and clothe me therein with the adornment of the God-conscious in... speaking the truth" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 83). Similarly, honesty in action is highlighted: "Protect us from prolonged expectation, and shorten it for us through the sincerity of action" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 190).

5.2.2. Respect and Courtesy in Speech and Writing

Maintaining respect and courtesy in online interactions is a crucial component. In the twentieth supplication, Imam Sajjad (as) stresses avoiding offensive language and violations of others' dignity: "Enable them to follow Your Sunnah, and adopt the best of Your etiquettes... and from my tongue let no obscene or abusive word proceed" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 113). This highlights that language can either elevate or degrade moral behavior. In cyberspace, refraining from insults, backbiting, and inappropriate expressions while promoting courteous communication ensures ethical interactions and a healthy digital environment.

5.2.3. Responsibility in Content Dissemination

Assuming responsibility for the growth and well-being of the community, and acknowledging mistakes when duties are neglected, holds particular importance in Islamic teachings. Users are encouraged to accept accountability and apologize for any deficiencies in content dissemination, as this preserves both respect and human values. Imam Sajjad (as) states: "I seek Your forgiveness, my God, for them and their peers, a remorseful apology that serves as a lesson for others. So, send blessings upon Mohammad and his family, and make my regret over past mistakes and my



resolve to avoid future misdeeds a repentance that earns Your love, O Lover of the repentant" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 187). Failure to accept responsibility and apologize undermines trust in cyberspace, whereas responsible behavior indicates individual and social maturity and strengthens online trust.

5.2.4. Protecting One's Own Privacy and That of Others

Imam Zain al-Abidin (as) emphasizes respecting others' secrets and privacy, establishing ethical foundations for privacy protection. In a supplication regarding interactions with others, he states: "O Allah, send blessings upon Mohammad and his family, and guide me in my dealings with neighbors and allies who recognize our rights, and those who oppose our enemies, by Your best guardianship in safeguarding their secrets and covering their faults" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 131). This highlights the obligation to respect others' confidential information and privacy. In cyberspace, this translates into protecting data, refraining from sharing private information, and respecting users' dignity. Practicing this ethic also encourages individuals to uphold their own privacy, providing a foundation for self-control and the protection of others' rights in digital environments.

5.2.5. Forbearance and Kindness toward Others

Forbearance and kindness are essential for fostering healthy and sustainable interactions in cyberspace. Adherence to these traits encourages users to avoid hostile behavior and unproductive disputes, creating space for respectful dialogue and empathy. Imam Sajjad (as) remarks: "My God, my hope from You is forgiveness, and my trust in You is goodness. Lighten my missteps, O Lord, for what has passed, and for He who is gentle with his enemies, how much more with those who turn to Him and converse with Him" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 479). In cyberspace, forbearance enhances positive interactions, reduces conflicts, and strengthens trust and solidarity among users. Hence, kindness not only promotes individual ethical conduct but also ensures constructive social participation and ethical productivity online.

5.2.6. Patience and Forbearance in Facing Inappropriate Behavior

Patience and forbearance help maintain calm and control emotional reactions when encountering inappropriate behaviors. These traits reduce tension, prevent verbal aggression, and facilitate constructive, ethical interactions online. Imam Sajjad (as) frequently emphasizes patience in Sahifa Sajjadiya: "O Allah, assist me in accompanying them with good patience" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 151), and in another supplication: "I ask You for the resolve of the patient and the firmness of the God-fearing" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 245). By exercising patience, users are encouraged to avoid impulsive or retaliatory behaviors, reinforcing positive ethical

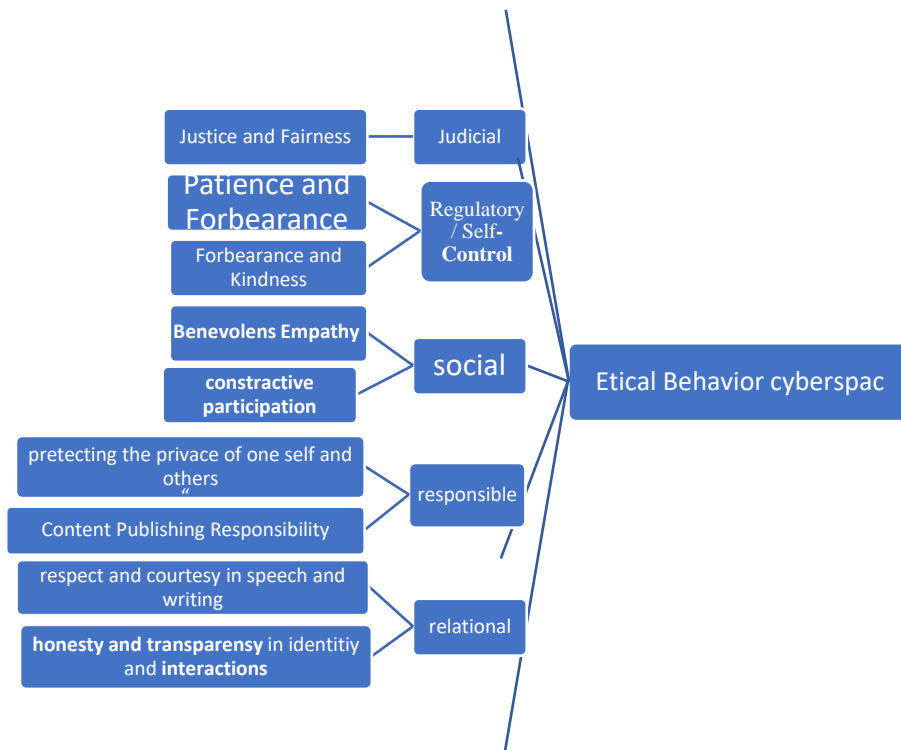


patterns in digital interactions. Thus, patience is not only an individual virtue but also a key factor in promoting social ethics online.

5.2.7. Justice and Fairness in Judgment and Decision-Making

Observing justice and fairness in digital interactions is a central behavioral component of cyber ethics, encouraging impartial judgment and avoidance of prejudice. Belief in divine accountability and awareness of God's oversight enhances individual responsibility and motivates ethical conduct online. Imam Zain al-Abidin (a.s.) states: "How can life be enjoyable for one who is certain of the Day of Judgment, when secrets are laid bare and evaluated justly" (Abtahi, 1420 AH, p. 22). Such teachings encourage users to act fairly, make accurate judgments, avoid spreading harmful content, and refrain from unjust evaluations, thereby strengthening justice and fairness in cyberspace.

Proposed Structure of the Conceptual Network Model of Cyber Ethics



Conclusion

The conclusion of this study, based on qualitative content analysis and the examination of the teachings of *Ṣaḥīfa Ṣajjādiyyah*, indicates that fundamental ethical principles—including monotheism-centeredness, responsibility, justice, self-control, and benevolence—can serve as a theoretical and normative framework for ethical behavior in the digital environment. These principles, while providing individual criteria for moral self-development, also contribute to fostering a culture of responsible interaction, mutual respect, and social cohesion.

The findings further suggest that specific behavioral components such as honesty and transparency, respect and politeness, accountability in content sharing, privacy protection, constructive participation, tolerance, patience, and fairness in judgment function as effective operational tools for realizing these principles. They are directly related to common social media challenges, including rumor spreading, dissemination of misinformation, and communication tensions.

The proposed cyber-ethics model, by integrating fundamental principles and behavioral components, provides a comprehensive and practical framework that can be operationalized at both individual and social levels. It can be institutionalized through educational content creation, the formulation of ethical charters, and leveraging the capacities of social networks. This approach enhances users' ethical self-awareness and establishes the foundation for healthy, responsible, and ethically guided interactions in the digital space.



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Textual Authentication of Hadiths Concerning the “Doctrine of *Ahl al-Jabr*” in the Manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*: A Perspective Based on Evidences and Corroborations from Both Sects

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Abstract

Determinism (*jabr*) and free will (*ikhtiyār*) represent some of the most significant and sensitive issues in Islamic philosophy and theology among both sects (*farīqayn*). These debates gave rise to three major perspectives within the Muslim community: two prevalent among Sunnis—namely, the proponents of determinism and the proponents of absolute free will—and the Shi‘i perspective, articulated as the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn* (a position between the two extremes). The manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*, authored by Ahmad ibn Sharīf in the eighth century AH, argues for the validity of the Shi‘i view by appealing to narrations and traditions acknowledged in Sunni *ḥadīth* collections. In this article, through textual authentication and by considering corroborative evidences from both sects, the narrations of this section are analyzed using a descriptive–analytical method. The findings indicate that, although establishing complete *tawātur* (mass-transmission) in terms of chains of transmission and wording is not possible, the narrations nonetheless achieve semantic *tawātur*, reliability of issuance, and conformity with the Qur’an and sound reason.

Keywords: Manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*; Doctrine of *Ahl al-Jabr*; Textual Analysis; Evidences and Corroborations from Both Sects.

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Introduction

The manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*, authored by Aḥmad b. Sharīf in the eighth century AH, was composed during the Mongol domination and the decline of the Abbasid caliphate. In such a context, the Shi‘a minority—often subjected to persecution—found greater opportunity to articulate their beliefs through polemical and argumentative writings aimed at establishing the legitimacy of their creed.

Consultation of various biographical and bibliographical sources, including *Tabaqāt A‘lām al-Shī‘a*, *al-Dharī‘a*, *al-Ziriklī’s al-A‘lām*, and *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, yields no information about the author, who thus remains largely unknown. The only available reference is found in *Mawsū‘at Mu‘allifī al-Imāmiyya* (Majma‘ al-Fikr al-Islāmī, 1428 AH, vol. 2, pp. 457–458), which mentions his name, the century in which he lived, the title of the book, and the fact that only a single manuscript exists. In the manuscript itself, the author identifies himself as “Aḥmad ibn Sharīf,” and concludes with the statement *wa-mā anā illā muslimun mutashayyi‘un* (I am nothing but a Muslim adhering to Shi‘ism). It is plausible that the obscurity of the author is due to the survival of only this single work, preserved in one manuscript among Shi‘i collections, which led to his omission from biographical and bibliographical records. Accordingly, the distinctive features of this work serve to introduce the author himself.

As noted, only one copy of the manuscript has been located in the library of the Goharshad Mosque within the sacred shrine of Imam Riḍā, and attempts to discover additional copies have proven unsuccessful. No critical edition or scholarly study has yet been undertaken, and the work remains unpublished.

The manuscript comprises 75 folios (150 pages), including an opening sermon and introduction, and is divided into two principal sections:

1. The first section establishes the legitimacy of the *firqah nājiyah* (the saved sect), affirms the authority of the Commander of the Faithful (‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib) and the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), and highlights their virtues, including prophecies of the advent of the savior and the misguidance of their opponents.

2. The second section addresses a variety of theological and historical topics, such as the doctrines of the determinists (*Ahl al-Jabr*) and their refutation, the beliefs of the four Sunni schools, the governance of the first and second caliphs, and the prohibition of temporary marriage (*mut‘a*) during their rule. Given the significance of the theological issue of determinism and free will, and the impracticality of analyzing all the narrations cited by the author, this study focuses on four of the thirteen



narrations included in the manuscript under the heading *fi bayān mu'taqad Ahl al-Jabr* (On the Doctrine of the Determinists). The methodology adopted here involves textual analysis of four selected narrations, while the remaining are cited as supporting evidence. A distinctive feature of this manuscript is its reliance on narrations considered authentic and trustworthy by Sunni authorities, transmitted in their recognized ḥadīth collections. In line with the maxim *al-faḍlu mā shahidat bihi al-a'dā'* (the highest merit is that acknowledged by one's adversaries), the inadvertent testimony of eminent Sunni scholars and transmitters to the validity of the Twelver Shi'i doctrine, preserved throughout their authoritative works, constitutes compelling proof for any fair-minded scholar and leaves no room for polemical evasion. The title of the book itself reflects this purpose. In addition to *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*, the author also refers to his work as *Kāshif al-Ghayāhib fi Ibṭāl al-Madhāhib* (Unveiling the Obscurities in Refuting Doctrines), a designation that further underscores its polemical and doctrinal intent.

The problem of determinism and free will has long been a contentious issue, giving rise to three major theological positions: determinism (*jabr*), absolute delegation (*tafwīd*), and the intermediate doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn* (a position between the two extremes). Human beings are inherently endowed with free will, which they intuitively perceive. Were humans not free, they would never deliberate before acting or refraining from action. The existence of commands, prohibitions, reward, and punishment in society testifies to human freedom, and moral education itself presupposes the acceptance of free will (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, n.d., vol. 3, pp. 139–140). Will (*irāda*) is defined as the relation between the willing agent and his direct actions. This relation, established between the human soul and its acts, is a genuine one (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1395 AH, vol. 1, p. 77). Islamic philosophers have defined free will as follows: *kawn al-fā'il bi-ḥayth in yashā' yaf'al wa-in lam yashā' lam yaf'al*—that is, free will means that if the agent wills to perform an act, he can do so, and if he does not will, he refrains (Mullā Ṣadrā, 1382 SH, vol. 6, p. 308). Determinism, by contrast, entails those human beings lack will and choice in their actions. The third view, upheld by the Imāmiyyah, is *amr bayn al-amrayn*, which affirms divine involvement in human acts alongside human free choice.

As noted, Sunnis are generally divided between determinism and absolute free will: the Ash'arīs advocate determinism, while the Mu'tazilīs uphold free will. The Imāmiyya, however, adhere to the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn*. In this study, following the approach of the manuscript's author, the focus will be restricted to critiquing the determinist position.



Problem Statement

This study seeks to address the fundamental question of to what extent the narrations cited and the traditions employed by the author of the manuscript in refuting the determinist (*Ahl al-Jabr*) position can be considered textually reliable, corroborated by evidences, and consistent¹ with the ḥadīth sources of both sects (*farīqayn*). To arrive at an answer, it is necessary to establish the reliability of issuance (*wathīqat al-ṣudūr*)² of these narrations through contextual indicators and corroborative evidences. In this discussion, the chain of transmission (*isnād*) and the formal authenticity of the narrations are set aside—since their validation requires a separate and detailed investigation—and, following the scholarly practice, textual authentication of four narrations included in the section *fī bayān mu'taqad Ahl al-Jabr* of the manuscript is undertaken, based on the aforementioned evidences and indicators. The remaining narrations in this section are cited as supporting witnesses (*shawāhid*) and corroborations (*mutāba'āt*) that reinforce the narrations under study, thereby establishing a general *tawātur*³ (mass-transmission) sufficient to yield certainty regarding their issuance. The data collection method employed in this research is library-based, while the content analysis follows a descriptive—

1 *Ḥadīth-e Shāhid*: This is one of the technical terms used in ḥadīth studies. It refers to a single report whose meaning is transmitted through another chain. It is also applied to a ḥadīth in which another transmitter, reporting from a different Companion, agrees with the narrator in both the wording (Hashemi Sharoudi, *Bohuth fi elm al osul* 318/7). Ḥadīth al-Mutābi': Another type of report exists whose definition overlaps with some definitions of ḥadīth al-shāhid, and that is the ḥadīth mutābi'. It is defined as follows: a mutābi' report is one in which another narrator agrees with the original narrator in transmitting from the same shaykh, or from someone above that shaykh. For example, 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm narrates from his father Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim from . . . , and another narrator besides 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm transmits the same text from Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim from. . . For this reason, sometimes the term shāhid is applied to mutāba'ah and vice versa in the words of scholars. (Asqalani *Sharh al nokhbah al fekr fi mostalahat ahl al athar* 92) (Mamqani, *Mostadrek al hedayeh*, 199-197/5.)

2 *Wathāqat Ṣudūrī*: This refers to certainty regarding the issuance of a report or narration from the Ma'sūmīn ('a). In ḥadīth terminology, *wathāqat ṣudūrī* is referred to as *wuthūq khabarī*. (جزایری، Hoda al taleb fi sharh al makaseb 363/4.)

3. *Tawātur Ijmālī*: This is a category of *tawātur* and stands opposite *tawātur lafẓī* and *tawātur ma'nawī*. In *tawātur ijmālī*, there is no shared wording or common explicit content among the reports, yet a shared conclusion is derived from all of them collectively. For example: the reliability of a solitary report transmitted by a trustworthy Imāmī narrator whose content is not explicitly stated in the other reports; however, the sum of the narrations implies it. (Maleki Esfahani, *Farhang estelahat osul* 309/1). If several reports on one subject exist, even if their chains are defective, a collective certainty about the issuance of at least one of them is achieved. (Khoyi, *Mesbah al osul* 192/2.) (Naini, *Ajvad al taghdirat* 13/2، ش1377.)



analytical approach. It should be noted that no book or scholarly study directly and comprehensively related to this manuscript has been identified, which highlights the innovative character of this research. However, with respect to the broader thematic content of the manuscript, reference will be made to articles¹ and dissertations² that have addressed related issues, serving as a review of the existing literature.

2- Presentation and Introduction of the Section “On the Doctrine of the Determinists (*Ahl al-Jabr*)” in the Manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*

In the manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*, the author presents thirteen narrations, whose cumulative transmission (*tawātur ijmālī*) indicates their collective reliability in refuting the doctrine of the determinists (*Jabriyyūn*). Before examining selected examples of these narrations, it is appropriate to reflect on the reasons and circumstances that led to the emergence of the debate on determinism and free will. Determinism (*jabr*) and free will (*ikhtiyār*) constitute some of the most fundamental, ancient, and sensitive issues in Islamic philosophy and theology. Their significance lies in their close connection with questions of divine will, power, and knowledge of human actions—particularly the creation of acts, divine decree (*qaḍā’ wa-qadar*), and divine justice. Lexically, *jabr* denotes performing an act against one’s will (al-Farāhīdī, 1409 AH, vol. 6, p. 115; Ibn Manẓūr, 1414 AH, vol. 4, p. 116), or under compulsion and force (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1412 AH, p. 183). In theological and philosophical usage, it refers to the compulsion of the servant in his actions due to divine overpowering (al-Mufīd, 1413 AH, pp. 46–47). By contrast, *ikhtiyār* derives from the root *khayr* (good), meaning to choose the best option (Ibn Manẓūr, 1414 AH, vol. 4, p. 267), and denotes any act performed without coercion (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1412 AH, p. 302), such that the act or its omission depends upon the agent’s will (Khawājā Naṣīr, 1405 AH, p. 477). In theological terminology, the opposite of determinism is *tafwīḍ* (delegation), meaning the complete assignment of

1 See: 1. A Response to the Critique of the Ḥadīth of the Division of the Ummah from the Perspective of Both Schools, Āl-Mujaddad Shīrāzī, Seyyed Hassan, *Ṣerāṭ Journal*, Winter 2019, Issue 20, pp. 9–26.

2. An Examination and Critique of the Ḥadīth of the Saved Sect, Beqāei Yamin, Mohammad, *Journal of Islamic Schools of Thought Studies*, Summer 2015, Issue 40, pp. 57–66.

2 See: 1. Critical edition and verification of the manuscript "*al shahab al thagheb le navaseb al aemeh al ataeb*", Emādi Esterābādī, Reyhāneh Sādāt, Supervisor: Ḥasanī Ranjbar, Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch, M.A. Thesis, Winter 2014.

2. *Critique and Examination of the Verses of Wilāyah in al-Ṭabarī’s Tafsīr*, Ḥabībī-Pour, Manẓūr, Supervisor: Ḥujjat al-Islām Seyyed Moḥammad Ḥossein Mīrī, Advisor: Ḥujjat al-Islām Alirezā ‘Azīmī-Fard, M.A. Thesis, 2014.



human acts to the servants themselves (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1418 AH, vol. 1, pp. 276–277). God, being All-Wise, does nothing without purpose or benefit, nor does He commit injustice or burden anyone beyond their capacity. Divine obligations are legislated for the benefit of human beings themselves, not for God’s own advantage (‘Allāma Majlisī, 1392 SH, p. 192). Thus, humans remain free in performing or refraining from their duties, and in the realm of voluntary acts neither absolute determinism nor absolute delegation applies. The correct belief is an intermediate position between the two. To claim that humans are compelled in their actions implies attributing injustice to God, which is impossible and tantamount to disbelief. Conversely, to claim that God has no involvement whatsoever in human acts—denying any divine relation to them—is also disbelief, known as *tafwīd* (ibid., p. 193). Rather, God intervenes in human acts through special guidance and granting success (*tawfīq*), or by withholding such guidance, without thereby compelling the servant. Analogies in jurisprudence and social relations illustrate this: when a master commands his servant to perform a task, threatens punishment for neglect, and emphasizes the obligation through encouragement and reminders, the servant remains responsible for compliance. The master’s involvement does not negate the servant’s freedom. In the same way, divine involvement in human acts constitutes the intermediate doctrine between determinism and delegation, as affirmed by numerous narrations (Majlisī, 1392 SH, pp. 194–195). ‘Allāma Majlisī, in Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn, states: “Know that many narrations affirm that neither determinism applies—whereby humans are compelled in their acts—nor delegation applies—whereby they are abandoned to themselves. Rather, it is a matter between two extremes. Most scholars interpret this to mean that God does not compel the servant, while the servant acts by his own will; yet all means and faculties enabling the act, such as bodily organs, spiritual capacities, and instruments, are provided by God. This is the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn* (a position between two extremes) mentioned in the narrations” (Majlisī, 1384 SH, vol. 2, chap. 3). Accordingly, the Imāmī Shi’a affirm that human acts are simultaneously attributable to human choice and divine will. Human volition operates in harmony with divine will, not in opposition to it. Determinists claim that God is the sole agent of human acts, while proponents of delegation deny any divine involvement. In the section *fī bayān mu’taqad Ahl al-Jabr* of the manuscript, the author employs rational arguments and Qur’anic verses to present narrations that refute and invalidate the determinist doctrine, portraying their beliefs as contrary to authentic Islam and inconsistent with the reasoning of the wise and discerning. A comprehensive view of the narrations included in the section



fī bayān mu'taqad Ahl al-Jabr of the manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād* allows these traditions to be classified under four main categories:

1. Refutation of determinism based on divine mercy
2. Rational arguments against determinism
3. The existence of divine punishment and reward as evidence of human free will
4. The adoption of determinism as a means of evading religious responsibility

In light of the Qur'anic verse *وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ* (None led us astray except the criminals, Qur'an 26:99), together with the preceding and subsequent verses that recount the reproachful and admonishing dialogues with the inhabitants of Hell, it must be acknowledged that the act of leading astray is attributed to agents other than God. This attribution is incompatible with the determinist claim that all acts are exclusively ascribed to God. Accordingly, the original narrations preserved in the manuscript will now be examined in detail.

2-1. Refutation of Determinism Based on Divine Mercy

All rational people, despite differences in nations, beliefs, and religions, agree that God is *Arḥam al-Rāḥimīn* (the Most Merciful of the merciful). The prophets also testify to God's supreme mercy. Among the examples is the statement of Moses (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an:

(al-A'raf, verse 151) *﴿قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِأَخِي وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِي رَحْمَتِكَ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ﴾*

“Moses said: My Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us into Your mercy, for You are the Most Merciful of the merciful. Another example is the statement of Joseph (peace be upon him):

(Yūsuf, verse 92) *﴿قَالَ لَا تَثْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ﴾*

He said: There is no blame upon you today. May God forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of the merciful. How then can this group affirm that their Prophet describes God with such a supreme attribute of mercy, yet at the same time claim that God creates people only to cast them into Hell without granting them any choice of their own? Ahmad ibn Sharīf, in the manuscript, cites the following narration from the perspective of the majority of Muslims, transmitted from the Messenger of God (peace be upon him): “Among these is what al-Ḥumaydī narrated in his book *al-Jam' bayn al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, in the Musnad of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, from Ibn 'Umar, from 'Umar, who said: Captives were brought before the Prophet (peace be upon him). A woman among the captives was searching anxiously until she found a child among them. She took the child, pressed him to her chest, and



nursed him. The Prophet (pbuh) then said: ‘Do you think this woman would throw her child into the fire?’ We replied: ‘No, by God.’ He said: ‘God is more merciful to His servants than this woman is to her child.’ This narration is supported by corroborative evidences (*shawāhid wa-mutāba‘āt*) as outlined below.

2-1-1. Corroborative Evidences (*Shawāhid wa-Mutāba‘āt*)

The aforementioned narration is supported by corroborative evidences both in the manuscript and in the sources of both sects (*farīqayn*).

2-1-1-1. Corroborative Evidences in the Manuscript

Aḥmad ibn Sharīf, in the manuscript, cites several narrations that serve as semantic corroborations of the preceding narration. These are transmitted from the Messenger of God (pbuh) as follows:

1. Narration of Abū Hurayra: Al-Ḥumaydī also reports in *al-Jam‘* from the Musnad of Abū Hurayra, through ‘Aṭā’ ibn Umm [Abī] Rabāḥ, who said: Abū Hurayra narrated that the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) said: “Indeed, God Almighty has one hundred mercies. He sent down one mercy among the jinn, humankind, animals, and creatures, through which they show affection and compassion, and through which even wild beasts show kindness to their offspring. God has reserved ninety-nine mercies with which He will show mercy to His servants on the Day of Resurrection.”

2. Another narration of Abū Hurayra: Al-Ḥumaydī also reports in *al-Jam‘* from the Musnad of Abū Hurayra, who said that the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) declared: “God, Mighty and Majestic, will say on the Day of Resurrection: O son of Adam, I was ill and you did not visit Me. He will reply: O Lord, how could I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? God will say: Did you not know that My servant so-and-so was ill and you did not visit him? Did you not know that had you visited him, you would have found Me with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you did not feed Me. He will reply: O Lord, how could I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds? God will say: Did you not know that My servant so-and-so asked you for food and you did not feed him? Had you fed him, you would have found that with Me. O son of Adam, I asked you for drink and you did not give Me water. He will reply: O Lord, how could I give You drink when You are the Lord of the worlds? God will say: My servant so-and-so asked you for water and you did not give him drink. Had you given him water, you would have found that with Me.”

3. Narration of ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd: Al-Ḥumaydī also reports in *al-Jam‘* from the Musnad of ‘Abd Allāh b. Mas‘ūd, who said: “I heard the Messenger of God (pbuh) say: God rejoices at the repentance of His believing servant more than a man who, after traveling in a desolate land



with his camel carrying his food and drink, lays down to sleep. When he awakens, his camel has gone. He searches for it until hunger and thirst overwhelm him, or as God wills. He then says: I will return to the place where I was and sleep until I die. He lays his head upon his arm to die, then awakens to find his camel beside him with his provisions and water. God is more joyful at the repentance of His believing servant than this man is at finding his camel and provisions.” Thus, the corroborative evidences of the aforementioned narration in the manuscript are also attested in the sources of both sects (*maṣādir al-farīqayn*), as will be outlined below.

2–1–1–2. Corroborative Evidences in the Sources of Both Sects (*Maṣādir al-Farīqayn*)

The major and authoritative sources of both sects, with agreement in wording, are as follows:

Shi‘i Sources

1. al-Ḥillī, *Nahj al-Haqq wa-Kashf al-Ṣidq*, p. 374
2. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Ṭarā’if fi Ma’rifat al-Madhāhib al-Ṭawā’if*, vol. 2, p. 308

Sunni Sources

1. al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8, p. 8
2. al-Bayhaqī, *al-Asmā’ wa-l-Ṣifāt*, vol. 2, p. 457.
3. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Kashf al-Mushkil min Ḥadīth al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, vol. 1, p. 94
4. Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi‘ al-Uṣūl*, vol. 4, p. 52.
5. al-Nawawī, *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*, p. 160
6. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya*, vol. 20, p. 53
7. Abū Nu‘aym, *Ma’rifat al-Ṣaḥāba*, vol. 8, p. 256
8. Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’ wa-Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā’*, vol. 3, p. 228, and others.

2–1–2. Textual Analysis

When the word *raḥmat* (mercy) becomes an attribute of God, it signifies benevolence and kindness in essence (al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1412 AH, p. 191; Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1390 AH, vol. 1, p. 23). From the perspective of Shi‘i theology, divine mercy means the effusion of goodness to the needy and the downtrodden, and the act of supporting them. God’s mercy is characterized by comprehensiveness, universality, and perfection. Comprehensiveness means that God intends to remove need and weakness from all who are needy. Universality means that the scope of divine mercy encompasses both the virtuous and the wicked, both believers and disbelievers, and applies in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Perfection means that, unlike human beings who may suffer fatigue or hardship in acts of kindness, God never experiences weariness or pain in His mercy (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1418 AH, vol. 1, p. 159). Human actions produce specific consequences and reflections. Good deeds result in greater insight, guidance toward God, and the performance of better acts. As the Qur’an states:



﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ ذُو

الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾ (al-Anfāl, verse 29)

“O you who believe, if you fear God, He will grant you a criterion to distinguish truth from falsehood, remove your sins, and forgive you. And God is the Possessor of great bounty.” Conversely, if a person pursues evil, the darkness of the heart increases, leading to greater sin and sometimes even to outright denial. Thus, the choice of the good or the evil path lies within human volition, a truth acknowledged by the conscience of every human being. How then could it be possible, in light of this divine attribute, that God would deprive humans of choice altogether or delegate it entirely without involvement? The sending of messengers itself is an expression of God’s mercy, ensuring that humanity is not left alone or without guidance throughout the course of life. Moreover, God has promised punishment to sinners in many Qur’anic verses. For example:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدَدًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ

فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ جُنْدًا﴾ (Maryam, verse 75)

“Say: Whoever is in error, let the Most Merciful extend for him an appointed term until, when they see what they are promised—whether punishment or the Hour—they will know who is worse in position and weaker in forces.” Similarly, in Sūrat al-Zumar, verses 54–55 and elsewhere, God warns sinners of punishment. If, as the determinists claim, sinners have no choice or will of their own in committing sins, and the act of sin is attributed directly to God, this contradicts divine mercy. It would mean that God punishes a servant for an act He Himself performed, which is clearly incompatible with attributing mercy to God—let alone describing Him as Arḥam al-Rāḥimīn (the Most Merciful of the merciful).

2–2. Rational Arguments Against Determinism

Numerous rational arguments have been advanced to refute the doctrine of the determinists (*Jabriyyūn*). In the aforementioned manuscript, Aḥmad b. Sharīf cites a narration from Abū Ḥanīfa, transmitted from Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (peace be upon him): “It is narrated that Abū Ḥanīfa, the founder of his school, once passed by Mūsā ibn Ja‘far (peace be upon him) and sought to test him. He asked: ‘Whose responsibility is sin?’ Mūsā b. Ja‘far replied: ‘Sit down and I will inform you.’ Abū Ḥanīfa sat before him, and Mūsā ibn Ja‘far said: ‘Sin must be attributed either to the servant, or to the Lord Almighty, or to both together. If it is from God, then He is too just and fair to wrong His weak servant and hold him accountable for what he did not do. If it is from both, then God would be a partner in sin, and the stronger is more obliged to show fairness to His weak servant. If it is from



the servant alone, then the command is directed to him, the prohibition is addressed to him, and he is entitled to reward and punishment, with Paradise or Hell becoming his due.”

2–2–1. Corroborative Evidences (Shawāhid wa-Mutāba‘āt)

This narration is supported by corroborative evidences both in the manuscript and in the sources of both sects.

2–2–1–1. Corroborative Evidences in the Manuscript

Aḥmad ibn Sharīf cites narrations that serve as semantic corroborations of the above narration:

1. Narration from Ja‘far ibn Moḥammad (peace be upon him): It is reported that he once said to some determinists: “Is there anyone who accepts a valid excuse more readily than God Almighty?” They replied: “No.” He asked: “What do you say about one who claims ‘I am unable’ and is truly unable? Is he excused?” They said: “Yes, he is excused.” He continued: “If God knows that His servants are unable to obey Him, or if they say on the Day of Resurrection: ‘O Lord, we were unable to obey You because You prevented us,’ would their statement and excuse not be valid according to the determinists?” They replied: “Yes, by God.” He said: “Then, according to your view, God must accept this valid excuse and never hold anyone accountable. This contradicts the consensus of all religions.” At that moment, the determinist repented from his belief in determinism.

2. Report concerning al-Ḥajjāj and early scholars: It is narrated that al-Ḥajjāj wrote to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd, Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’, and ‘Āmir al-Sha‘bī, asking them to state what they had received regarding *qaḍā’ wa-qadar* (divine decree and predestination). Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī replied: “Among the best of what has reached us is what I heard from the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him), who said: ‘Do you think that the one who forbade you is the one who caused you harm? Rather, it is yourself that brings you harm, while God is free from such matters.’” ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd wrote: “The best statement I heard regarding *qaḍā’ wa-qadar* is from the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī (peace be upon him): ‘If sin were decreed as inevitable, then the sinner punished in retribution would be wronged.’” Wāṣil ibn ‘Aṭā’ wrote: “The best statement I heard is from ‘Alī (peace be upon him): ‘Would God guide you to the right path and then compel you to hardship?’” al-Sha‘bī wrote: “The best statement I heard is from ‘Alī (peace be upon him): ‘Whatever you seek forgiveness from God for is from yourself, and whatever you praise God for is from Him.’” When al-Ḥajjāj read their letters, he reflected and said: “Indeed, they have taken this from a pure source.” This was his admission despite his well-known enmity toward the Ahl al-Bayt (as).



3. Narration from Imām Ja‘far al-Şādiq (peace be upon him): It is reported that a man asked him about qaḍā’ wa-qadar. He replied: “Whatever you can reproach the servant for is from the servant, and whatever you cannot reproach him for is from God. God says to the servant: ‘Why did you disobey? Why did you commit immorality? Why did you drink wine? Why did you commit fornication?’ But He does not say: ‘Why did you fall ill? Why did you become short? Why did you become white or black?’ For these are acts of the servant, while those are acts of God in creation.”

2–1–2. Corroborative Evidences in the Sources of Both Sects (*Shawāhid wa-Mutāba‘ūt fī al-Farīqayn*)

The major classical sources of both sects that mention the narration in agreement of wording include the following:

Shi‘i Sources

1. al-Mufīd, *al-Fuṣūl al-Mukhtāra min al-‘Uyūn wa-l-Maḥāsīn*, p. 73
2. al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *Amālī al-Murtaḍā*, vol. 1, p. 152
3. al-Fattāl al-Nīshābūrī, *Rawḍat al-Wā‘izīn wa-Baṣīrat al-Muta‘izīn*, vol. 1, p. 39
4. al-Ṭabrisī, *A‘lām al-Warā‘ bi-A‘lām al-Hudā*, vol. 2, p. 29
5. Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib al-Qur‘ān wa-Mukhtalifa*, vol. 1, p. 120.
6. Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 4, p. 314.
7. bn Ṭāwūs, *al-Ṭarā‘if fī Ma‘rifat al-Madhāhib al-Ṭawā‘if*, vol. 2, p. 328

Sunni Sources

1. al-Dhahabī, *al-Muntaqā min Minhāj al-I‘tidāl fī Naqḍ Kalām Ahl al-Rafd wa-l-I‘tizāl*, p. 136
2. Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj al-Sunna al-Nabawiyya fī Naqḍ Kalām al-Shi‘a al-Qadariyya*, vol. 3, p. 138
3. al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā, *Amālī al-Murtaḍā (Ghurur al-Fawā‘id wa-Durar al-Qalā‘id)*, vol. 1, p. 152

2–2–2. Textual Analysis

In the domain of rational arguments against determinism, several proofs have been advanced, of which the most significant are as follows:

1. Innate Disposition and Conscience (*Fiṭra wa-Wijdān*): All human beings intuitively perceive that they are free in their actions. This sense of freedom is self-evident and undeniable (Mullā Şadrā, 1382 SH, vol. 6, p. 370).

2. Responsibility and Obligation (*Taklīf wa-Mas‘ūliyya*): Human responsibility and obligation without free will is invalid and reprehensible, and the All-Wise God does not commit reprehensible acts (al-Ṭūsī, 1407 AH, p. 330).



3. Praise and Blame (*Madh wa-Dhamm*): Praise and blame, reward and punishment, are meaningless without free will. These are universally acknowledged realities in human life (al-Mufīd, 1413 AH, p. 55).

4. Immediate Knowledge (*‘Ilm Ḥuḍūrī*): Human beings possess direct experiential knowledge of their own volition in actions, and this immediate awareness cannot be denied (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1395 AH, vol. 2, p. 102).

5. Causality (*‘Ilīyya*): Every act requires a cause, and the cause of voluntary acts is human will and choice (Ibn Sīnā, 1381 AH, al-Ishārāt wa-l-Tanbīhāt, Third Namat, Chapter 12).

In the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn* (“a position between determinism and delegation”) is presented as the middle path, preserving both divine power and human free will (al-Ṣadūq, 1398 SH, Bāb 59, ḥadīth 1; al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, vol. 1, Kitāb al-Tawḥīd, Bāb al-Jabr wa-l-Qadar). From all these arguments, it becomes evident that assigning obligation to human beings without free will and volition is meaningless, impossible, and void. Human reason alone suffices to recognize that man is free and responsible for his actions. Thus, in all societies—even the most primitive—wrongdoers are deemed worthy of blame and condemnation, while the virtuous are considered deserving of praise and commendation. If human beings did not perceive themselves as free and possessing volition, they would not acknowledge responsibility for themselves or others, nor would they distinguish between permissible and impermissible acts. Yet reality demonstrates otherwise.

3–2. The Existence of Divine Punishment and Reward as Evidence of Human Free Will

The issue of reward and punishment constitutes one of the most important arguments against determinism, for reward and punishment without free will would be unjust and reprehensible. In light of this, the author of the manuscript substantiates this principle by citing a narration from the Messenger of God (pbuh). Aḥmad ibn Sharīf, in the manuscript, transmits the response of ‘Alī b. Mūsā al-Riḍā (peace be upon him) to a question posed by Faḍl ibn Sahl. Faḍl asked the Imam: “O Abū al-Ḥasan, are human beings compelled?” He replied: “God is too just to compel His creation and then punish them.” Faḍl then asked: “Are they abandoned?” He replied: “God is too just to neglect His creation and leave them to themselves.”

3–2–1. Corroborative Evidences (*Shawāhid wa-Mutāba‘āt*)

This narration is supported by corroborative evidences both in the manuscript and in the sources of both sects.

3–2–1–1. Corroborative Evidences in the Manuscript

1. Narration from Abū Ḥanīfa and Mūsā ibn Ja‘far (peace be upon him):



It is narrated that Abū Ḥanīfa once passed by Mūsā b. Ja‘far (peace be upon him) intending to test him. He asked: “Whose responsibility is sin?” Mūsā b. Ja‘far replied: “Sit down until I inform you.” Abū Ḥanīfa sat before him, and the Imam said: “Sin must be attributed either to the servant, or to the Lord Almighty, or to both together. If it is from God, then He is too just and fair to wrong His weak servant and hold him accountable for what he did not do. If it is from both, then God would be a partner in sin, and the stronger is more obliged to show fairness to His weak servant. If it is from the servant alone, then the command is directed to him, the prohibition is addressed to him, and he is entitled to reward and punishment, with Paradise or Hell becoming his due.”

2. Narration from *al-Khwārazmī in al-Fā‘iq* (a Sunni scholar of reliability): He reports from al-Aṣḡagh b. Nubāta that an elderly man approached ‘Alī (peace be upon him) after the battle of Ṣiffīn and asked: “Tell us, O Commander of the Faithful, was our march to Syria by divine decree and predestination?” ‘Alī replied: “By Him who split the seed and created life, we did not tread a step, descend into a valley, or ascend a hill except by divine decree and predestination.” The man said: “Then I see no reward for myself with God.” ‘Alī responded: “Patience, O elder. Rather, your reward is immense in your journey and in your return. In none of your states were you compelled or coerced.” The man asked: “Then what of the decree and predestination that brought us here?” ‘Alī replied: “Woe to you! Did you think decree and predestination are binding and absolute? If that were so, reward and punishment, promise and threat would be nullified. No one would deserve praise or blame, the righteous would not merit commendation, nor the sinner condemnation. That is the doctrine of idol-worshippers and the soldiers of Satan; they are the Qadariyya and the Magians of this community. God commands by way of choice and forbids by way of warning. He is not disobeyed out of weakness, nor obeyed under compulsion. He did not send messengers in vain, nor create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in futility. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve, and woe to them from the Fire.” The man then asked: “What then are the decree and predestination by which we marched?” ‘Alī replied: “It is the command of God Almighty and His judgment.” He then recited:

(وَقَضَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ) (al-Isrā’, verse 23) “And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.” The elder departed rejoicing.

2-1-3-2. Corroborative Evidences in the Sources of Both Sects (*Shawāhid wa-Mutāba‘āt fī al-Farīqayn*)

The major classical sources of both sects that transmit the aforementioned narration with agreement in wording include:

Shi'i Sources

1. al-Hillī, *al-Uddad al-Qawiyya li-Daf' al-Makhāwif al-Yawmiyya*, p. 299
2. Ibn Ṭāwūs, *al-Ṭarā'if fī Ma'rifat al-Madhāhib*, vol. 2, p. 330

Sunni Sources

1. al-Rāzī, *Nathr al-Durr fī al-Muhāḍarāt*, vol. 1, p. 250
2. al-Hindī al-Makkī, *al-Suyūf al-Mushriqa wa-Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawā'iq al-Muḥarriqa*, p. 400

2–3–2. Textual Analysis

As is evident from authoritative sources and rational arguments, the issue of reward and punishment is among the strongest proofs against determinism. Belief in determinism contradicts divine justice and wisdom, for reward and punishment without free will are unacceptable. If human beings were compelled, the purpose of sending messengers and revealing scriptures would be meaningless. According to theological sources, obligation without free will is not only meaningless but reprehensible (al-Ṭūsī, 1407 AH, p. 332). Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī states: “Self-evident perception testifies that our actions are attributable to ourselves” (al-Ṭūsī, 1413 AH, p. 308). Al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā affirms: “Punishment without choice is injustice, and God is exalted above injustice” (1411 AH, p. 285).

The Qur'an explicitly emphasizes human free will:

(إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا) (al-Insān, verse 3)

“We have shown him the way: he may be grateful or he may be ungrateful.” In light of Qur'anic verses and rational as well as transmitted proofs, the doctrine of determinism is incompatible with divine reward and punishment. Belief in determinism entails attributing injustice to God and rendering the sending of messengers futile. Therefore, the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn* stands as the only logical explanation of human volition, preserving both divine power and human free will.

4–2. Belief in Determinism as a Means of Escaping Religious Responsibility

Belief in determinism can function as a defensive mechanism to evade religious and moral responsibilities. In this regard, Aḥmad b. Sharīf substantiates the point by citing a narration from the Messenger of God (pbuh). It is narrated in al-Fā'iq from Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh, a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) who said: “There will come in the latter days a people who commit sins and claim that God Almighty decreed them upon them. Whoever refutes them is like one who unsheathes his sword in the path of God.”

4–2–1. Corroborative Evidences (Shawāhid wa-Mutāba'āt)

This narration is supported by corroborative evidences in the manuscript and in the sources of both sects.



4-2-1-1. Corroborative Evidences in the Manuscript

1. It is narrated from the Prophet (pbuh), as reported by al-Khwārazmī in *al-Fā'iq* and others: A man came to the Prophet (pbuh), who asked him: "Tell me of the most astonishing thing you have seen." He replied: "I saw a people who married their mothers, daughters, and sisters. When asked why they did so, they said: 'God decreed it upon us.' The Prophet (pbuh) said: 'There will be in my community a people who hold the same belief. They are the Magians of my community.'"

2. It is narrated by a group of Muslim scholars from the Prophet (pbuh): "The *Qadariyyah* were cursed upon the tongue of seventy prophets." They asked: "Who are the *Qadariyyah*, O Messenger of God?" He replied: "They are those who claim that God Almighty decreed sins upon them and then punishes them for them."

2-4-1-2. Corroborative Evidences in the Sources of Both Sects (*Shawāhid wa-Mutāba'āt fī al-Farīqayn*)

The major and well-known classical sources of both sects that transmit the aforementioned narration with agreement in wording include:

Shi'i Sources

1. Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān wa-Mukhtalifah*, vol. 1, p. 202
2. Ibn Tāwūs, *al-Ṭarā'if fī Ma'rifat al-Madhāhib al-Ṭawā'if*, vol. 2, p. 344

Sunni Sources

Upon reviewing the major sources and works of Sunnī scholarship prior to the eighth century, the narration was not found. However, it appears in works after the eighth century, including:

1. Sayyid Sābiq, *al-'Aqā'id al-Islāmiyyah*, p. 99
2. Ḥamlāwī, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd al-Musammā bi-l-Takhallī 'an al-Taqālīd wa-l-Taḥallī bi-l-Aṣl al-Mufīd*, p. 205

2-4-2. Textual Analysis

The fundamental inclination toward determinism among Muslims often served to negate moral and religious responsibility, particularly for rulers, and to justify their oppression. By attributing all actions to God, the masses were more inclined to endure injustice without complaint or protest against their rulers. At the same time, this belief opened the door for individuals to commit sins without accountability, making it appealing to many as a justification for evading obligations. Imām al-Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) is reported to have said: "Indeed, there are people who wish that God would forgive them without merit, so they argue by means of determinism." (al-Ṣadūq, 1398 SH, p. 360). Likewise, the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) stated: "When actions are attributed to determinism, reward and punishment are nullified." (al-Āmidī, 1410 AH, ḥadīth 4521). Shaykh al-Mufīd, in his critique of the determinists, wrote: "The determinists



advanced this claim solely to escape responsibility.” (Awā’il al-Maqālāt, p. 58). ‘Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī also argued that belief in determinism leads to false reliance (*tawakkul kādhīb*) and abandonment of effort and action (al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān, vol. 1, p. 234). Mullā Ṣadrā, in *al-Ḥikma al-Muta’aliya fī al-Asfār al-‘Aqliyya al-Arba‘a*, warns: “If determinism were true, the revealed laws would be invalidated and the motives for obedience would cease.” (vol. 6, p. 378). Based on authoritative Islamic sources and the analyses of religious scholars, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Belief in determinism often serves as a justification for evading responsibility.

2. This belief contradicts the philosophy of prophetic mission and the objectives of divine legislation.

3. The practical consequence of such belief is the weakening of motivation for obedience and the abandonment of obligations.

Conclusion

Regardless of the chain of transmission (*isnād*) of the narrations contained in the manuscript *Minhāj Ūlī al-Albāb bi-Nahj al-Sadād wa-Ṭuruq al-Rashād*, and in accordance with the methodology of the classical scholars, after examining the corroborative evidences (*shawāhid wa-mutāba‘āt*) from both sects and conducting textual validation, the following results were obtained:

1. Due to the corroborative evidences cited by Aḥmad ibn Sharīf in his manuscript, together with the narrations transmitted in the sources of both sects, the cumulative (*tawātur ijmālī*) authenticity of the narrations was established.

2. The content of these narrations conforms to the Book of God, accords with the Prophetic Sunnah, and is consistent with rational proofs, thereby possessing reliability in transmission.

3. The scholars of the Shi‘i tradition unanimously accepted such narrations, whereas the scholars of the Sunnī tradition expressed differing views regarding their authenticity. Certainly, the consensus of the Shi‘i scholars carries greater weight than the divergence of opinion among Sunnī scholars, and the narrations cannot be invalidated merely on the basis of some Sunnī objections.

4. By establishing the soundness of the content and the presence of corroborative evidences in the sources of both sects, it is concluded that the doctrine of determinism (*jabr*), which has many adherents among the masses, is invalid and unacceptable according to the Book of God, the Prophetic Sunnah, and rational arguments. Alongside the principal content of the narrations under study, a subsidiary conclusion may also be drawn: neither absolute determinism nor complete delegation (*tafwīd*) is correct.



Rather, human will and choice occupy a position between the two, which is the doctrine of *amr bayn al-amrayn*.

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Andalusi *Sīra* Writing from the Third Century to the Fall of al-Andalus (Transformation from Historical to Legal Tradition in the Maliki-Salafi School)

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Abstract

This article investigates the development of Andalusian *sīra* writing over seven centuries of intellectual activity. The scope of the study includes major figures of Andalusian *sīra* writing from ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb to Ibn Sayyid al-Nās and their principal works. Drawing on a qualitative content analysis of authoritative historical and *sīra* texts, such as *al-Maghāzī* by Ibn Ḥabīb, *Jawāmi‘ al-Sīra* by Ibn Ḥazm, *Mukhtaṣar al-Sīra* by Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Shifā’* by Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, and *‘Uyūn al-Athar* by Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, the study argues that Andalusian *sīra* writing evolved through three distinct phases. These phases include: (1) the historical–narrative and jurisprudential *sīra* of Ibn Ḥabīb in the third century AH; (2) the critical and *ijtihād*-based approach of Ibn Ḥazm alongside the Salafī–jurisprudential orientation of Ibn al-‘Arabī in the fifth century AH; and (3) the legal devotional *sīra* of Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ and the integrative approach of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās from the sixth to the eighth centuries AH. The shift from an emphasis on the narration of military expeditions (*maghāzī*) to a focus on the legal and devotional concept of the “rights of the Prophet” (*ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*) was closely connected to broader political, legal, and theological transformations.

Keywords: Andalusī *Sīra* Writing, Maliki–Salafī Tradition, Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *al-Shifā’*, Transformation of Islamic Religious Literature.

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1. Introduction

Islamic historiography began with the recording and compilation of the *sīra*, the biography of the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him). *Sīra*-writing, as a specialized branch of Islamic historiography, reconstructs the life, character, ethics, campaigns, and policies of the Prophet. This type of historiography is central to religious and doctrinal studies and serves as a critical source for understanding the social, political, and cultural foundations of early Islamic society.

Over subsequent centuries, *sīra*-writing was influenced by the political, social, and cultural conditions of different regions. While the earliest *sīra* works were produced in Medina and Mecca, by the late first and second centuries AH, scholars from other regions contributed to this tradition due to the geographic expansion of Islam.

Following the spread of Islam to the Maghreb and al-Andalus, intellectual activity flourished in these regions. Prominent thinkers contributed significantly to Islamic civilization, producing works that advanced disciplines such as science, literature, philosophy, and law. As Ghazali and Zamani note:

"Spain remained under Muslim rule for about eight centuries; their light illuminated Europe. Sciences, literature, and industry flourished, and through this route, various disciplines such as mathematics, botany, astronomy, history, philosophy, and law reached maturity in Islamic Spain" (Ghazali & Zamani, 2007: 246).

The enduring recognition of this intellectual tradition is further illustrated by the sale of a manuscript of Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ's *al-Shifā' bi-ta'rīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* at Christie's London in 1438 AH for 265,000 euros. This event underscores the lasting influence and prestige of Andalusī *sīra*-writing, which addressed the cultural challenges of the Middle Ages and shaped religious, legal, and identity formation among Maliki communities in the Maghreb.

Despite this significance, the development of *sīra*-writing in al-Andalus and the Islamic West has received comparatively limited attention, especially relative to Eastern traditions such as the *sīra* of Ibn Ishāq and the *Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī.

2. Problem Statement

The regions of the Islamic West were incorporated into the Muslim world later than Eastern regions, and it took time for Islamic culture and institutions to become established. Accordingly, *sīra*-writing in al-Andalus developed later than in the East. Nevertheless, Islamic powers in the West made substantial contributions to Islamic civilization, facilitating the transmission of knowledge to Christian territories in the Mediterranean.



Prophetic biography, an integral aspect of this region's history, has received limited scholarly attention. Historians often engage with Andalusī *sīra* sporadically, leaving many aspects underexplored. A focused analysis is necessary to understand the distinctive development of this genre.

Re-reading Andalusī *sīra*-writing is important for three reasons:

1. **Religious literature:** Andalusī *sīra* transformed the concept of biography, redefining it as a set of rights incumbents upon Muslims rather than a mere historical record. This conceptual shift influenced Sunni thought across the Maghreb and continues to inform contemporary practices of veneration in West Africa.
2. **Juridical thought:** Political, geographic, and ideological pressures shaped the transformation of *sīra*-writing in al-Andalus. In response to the expansion of Christian powers, the fall of Córdoba, the rise of the Almoravids and Almohads, and internal religious challenges such as Mu'tazilite influence, *sīra*-writing became a tool to legitimize ruling systems and consolidate Maliki–Salafi identity.
3. **Contemporary religious policy:** Limited knowledge of this tradition has led to misconceptions regarding Sunni schools in the Maghreb, with some scholars treating works by Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ and Ibn Sayyid al-Nās as derivative of Ibn Ishāq. In reality, these authors explicitly sought to establish an independent intellectual framework.

This study addresses the knowledge gap regarding why *sīra*-writing in al-Andalus shifted from a historico-narrative approach (e.g., Ibn Ḥabīb) to a juridical-devotional approach (e.g., Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ) and how this transformation relates to the Maliki–Salafi juridical-theological current. While prior research has catalogued key figures and works (Naseri Taheri, 2009; Yusef, 1992; Maqqari, 1978), few studies analyze the simultaneous changes in method, structure, purpose, and the role of Maliki–Salafi thought as a moderating factor.

The independent variable of this research is the Maliki–Salafi juridical-theological current (comprising Maliki jurisprudence, Salafi creed, and resistance to Mu'tazilite theology and philosophy). The dependent variable is the mode of *sīra*-writing, ranging from historico-narrative to juridical-devotional. The moderating variable includes political-cultural pressures such as confrontations with Christian powers, the fall of Córdoba, and the rise of the Almoravids and Almohads. The study hypothesizes a gradual transformation: as the Maliki–Salafi current expanded and faced external challenges, *sīra*-writing shifted from battle narratives to articulating the rights of the Prophet.



The overall aim is to explain how Andalusī *sīra* evolved from a historical genre into a juridical-theological instrument for consolidating Maliki–Salafī identity. Specific objectives include: (1) reconstructing the scholarly and political contexts of this transformation from the third to eighth centuries AH, (2) identifying the three key stages of development, and (3) analyzing the role of the Maliki–Salafī school as a driving factor.

3. Research Background (Historical-Literary)

The expansion of scholarly activity in the Islamic West and Al-Andalus fostered the development of *Sīra* writing, the biographical literature of the Prophet. Despite its importance, scholarly attention has predominantly focused on biographical cataloging of figures and their works, rather than on the methodological and structural evolution of *Sīra* as a literary and intellectual genre. Existing research can be broadly categorized into three strata: primary sources, classical secondary sources, and contemporary studies, each with specific strengths and limitations.

Primary sources constitute the foundation for understanding Andalusian *Sīra*. Key texts include *Tarteeb al-Madaarik* by Qadi' Iyad, *Al-Sila* and *Takmilat al-Sila* by Ibn Bishkuwal and Ibn al-Abbar, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala'* and *Tārīkh al-Islām* by al-Dhahabi, and *Al-Ihata* by Ibn al-Khatib. These works provide detailed accounts of scholars' lives and contributions; however, they generally adopt a prosopographical-historical approach, emphasizing personal attributes, debates, official positions (*manaṣīb*), and literary output rather than the development of *Sīra* as an independent literary and intellectual form. For instance, al-Dhahabi praises Qadi' Iyad's *Al-Shifā'* as his "Most Noble and Excellent Composition" but does not analyze why this work attained prominence among *Sīra* narratives (Naseritahari, 2009). Similar patterns appear in Ibn al-Khatib's *Al-Ihata* and Ibn Bishkuwal's *Al-Sila*, where Qadi' Iyad is described as a "Synthesizer of the Disciplines of His Age" without connecting this mastery to the structural evolution of *Sīra* writing.

Contemporary studies have attempted analytical approaches, although significant gaps remain. Mohammad Yousif (*Al-Muṣannafāt al-Maghribiyya fī al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya*, 1992) produced the first systematic catalog of *Sīra* works in the Maghreb, noting stylistic continuity between Qadi' Iyad's *Al-Shifā'* and Eastern models such as *Kitāb Shamā'il al-Nabī* and *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwah* (al-Dhahabi, 1985). However, he did not address whether this reflects a conscious innovation or an unintended continuity. Naseritahari (2009) critiques claims of rationalist historiography in the Maghreb, emphasizing that Andalusian *Sīra* writing developed independently from Eastern rationalist schools, but does not situate this within a methodological framework. Western scholars, including Bouca

(1999), focus more on narrative transmission than on the intellectual evolution of *Sīra* writing. Similarly, Shahidi Pak (2010) provides general historical context on Maghreb cities and dynasties but does not integrate political developments with the evolution of *Sīra* literature. A review of these studies highlights three persistent patterns:

Focus on personalities rather than structure: Most sources emphasize who said what rather than why it was said and how it differs from other accounts.

Neglect of Maliki-Salafī influence: The role of juristic (Maliki) and theological (Salafī versus Mu'tazilite and philosophical) perspectives in shaping Andalusian *Sīra* methodology is rarely examined. Absence of evolutionary segmentation: Andalusian *Sīra* literature is described linearly from Ibn Habib (3rd century AH) to Ibn Sayyid al-Nas (8th century AH), without analysis of three intellectual-historical-narrative stages:

Juristic-Historical-Narrative (Ibn Habib)

Critical-Salafī (Ibn Hazm and Ibn al-'Arabi)

Legalistic-Dogmatic (Ta'abbudī, including Qadi' Iyad and Ibn Sayyid al-Nas)

Research gaps include:

Transformation of *Sīra* into *Huqūq* (Legal Rights): Previous studies fail to trace how *Sīra* writing evolved into a juridical-ethical framework within the Maliki-Salafī context.

Methodological rupture: No structural analysis has examined the shift from Ibn Habib's descriptive accounts of military campaigns to Qadi' Iyad's prescriptive delineation of the Prophet's rights.

Synchronization with political developments: The interrelation between *Sīra* writing and historical events (fall of Córdoba, rise of Almoravids and Almohads, temporary conquest of Seville, fall of Granada) remains unexplored.

This study aims to reconstruct the evolution of Andalusian *Sīra* writing, situating it within juristic, theological, and historical frameworks, and highlighting its significance as a distinct intellectual achievement in the Islamic West.

4. Methodology

This study employs a historical-analytical approach and falls under qualitative research, specifically utilizing qualitative content analysis of historical documents.

The population comprises Andalusian *Sīra* writers active from the third century AH until the fall of Granada (238–897 AH), as cited in authoritative historical sources including *Al-Sila*, *Takmilat al-Sila*, *Tarteeb al-Madaarik*,



Siyar A'lam al-Nubala', and *Al-Ihata*. These sources identify authors of independent *Sīra* works. Seven key figures are highlighted:

1. 'Abd al-Malik ibn Habib (d. 238 AH)
2. Ibn Hazm (d. 456 AH)
3. Qadi Ibn al-'Arabi al-Ishbili (d. 543 AH)
4. Ibn Hubaysh (d. 581 AH)
5. Qadi 'Iyad (d. 544 AH)
6. Yusuf ibn Biyyasī (d. 653 AH)
7. Ibn Sayyid al-Nas (d. 734 AH)

Selection criteria were limited to authors who were either born in al-Andalus or permanently established there (*muḥaddar*), produced independent *Sīra* works, and were explicitly identified in primary prosopographical-historical sources either by the title of “*Sīra*-Writer” or by specific mention of their biographical compositions. Authors who only included sections on *Sīra* within broader jurisprudential or historical works, such as Ibn Khaldun, were excluded.

5. Historical Transformations of Al-Andalus and Islamic Civilization

The Iberian Peninsula, presently comprising Spain and Portugal, was conquered by Muslims in 92 AH, and Islamic rule in al-Andalus continued until 897 AH. During these eight centuries, al-Andalus witnessed a remarkable flourishing of science, culture, and philosophy, acting as a counterbalance to the intellectual stagnation of Medieval Europe and laying the groundwork for the European Renaissance (Al-Sāmmarrā'ī, 2003: 17).

The unified Islamic state in al-Andalus periodically weakened due to internal strife, dissent, and external pressures. These internal divisions, combined with the rising influence of the Catholic Church and other external factors, ultimately led to the end of Islamic dominion. Nevertheless, the legacies of Islamic civilization endured: Islamic art, culture, and philosophy remained evident in Spanish cities, supported by approximately 300 Muslim religious centers engaged in the translation and dissemination of Islamic works (Qurčanlu, 1381: 2/452).

Al-Andalus served as a beacon of Islamic culture, contributing significantly to astronomy, medicine, mathematics, chemistry, and agriculture. Its intellectual achievements illuminated the darkness of Medieval Europe (Dhanun Taha, 2004: 72). The contributions of Muslims were so profound that even Western historians and Orientalists recognize the accomplishments of Islamic civilization in the region. Prominent scholars such as Ibn Bāja, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Tufayl, Ibn 'Arabi, Ibn Firnas, al-Zarqālī, Majrīṭī, Ibn Ṣaghīr al-Qurṭubī, and al-Bitrūjī exemplify these advances across multiple disciplines.



This intellectual and cultural brilliance coincided with a period of European stagnation. English Orientalist Lane-Poole notes that Spain remained under Muslim rule for eight centuries, and its civilization illuminated Europe. Spanish Orientalist Martínez Montalbán adds: "Had it not been for eight centuries of Islamic rule over Spain, this country would never have entered the historical trajectory of civilization. While neighboring Europe was enslaved by ignorance and backwardness, Islam transferred the illumination of wisdom and culture to it" (Al-Rifa'ī, 1371 AH: 149).

The fall of Granada, the last Islamic stronghold in al-Andalus (modern-day Spain), in 1492 CE / 896 AH, marks one of the most significant events in Islamic history. Despite the valor of Muslim defenders, Granada fell without external aid against the Christian armies. This event remains a cautionary episode in world history, and historians have extensively analyzed the causes of al-Andalus' collapse and the subsequent expulsion of Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula.

6.1. 'Abd al-Malik ibn Habib al-Sulamī (174–238 AH): The Founder of the Sīra Writing Tradition in Al-Andalus

The study of Sīra writing in Al-Andalus, particularly during the third to fifth centuries AH, requires an understanding of figures who not only compiled biographies of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) but also acted as pioneers in establishing a new literary tradition in the Islamic West. 'Abd al-Malik ibn Habib al-Qurtubi holds a unique position, recognized both as the first Andalusian to author a work concerning his homeland and as the first figure in Al-Andalus to write an independent treatise dedicated to the Sīra of the Prophet (pbuh).

6.1.1. Ibn Habib's Sīra Works

Ibn Habib authored four works concerning the Prophet's biography (*Sīra*) and military expeditions (*Maghāzī*): *Al-Maghāzī*, *Ḥurūb al-Islām*, *Fadā'il Rasūl Allāh*, and *Maqām Rasūl Allāh*.

Al-Maghāzī covers the military campaigns of the Muslims from the beginning of Islam through the era of the first three Caliphs, concluding with events contemporaneous to the author. *Ḥurūb al-Islām* is a blend of Sīra and general history, written in the style of the Medinan *Maghāzī*. It also examines the Islamic conquests and battles that occurred during the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs.

The works *Fadā'il Rasūl Allāh* and *Maqām Rasūl Allāh* focus on the life and Sīra of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), following the style of *Sīrat Ibn Ishāq*. According to Boučia, the origin of these books is linked to "the beginning of creation and its formation" (Boučia, 1999, p. 50).



The term *Maghāzī* generally denotes “conquest” or “military expedition,” and in most contexts, it specifically refers to the Prophet’s campaigns (*ghazawāt*), including his detachments (*sarāyā*, small groups sent ahead) and companions.

6.1.2. Analysis of Ibn Habib’s Personality in *Sīra* Writing

Ibn Habib can rightly be regarded as the intellectual founder of Al-Andalus. He was not only the first person in this region to write a book on the Prophet’s *Sīra* but also the first to author an independent work on his homeland’s history. These dual contributions—*Sīra* writing and local historiography—created a revolutionary synthesis within the scientific culture of Al-Andalus.

From a methodological perspective, while remaining faithful to the Medinan tradition through his direct connection with Imam Mālik and Nāfi’, he introduced a novel model of *Sīra* writing within the Andalusian context. This model merged narration with analysis, integrated the Prophet’s biography with general Islamic history, and linked knowledge to social responsibility.

His scholarly network, spanning teachers and students, demonstrates that he served as a central nexus in the intellectual circulation of Al-Andalus. His influence was so profound that traces of his methodology and sources appear as late as the eighth century AH, particularly in the works of Ibn Sayyid al-Nas in Cairo, indicating that the tradition initiated in Córdoba spread to Egypt and the Levant.

In this trajectory, Ibn Habib consistently functions as both a starting point and an authority figure, as the establishment of an independent *Sīra* writing tradition in the Islamic West would have been impossible without the foundations he laid.

6.2. Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi (384–456 AH): *Sīra* Writing within the Framework of the *Zāhirī* School

The study of *Sīra* writing in Al-Andalus would remain incomplete without addressing a figure such as Ibn Hazm of Córdoba. He occupies an exceptional position in the intellectual history of the Islamic West, not only as one of the most prominent jurists of Islamic civilization, but also as the first *Sīra* writer to critically examine the biography of the Noble Prophet (pbuh) within a principled and systematic framework. Among Andalusian *Sīra* writers, Ibn Hazm is the only individual who consistently applied his specific intellectual school—the *Zāhirī* school—not only in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*kalām*) but also in *Sīra* writing.

Abū Moḥammad ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Sa‘īd ibn Hazm, known as Ibn Hazm al-Qurṭubī al-Zāhirī, was born in 384 AH in Córdoba, the scientific and political capital of Al-Andalus during the Umayyad era. He personally



attested in his writings that he was born in this city (Ibn Sa'id, 1912: 1/75). This emphasis underscores the significance of the 'Qurtubi' identity in shaping his intellectual persona, as Córdoba was a major center of the Mālikī school and a transmitter of the Medinan tradition.

His ancestors resided in Muntlisham, a village in the region of Huelva, but his family settled in Córdoba. In his youth, Ibn Hazm served as a secretary and advisor to the *Ṭawā'if* (*Taifah*) emirs, first in Córdoba and later at the court of al-Mu'taḍid in Seville. He was appointed to several official posts, including vizier and judge (*qāḍī*). Despite his political and administrative acumen, he frequently engaged in intellectual conflicts with opponents, particularly Mālikī jurists, which occasionally escalated to physical confrontations and the burning of his books.

From the beginning of his apprenticeship, Ibn Hazm was exposed to diverse intellectual currents, including Mālikism (through Farhūn), Mu'tazilism and Greek philosophy (through al-Madhḥijī), as well as Ash'arī and Māturīdī theology (through al-Azdi). However, he was not merely a recipient of this knowledge; he emerged as a "bold critic" within these traditions.

In terms of the volume and diversity of his writings, Ibn Hazm is regarded as one of the most prolific figures in the history of Islamic thought. Qaḍī Abū al-Qāsim Sā'id ibn Aḥmad al-Andalusī states:

"He reached a degree of knowledge and *ijtihād* that none of the scholars of Al-Andalus had attained. He produced countless compositions—more than 40 books and nearly 1080 folios—and such knowledge is only found in someone like Jābir ibn Jarīr al-Tabarī; he possessed the most extensive writings among Muslim scholars" (Ibn Sa'id, 1912: 1/77).

He did not specialize in a single field but maintained an active presence across all branches of Islamic learning, including *fiqh*, *kalām*, literature, and logic.

6.2.1. The Hagiographical Works of Ibn Ḥazm al-Andalusī (Final ISI-Ready Version)

Ibn Ḥazm authored two independent works in the field of *Sīrah* (Prophetic Biography): *Jawāmi' al-Sīrah*, a comprehensive biography serving as a key source for researchers, and *Ḥijjat al-Widā'*, a specialized treatise. Despite differences in volume and scope, both works share a standard methodology and objective. They critically re-examine the Prophet Mohammad's (pbuh) biography based solely on the Qur'an and authentic Ḥadīth, excluding weak narrations and *Isrā'īliyyāt* (Judeo-Christian legends).



Jawāmi' al-Sīrah: The First Critical Biography in al-Andalus

Jawāmi' al-Sīrah is Ibn Ḥazm's most significant work in *Sīrah* literature. Its title reflects its purpose: to collect the most reliable reports of the *Sīrah* rather than compiling all existing narrations. This distinction demonstrates Ibn Ḥazm's critical approach. The work gained greater recognition in the East than in the West, the author's birthplace and the cradle of its composition (Yūsif, 1992 CE: 1/53).

The book was likely compiled during Ibn Ḥazm's final period of seclusion (circa 440–455 AH) in Montijo. He stated that he wrote it “despite the criticism of scholars and opponents, in quiet solitude,” highlighting that he no longer sought scholarly approval and regarded the composition as a *wazīfah shar'īyyah* (religious obligation) rather than a regular academic endeavor.

In *Jawāmi' al-Sīrah*, Ibn Ḥazm transparently cites his sources:

- The Qur'an as the primary basis
- *Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah* (Six Authentic Books)
- *Muwatta'* of Mālik
- The *Sīrah* of Ibn Ishāq (only those sections corroborated by other texts) (Moḥammad ibn Futūḥ, 1429 AH: 1/275)

He explicitly avoids reliance on later *Maghāzī* works, such as al-Bayhaqī's *Dalā'il al-Nubūwah*, and *Isrā'īliyyāt*. In the introduction, he writes:

“Any narration that contradicts the Qur'an or authentic Ḥadīth must necessarily be set aside, even if it appears in the books of great scholars.”

This approach demonstrates, for the first time in *Sīrah* literature, the prioritization of the Qur'an over *Zannī Sunnah* (probabilistic tradition). *Jawāmi' al-Sīrah* is organized chronologically and features the following characteristics:

- Focus on legal rulings (*Aḥkām Shar'īyyah*) derived from the *Sīrah* (e.g., Jihād, transactions, ethics)
- Omission of unnecessary details (e.g., exhaustive descriptions of battles)
- Analysis of political and social causes of events (e.g., reasons for the Battle of the Trench or the Confederates)
- Responses to doubts or misconceptions about the *Sīrah* (e.g., the marriage of 'Ā'ishah at a young age)

In sections concerning the final events of the Prophet's (pbuh) life, Ibn Ḥazm provides a political analysis of the post-Prophetic period, expressing his theory on the Caliphate—a perspective rarely observed in other biographies. The work influenced both the Maghrib and the Mashriq, remaining a subject of scholarly attention for centuries (Yūsif, *ibid.*).



***Ḥijjat al-Widā'*: The Zenith of Conciseness in *Sīrah* Literature**

Ibn Ḥazm's second *Sīrah* work, *Ḥijjat al-Widā'* (The Farewell Pilgrimage), is his shortest yet most substantial treatise. The title refers to the sermon delivered by the Seal of the Prophets (Ppbuh) during the Farewell Pilgrimage, which articulated the core principles of Islam, including Monotheism (*Tawḥīd*), the Qur'an, and the rights of women and enslaved people.

In just a few pages, Ibn Ḥazm compiled:

- The precise time and location of the Farewell Pilgrimage
- The complete context of the Prophet's sermon, citing sources for every statement
- Analysis of doctrinal and jurisprudential principles derived from the sermon
- Responses to challenges related to this *Hajj* (Moḥammad ibn Futūḥ, 1429 AH: 1/275)

This work avoids repetition and rhetorical embellishment while combining juridical precision with literary elegance. It represents the most concise and robust articulation of the life of the Prophet of Islam at a pivotal historical moment.

6.2.2. Analysis and Conclusion on Ibn Ḥazm's Hagiography (Transformative)

Ibn Ḥazm's *Sīrah* work cannot be understood in isolation from his broader intellectual school of thought. He views the *Sīrah* of the Prophet Moḥammad (pbuh) not merely as a "biography of a hero" but as the primary source for deriving legal rulings (*Istinbāt al-Aḥkām al-Shar'īyyah*).

Unlike the *Sīrah* of Ibn Ishāq, which is confined to the Prophet's era, Ibn Ḥazm's *Sīrah* occasionally addresses the period of the Rashidun Caliphs, particularly regarding issues such as the Caliphate and Islamic conquests. This extension is deliberate, aiming to demonstrate that post-Prophetic politics must also be grounded in the literal interpretation of the Sunnah.

Moreover, he references contemporary events in al-Andalus, such as the Jihād against the Christians, indicating that the *Sīrah* served for him not merely as history but as a model for present and future guidance.

Ibn Ḥazm stands out as one of the rare figures in Islamic civilization who transformed the *Sīrah* from a purely narrative and compilational form into a critical, argumentative, and practical discipline. He not only rewrote the Prophet's biography but also provided a methodology for the responsible re-examination of the *Sīrah* across generations.

His intellectual boldness in confronting established traditions is particularly noteworthy. He recognized that the indiscriminate compilation



of narrations does not preserve the Sunnah but rather propagates “doubt” (*shubhah*) and “disagreement” (*ikhtilāf*). Therefore, he selected only narrations with a “firm chain of transmission” (*sanad maḥkam*).

Although his methodology faced contemporary criticism, it has gained renewed attention in subsequent centuries. Today, both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars regard Ibn Ḥazm as a pioneer of the historical-critical method in Islamic studies.

Ultimately, studying Ibn Ḥazm not only recovers a significant intellectual figure but also fosters a broader discussion on the relationships among Tradition (*Sunnah*), Reason (*‘Aql*), and Criticism (*Naqd*) within Islamic culture. He reminds us that every tradition, whether ancient or recent, must be accountable to standards of knowledge and ethics.

6.3 Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ishbīlī (468–543 AH): Bridging the Western and Eastern Islamic Worlds in Jurisprudence, Theology, and Hagiography

Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ishbīlī was a pivotal Andalusian scholar whose influence extended beyond the field of Sirah. He served as an intellectual bridge between the Eastern and Western Islamic traditions, functioning both as a credible transmitter of the Mālikī school in al-Andalus and as a conduit for theological currents from Baghdad to the Maghrib. This dual role positioned him as a key agent in the cross-fertilization of Islamic thought.

He was born in Ishbīliyya (Seville, modern-day Spain) in 468 AH. His father, Ibn ‘Abd Allāh, was a leading scholar who profoundly shaped his son’s scholarly development (Ibn Farḍūn, 1410 AH: 289). Ibn al-‘Arabī began his education under his father at an early age, and by fifteen, he had achieved mastery in Arabic literature, Qur’anic recitation, and arithmetic, forming the foundation for both transmitted (*naqli*) and rational (*‘aqli*) sciences (Ibn al-Abbār, 1410 AH: 82).

In Ishbīliyya, he also studied under Abū al-Qāsim al-Huwazanī and Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Sarakusī, prominent scholars who integrated the Sunnah of Medina with local Andalusian culture. This environment nurtured a solid understanding of the Mālikī school while fostering openness to diverse intellectual currents—a trait evident in his later travels (Ibn ‘Adhārī, 1400 AH: 4/88).

In 489 AH, Ibn al-‘Arabī embarked on a formative journey to the Levant and Baghdad. In Damascus, he attended study circles led by Abū al-Faḍl Ibn Furāt al-Shī‘ī, Abū Moḥammad Ibn Akfānī, and Abū al-Faḍl al-Maqdisī. His sojourn in Baghdad, the intellectual center of the Islamic world, exposed him to the Mu‘tazilī, Ash‘arī, and Mashshā‘ī (Peripatetic)



schools, leaving a profound impression; he later described Baghdad as the “City of Sciences and Wisdom” (al-Dhahabī, 1390 AH: 4/129).

The journey to the East was not solely academic. Ibn Khaldūn notes that Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn, the Almoravid Emir, commissioned the trip to dispatch a political-religious representative to the Abbasid court, strengthening relations between the Maghrib and Mashriq (Ibn Khaldūn, 1371 AH: 74). Earlier, in 485 AH, Ibn al-‘Arabī traveled through North Africa and Egypt, culminating in a three-year stay in Jerusalem (al-Dhahabī, 1390 AH: 135).

6.3.1 Intellectual Profile and Creedal Orientation

In theology (‘*Aqā'id*), Ibn al-‘Arabī adhered to a Salafī framework. In *al-‘Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim* (The Fortresses Against the Blemishes), he rejects any form of theological or philosophical interpretation (*ta'wīl*) regarding internal Islamic events, relying strictly on the apparent meaning (*Zāhir*) of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. He criticized both the Mu‘tazilah and Greek philosophers (*Faylasūfūn*) for methods incompatible with Islamic doctrine (al-‘Arabī, 1392 AH: 2/252).

In jurisprudence, he was a staunch Mālikī, sometimes regarding Imam Mālik as “the most eminent among the Four Schools,” while critiquing the Ḥanbalīs, Shāfi‘īs, and Zāhirīs (al-‘Arabī, 1392 AH: 2/252). However, he never saw himself as a mere Muqallid. As a *Mujtahid Muṭlaq*, he occasionally issued fatwas diverging from prevailing Mālikī opinions. His approach was text-centric (*naṣṣ-exis*), emphasizing adherence to primary sources. Additionally, he highlighted legislative wisdom (*Hikmah Tashrī‘iyyah*), arguing that the underlying purpose of a ruling can, in some cases, take precedence over its literal formulation (Ibn ‘Adhārī, 1400 AH: 94).

6.3.2 Hagiographical Works

Ibn al-‘Arabī’s contributions to Sirah literature reflect his comprehensive scholarship:

***Mukhtaṣar al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah* and the Chapter on the Sandals (Na‘l)**

This structured summary of the Prophetic Biography (pbuh) follows Mālikī methodology. Its most distinctive feature is the chapter on the Prophet’s sandals (*Na‘l*) (Yūsif, 1992 CE: 1/73), symbolizing reverence, spiritual obedience, and emotional attachment. Some Companions preserved the Prophet’s sandals as sacred objects (*Muqaddasāt*). In Andalusī culture, the Na‘l became a key symbol connecting the community to the Prophet (Ibn Bashkwāl, 1410 AH: 2/591).



Sharḥ Ḥadīth al-Ifk (Commentary on the Hadith of Slander)

Ibn al-‘Arabī critically analyzes the Ifk incident. In this commentary, he:

1. Critiques weak narrations surrounding the event.
2. Examines the causes and social roots of the slander.
3. Discusses the Qur’ānic penalty for *Qadhf* (slander) as outlined in *Sūrat al-Nūr*.
4. Clarifies ‘Ā’ishah’s religious status within the legal framework (Yūsif, 1992 CE: 1/79).

Sharḥ Ḥadīth Umm Zar’ (Commentary on the Hadith of Umm Zar’)

This work analyzes sayings narrated by a woman prior to Islam about her husbands, exploring criteria for a virtuous wife, family structure, and marital relations in both pre-Islamic and Islamic societies (Ibid.).

Tabyīn al-Taṣḥīḥ fī Ta’yīn al-Dhabīḥ (Clarification Regarding the Identification of the Sacrificed One)

Addressing whether Abraham (PBUH) was commanded to sacrifice Ismā’īl or Ishāq, Ibn al-‘Arabī affirms Ismā’īl, consistent with Mālikī doctrine, citing the Qur’ānic verse “And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice” (*fa-fadaynāhu bi-dhibhin ‘azīm*), narrations from Medina, and critiques of Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanafī positions (al-‘Arabī, 1392 AH: 2/280).

Al-Riwāyah al-Maghribiyyah li-l-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah (The Western Narration of the Prophetic Biography)

This compilation of Maghribī *Sīrah* narrations demonstrates that the Western tradition developed independently from the Mashriq. It is essential for reconstructing both the narrative style and intellectual trajectory of *Sīrah* in al-Andalus (Yūsif, 1992: 1/95).

6.3.3 Hagiographical Methodology: Characteristics and Transformative Dimension

Ibn al-‘Arabī’s approach to *Sīrah* writing within the Mālikī-Salafi framework is distinguished by three primary characteristics:

A) *Sīrah* as a Tool for Creed (‘*Aqīdah*)

Unlike hagiographers who saw the *Sīrah* merely as a biography, Ibn al-‘Arabī used it to derive legal rulings (*Istiṣbāṭ al-Aḥkām*), ethical paradigms, and as a cornerstone of Islamic identity, engaging in deep analysis alongside narration.

B) *Sīrah* Based on Political Legitimacy

Given his role as a representative of Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn, his *Sīrah* writing carried a political dimension. He presented the Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) biography as a model legitimizing Almoravid rule, highlighting the Prophet’s struggle against foreign aggression and internal hypocrisy, and emphasizing reliance on God as the ultimate source of legitimacy.



6.3.4 Analysis and Conclusion of Ibn al-‘Arabī al-Ishbīlī’s Hagiography

Ibn al-‘Arabī rightly deserves recognition as a bridge between the Islamic West and East. He was not only a reliable transmitter of the Mālikī school in Al-Andalus, but through his scholarly and political journeys, he also facilitated intellectual exchange between Baghdad and Córdoba.

From a historiographical perspective, Ibn al-‘Arabī was not the first to write a *Sīrah* in Al-Andalus; however, he was the first to present it within an analytical, Mālikī-Salafī framework. He treated the *Sīrah* not merely as a historical narrative, but as a living tool to address the pressing challenges of his time—from defending against Christian incursions to preserving unity against sectarianism.

His extensive scholarly network, ranging from teachers in Baghdad to students such as Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, demonstrates that he played a central role in the intellectual circulation of Al-Andalus. His influence was so profound that traces of his methodology and sources can be observed in the works of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās in Cairo during the 7th century AH.

Ultimately, a comprehensive study of Ibn al-‘Arabī not only reconstructs the portrait of one of Al-Andalus’s most eminent jurists but also illuminates the methodological trajectory of Western Islamic hagiography, spanning from Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ to Ibn Sayyid al-Nās.

6.4 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Moḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn Ḥabīsh (d. 581 AH): The Mālikī Narrative Muhaddith

Abū al-Qāsim al-Qāḍī Ibn Ḥabīsh was born in 504 AH in Al-Murīyah, southern Al-Andalus. His nisbah, Ḥabīsh, refers to his wet nurse. His family originated from Sharīqah, Valencia, from where his grandfather ‘Abdullāh migrated to Al-Murīyah. He is regarded as the last great Muhaddith of the Maghrib, as noted by his student Abū al-Rabī‘ al-Kulā‘ī (Ibn al-Abbār al-Andalusī, 1974 AH: 3/573).

He began his education in Al-Murīyah, studying Qur’anic recitation (*Qirā’āt*) under Abū al-Qāsim Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qaṣbī, Abū al-Qāsim ibn Abī Rajā’ al-Balawī, and Abū al-Aṣbagh ibn al-Yasa’, among others (Ibid.). He studied Arabic sciences under Abū ‘Abdullāh Moḥammad ibn Abī Zayd al-Naḥwī.

In 530 AH (1136 CE), he traveled to Córdoba to further his studies, learning Hadīth from scholars including Ibn Mughīth, Ibn al-Manāshif, Ja‘far ibn Moḥammad ibn Makī, and Abū Bakr al-Ma‘āfirī, known as Ibn ‘Arabī (Al-Dhahabī, 1390 AH: 4/129). After approximately three years, he returned to Al-Murīyah, where he remained until the Crusader capture of the city in 542 AH / 1147 CE. He died in Al-Murīyah following a period of illness (Ibn al-Abbār al-Andalusī, Ibid.).



6.4.1 The Scholarly and Intellectual Profile of Ibn Ḥabīsh

Ibn Ḥabīsh was a distinguished scholar of the Mālikī school, recognized for his mastery of Hadith and Islamic sciences. Although early sources do not explicitly state his affiliation, later authorities consistently list him among the Mālikīs. Some historical accounts, however, mistakenly classify him as a Ḥanafī. One of his most notable personal attributes was his exceptional memory, which underpinned his scholarly accomplishments.

Contemporaries described Ibn Ḥabīsh as a man of profound piety and exemplary character. He was known for his humility and introspection, often walking through the streets without greeting others, keeping his eyes lowered in contemplation. Despite this reserved demeanor, he maintained an engaging teaching practice: he regularly took his students to outdoor settings for study and discussion, providing detailed explanations of the Prophet's Hadiths and guiding their scholarly development.

Ibn al-Abbār praised him as one of the preeminent Hadith scholars in the Maghrib, noting that he excelled in documenting historical events and the biographies of notable figures. Among his contemporaries, few matched his competence in these areas. Abū Sulaymān Ibn Ḥawṭallāh highlighted his eloquence and clarity of speech, as well as his skill in producing scholarly works across various disciplines. Ibn al-Jazarī referred to him as “The Great Imam and the Righteous, Illustrious Ḥāfīz,” emphasizing both his piety and his scholarly mastery.

Ibn Ḥabīsh's intellectual and pedagogical contributions solidified his status as the last major Hadith scholar of the Maghrib, ensuring the transmission of knowledge and the preservation of the Mālikī narrative tradition for subsequent generations.

6.4.3 Works of Ibn Ḥabīsh

Ibn Ḥabīsh produced several scholarly works, three of which have survived to the present: *Iqtidāb 'Alā Ṣilat Ibn Bashkwāl*, *Alqāb al-Ḥadīth*, and *Al-Maghāzī*.

Among these, *Al-Maghāzī*—also referred to as *Al-Ghazawāt*—represents his most significant contribution to Sirah literature. The full title, *Dhikr al-Ghazawāt al-Dāminah al-Kāfilah wa-l-Futuḥ al-Jāmi'ah al-Ḥāfilah al-Kā'inah fī Ayyām al-Khulafā' al-'Immah al-Awlī al-Thalāthah*, can be rendered as: “A Record of the Guaranteed and Comprehensive Battles and Glorious Conquests during the Reign of the First Three Imām Caliphs.” Currently, two sections of this work are extant. This text reflects Ibn Ḥabīsh's systematic approach to documenting military campaigns and the historical context of early Islamic governance, illustrating both meticulous historiography and attention to narrative coherence.



In addition, Ibn Ḥabīsh is credited with the commentary *Al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz*, a work that demonstrates his analytical rigor in both Hadith studies and historical exposition. This commentary exemplifies his capacity to integrate textual accuracy with critical interpretation, confirming his reputation as a leading Mālikī scholar and Muhaddith in al-Andalus.

6.5 Qadi Iyad ibn Musa al-Sabti (476–544 AH): The Maliki Hagiographer and Architect of the “Rights of the Chosen One” in Al-Andalus

Qadi Iyad ibn Musa al-Sabti is a central figure in Andalusi Sirah literature. As a leading Maliki jurist, Hadith scholar, theologian, and linguist of the 5th–6th centuries AH, he authored *Al-Shifa bi T'arif Huquq al-Mustafa* (The Healing by the Definition of the Rights of the Chosen One), which marked a pivotal shift in Western Islamic hagiography from narrative-historical approaches to creedal and jurisprudential frameworks.

He began his scholarly journey at a young age, studying under local shaykhs in Ceuta and later in Córdoba and Murcia. He engaged with diverse intellectual circles, including those of Ibn al-Arabi (Maliki-Salafi jurist), Ibn Rushd (philosopher), and al-Sadafi (*Muhaddith*) (Ibn Taghri Birdi, 1375 AH: 5/285). This extensive exposure enabled him to master multiple disciplines, including Hadith, Tafsir, Kalam, grammar, linguistics, history, literature, poetry, and rhetoric.

Beyond his writings, Qādi Iyād actively held judicial and teaching positions, reinforcing the practical and theoretical impact of his scholarship.

6.5.1 Qadi Iyad’s Sirah-Related Works

Qadi Iyad authored numerous works beyond the Sirah that laid the foundation for his hagiographical contributions, including:

Tartib al-Madarik wa Taqrib al-Masalik: His most significant work on biographical reporting (*Rijāl*) and history, also known as the “Dictionary of Biographical Narrators and History of the Maliki School” (Ibn al-Khatib, 2001 CE: 4/193). This work demonstrates that Qādi Iyād completed preparatory scholarship in three key areas—*Rijāl*, *Hadith*, and *Fiqh*—before composing *Al-Shifā* (Iyad, 1390 AH: 24).

Al-Shifa bi Tarif Huquq al-Mustafa: Recognized as the first “rights-centric” Sirah in Islamic history, it is considered by al-Dhahabi as the most sublime of Qadi Iyad’s compositions. The book is notable for:

- Introducing the *Ziyārah* (visitation) of the Prophet’s grave as a recognized “Right of the Prophet.”
- Providing detailed guidance on sending *Ṣalawāt* (blessings), citing Qur’anic verses such as “Indeed, Allah and His angels...” along with Hadiths.



- Systematically explaining the Prophet's *'Ismah* (infallibility) from a jurisprudential and theological perspective, rather than relying solely on *Hadith* (Ibid.: 35).

Structure of *Al-Shifā*

1. **The Status of the Prophet in the Qur'an:** Covers verses of praise, divine oaths, eloquence, lineage, birthplace, wives, and physical and moral attributes.
2. **The Prophet's Rights over Muslims:** Includes obedience, love, reverence, sending blessings, and grave visitation.
3. **Unique Characteristics:** Discusses infallibility (*'Ismah*), human forgetfulness, Isra' (addressing doubts), and miracles.
4. **Insult and Blasphemy (*Sabb*):** Examines the ruling on executing those who insult the Prophet, references Meccan verses regarding harm to the Prophet, and rulings on apostasy.

6.5.2 Analysis of Qadi Iyad's Hagiography within the Andalus School

Qadi Iyad represents the culmination of the trend of "*Fiqh*-ization of the *Sirah*" in Al-Andalus and the beginning of the era of "Veneration-making" (*Ta'zim-sazi*) of the *Sirah*. His methodological approach shifted the focus from the narrative of the *Sirah* to the "Rights" (*Huqūq*), encompassing the Prophet's rights over Muslims, including love, obedience, sending blessings, and visitation.

Al-Shifa had an unprecedented impact, being the first *Sirah* work to consider the Ziyarah (visitation of the Prophet's grave) as definitively obligatory or highly recommended—a practice that remains foundational to visitation culture in the Maghrib.

If Ibn Ishaq's *Al-Maghazi* transformed the *Sirah* into a "story," and Ibn Abd al-Barr's *Al-Durar* framed it as "Fiqh" (jurisprudence), Qāḍī Iyāḍ, through *Al-Shifa*, established the *Sirah* as "Law/Right" (*Haqq*). This approach directed Andalus hagiography for centuries toward a devotional and reverence-based perspective.

One of his key innovations was the formalization of ceremonial chapters in the *Sirah*, including:

- Sending Blessings
- Grave Visitation
- Love and Obedience

These sections were unprecedented in their scope, transforming the *Sirah* from a purely "field of knowledge" into a "field of worship" (*Ibadah*).

Qāḍī Iyāḍ's influence extended to subsequent biographers. Ibn Sayyid al-Nas, in *Uyoun al-Athar*, cites *Al-Shifa* over one hundred times in his chapter on "Rights." Al-Maqqari (8th century AH) organized all *Sirah*-



related chapters around *Al-Shifa* in *Azhar al-Riyad*. In regions influenced by Andalusī jurisprudence, *Al-Shifa* became a core textbook in theological and jurisprudential schools.

6.6 Yusuf ibn Mohammad Bayyasi (d. 573–653 AH): Historian and Man of Letters

Yusuf ibn Mohammad Bayyasi was a historian, Muhaddith, poet, and man of letters of the 7th century AH. He was born in Bayyasa (Biyasa) in Al-Andalus in 573 AH. He is closely associated with Bayyasa, a city in the province of Jaén, and some sources explicitly state that he was born there (Palencia, 1955 CE: 107).

6.6.1 The Scholarly and Social Profile of Bayyasi

Bayyasi traveled extensively throughout Al-Andalus. During the reign of Abu Zakariyya Yahya I, the Hafsid ruler of Ifriqiya (625–647 AH), he moved to Tunis, following many other Andalusian Muslims who were fleeing the Christian reconquest in Spain and seeking refuge in North African cities (Tawahi, 1955 CE: 213).

Abu Zakariyya, known for appointing elite émigrés to high offices, honored Bayyasi with respect, a stipend, and a monthly salary. Bayyasi apparently remained in Tunis until the end of his life (Al-Dhahabi, Mohammad, 1406 AH: 217).

During this period, Bayyasi engaged in literary activities, compiling a collection of poetry (Yafii, 1390 AH: 4/130). His best-known work is the *Epic of Bayyasi* (*Kitab Hamasat Bayyasi*). He was described as a “lexicographer, historian, and poet, well-trained in the classical school of poetry” and an authority in verse (Yafii, 1390 AH: 5/39).

Another notable work is his commentary on the *Risalah* of Ibn Hariq, which itself comments on the verses of *Al-Jumal* by Abu Ishaq al-Zajjaji. In his commentary, Bayyasi clarified unusual expressions, proverbs, and difficult passages, citing Arabic poetry as supporting evidence for each point (Mahfuz Mohammad, 1405 AH: 1/173).

Bayyasi’s historical contributions include *Tarikh Ibn Hayyan*, a supplement to Ibn Hayyan’s major historical work, *Al-Mutin*.

6.6.2. Bayyāsī’s Works on Sirah

Al-I’lām bi al-Ḥurūb al-Wāqī’ah fī Ṣadr al-Islām (The Informing on the Wars That Occurred in the Early Days of Islam). Upon his arrival in Tunis and the warm reception by Emir Abū Zakariyyā, Bayyāsī compiled the two-volume work *Al-I’lām bi al-Ḥurūb al-Wāqī’ah fī Ṣadr al-Islām* for him (Ḥājji Khalīfa, 1410 AH: 1/81).

As indicated by its title, the narratives in this work begin with the assassination of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (23 AH/644 CE) and conclude with



the uprising of Walīd ibn Ṭarīf al-Shārī against Hārūn al-Rashīd (Al-Ṭabarī, 23 AH/644 CE).

Ibn Khallikān described Bayyāsī's writing in this book as highly specialized, noting that he had examined and praised it. Jurgi Zaydān regarded *Al-I'lām* as unparalleled in its detailed exposition of Umayyad history (Zaydān, 1975 CE: 3/89).

6.7. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (671–734 AH): The *Shāfi'ī Muḥaddith*

Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, whose full name is Abū al-Faṭḥ Fath al-Dīn Ya' marī, was a Hadith scholar, historian, Shāfi'ī jurist, and Andalusī man of letters. His family belonged to the Ya' marī tribe, and their homeland was Seville (Ishbīliyyah) in Al-Andalus. Most of his ancestors were renowned for their scholarship and political acumen. After the fall of Seville to the Christians in 646 AH/1248 CE, they were forced to leave their homeland (Al-Ṣafadī, 1381 AH: 1/294). His father, Abū 'Amr Moḥammad, studied in Tunis and Beja before immigrating to Egypt, where he brought with him important and reliable books. Abū 'Amr continued his studies in Alexandria, Mecca, and Cairo, eventually settling in Cairo (Al-Dhahabī, 1405 AH: 4/99). Ibn Sayyid al-Nās was born in Cairo and attended the study circles of its scholars from childhood.

6.7.1. The Scholarly Status of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās

Ibn Sayyid al-Nās received ijāzāt (licenses to transmit Hadith) from numerous scholars in the Hijāz, Iraq, Syria, Ifriqiya, and al-Andalus. Ibn Kathīr considered him preeminent among his contemporaries in the disciplines of Hadith, Fiqh, grammar, Sirah, history, and other fields. Al-Dhahabī noted that his narrations were accurate and insightful, regarding him as highly knowledgeable in Sirah, Rijāl, and linguistics (Ibid.).

He also possessed considerable talent in poetry and literature. His poems in praise of the Noble Prophet (pbuh) gained widespread recognition. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās was a master calligrapher and notably fast in reading and writing. He famously copied the entire Qur'an in a single Friday and completed his Sirah book in twenty days (Al-Subkī, 1383 AH: 9/270).

His scholarly and cultural activities were extensive. A large number of people from Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere attended his Hadith recitations and lectures. Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī and Al-Ṣafadī also studied his books (Al-Ṣafadī, 1381 AH: 1/300).

6.7.2. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās's Famous Work in Sirah Writing

'Uyūn al-Athar fī Funūn al-Maghāzī wa al-Shamā'il wa al-Siyar (The Springs of Traditions Concerning the Arts of Campaigns, Qualities, and Biographies)



This book, as its title clearly indicates, is dedicated to the biography of the Noble Prophet (pbuh) and represents the primary source of Ibn Sayyid al-Nās's scholarly renown. In the introduction, the author explained that he selected the most reliable sections from existing Sirah works and arranged them chronologically according to the sequence of events.

In compiling his Sirah, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās drew upon numerous sources, including the Six Canonical Books of Hadith (*Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*), the *Sirah* of Ibn Ishāq, the *Maghāzī* of al-Wāqidī, the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd, and *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* by al-Ṭabarānī.

A close examination of the text demonstrates that Ibn Sayyid al-Nās provided detailed explanations of events whenever possible, avoided narrating weak or unreliable reports, and occasionally offered critical analysis. He presented reasoned arguments to support or question the authenticity of specific accounts, making his Sirah not merely a narrative history but, in many instances, an analytical work.

7- Discussion and Analysis of Research Findings

The findings of this study indicate a structural transformation in Andalusī Sirah writing. As the genre increasingly adhered to the Mālikī-Salafī tradition, its format evolved from a primarily "Chronological-Narrative" arrangement to a more "Conceptual-Juridical" framework.

A significant development in this period was the introduction of a dedicated chapter on the "Rights of the Prophet" (including love, obedience, blessings, and visitation of his grave), which became independent of the chronological sequence of military campaigns (*Ghazawāt*). This structural innovation is consistently observed in Sirah works composed after the 5th century AH.

Furthermore, the reliance on the foundational Sirahs of Ibn Ishāq and al-Wāqidī diminished in texts conforming to the Mālikī-Salafī school, reflecting a deliberate shift in methodological priorities.

The underlying causes of this transformation can be discerned through three interrelated analytical layers:

1. **The Juridical Layer (*Fiqh*):** With the consolidation of the absolute Mālikī current in al-Andalus, Sirah writing increasingly incorporated principles of "Applied Mālikī Jurisprudence." This adaptation enabled the presentation of the Prophet's life in a manner consistent with juridical norms and moral exemplars.
2. **The Theological Layer (*Kalām*):** The intellectual presence of the Mu'tazila and other philosophical currents in al-Andalus transformed Sirah writing into a medium emphasizing the Prophet's absolute Infallibility (*iṣmah*). This development facilitated the alignment of historical narratives with theological doctrine.



3. **The Political Layer:** Following the fall of Córdoba (422 AH), Almoravid and Almohad authorities sought a depiction of the Prophet that was both venerable and tangible, rather than merely a “Prophet of Battles.” This objective explains the symbolic prominence of the “Sandal” (*Naʿl*) in Ibn al-ʿArabī’s *Mukhtaṣar al-Sīrah* and Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ’s *Al-Shifāʾ*, which functioned as markers of a tangible connection to the Prophet rather than simple historical artifacts.

Collectively, these juridical, theological, and political factors elucidate the conceptual shift in Andalusī Sirah literature, highlighting its evolution from mere historical narrative to an integrated analytical and doctrinal enterprise.

8- Conclusion

One of the primary questions addressed in this study was: Why did Sirah writing in al-Andalus, spanning from the 3rd century AH until the fall of Granada, evolve from a “Historical-Narrative” approach toward a “Juridical-Devotional” model, and how was this transformation related to the Mālikī-Salafī jurisprudential and theological currents?

This conceptual gap emerged because previous studies, although identifying key figures and cataloging their works, had not examined this structural transformation in Andalusī Sirah as a conscious response to the social, political, and religious challenges faced between the 5th and 8th centuries AH.

The findings of this research demonstrate that this evolution was neither accidental nor a mere imitation of Eastern models; rather, it constituted a deliberate intellectual and political process. As the Mālikī-Salafī current expanded in al-Andalus, particularly under the Almoravid and Almohad regimes, which sought to establish a cohesive religious identity to legitimize their rule against Christian encroachment, Sirah writing shifted from narrating military campaigns to articulating the Prophet’s rights over the Muslim community. This transformation can be conceptualized in three sequential stages:

1. **The Historical-Narrative Sirah**, exemplified by Ibn Ḥabīb.
2. **The Critical-Salafī Sirah**, exemplified by Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn al-ʿArabī.
3. **The Juridical-Devotional Sirah**, exemplified by Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ and Ibn Sayyid al-Nās.

The significance of these three categories is evident in three dimensions:

- **Theoretical:** Providing a three-stage model for the evolution of Maghribī Sirah writing.



- **Contextual:** Reinterpreting the history of religious literature in the Western Islamic world within the framework of political and identity confrontations.
- **Conceptual:** Introducing the “Juridical *Sirah*” as an independent literary genre.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings challenge traditional models of historiography as a passive reflection of events and instead support a model of historiography as a deliberate instrument of legitimization. From a practical perspective, this research indicates to educational policymakers in Mālikī-dominated West African contexts that the culture of veneration of the Holy Prophet in the Maghreb is rooted not in emotional excess but in a conscious jurisprudential and political tradition.

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