

Non-Physical Causes of the Loss of Imami Sources of History until the Thirteenth Century

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Abstract

Several major Imami sources of history, dating back to the early Islamic centuries, are not available to us. This article is concerned with the main non-physical causes of the loss of these sources, such as formation of hadith communities, negligence of historical works, and excessive focus on theology and jurisprudence. The research is done with the descriptive-analytical method based on library sources, book catalogues, bibliographies, and the views of scholars. The hypothesis put forward in this article is that change of attitude on the part of Imami scholars led to the enrichment of some fields of study and impoverishment of others. The findings confirm this hypothesis for the main non-physical cause of the loss of historical sources, as opposed to certain alleged physical causes. Since citation is a significant criterion for accreditation of research data, then if these missing sources were available to us, the findings of historians could be more accurate and cogent and there would be no ground for reliance on famous historical accounts.

Keywords: Historical sources, Shiism, missing sources, physical causes, non-physical causes.

Introduction

In many of the present books of history, there is reference to sources that are not available to us. There is no doubt that some significant Shiite sources of history² are missing, and those works could affect the validity or invalidity of the later accounts that are based on them. References to those sources in later works of history makes it obvious that there are missing sources, and what remains from the Shiite historical account in the later sources of both Shiism and Sunnism is just part of Shiite historiography, and a large portion of Shiite

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2. By “sources of history” I refer to works concerning the Shia-related events that took place in the first seven Islamic centuries. It includes all kinds of works, including genealogies, local historical, cultural works, literary works, and works of rijāl (evaluation of the reliability of hadith transmitters) within the time span.

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works of history have gone missing (Ghafouri 1394 Sh, 100). A reference to classical catalogues of books, such as the books titled *Fihrist* (catalogue) by Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 380 AH/990 CE), al-Najāshī (d. 450 AH/632 CE), and al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 AH/1067 CE) reveals that there were works on history and the Prophet's life, which are totally missing or only passages of which are quoted in later sources. A case in point is Abān b. 'Uthmān al-Aḥmar al-Bajalī al-Kūfī, who lived during the imamate of Imam al-Bāqir and Imam al-Ṣādiq and tended to transmit hadiths with historical themes, but his works are not available today.³ Rasoul Jafarian has collected some of his essays (Jafarian 1374 Sh, 17). Moreover, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Yaḥyā al-Jalūdī (d. 332 AH/ 943 CE) was a major Imami Shiite figure (Najāshī 1407 AH, 240, 244; Ibn al-Nadīm 1346 Sh, 246), who wrote 202 works, 124 of which are historical accounts that are not available today (Dadashnejad 1386 Sh, 66). Another Shiite figure is al-Nawfalī, whose work on history, *al-Akhhbār*, is not available today. Certainly, many Shiite works on hadīth, history, jurisprudence, and so on have been missing for a variety of reasons in different periods, but among these, the loss of works on history is more prominent (Sadeghi 1390 Sh).⁴ In this article, I am concerned with non-

3. For more instances, see the books of *Fihrist* by al-Najāshī, al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī, and Ibn al-Nadīm.

4. This long footnote is a list of missing Shiite works on history until 200 AH (815 CE):

- (1) *Alwāḥ* by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 68 AH/ 687 CE).
- (2) *Khuṭab Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'alā l-manābir fī l-jam' wa-l-a'yād wa-ghayrihā* (Imam 'Alī's sermons on minbar in congregations, eids, etc.) by Zayd b. Wahab al-Juhanī (d. after 83 AH/702 CE).
- (3) *Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn* (The story of Imam al-Ḥusayn's murder) by Aṣṣbagh b. Nubāta al-Ḥanzalī al-Mujāshī'ī (d. late first century AH/early eighth century CE).
- (4) *Tasmiya man shahid ma' Amīr al-Mu'minīn al-jamal wa-Ṣiffīn wa-l-Nahrawān min al-aṣḥāb* (Naming those who were present with Imam 'Alī in the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn and Nahrawān) by 'Ubayd Allāh b. Abī Rāfi' (d. circa 100 AH/ 718 CE).
- (5) *Kitāb al-mubtada'* by Wahab b. Munabbih al-Yamānī (d. 114 AH/732 CE).
- (6) *Faḍā'il Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (The virtues of Imam 'Alī) by Zayd b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 122 AH/739 CE).
- (7) *Nasab qawmih* (Genealogy of his people) by Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Shahāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124 AH/741 CE).
- (8) *Maqṭal Amīr al-Mu'minīn* (The story of Imam 'Alī's murder) by Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 AH/745 CE).
- (9) *Maqṭal al-Ḥusayn* (The story of Imam al-Ḥusayn's murder) by Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 AH/745 CE).
- (10) *Kitāb al-Jamal* (On the Battle of Jamal) by Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 AH/745 CE).
- (11) *Kitāb al-Nahrawān* (On the Battle of Nahrawān) by Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 AH/745 CE).
- (12) *Kitāb al-Ṣiffīn* (On the Battle of Ṣiffīn) by Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī (d. 128 AH/745 CE).
- (13) *Kitāb al-Ṣiffīn* (On the Battle of Ṣiffīn) by Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāḥ al-Bikrī (d. 141 AH/ 758 CE).
- (14) *Al-Faḍā'il* (The virtues) by Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāḥ al-Bikrī (d. 141 AH/ 758 CE).
- (15) *Kitāb Nahrawān* (On the Battle of Nahrawān) by Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāḥ al-Bikrī (d. 141 AH/ 758 CE).
- (16) *Kitāb al-Jamal* (On the Battle of Jamal) by Abān b. Taghlib b. Riyāḥ al-Bikrī (d. 141 AH/ 758 CE).
- (17) *Al-Siyar* by Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥasanī (Zaydī) (d. 145 AH/ 762 CE).
- (18) *Kitāb Ṣiffīn* (On the Battle of Ṣiffīn) by 'Umar b. Sa'd al-Asadī (d. 145/762 or 147/764 or 148/765).
- (19) *Mab'ath al-Nabī wa-akhhbārūh* (The Prophet's mission and his stories) by 'Abd Allāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh (d. 148 AH/765 CE).

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- (20) *Kitāb asmā'* by Sulaymān b. Muqātil al-Madīnī (d. 150 AH/767 CE).
- (21) *Akhbār Āl Mikhnaf b. Sulaym* (Events of the family of Mikhnaf b. Sulaym) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (22) *Akhbār al-Ḥajjājī* (Events of al-Ḥajjājī) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE)
- (23) *Akhbār Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (24) *Akhbār Abī l-Ḥanīfa* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (25) *Akhbār Muṭrif b. Mughīra b. Shu'ba* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (26) *Akhbār Shabīb al-Khārījī* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (27) *Akhbār Yūsuf b. 'Umar* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (28) *Asad al-Nājī wa-khurījūh* (Asad al-Nājī and his uprising) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (29) *Balāl al-Khārījī* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (30) *Al-Jamal* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (31) *Al-Hakamayn* (The two arbiters) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (32) *Ḥadīth al-Arāziqa* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (33) *Ḥadīth Rawshan Qubād* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (34) *Khālid b. 'Abd Allāh al-Qisrī* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (35) *Dayr al-jamā'īm wa-khal' 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ash'ath* (Jamā'īm monastery and the removal of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ash'ath) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (36) *Kitāb al-ridda* (The book of apostasy) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (37) *Shabīb al-Ḥarawī wa-Ṣāliḥ b. Masraḥ* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (38) *Ṣifṭīn* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (39) *Zayd b. 'Alī* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (40) *Al-Saqīfa* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (41) *Sulaymān b. Ṣurad wa-'Ayn al-Warda* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (42) *Al-Shūrā* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (43) *Ḍaḥḥāk al-Khārījī* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (44) *Futūḥ al-Shām* (Conquest of the Levant) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (45) *Futūḥ Khurāsān* (Conquest of Khorasan) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (46) *Futūḥ al-Islām* (Conquests of Islam) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (47) *Futūḥ al-'Iraq* (Conquest of Iraq) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (48) *Maqṭal Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr* (The murder of Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (49) *Maqṭal Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥudhayfa* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (50) *Qaṭl 'Uthmān* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (51) *Maqṭal Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (52) *Maqṭal Ibn al-Ash'ath* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (53) *Al-Mustawrid b. 'Allafa* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (54) *Muṣ'ab wa-wilāyat al-'Iraq* (Muṣ'ab and the governance of Iraq) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (55) *Maqṭal Sa'īd b. al-'Ās* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (56) *Maqṭal Ḥijr b. 'Udayy* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (57) *Maqṭal 'Abd Allāh Zubayr* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (58) *Maqṭal al-Ashtar* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (59) *Maqṭal Ḍaḥḥāk b. Qays* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (60) *Marj Rāhiṭ wa-bay'a Marwān* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (61) *Kitāb al-Nahr* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (62) *Najda Abī Fudayk* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (63) *Nasab 'Adnān* (Genealogy of 'Adnān) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (64) *Nasab Quraysh* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (65) *Nasab Banī Tamīm* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (66) *Yazīd b. Muhallab wa-maqṭaluh bi-l-'Aqr* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yahyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).

- (67) *Yūsuf b. 'Umar wa-mawt Hishām wa-wilāyat al-Walīd* (Yūsuf b. 'Umar and Hishām's death and Walīd's rule) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yaḥyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (68) *Yaḥyā b. Zayd* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yaḥyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (69) *Waq'at al-Ḥurra wa-Ḥiṣār b. Zubayr* by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yaḥyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (70) *Wafāt al-Mu'āwiya wa-wilāyat al-Yazīd* (Mu'āwiya's demise and Yazīd's rule) by Abū Mikhnaf Lūt b. Yaḥyā (d. 157 AH/773 CE).
- (71) *Akhbār al-salaf* (Events of the predecessors) by Muḥammad b. Mubashshir Ḥubaysh (d. 158 AH/774 CE).
- (72) *Ithbāt al-waṣīyya* (Proof for succession) by Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Nu'mān al-Aḥwal (d. 160 AH/776 CE).
- (73) *Al-Jamal fī amr Ṭalḥa wa-l-Zubayr wa-'Ā'isha* by Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Nu'mān al-Aḥwal (d. 160 AH/776 CE).
- (74) *Kitāb Mazār Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by Mu'āwiya b. 'Ammār al-Duhnī al-Kūfī (d. 175 AH/791 CE).
- (75) *Kitāb mā su'il 'anhu al-Ṣādiq min umūr al-malāḥim* (The book of what Ṣādiq was asked concerning the affairs of fierce battles) by 'Alī b. Yaḥyā (d. 182 AH/798 CE).
- (76) *Maqatal Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by Ghiyāth b. Ibrāhīm al-Tamīmī al-Asadī (d. 183 AH/799 CE).
- (77) *Ṭabaqāt al-shu'arā'* by 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥammād al-Anṣārī Abū Haffān (d. 183 AH/799 CE).
- (78) *Shi'r Abī Ṭālib b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib wa-akhbāruḥ* (Poems and events of Abū Ṭālib b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib) by 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥammād al-Anṣārī Abū Haffān (d. 183 AH/799 CE).
- (79) *Al-Mi'rāj* by Hishām b. Sālim al-Jawālīqī (d. 183 AH/799 CE).
- (80) *Kitāb Fadak* by 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Kathīr al-Hāshimī (d. 186 AH/802 CE).
- (81) *Al-Nasab al-kabīr* by Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ Abū Yaḥyā Nassāba (d. 190 AH/805 CE).
- (82) *Nasab Khindif wa-akhbāruḥā* (Genealogy and events of the Khindif tribe) by Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ Abū Yaḥyā Nassāba (d. 190 AH/805 CE).
- (83) *Akhbār Tamīm* by Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ Abū Yaḥyā Nassāba (d. 190 AH/805 CE).
- (84) *Al-Maghāzī* by Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Abū Yaḥyā Abū Ishāq (d. 184/800 or 191/806).
- (85) *Khurūj Ṣāhib Fakhkh wa-maqataluh* (Uprising and murder of Ṣāhib Fakhkh) by 'Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Abū Muḥammad al-Ja'farī (b. 195 AH/810 CE).
- (86) *Kitāb waṣīyya Mūsā b. Ja'far* by 'Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad Abū Muḥammad al-Ja'farī (b. 195 AH/810 CE).
- (87) *Al-Ḥakamayn* by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam al-Shaybānī (d. 199 AH/814 CE).
- (88) *Al-Radd 'alā al-Mu'tazila fī amr Ṭalḥa wa-Zubayr* by Hishām b. al-Ḥakam al-Shaybānī (d. 199 AH/814 CE).
- (89) *Al-Mabda' wa-l-mab'ath wa-l-maghāzī wa-l-wafāt wa-l-Saqifa wa-l-ridda* by Abān b. 'Uthmān al-Aḥmar al-Bajalī (d. circa 170-200 AH/786-815 CE).
- (90) *Akhbār al-shu'arā' wa-l-nasab wa-l-ayyām* by Abān b. 'Uthmān al-Aḥmar al-Bajalī (d. circa 170-200 AH/786-815 CE).
- (91) *Kitāb ṣifāt al-nabī* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (92) *Mawlid Amīr al-Mu'minīn* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (93) *Faḍā'il al-Anṣār* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (94) *Faḍl al-kabīr* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (95) *Ṭilism wa-Jadīs* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (96) *Nasab wuld Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (97) *Al-Wilāya wa-l-rāyāt* by Wahab b. Wahab 'Abd Allāh b. Zam'a al-Aswad Abū l-Bakhtarī (d. 200 AH/815 CE).
- (98) *Al-Jamal* by Muṣabbih b. Hilqām b. 'Ulwān al-'Ijlī (d. second century AH/eighth century CE).

physical causes of the loss of historical sources, particularly those pertaining to the life history of the Shiite Imams. I provide an explanation based on early and late sources and historical data.

Background

Some researchers have surveyed all available and missing sources of Imami history. For instance, Mansoureh Bakhshi (1393 Sh) has surveyed Imami historiographers until the seventh century AH (thirteenth century CE), but she does not explain why some of those sources are missing. Mohammad Reza Hedayatpanah (1396 Sh) has surveyed sources of Shiite history until the fifth century AH (eleventh century CE), but he also fails to note the causes underlying their loss. In his book, *Shiite historiographers until the end of the seventh century AH*, Ali Emamifar (1383 Sh) also fails to explain why some of these sources are missing. In an article, Maher Jarrar (2000) makes a cursory reference to why some sources are missing, but he fails to go into details. Mansour Dadashnejad in an article on the historiography of Shias in the early centuries (1386 Sh) and another article on the missing book, *Ma'ālim al-'itrat al-nabawiyya* by al-Janābadhī (1389 Sh) provides a case study of some missing sources, but he also fails to explain why the sources went missing. In an article on the grounds and consequences of the loss of bureaucratic documents of the early Islamic centuries, Ali Bayat and Zeynab Fazli (1391 Sh) points out some factors, which we address in this research. In this article, I consider non-physical causes of the loss of Imami sources of history. It goes without saying that loss of such sources is not confined to Imamiyya, as the written works of other Islamic sects have also gone missing or been damaged, but this is remarkably less wide-ranging than those of the Imamiyya (Kohlberg 1371 Sh, 137). In this paper, I do not concern myself with the works of other Islamic sects. Scholars have offered a variety of causes for the loss of sources, which can be divided into physical and non-physical, where the former includes battles, conflicts,

(99) *Khurūj Ṣāhib Fakhh wa-maqtaluh* by 'Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-'Alawī (d. the second century AH/eighth century CE).

(100) *Khurūj Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Nafs al-Zakiyya* by 'Abd Allāh b. Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-'Alawī (d. the second century AH/eighth century CE).

(101) *Ayyām al-Basūs* by Musmī' b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Baṣrī (d. the second century AH/eighth century CE).

(102) *Akhhbār al-a'imma wa-mawālidihim* (Events and births of the Imams) by Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī al-Kūfī al-Shī'ī (d. circa 200 AH/815 CE).

(103) *Kitāb al-fitan wa-l-malāḥim* (Book of dissensions and fierce battles) by Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī al-Kūfī al-Shī'ī (d. circa 200 AH/815 CE).

(104) *Malāḥim* by Ibrāhīm b. al-Ḥakam b. Ḥayr al-Fazārī (d. late second century AH/eighth century CE).

(105) *Adab al-wuzarā'* by Aḥmad b. Ja'far b. Shādhān (b. second century AH/eighth century CE).

(106) *Al-Fihrist* by Jābir b. Ḥayyān b. 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī (b. second century AH/eighth century CE).

(107) *Aṣl* by Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. 'Umar b. Yazīd (Barīd) (b. late second century AH/eighth century CE).

floods, earthquakes, and intentional destruction of books. In this article, I tackle non-physical factors leading to the loss of the relevant sources. I note that the main non-physical cause of such loss is negligence of the science of history and the change of attitude on the part of Shiite scholars toward theology and jurisprudence. Physical causes of the loss of the sources of Imami history require an independent study.⁵

1. The Cultural Context of Political Reigns and Negligence of the Shias

Obviously, Shias were always the minority in Islamic communities, and except for short periods of time in small areas, the political power was in the hand of the Sunni majority with their own cultural context. For instance, scholarly works, particularly those of history, were preserved and transmitted given the demands of rulers and in accordance with the cultural context. For this reason, the Shiite view of history was at odds with the predominant cultural context and against the demands of the rulers as well as the majority, and as a consequence, it was difficult to promote the Shiite perspective on history, particularly in that some rulers suppressed or otherwise restricted authors. Notwithstanding this, Shias managed to convey certain truths about history contrary to the predominant perspective, although the rulers tried to suppress those truths by whatever means they had at their disposal (Yusofī Gharavi 1388 Sh, 76).

Another noteworthy point is that written works survive if they are cited or quoted in later works. However, most Sunni authors did not cite the works of the Imami minority in their own works on history. Although they cited the works of writers such as Abu Mikhnaf, Hishām al-Kalbī, Naṣr b. Muzāhim, and al-Thaqafī who left a considerable impact on later Shiite and Sunni works, they neglected the works of other Imami historiographers. In this way, Imami works on history were thrown into oblivion. Perhaps Shiite works on history were overlooked because they tended to focus on specifically Imami issues and because most Shiite historiographers were deemed unreliable by Sunni writers (Ghafouri 1394 Sh, 99-100).

It should also be noted that some Sunni authors believe that there are few works on history written by Shiite scholars, and most such works were written by Sunni authors (Shakir 1983, 121 and 264; Sezgin 1412 AH). Of all historians, only al-Ya'qūbī is known as a Shiite scholar. Nevertheless, some contemporary researchers believe that Shiite narratives greatly contribute to Sunni sources of history (Nūrwalī 1417 AH, 3).

Another significant factor is the Shiite policy of dissimulation (*taqiyya*), which is suggested as a reason why Shias were reluctant to write histories (Bakhshi 1393 Sh, 518). In a period of the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258) as

5. In another article under "Physical causes of the loss of the Shiite historical sources," I refer to social, political, and military causes of such loss (Zare Booshehri et al., 1400 Sh).

well as certain periods of Buyid (934-1062), Seljuk (1037-1194), and Anushtegin or Khwarazmian (1077-1260) dynasties, the Shiite historiography declined in comparison to the earlier periods, as attested by catalogues of works. The fragile condition of the Buyid dynasty in its final years and its subsequent collapse were reasons why Shias were reluctant to write histories (Bakhshi 1393 Sh, 427).

Of all sorts of historiography,⁶ some were not interesting to Shiite scholars, including general historiography, which was neglected for two main reasons: first, the predominant political and cultural context of the society, because of which caliphs and rulers ordered the writing of those works or were their main readers for the need to learn more about the earlier governments and their mechanisms, and second, such works of history were informed by the deeds and words of those rulers, and since Shias believe that those rulers were illegitimate, they could not find a proper context to write what they truly believed (since the main readers of such works were the rulers themselves). Owing to the limitations of general historiography, including the requirement of giving an account of the caliphs and the restriction of providing life histories of Shiite Imams and denominational uprisings, they were led to other branches of historiography (Janahmadi 1382 Sh, 262). Furthermore, general historiography would require its author to admit the legitimacy of the Sunni institution of caliphate, which was perhaps why such historiography was more acceptable to Sunni writers than Shias, although this is not true of all historiographers and all caliphs (Robinson 1392 Sh, 94). As for the historiography of ministry and bureaucracy, since it included the words and deeds of rulers whose legitimacy was denied by Shias, it was viewed as contradicting the primary Islamic principles. Moreover, its main readers were governmental agents, which imposed remarkable restrictions on how such historiography should be written. For this reason, this variety of historiography was also avoided by Shiite scholars (Bakhshi 1393 Sh, 588). What is more, governments saw the truths recounted in Shiite historiography as being against their interests, and hence, prevented their work (Yousofi Gharavi 1388 Sh).

2. Focus on Shiite Theology and Jurisprudence, Mythical View of the Imams, and Inadequacy of History

Excessive focus on Shiite theology and jurisprudence was a crucial factor that led to the loss of major Shiite works on history. Some scholars believe that Shiite scholars tended to underscore the educational aspects of branches of knowledge, which prepared the ground for the inference of jurisprudential rulings, which led to ignorance of other texts. For a long time, all aspects of jurisprudential rulings and hadiths were painstakingly taken into consideration

6. For more about varieties of historiography, see Majidinasab (1387 Sh).

to make sure that Islamic rulings are accurately inferred, but no similar treatment was ever given to hadiths concerning the Prophet's practice, history, Quranic exegesis, Islamic codes of conduct, and other branches of Islamic knowledge (Askari 1417 AH, 2:202, 206, 414). Accordingly, one reason why the works written by companions of Shiite Imams went missing was the excessive focus on jurisprudence and negligence of other fields of study, as a result of which Shiite scholars treated historical accounts with laxity and sometimes relied on Sunni narratives and sources. In this way, unreliable hadiths found their way into Shiite writings such as al-Kashshī's book on *rijāl* (evaluation of the credentials of hadith transmitters) (Askari 1417 AH). The field of Shiite theology played a greater role in negligence of history (Ghafouri 1394 Sh, 99). Some scholars agree that engagement in theology partly distracted Shiite scholars from history, as attested by the fact that, in their historical writings, al-Shaykh al-Mufīd and al-Kulaynī were merely focused on doctrinal and theological issues, which is in turn rooted in the minority status of the Shia; that is, they were primarily intent on the establishment of Shiism, and only secondarily with its history (Yousofi Gharavi 1388 Sh, 86). As for whether the sanctification of Shiite Imams played a role in negligence of history, Yousofi Gharavi fails to offer a response, but the problem is addressed by Maher Jarrar. In accounting for why the Imami works on the Prophet's life and battles are missing, particularly after the twelfth and thirteenth centuries CE, Jarrar draws on the work of John Wansbrough to show that the main theme of Shiite writings was the "nation's salvation," asserting the Messianic conception of the Imams and their role in the history of salvation, which is a trans-historical role. The Imams are therefore the "holy household," *Ahl al-Kisā'* (people of the robe), rather than children of Fatima (Jarrar 2000).

Another reason why Shias neglected history, particularly that of the Prophet's Household at the beginning of the Major Occultation (the long-term absence of the Twelfth Shiite Imam) was their Expectation of, or the Wait for, the Last Imam al-Mahdī. For, in that period, the Shias waited for the reappearance of Imam al-Mahdī, and this weakened their determination to do major tasks. Some people believe that the needs could be met with the hadiths at their disposal. Of course, many essays that are missing today were available at the time, and could thus meet their needs. Accordingly, negligence of historiography was due to the expectation of the reappearance of Imam al-Mahdī and availability of some sources at the time (Yousofi Gharavi 1388 Sh, 82).

3. Shiite Negligence of Works on History

Of all varieties of historiography, Shias tend to ignore pure history, such as Jalūdi's works. Instead, they mostly cite the works that could affirm their beliefs and denominational ideals (Dadashnejad 1386 Sh, 77). In the introduction to his

Fihrist, al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī says that, after Ibn al-Ghaḍā'ir's death, his heirs intentionally destroyed all of his works, and only two copies of his *Fihrist al-uṣūl* and *Fihrist al-muṣannafāt* remained intact (Ṭūsī, n.d., 2). Since al-Najāshī has cited Ibn al-Ghaḍā'ir's work on history, this work was probably available in al-Najāshī's time (Bakhshi 1393 Sh, 404). It is not clear why his heirs did so, but this is evidence that intentional destruction was one reason why Shiite sources of history went missing. Another noteworthy point, which is a reason for failure to transcribe and preserve books of history, is that people never needed history except a few pieces of historical evidence. Even until recently, Shias treated history as a subsidiary insignificant field of study (Yousofi Gharavi 1388 Sh, 77). In addition, some contemporary Shiite scholars believe that Shias underestimated the significance of history and did little by way of doing history, which is why they lost a great part of historical truths. Because of this, they need to draw on non-Shiite sources to reconstruct the Shiite history and cite those works to account for their history and beliefs (Ghafouri 1394 Sh, 72).

4. Formation of Communities of Hadith and *Rijāl*, Needlessness of Other Books, and Negligence of Other Fields of Study

The Shiite community no longer needed short unsystematic works because collections were made from the earlier works since the third century AH (ninth century CE), which reached a peak in the fourth century AH (tenth century CE); for example, comprehensive books such as *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, which drew on the earlier monographs and contained a multitude of historical events. Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd wrote a book under *Mawālid al-nabī wa-mawālid al-awṣiyā'* on the life history of the Prophet and Shiite Imams, which is missing today, perhaps because it is contained in other works of his, such as *al-Irshād* (Zamanejad 1371 Sh, 44).

Other reasons for the destruction of some sources of history include the writing of books, drafts, duplications, collections, and novel contributions that marginalized all other types of writing, denominational tendencies of authors, refinement of other people's works such as Ibn Hishām's *Sīra*, natural courses of events, integration of smaller essays into more comprehensive books, failure to publish a book (through transcription), and insignificance of a work's content.

Some works were produced in the course of collecting or transmitting the earlier writings. For example, scholars of hadith duplicated and transcribed some of their teachers' works during their education. They later collected those hadiths or smaller essays into bigger works, as a result of which the origins went missing, although their content was preserved in the later works. This is exemplified in the works of al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq and al-Kulaynī. Moreover, al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq's book *Madīnat al-'ilm* was deemed unreliable compared to

his *Man lā-yahḍuruh al-faqīh*, which led to the elimination of the former, although their content was almost the same.

When the Four Books (on Shiite jurisprudential hadiths) were written, many hadith collections went missing, including the books of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Abū Naṣr, al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī b. al-Faḍḍāl, al-Ḥasan b. al-Maḥbūb, and Ḥammād b. ‘Īsā (Borujerdi 1409 AH, 1:12-13). The same is true of books of catalogue. For instance, the catalogues written by al-Ṭūsī and al-Najāshī were based on the earlier catalogues, and since they were comprehensive, those earlier works were thrown into oblivion (Emadi Haeri 1388 Sh, 39).

Accordingly, in the third and fourth centuries AH (ninth and tenth centuries CE), just as the writing of hadith collections led to the elimination of the earlier works of hadith, production of large collections of history led to the destruction of earlier works on history (Robinson 1392 Sh, 80). In fact, in the phenomenon of integrating monographs into comprehensive collections was prevalent at the time (Robinson 1392 Sh, 83).

5. Intellectual Developments of Shiism, Prevalence of New Discourses

As a consequence of developments that occurred in certain periods of time, styles of writing changed. For instance, after the martyrdom of Imam al-‘Askarī (d. 874 CE), since it was unknown who would replace him, masses of Shias encountered challenges. The Shiite community was unprecedentedly divided into fourteen sects according to classical sources (Nawbakhṭī 1374 Sh). The encounter between the Imamiyya and those sects exacerbated the situation and made them more vulnerable.⁷ Intellectual perplexity was predominant at the time, and many skepticisms were in the air concerning the Imam’s Occultation. Moreover, Zaydi and Ismaili Shias were seeking battles against the government (Newman 1386 Sh, 109).

In the face of the Sunni hadith-based approach and the Zaydi-Ismaili pragmatism, which could lead to the deviation of Imamiyya, Imami scholars prioritized the recording and promotion of hadiths from the Shiite Imams in order to be able to answer the questions asked by Shias. This focus let many false hadiths into Shiite hadith collections (Maaref 1376 Sh, 67-82). Moreover, the conflict between certain historical accounts and the Shiite theological views led to negligence of many authentic books of history. This is attested by the fact that none of the works by the prolific Shiite author ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Yahyā al-Jalūdī (d. 322 AH/933 CE) are available today, and none of his hadiths is cited in the Four Books on Shiite jurisprudential hadiths (Dadashnejad 1386 Sh). When the theological school of Baghdad (championed by al-Shaykh al-Mufīd

7. In that period, there was a surge in writing repudiations against Shias, to which they responded. For instance, see the editor’s introduction to Shaykh al-Ṣadūq 1363 Sh.

and al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā) prevailed, some of the works by al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq went missing.

The Shias developed the discourse of virtues (of the Prophet and Imams) against that of history. Rosenthal believes that the reason why most books of history were destroyed was that non-professional historians wrote history. In his view, historiography was of little value in Islamic education. Many non-professional historiographers had positions in the royal court during the golden age of the Abbasid Caliphate. Historiographers were either independent like Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī (d. 946 CE), the Abbasid-era author and historian, or wrote at the order of the court like al-Ḥassān b. al-Thābit. Some historians, like al-Ṭabarī, were more widely known as religious scholars, rather than historiographers. There were people like Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Jazzāz the ophthalmologist among the authors of historical books. There were, of course, exceptional figure like al-Masʿūdī who devoted themselves to compilation of historical works. Non-professional writings of low-ranking historiographers were unlikely to be preserved for later generations because they works would rarely be transcribed (Rosenthal 1365 Sh, 1:86, 71).

Some scholars believe that some writings perished because their authors were from Iraq, because people like al-Awzāʿī (d. 157 AH/773 CE) confined knowledge of the Prophet's battles to people of Hijaz and the Levant, saying that Iraqis lacked such knowledge, which was why he repudiated Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī's *al-Siyar al-ṣaghīr* (Sarakhsī, n.d., 378). Other factors to be noted including: the Prophet's life not being fully taught by the Shiite Imams and its learning not being encouraged as the learning of jurisprudence and theology was encouraged. This approach is still dominant in Shiite seminaries (Hosseinian Moghaddam 1395 Sh, 46).

6. The Historical Approach of Hadith Scholars

Hadith scholars tend to rely on hadiths and narratives, which is why criteria of hadith transmission was imposed on historical writings in certain stages of historiography (Robinson 1392 Sh, 99). They tried to formulate all religious doctrines in terms of hadith scholarship. Bolstered by the approach adopted by school of Qom to reason as valid only when applied to religious texts, rather than an independent instrument (Jabbari 1384 Sh, 374), this approach ultimately dismissed rational inferences in providing historical accounts. This is despite the fact that each branch of religious knowledge, including history, is fruitful when it is presented in its own terms and methods (Towhidinia and Safari Forushani 1394 Sh). Moreover, books of history need to conform to the constitutive components of historical formulation, like time, place, character, and event, and be organized accordingly, whereas scholars of hadith tended to overlook these components, resting content with collecting hadiths and

narratives (Towhidinia and Safari Forushani 1394 Sh).

Furthermore, the approach to history adopted by scholars of hadith is also characterized by negligence of criticism and analysis. Even those scholars of hadith who wrote works on history tended to overlook the principles of historiography. Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd's attempts in his *al-Irshād* and *al-Jamal* and the historical sections of al-Kulaynī's *al-Kāfi* are confined to doctrinal and theological issues, which is rooted in limitations of Shiite historians and the peculiarity of their problems. Authors like al-Shaykh al-Mufīd and al-Kulaynī were primarily concerned with the establishment of their denomination and only secondarily with its history, but they often stopped in the first stage (Dadashnejad 1386 Sh, 48).

If it is not obvious that theological or apologetic issues prevail al-Shaykh al-Mufīd's historical discussions, it might at least be claimed that his main motivation for providing historical accounts is to defend Shiite doctrines, particularly imamate and the legitimacy of Shiite Imams in a logically cogent way (Khanjani 1394 Sh). Another example is al-Salāmī's *Akhbār wulāt Khorasan* (Chronicles of the rulers of Khorasan), which was authored by two generations of people from the family of al-Salāmī. The content of this book could not please the ruling dynasty and people of hadith in eastern regions of Iran. The book was a non-religious local history, and perhaps one reason for its loss was its unpleasant historiographical approach (Kazembeigi 1390 Sh, 68). The third historian from the family of al-Salāmī was Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Salāmī, a scholar of hadith who adopted a hadith-based approach in his summary of Abū l-Ḥusayn 'Alī's work (Kazembeigi 1390 Sh, 69). On this account, scholars of hadith cited historical works or account only as far as they could establish their claims, which is to say that they were not disposed to preserve purely historical works. This also led to the destruction of works of history.

Conclusion

I conclude that a variety of non-physical causes contributed to the loss of historical writings in different periods. Overall, the main cause was change of attitude on the part of Shiite scholars toward certain fields of study such as theology and jurisprudence and the subsequent negligence of history. Another cause was that, unlike Sunni scholars such as al-Ṭabarī, Shias failed to gather scattered works of history within more comprehensive collections. Since historical studies rest upon sources, the type and validity of those sources play a crucial role in historiography, which is why historical studies essentially depend on evidence and sources that disclose truths of matters. Since many Shiite sources were lost, their historical research faced serious challenges.

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