

Shami Compositions Up to the End of the 8th Hijri Century Sourced from Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him)

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ABSTRACT

Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) received significant attention from Shami authors throughout the first eight centuries. His biography (Peace Be Upon Him) is distributed among books of biographies, history, Hadith, and others. This importance arises from his intellectual and ethical contributions and sacrifices to maintain the strength of Islam, as he is the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and a companion. Another aspect is the impact of the Hussaini Renaissance, which awakened the nation and emphasized enjoining good and forbidding evil. Unfortunately, not all writings and compositions about Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) have reached us, and some of the narratives we have are influenced by political and ideological actors. This study aims to examine these Shami compositions up to the 8th Hijri century, to explain their methodology in dealing with the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), their views on the Hussaini Renaissance, and their stance on Yazid bin Muawiya's caliphate.

Keywords: Hijri Century, peace, composition

Summary

These compositions can be divided into:

Firstly: Biographical Books

Biographical books are essential sources containing valuable information. Historians have shown interest in this type of writing since the end of the second century, beginning to document the biographies of famous scholars, philosophers, literati, hadith narrators, linguists, and jurists. One of these books is Ibn Asakir's 'History of the City of Damascus' (571 AH / 1175 AD).

His Works

Ibn Asakir authored many works, the most important being 'History of the City of Damascus,' as it mentions Imam Hussein's biography (Peace Be Upon Him) the most.

His Methodology

In his book, Ibn Asakir followed the methodology of hadith scholars. He would start by mentioning the chain of narrators, then present the report. Depending on the source of the narrative, whether heard or authorized, he would state accordingly: 'He told us,' 'He informed me,' etc., for heard narratives, and 'He informed us' for authorized ones. Regarding selecting names for his biographies, he included anyone who stayed in or passed through Damascus. He stated, 'I started with those named Ahmad, as this aligns with the name of the Prophet, then listed them alphabetically considering the second and third letters for ease of reference. This also applied to their fathers' and grandfathers' names. I didn't arrange them by their time periods, numbers, status, or lineage, but rather included those known by their nicknames when their real names were unknown, followed by women and famous poetesses. Before all this, I included a section on the virtues of Damascus and its people, distinct from other regions, except the residents of the Holy Cities and their neighbors, organizing it accordingly. This is the extent of my knowledge and effort based on what I have received or confirmed.'

Ibn Asakir combined the chains of his teachers in a single narrative, sometimes from one book narrated by several teachers, sometimes from multiple books, by one or multiple authors, merging their narratives. As for his methodology in conveying the news of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), he dedicated approximately 149 pages to discussing the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). He often provided multiple narratives for a single event and used many chains of narrators. He was not just a

transmitter but sometimes a critic as well, labeling some narrations as 'rejected' He was precise in transferring statements, conveying them as he heard or read them, like the phrase 'it is a mistake' Despite the vast number of narrations he conveyed about the life of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), almost 400 in total, he focused on one aspect at the expense of another. He paid much attention to the narratives of the birth and name, as opposed to those about the Day of Ashura. He provided brief accounts of the event of Karbala without delving into the atrocities committed by the Umayyad army against Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), his family, and companions, which were mentioned by authors who preceded him. In contrast, he extensively narrated the miracles that occurred after the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) and their significant implications in highlighting the enormity of Yazid's crime in killing the Imam (Peace Be Upon Him). However, this may have been intended to cover up the real objectives for which the Imam (Peace Be Upon Him) revolted.

One researcher notes that despite Ibn Asakir being an Ash'ari in creed, he showed extremism towards the Ash'arites and Jabrites, and was biased towards them through his composition of the book 'Exposing the Lies Fabricated Against Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari.' This bias is attributed to the environment in which Ibn Asakir lived, which may have greatly influenced his personality. He was born in Damascus to an Umayyad mother, lived there, and died there. The ruling authority at the time embraced him, providing all the necessities that aided him in composing his book, 'History of the City of Damascus'."

Tadhkirat al-Khawas by Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi (654 AH / 1256 AD).

He is Abu al-Muzaffar Shams al-Din Yusuf ibn Qaza'uli ibn Abdullah ibn Firuz al-Baghdadi al-Damashqi al-Hanbali, then al-Hanafi. This designation reflects that he was born in Baghdad and died in Damascus.

Al-Dhahabi criticized him, saying: 'We see that he brings in his book strange and unbelievable stories, and I don't think he is reliable in what he transmits. He is biased and takes risks. Moreover, he became a rejector of traditional beliefs, and perhaps this criticism was due to accusations of him being a Rafidi, as his grandfather had described him as such.' He died in Damascus and was buried in Mount Qasioun.

The book Tadhkirat al-Khawas contains important information about the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), mentioning his life from birth to martyrdom, and even beyond, including the captivity of the Prophet's household, the carrying of the heads to Yazid bin Muawiyah's court in Damascus, and some elegies. It also briefly mentions the children of the Imam (Peace Be Upon Him) and concludes the biography with a section on the punishment of his killers (Peace Be Upon Him). He preferred one narrative over another; for example, he considered that the number of Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) supporters at the Battle of Karbala was 145 horsemen.

Bughyat al-Talab fi Tarikh Halab" by Ibn Al-Adim (660 AH / 1262 AD).

He is Abu al-Qasim Kamal al-Din Umar bin Ahmad bin Hibat Allah from the Bani Abi Jaradah Al-Aqili family of Aleppo, from a house of judges and nobility. He studied in Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, and the surrounding areas. He wrote a history of Aleppo in about thirty volumes and served as a deputy in the Sultanate of Damascus. Born in Dhul-Hijjah in the year 588 AH in Aleppo, he succeeded the role of judge in the Hanafi school from five of his forefathers in succession. He became well-versed in religious jurisprudence in his homeland, as well as in Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, the Hejaz, and Iraq. After returning to Aleppo, he worked as a scribe and then as a judge, later serving as a minister for many princes. When the Mongols invaded and destroyed Aleppo in the year 658 AH, he fled with King Al-Nasir to Egypt. Later, when Hulagu Khan appointed him as a judge in Syria, he returned there. He died in Hama on the first of Dhul-Hijjah in the year 660 AH, and his funeral was attended by Sultan Al-Malik Al-Muzaffar. He was buried in AqabahNaqrin.

This book is among the biographical works dedicated to the kings of Aleppo, its scholars, narrators of Hadith, and writers who entered Aleppo. He arranged the history of its scholars alphabetically in ten volumes. The first part was dedicated to the city of Aleppo, mentioning its significant forts, castles, and frontiers, and providing a geographical description. The remaining parts focused on biographies of individuals, beginning with those named Ahmad. The extent of each biography varied depending on the information Ibn Al-Adim could obtain. This was his general methodology.

His Methodology

The work of Ibn Al-Adim differed from that of his teacher, Ibn Asakir, as did their professions and life paths. Ibn Asakir was primarily and ultimately a hadith scholar, while Ibn Al-Adim was a politician and heir to a distinguished family that combined knowledge, judiciary, governance, politics, commerce, and agricultural activity. His book, comprising ten volumes, dedicated the first part to the city of Aleppo, mentioning its significant fortresses, castles, and frontiers, and providing a geographical description. The remaining volumes focused on biographies, arranged alphabetically starting with individuals named

'Ahmad,' in honor of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family), a common practice among biographers.

The extent of each biography varied depending on the information Ibn Al-Adim could gather from the books of preceding historians. For example, the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) spanned 109 pages, starting from his blessed birth to mentioning elegies. Despite the vast amount of information he transmitted about Imam Hussein, sometimes he relayed accounts far from historical reality. He supported his teacher Ibn Asakir in the claim of Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) participation with Yazid bin Muawiya in the conquest of Constantinople and portrayed a relationship marked by conflict and resentment between him and his brother Imam Hassan (Peace Be Upon Him). Regarding Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) closeness and status with the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him and His Family), he denied that Imam Hussein transmitted any hadiths from his grandfather, stating that what was transmitted were all *mursal* (unlinked) narrations.

As for the Hussaini revolution, he did not differ from his predecessors, perhaps because he was a transmitter of the writings of those before him without preferring one narrative over another or commenting on them. This means he accepted them as they were. He elaborated on one aspect at the expense of others, portraying the Imam (Peace Be Upon Him) as obstinate in his opinions, disregarding the advice of companions and followers.

Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal by Al-Mizzi (742 AH / 1341 AD)

He is the Hafiz Jamal al-Din Abu al-Hajjaj Yusuf ibn Zaki Abd al-Rahman ibn Yusuf ibn Ali ibn Abd al-Malik ibn Ali ibn Abi al-Zahra, Al-Quda'i, Al-Kalbi, Al-Dimashqi. Born on the tenth of Rabi' al-Thani in the year 654 AH in Aleppo, he later moved to Damascus and grew up in Al-Mizzi. Influenced by his father in childhood, he was encouraged to memorize the Holy Quran and followed the Shafi'i school of thought. As for his creed, he followed the Salaf's doctrine of Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jama'ah, particularly when he accompanied his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah and adopted this school of thought from him. He died in Damascus in the year 742 AH and was buried in the Sufi cemeteries.

His Methodology

His approach in the book 'Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal' was a continuation of the book 'Al-Kamal fi Ma'rifat Asma' al-Rijal' by Al-Maqdisi. Al-Mizzi chose this book due to his admiration for it, though he criticized 'Al-Kamal' for not giving due importance to the biographies mentioned, despite having sufficient information, and for not fully exploring the names included in the six major Hadith collections, nor thoroughly following up on all the biographies mentioned in his book. Al-Mizzi's methodology was to mention everyone uniformly, starting with men. He placed the companions in their sections of biographies and arranged everyone alphabetically according to the eastern Arabic letters in their names, their fathers', and grandfathers' names. However, he began with the letter Alif with 'Al-Ahmadain' and with the letter Meem with 'Al-Muhammadain' due to the honor of these names, a practice many authors in biographies and men's histories had followed before him. As for his approach in translating the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) and reporting his news, especially about Karbala, it was no different from his predecessors. This may be due to his reliance on the books of previous historians or the influence of his Salafi creed in this regard.

Siyar A'lam al-Nubala'by Al-Dhahabi (d. 748 AH / 1347 AD)

He is Abu Abdullah Shams al-Din Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Uthman ibn Qaimaz Al-Dhahabi, a Turkmen from Damascus, born in Damascus in the year 673 AH. He was nicknamed Al-Dhahabi ('The Golden') in reference to his father's profession in goldsmithing. Although he adhered to the Shafi'i school of thought, he was influenced by Salafi creed due to his close connection with Ibn Taymiyyah. This means that he was Shafi'i in jurisprudential branches but Salafi in fundamentals. He died in Damascus in the year 748 AH and was buried in the Bab Saghir cemetery in Damascus.

His Methodology

Al-Dhahabi, born and raised in Sham (Greater Syria), followed the Salafi creed of Ibn Taymiyyah, who is known for his distance from the Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be Upon Them). This explains Al-Dhahabi's approach of omitting many significant events in the revolution of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), and his interpretation and abbreviation of some events to downplay the tragedy and severity of the Battle of Karbala, thus straying from the truth. However, despite this orientation, we see Al-Dhahabi transmitting a text where he describes Yazid as a harsh, crude Nasibi, indulging in alcohol and wrongdoing. He started his reign with the killing of the martyr Hussein and ended it with the event of Al-Harra, thus being despised by people, and his life was not blessed.

The people of Iraq were held responsible for the killing of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) without specifying who among the Iraqis were responsible. Did all the people of Iraq participate in the killing of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him)? Finally, we see Al-Dhahabi sometimes commenting on narratives and sometimes not, influenced by his creed. This caused inconsistencies in his writings. In his book *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala*, he mentions that Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) pledged allegiance to Yazid under duress, whereas in his book *'History of Islam*, he states that Hussein was among those who did not pledge allegiance.

"Al-Wafi bi al-Wafayat by Al-Safadi (764 AH / 1362 AD)

Khalil bin Amir Az ad-Din Aybak bin Abdullah Al-Altaki Salah ad-Din Abu al-Safaa Al-Safadi, named after the city of Safad, then a Damascene literate, was born in 696 AH and died in 764 AH in Damascus. Among his works are *'A'wan al-Nasr fi A'yan al-Asr* in history and biography, *'Alhan al-Sawaj* in his correspondence, *'Tadhkirat al-Adab*, and *'Al-Wafi bi al-Wafayat*'.

His Methodology

His methodology did not differ from other biographical historians, but what concerns us here is his approach in narrating the news of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). His biography spans five pages, starting with his name and lineage, the time of his birth, and mentioning some sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) about him. He then portrays Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) as if he was deceived by the people of Kufa, and that no one except his family accompanied him, even his brother Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah did not go with him, although about thirty-two men did. He did not mention the supporters of Imam Hussein, as if everyone disagreed with his decision to rise up. He suggests that Imam Hussein's killing was easy and criticizes Imam Hussein for his uprising. He then talks about carrying the Imam's head before Yazid and what was done with it, presenting several opinions on this matter.

He also mentions the cosmic events that occurred on the day of Imam Hussein's martyrdom and the public opinion regarding his killing (Peace Be Upon Him), although he distances Yazid from responsibility, placing it on Ibn Ziyad. He concludes his biography with some poetry lamenting Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). "

Secondly: General History Books

General history books are important due to their rich and varied information. While many such books have emerged, what is of interest to us are the general history books of the Levant during the first eight centuries of the Hijra, which discussed the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). Among these books is *'The History of the Birth and Death of Scholars'* by Al-Ruba'i, who is Abu Sulaiman Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Rubay'ah ibn Sulaiman ibn Khalid ibn Abdul-Rahman ibn Zubar ibn Attard ibn Amr ibn Hajar ibn Munqidh Al-Ruba'i Al-Dimashqi. He was a narrator of Hadith and a Damascene historian, born in Dhu al-Hijjah in the year 298 AH in Raqqa. He followed an annual chronological approach rather than a thematic one and greatly abbreviated the details. He began with the first year of the Hijra and concluded in the year 357 AH. He would mention the year and its most significant events, whether births or deaths, along with some names of children. He mentioned the birth of Imam Hussein in the fourth year of the Hijra and referenced him in the events of the year 61 AH. However, he made some mistakes with the names of the Banu Hashem who were martyred with Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). For instance, he mentioned a name, Ibrahim, as a descendant of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), and he mentioned a son of Abbas ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib named Muhammad, whereas Abbas did not have a son by this name.

Book of Murat Alzaman fi TawarikhAlaeian by Sibte Ibn al-Jawzi (654 AH) is considered one of the important historical encyclopedias because it covers a long period, starting from the beginning of creation to his death in the year 654 AH. In it, he followed the annual chronological approach.

He used many quotations that, if they indicate anything, demonstrate his extensive knowledge, deep understanding, and the vast library he relied upon in compiling *'Murat Alzaman fi TawarikhAlaeian*'. However, this did not prevent the author from falling into misconceptions. For instance, he placed the responsibility for the killing of Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) and Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) on the people of Iraq. Moreover, like his predecessors, he extensively mentioned the advice given by the companions and followers to Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), as if they were more knowledgeable than him in matters of this world and the hereafter.

Tarikh Alaislam = The 'History of Islam' by Al-Dhahabi (748 AH) arranged events in the first part of the book, followed by biographies. He organized the events by years, starting from the first year of the Hijra

until the end of the year 700 AH. He separated the events within each year with phrases like 'in Dhu al-Hijjah' (the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar).

His style tended towards brevity in narrating events. The elements of biography in Al-Dhahabi's work consisted of the person's name, lineage, birth, and details indicating their age, upbringing, and education. Sometimes, he expressed his opinion about the personality he was writing about. The biographies varied from one person to another; he would write a concise biography for one person, while for another, he would provide a more comprehensive account.

The book 'Al-Bidayawa al-Nihaya' by Ibn Kathir (774 AH / 1372 AD)

He is Imad al-Din Abu al-Fida Ismail ibn Umar ibn Kathir ibn Daraa Al-Qurashi Al-Dimashqi Al-Shafi'i. Born in the village of Majdal among the villages of Bosra in the Levant in the year 701 AH, he moved to Damascus and died there in the year 774 AH, and was buried next to the grave of his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah.

His book 'Al-Bidayawa al-Nihaya' is considered one of the important books in general history due to its valuable content. It starts from the beginning of creation and goes up to Islamic history, mentioning the prophetic mission and continuing until the year 767 AH. Ibn Kathir adopted a critical approach in his work; he reported myths, nonsensical stories, and weak narratives for the purpose of refuting them. He stated that if such tales weren't documented in many books of exegesis and other historical texts, he wouldn't have mentioned them due to their baselessness and crudeness, as they are contrary to reason and transmitted reports.

Regarding the Hussaini revolution, Ibn Kathir's opinion was clear. He states that those who killed him justified their actions, claiming he came to divide the unity of Muslims and to depose the one whom people pledged allegiance to. He supported the non-confrontational approach of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), saying that the killers should have accepted one of the three conditions proposed by Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) to prevent his killing. He pointed out that while a group of tyrants was condemned, the entire nation was not, as the majority, both in the past and recently, abhorred what happened to Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), except for a despicable few from the people of Kufa, whom Ibn Ziyad lured with worldly gains and threatened, leading them to betray and kill Hussein.

However, Ibn Kathir defended the army that fought against the Imam, stating not everyone in that army was pleased with his killing. He also attempts to absolve Yazid of the murder, suggesting that had Yazid been able to capture him before his killing, he would have pardoned him, as advised by his father. Nevertheless, Ibn Kathir criticizes Yazid for not holding Ibn Ziyad accountable, neither dismissing nor punishing him.

Despite these views, Ibn Kathir describes Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) as one of the leaders of Muslims and scholars among the companions, the son of the Prophet's daughter, whom he considers the best of his daughters. He describes Imam Hussein as devout, courageous, and generous. Finally, he criticizes the Shiites for showing excessive grief and accuses them of exaggeration and extremism.

Thirdly: Hadith Books

'Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir' = The Major Compendium by Al-Tabarani (360 AH / 970 AD)

He is Abu al-Qasim Sulaiman bin Ahmad bin Ayoub bin Matar Al-Lakhmi Al-Shami, nicknamed Al-Tabarani, named after the city of Tiberias. Born in the year 260 AH, there is disagreement about his birthplace. Some say it was in Tiberias (according to Ibn Al-Athir), while others suggest Acre. One researcher posits that he was born in Acre at his maternal relatives' place and then returned to Tiberias.

Al-Tabarani is one of the earliest Shami compilers and authored numerous works, most notably the three compendia, the Book of Supplications, Signs of Prophethood, the Great Tafsir, Hadith of the Shamis, Long Narrations in Hadith, Tenets of Women, the Book of Firsts, the Book of Archery, the Book of Sunnah, the Book of Noble Deeds, Mention of the Generous, the Book of Rituals, and the Book of Anecdotes.

However, our choice for the Major Compendium is due to its extensive historical content related to the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), and his book has reached us.

His Methodology in the Book 'Al-Mu'jam al-Kabir'

We chose this book because it mentions Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) extensively. This book is dedicated to understanding the conditions of the companions, by mentioning their biographies, virtues, and narrations. Al-Tabarani organized it in a lexical order, saying, 'This book, compiled by us, gathers the number of men and women who narrated from the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him) in alphabetical order...' He then adds that for each of them, he extracted one, two, three, or more narrations depending on the abundance or scarcity of their narrations. For those who narrated less, he included their entire narrations. For those who didn't narrate from the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him) but

were mentioned among his companions, whether they were martyred with him or passed away earlier, he mentioned them from the books of military expeditions and the history of scholars, to inform about the number of narrators from the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him) and to mention his companions, intending to extensively document their traditions in the order of tribes.

This was his general methodology. As for his approach regarding the narrations of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), he dedicated about 51 pages and relied on a large number of narrators to convey the news about Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him). He began all these narrations with the phrase 'He told us', and this included most of the news about Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) from his birth. He was keen on mentioning everything about him (Peace Be Upon Him), including details of his physique, clothes, dye used, and the relationships he had with the Messenger of Allah (Peace Be Upon Him), his father Ali (Peace Be Upon Him), his mother Fatima (Peace Be Upon Him), his brother Hasan (Peace Be Upon Him), and other companions and followers.

Regarding the Prophetic biography, Al-Tabarani mentioned many hadiths narrated by Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), prophecies about his martyrdom, the place of his martyrdom, the people who would kill him, and a vast amount of miracles that occurred after his martyrdom (Peace Be Upon Him), and the fate of some of his killers (Peace Be Upon Him). However, despite this detail mentioned by Al-Tabarani about Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him), he did not provide many details about Al-Taff and the events of the battle, perhaps due to the nature of his book, which focuses on hadiths rather than narratives, mentioning hadiths that talk about the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), whether issued by the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) or transmitted by the companions.

Fourth: Ibn Taymiyyah (728 AH / 1327 AD) and His Methodology in Narrating the Biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him).

He is Taqi al-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim al-Harrani al-Dimashqi al-Hanbali. This is because the Harran area is considered the main center for the Hanbalis. Since the emergence of schools of thought and the division of people among these schools, Harran has been a stronghold of the Hanbalis. Numerous scholars have emerged from there, among whom we find none but Hanbalis. Here, Al-Dhahabi objected to Ibn Asakir when he considered Abu Arouba al-Harrani, who died in 318 AH, as being excessively biased towards Shiism and strongly inclined against the Umayyads, questioning how Abu Arouba, being a hadith scholar and Harrani, could be so extreme. Perhaps his bias was against the Marwanids to the point of treachery. Ibn Taymiyyah was born in the city of Harran in 661 AH and moved to Damascus following the Mongol and Tatar invasions when he was six years old.

He authored numerous books, the most prominent being 'Minhaj al-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah in Refuting the Sayings of the Qadariyya Shia,' which was written in response to 'Minhaj al-Karamah in Establishing the Imamate' by Allama Al-Hilli (726 AH). He accused the book and its author of various charges, thus naming his book 'Minhaj al-Nadama' (The Path of Regret), and described Al-Hilli as a person of innovation, a hypocrite, impure, filthy, etc. Among his other works are 'Jami' al-Masail' and the book 'Head of Imam Hussein.

His Methodology

In his book 'Minhaj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah', which is one of his most extensive works, he used phrases like 'it is said' and 'by consensus of the narrators' (without naming any of them). His primary focus was defending the Umayyad dynasty, particularly Yazid, saying: 'Even if Yazid did kill Hussein, it would not be a sin for his father.' He employed evasive tactics to downplay the killing of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) and to absolve Yazid, claiming that Omar bin Saad was the commander of the detachment, as if those who besieged Imam Hussein and his companions were not a large army but a small squad. He also denied some of Yazid's poetry attributed to him, as reflected in the poetry of Ibn al-Zubair.

His approach differed from other Shami authors in that he explicitly expressed his opinion about Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) and his rebellion, stating clearly: 'It appears that what those people said is true; there was neither religious nor worldly benefit in the uprising. Instead, those tyrants overpowered the Prophet's grandson (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him), leading to his wrongful and martyrdom death. His rebellion and death caused corruption that would not have occurred had he stayed in his land. His intention to promote good and prevent evil was not achieved; instead, his rebellion and death only increased evil and decreased good, leading to significant harm. Hussein's killing was a cause of strife, as was Uthman's killing.' It's unknown why Uthman wasn't held accountable for not relinquishing power.

Ibn Taymiyyah, knowingly or unknowingly, fell into hypocrisy. While he states that Imam Hussein was wrongfully killed and martyred, he simultaneously describes him as war-loving, unlike his brother Hasan (Peace Be Upon Him), who loved peace, referencing Imam Hasan's peace agreement with Muawiyah.

Regarding the use of chains of narrators, while Ibn Taymiyyah weakened unlinked reports, he would relay narratives that were essentially creative speech without any chain. His approach often involved denial in many events related to the Hussaini revolution. For instance, he denied the captivity and also denied that Hajjaj killed the Hashimites, saying, 'It is false and baseless: Muslims, thankfully, never captured any Hashimite women, nor did the nation of Muhammad (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) ever legitimately capture the Hashimites. But those driven by passion and ignorance often lie, as some claim that Hajjaj killed the nobles, referring to the Hashimites.' He also denied miracles, the Verse of Mawaddah, and even the Prophet's (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) bequest to Hasan and Hussein (Peace Be Upon Them). We do not know what Ibn Taymiyyah based these denials on, other than lies, slander, and malice.

As for his book about Imam Hussein's head, it discusses the shrine attributed to Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) in Cairo, whether it is authentic or not. However, he diverged significantly in his rebuttal of the concept of the awaited Mahdi. It's unclear how the Mahdist issue relates to the matter of the shrine attributed to Imam Hussein's head.

While Ibn Taymiyyah considers Ibn Ziyad and Omar bin Saad responsible for unjustly and aggressively killing the Imam (Peace Be Upon Him), he denies that the head was transferred to Yazid bin Muawiyah's court in Damascus.

In tracking Ibn Taymiyyah's approach, the researcher observes that he did not apply an important trait of a historian, which is impartiality. He was not neutral in his methodology but was biased towards one side. While his stance on the Fatimid state was aggressive, he glorified the Ayyubid state.

CONCLUSION

The researcher arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The historical material related to the biography of Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) during the first eight centuries of Hijrah in the Shami compositions is distributed among books of biographies, history, Hadith, and others. The extent of this material varied; some authors elaborated on it, while others were concise.
2. Some Shami authors were influenced by political, ideological, and intellectual aspects, which reflected on the nature of the historical material, leading to contradictory narratives, especially if an author had more than one source. Thus, the Shami author was not always impartial.
3. Many authors shared similar methodologies, focusing on certain aspects at the expense of others. In the case of the event of Karbala, the focus was on the advice of the companions and followers to Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) to prevent him from going to Kufa, the miracles that occurred after the battle, and the divine punishment for Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) killers. Although this is important, it led to the omission of details of the battle, the purpose of Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) departure, and the brutality of Ibn Ziyad's army.
4. The Shami authors were influenced by their environment. Since the authors lived in a Shami environment known for its hostility towards the Ahl al-Bayt (Peace Be Upon Them), most of their views conformed to this environment. However, this does not mean that they did not convey accurate and realistic events about him (Peace Be Upon Him).
5. Some Shami authors explicitly expressed their opinion on the Hussaini issue to defend Yazid and his rule, arguing that Imam Hussein's (Peace Be Upon Him) actions were neither religiously nor worldly beneficial. They claimed that the Imam achieved nothing, but rather increased evil through his departure and killing, reducing good and causing great harm. His killing was considered a cause of significant strife.

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