METHODS OF RECORDING INFORMATION IN THE BOOK OF SHARH AL-AKHBAR BY JUDGE AL-NU’MAN (363AH/973AD)

Huda Ali Abdullah Al-Taie, Dr Alaa Hammad Rajah

University of Baghdad, College of Arts, Department of History, Iraq.

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ABSTRACT

This research dealt with the methods of codification adopted by Judge Al-Nu'man Al-Maghrebi, the judge of the Fatimid state judges during its emergence in his book Sharh Al-Akhbar, which is one of the most important history books because of the information and dates it contained for an important era of Islamic history. The author made every effort to write about great personalities in Islamic history, represented by the person of the Messenger (ﷺ) and his house (), as it is a book of scientific value on the virtues of Imam Ali, Al-Hasan, Al-Hussain, and Jafar Al-Sadiq (). in other sources. It is a valuable reference for scholars of various sects in the event that evidence is needed to prove the validity of a hadith.

The author used the collective attribution in which he tries to stay away from repetition. He also relied on brevity with the chain of transmission. He did not mention a serial chain of transmission for any narration or hadith, and that he mentioned it in a dispatched form. From what the research concluded, al-Nu’man used to write a vision of his imams from the Fatimid caliphs who were contemporary with them, as he was presenting his material to them to prove the correct one and to drop the weak from it, which means that he did not write except with their advice and guidance.

Imam Ali thought became active when Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq () sent two messengers to the countries of the Islamic Maghreb to spread Shiism in the middle of the second century AH (8th century AD). The Shiite call began when Al-Halwani and Abu Sufyan, the messenger of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq () arrived in Tunisia (145 AH / 762 AD) and some men from the western regions entered their hands, although the invitation was for the Imamate school, which begins with Imam Ali bin Abi Talib () all the way to the front Jafar al-Sadiq (), meaning that the call to Shiism was for the Imamate school in general, not for the Ismailis.

INTRODUCTION

The Ismailis differ from the Twelver Imams after Imam al-Sadiq () according to their belief that the Imamate was not Ismail, the eldest son, except that his death during his father’s life and its transmission to Imam Musa al-Kadhim () and then its succession in the descendants of Imam al-
Kadhim (v) prevented the continuation of the Imamate in the descendants of Ismael. The Ismailis believe in the apparent blame, starting with Ali bin Abi Talib (v) up to Ismail bin Jaafar Al-Sadiq and the hidden imams starting with Muhammad bin Ismail all the way to Abdullah Al-Mahdi, after which the second period of the emergence of the Ismaili imams begins. The Ismaili state arose in Kairouan in the year 297 AH / 910 AD when Abdullah al-Mahdi announced the establishment of the state. The Fatimid state was named after the Lady Fatimah al-Zahra (v), the daughter of the Prophet (v) and the mother of the imams from the sons of Ali ibn Abi Talib (v), whose descendants descend from and from whom. Thus, they are linked to the House of Prophethood and are descended from the lineage of Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq (v).

During the emergence of the Fatimid state in Kairouan and then Mahdia, which was built by the first Fatimid Caliph Abdullah al-Mahdi, many figures emerged who had a prominent role in the emergence and spread of Ismaili thought in the Maghreb. Perhaps one of the most prominent of these personalities was represented by Judge al-Nu’man ibn Muhammad ibn Hayun al-Maghribi al-Qayrawani, the preacher of the Ismaili da’wa and the judge of the judges of the Fatimid state during the era of the first four caliphs of the Fatimid state. The Fatimid Caliphs and Al-Muizz Li-Din Allah is their fourth, and he died in Al-Muizz’s life after the Fatimid Caliphate moved to Egypt (358AD/969AD), only to die one year after his arrival in Egypt with the Caliph Al-Muizz Li-Din Allah.

Al-Nu’man contributed to the dissemination of Ismaili thought through his numerous books on various aspects of knowledge, as his works varied between jurisprudence, biography, history. He also contributed to this by holding many positions that required the dissemination of Ismaili thought and culture, the most important of which was the position of Chief Justice. In this study, the focus has been on the methods of information codification that Al-Qadi Al-Nu’man followed in writing his books, specifically his book Sharh Al-Akhbar, one of the most important historical works that dealt with novels and hadiths, totalling (1458) hadiths and narrations about the House of the Messenger ﷺ).

The nature of the research necessitated that it be divided into two sections: The first topic included the definition of the book and its importance
in the Ismaili thought, as it included, the author of the message, the reason for writing the book, copying the book, and the importance of the book. As for the second topic, it shed light on the methods of transcribing information, which included: the linguistic style, the codification of Qur’anic verses, the codification of the honorable prophetic hadiths, the codification of poetry.

THE FIRST TOPIC: INTRODUCING THE BOOK AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN THE ISMAILI THOUGHT

First, the Author of the Book

Al-Numan bin Muhammad bin Mansour bin Ahmed bin Hayun (d. 363 AH / (973 AD) (1), born in the year 292 AH / 905 AD (2), mentioned in the sources for short, belongs to the Tamim tribe (3), one of the famous Arab tribes that inhabited Maghreb countries. He was nicknamed Abu Hanifa by the Ismaili imams in imitation of Abu Hanifa al-Nu’man al-Baghdaadi (4), the jurist of the Abbasid state, in order to admire him and to show his jurisprudential and scientific superiority over his counterpart Abu Hanifa al-Baghdaadi, the author of the Hanafi school of thought.


(2) Sources differ on the date of his birth, some say that he was born in the year 256 AH/869 AD, and others say that he was born between (283-290 AH) (896-902 AD). There are some indications that the date of his birth was determined based on his proven statements in a number of his books. In his book Sharh al-Ahkbar, which is one of the books filled with important dates in the Ismaili state, Al-Numan mentioned, “I served the Mahdi by God at the end of his life,” who died on Rabi’ al-Awwal 14 of the year 322 AH /933 AD) and the period of his service was nine years and a few months, so the date of Qadi al-Nu’man’s service to al-Mahdi is at the end of the year (312 AH/924 AD), and Muhammad Husayn al-Jalali estimated in the introduction to the book Sharh al-Ahkbar that if he was twenty-one years old at that time, his birth would be within the limits of (292 AH / 903 AD).

Looking at Al-Qadi Al-Numan, Al-Hama in the Etquette of Following the Ismail, i (Cairo: pg. 5. Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, d.l.).


(4) Abu Hanifa al-Baghdaadi: (d. 150 AH / 767 AD) Abu Hanifa bin Thabit al-Zawiti is originally from Kabul, the capital of today’s Afghanistan. He was born in Kufa in the year (80 AH / 699 AD), the owner of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence is one of the famous schools of jurisprudence in the Islamic East, Hanifa, who is one of the students of Imam Jaafar Al-Sadiq (5), and he has a famous saying in praise of Imam Jaafar Al-Sadiq (if it were not for the two years; Al-Nu’man would have perished).


(7) Kauoz: The first Egyptian city in Africa (currentingly Tunisia) at the time of the Islamic conquest of the Maghreb at the time of Muawiyah bin Abu Sufyan. Uqba bin Nafee al-Fihr drew it in the year (55 AH / 670 AD), and the reason for choosing this site was because of its distance from the sea so that the Roman ships would not touch it. And it became the greatest city in Morocco, the widest in terms of conditions and the most human, in addition to the easiest
which he grew up and lived part of his life there (8), and he was also called al-Qadi, a metaphor for his work in the Fatimid state (9), as he held the position of judiciary during the reigns of three Fatimid caliphs, the last of which was the state judge during the reign of Caliph Al-Mansur and Caliph Al-Muizz in the Egyptian era, as he was called the Ismaili legislator (10). For his scientific and religious traces of jurisprudence and religion in the Ismaili sect, which were represented by the jurisprudential laws of the Ismaili sect, and perhaps his most famous books on jurisprudence are the two pillars of Islam and the opening of the call, in addition to other jurisprudential books he knew him.

Second, the Reason for Writing the Book

Al-Qadi al-Nu’man mentioned this in the introduction to his book, when he said, “I collected from the traces of the virtue of the pure imams according to what I found and the purpose of what I dictated and asked for. His predecessor and his successor, and what was proven from him that he established, was true to him, knew him, preferred him from his pure forefathers, and permitted him, and his narration was for those who take from me, so I simplified in this book what he established, authorized and defined, and dropped what he raised from that and denied it”. The reason for writing the book was his desire to leave a legacy written on the virtues and qualities of the pure imams, starting with Imam Ali (peace be upon him) all the way to Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (v).

Third: Copy the Book

The book Sharh al-Akhbar is one of the dear and precious books of copies, and there are several copies of the book, despite the lack of copyists, with what was known about the Ismaili sect of keenness to preserve their books so that those outside their group would not see them. He was able to obtain all parts of the book from several countries (11), five copies, namely:

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(8) same source.
(9) same source., P.446.
(11) Al-Qadi Al-Nu’man, Abu Hamifa Al-Nu’man bin Muhammad bin Mansour bin Ahmed bin Hayun Al-Tamimi, Sharh Al-Akhbar, investigated by Muhammad Husayn Al-Jalali, 2nd Edition (Qom, Islamic Publication Institution, 1431 AH / 2009 AD), part 1, p. 73.
1. The Tehran University copy contains parts (1-7).
2. Al-Marashi’s library copy contains parts (1, 2, 4, 6).
3. A third copy contains parts (9-12), which is an unknown copy, the scribe and the date.
4. A fourth copy containing parts (6-10), which is one of the books of the Ismaili Society in London.
5. A fifth copy containing the parts (13-16) and is preserved in the Islamic Society of Pompeii.
6. And a sixth version that contains the two parts (13-14), which is the copy of the University of London. Thus, the book, which was compiled and verified by Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Al-Jalali, consists of three parts, constituting a total of sixteen parts.

**Fourth: The Importance of the Book**

The book Sharh al-Akhbar is one of the books of Islamic history and the most famous book of Qadi al-Nu’man during the establishment of the Fatimid state. The book covered scientific investigations and benefits and responded to the innovator in his scientific package of great importance in his time, as it is a distinguished scientific product in the middle of the third century AH / ninth century AD, and it is important to the Shiites because it dealt with the first twelve imams, the first of whom is Imam Ali (v) and cited There are many hadiths describing the virtues of the Imam and what the Messenger (ﷺ) said about Imam Ali (v).

**THE SECOND TOPIC / METHODS OF WRITING INFORMATION**

Judge al-Nu’man followed several methods in presenting his historical material, as the allocated space was commensurate with the narrated events; Therefore, news about Imam Ali (v) occupied a large part of the book explaining the news, despite its abbreviation of some historical narrations and its lengthening in others, without losing the value of the historical narration by clever behavior; This is because the elaborate style may reduce the historical value of the novel, and the short style usually prevents understanding the meaning.

In his book, Al-Qadi Al-Numan mentioned a collection of prophetic hadiths and narrations, and we will discuss the methods of recording these hadiths and narratives.
First: The Linguistic Style

The linguistic style is defined as the approach that the historian follows in writing his material, by choosing the vocabulary of sentences, words and combinations of expressions to express the meaning with the aim of influencing and persuading the reader (12). Al-Qadi al-Nu'man has a unique style in all of his books, which is an advantage over others' books. He also adopted the method of presenting what he wrote for review by the people of the matter represented by the Fatimid caliphs whom he was contemporaneous with, as he was presenting his writings to the Fatimid caliph to take his guidance and approval of those writings and put forward what the caliph was rejecting. The book Sharh al-Akhbar is one of those books that were subject to the guidance and scrutiny of the Fatimid Caliphs (13).

As for the method he followed, Judge Al-Numan used the easy method far from dumping and interpretation (14), and from rhetorical terms and verbal embellishments that are difficult for the reader to receive easily. And the hadiths and stories included by its author, and he mentions that “these reports are all proven, and what has been presented in this book is what has been narrated by the trustworthy among the public.”

The first of this book - most of what was mentioned in that, and I confined myself to one hadith from each ar (15), and omitted the repetition that the hadith owners and others enter with different chains of narrators..." (16). His writings are such as his saying (...and leave the chains of narrators and the multitude, in order to prefer mitigation and brevity in that.....) (17). On the other hand, al-Nu'man stated in a number of narrations by assigning them to a series of narrators, some of them following one another, and this is clear from the hadiths and narrations that he mentioned without The presence of a margin indicating the sources in which they were mentioned.

Secondly. Codification of Quranic Verses

Al-Qadi al-Nu'man followed another method in writing down the information, using the remembrance of the Qur’anic verses. He often supported his words with those verses. Because there are

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(15) Same source: Part 1, p. 126.
(16) Judge Al-Numan: Explanation of the news, p. 76.
texts related to people’s translations that he mentioned in this author, or that he mentions the verse in order to clarify a jurisprudential concept that needs the legislative origin, which is the Holy Qur’an to prove what he mentions. He mentioned the Qur’anic verses that were revealed against the people of the Prophet’s House (v), explaining the interpretation of those verses and their relationship to the House after the death of the Prophet (e). Below are some examples:

- The saying of God (Y)( Prophet, fight against the infidels and the hypocrites)\(^{(18)}\). As for its interpretation and its relationship to the House (v), it was mentioned that when the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) fulfilled his religion and struggled with the infidels and the blessings of God be upon him and his family were arrested, he commanded Ali (v) to fight the infidels and the hypocrites after him, and Ali said (v)): The Messenger of God commanded me With the jihad of the transgressors, I fought them while they were the companions of Talha and al-Zubayr who pledged allegiance to me willingly and obediently, then they broke their allegiance without a reason that required that. And he ordered me to fight the Qasitin, so I fought them, and they are the companions of Sham, Muawiya and his companions. And he commanded me to fight the renegades, so I fought them, and they are the Kharijites of the people of Nahrawan.” \(^{(19)}\) \(^{(19)}\). The interpretation of this verse has been mentioned with the content mentioned in some sources of history, including it

Sunan al-Tirmidhi \(^{(20)}\). Another example: On the authority of Ibn Abbas that God Almighty, the Almighty(Y), said: (those who spend their money by night and day, secretly and openly) \(^{(21)}\) This verse was revealed from Imam Ali (v) where he had four dirhams, and he spent one of them during the night, And one in secret, and one in public\(^{(22)}\).
God’s saying (Y) (And We did not send down the Book to you except that you might make clear to them about which they differed)\(^{(23)}\). To clarify what the Messenger (ﷺ) said to Ali (υ) (You are my brother and my guardian)\(^{(24)}\). He narrated the story behind these verses, explaining them as follows:

When the revelation was revealed to the Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ), he gathered the sons of Abd al-Muttalib and said to them, (God did not send a prophet without making for him a brother, a minister, an heir, a trustee, and a successor from among his family. He will rise from you to pledge allegiance to me. He said: (If your Qaim does not rise, he will be one of others and you will regret it)\(^{(25)}\), so Ali rose and pledged allegiance to him as he called him\(^{(26)}\) (so he made him his brother)\(^{(27)}\), successor and successor after him.

In the reporting of the mandate of Ali (υ) as God, the Blessed and Most High, commanded, where Judge Al-Nu‘man mentioned the verses that are specific to that event, mentioning what it says: (Oh Muhammad, teach people from their guardianship as I taught them from their prayers, fasting, Hajj and jihad)\(^{(28)}\). The Messenger of God (ρ), peace be upon him, said to Gabriel: (My nation has a modern era of ignorance, and I fear for them that they will apostate)\(^{(29)}\). (Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord \(^{(30)}\), and if you do not do that, then what His message has been conveyed, and Allah will protect you from the Messenger (peace be upon him) saying that the Messenger (peace be upon him) has commanded them as the Prophet (peace be upon him) has assumed guardianship and said: (Only your guardian is God, His Messenger, and those who believe, who establish prayer and pay zakat while they are bowing)\(^{(32)}\). So he conveyed to this the command of his Lord that his guardian and the guardian of the Muslims after him is Ali bin Abi Talib (υ). Then God revealed (Y) (Today I have perfected your religion

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\(^{(23)}\) Surah An-Nahl: Verse 64.
\(^{(24)}\) Judge Al-Numan, Sharh Al-Akhbar, Part 1, p. 116.
\(^{(26)}\) The same source.
\(^{(27)}\) The same source, vol. 1, p. 116.
\(^{(28)}\) The same source, vol. 1, p. 104.
\(^{(29)}\) The same source, part 1, p. 105.
\(^{(30)}\) The same source, part 1, p. 105.
\(^{(31)}\) Surat Al-Ma‘idah: Verse 67.
\(^{(32)}\) Surat Al-Ma‘idah: Verse 55.
for you, completed My blessing upon you, and approved Islam for you as your religion)\(^{(33)}\).

**Third: Recording the Hadiths of the Noble Prophet**

In his book, Al-Qadi Al-Nu’man included a number of honorable hadiths of the Prophet in his three volumes, which amounted to (1458) hadiths, and they included the virtues of the people of the Prophet’s house (ﷺ), which were recorded by other Islamic sources. (I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate)\(^{(34)}\). This hadith is supported by the inclusion of his saying (Y)(And come to the houses by their doors)\(^{(35)}\).

**Fourth: Writing poetry**

Al-Qadi al-Nu’man followed the method of citing poetic verses in his book Shahr al-Akhbar, as he used them extensively and was intent on mentioning poetic verses to document events, or that he was mentioned by someone who contributed to the historical event, or was close to that, and the poetic verses varied between lamentations, satire, Spinning, pride and praise, as there are (93) poetic lines. For example, what was reported on the authority of Abu Saeed Al-Khudri in verses that dealt with the description of someone who insulted Ali (v). Al-Nu’man mentioned verses of poetry on the authority of Saeed bin Jubayr \(^{(36)}\).

They cursed God and belied Muhammad and al-Murtada, the pure guardian Their living is a shame for their dead, and the dead are a scandal for the past

**Fifth: Writing more than One Novel**

In his author, Al-Qadi al-Nu’man, Explanation of the News, often cited more than one narration of the historical event. He transmitted the narration from more than one source and gave two opinions, one with isnad and the other without isnad without giving preference to any of them over the other. Examples of this are.

On the authority of al-Daghshi with his chain of transmission on the authority of Habbat al-Arni\(^{(37)}\) (peace be upon him) he said (p): (Prophecy was revealed to the Prophet, may God’s prayers and peace be

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\(^{(33)}\) Surah Al-Ma’idah: Verse 3.
\(^{(37)}\) Habbat Al-Arni: Habba Bin Gwain Al-Bajali Al-Arabi, originally from the senior followers, his nickname Abu Qudamah, participated in the Battle of Nahrawan, narrated on the authority of Al-Ghadir. Judge Al-Numan, Shahr Al-Akhbar, Volume 2, p. 177.
upon him and his family on Monday, and Ali, peace be upon him, prayed with him on Tuesday) And it was said on the authority of Ibn Yahya \(^{(38)}\) that Ali (v) said: (I prayed with the Messenger of God for three years)\(^{(39)}\).

**Sixth: Abbreviation**

Judge al-Numan followed in his codification of the information in what is known as al-Iqtida, as he mentioned that in more than one text, indicating not to be extravagant with details. It is noticed that when he mentions the novel, he focuses on the event that is related to the title of the topic he took and leaves the detail of the novel, so he follows the abbreviation in the chains of transmission and avoidance of repetition in the body of the novel and limiting himself to one hadith for each art \(^{(40)}\), which indicates the capacity of the author’s knowledge to provide the best and useful for the researcher and reader.). An example of this is his brief mention of the Battle of Badr compared to the Islamic texts that mentioned that battle \(^{(41)}\). It focuses on the fight that took place between Ali bin Abi Talib (v) and Al-Waleed bin Utbah, the fight of Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib with Shaybah bin Rab’ah and the fight of Ubaidah bin Al-Harith with Utbah bin Rab’ah, and the same situation is repeated in short when he mentions the narration of the conquest of Khaybar compared to its mention in the sources. Islamic in detail\(^{(42)}\)

**Seventh: Geographical Location**

Al-Qadi al-Nu’man followed in his book mentioning the geographical location of the place as well, which mentions his narration about it. This helps the reader to comprehend and understand the details of the novel. It was mentioned in the explanation of the news \(^{(42)}\) geographical locations and examples of that:

On the authority of Abdullah bin Buraidah, on the authority of his father, he said: (The Messenger of God sent us to Yemen) \(^{(43)}\).

**Conclusion**

The book Sharh Al-Akhbar by Judge Al-Numan dealt with many narrations and hadiths about the virtues of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (v) and his relationship with the Messenger Muhammad (p). Al-Qadi al-Nu’man wrote the narrations and hadiths in most of his books, relying on the

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\(^{(38)}\) Abdullah bin Yahya is one of the companions of Imam Ali (v) He witnessed many events with him, Judge Al-Nu’man, Sharh Al-Akhbar, Volume 2, p. 177.

\(^{(39)}\) Judge Al-Numan: Explaining the News, Volume 2, p. 177.

\(^{(40)}\) The same source, vol. 1, p. 77.


\(^{(42)}\) The same source, part 2, p. 301.

\(^{(43)}\) The same source, vol. 1, p. 94.
abbreviation in the chain of narrators, and he cited the Qur’anic verses to prove some of the noble prophetic narrations and hadiths as required in his book Sharh al-Akhbar.