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Abū Hāshim al-Ja'farī and his Presentation of the Book '*Yawm wa layla*' to al-Imām al-'Askarī: A Theory of Historical Harmony

This paper examines a significant personality in the history of Imāmism in the third century of the Islamic calendar, namely Abū Hāshim Dāwūd b. al-Qāsim al-Ja'farī. It is a comparative historical study that delves into his role as a prominent scholar who had close interactions with five of the later Imāms. He was in clear association with al-Imām al-'Askarī (d. 260 AH), being imprisoned with him and transmitting numerous hadiths, especially those related to miracles, the Mahdi, and the Twelve Imāms, as mentioned in Shi'i literature. He may be the only Hāshimī who relates such narrations during that period. At the same time, historical Sunni texts mention him as the one who challenged the authorities and caliphs, taking bold stances. The paper first analyzes him in terms of his relationships within the political, scientific, and intellectual context of his society. It then delves into his narrations and their content through the lens of the historical harmony theory. This theory explores the alignment of the chains of transmission (*isnād*) and the content (*matn*) with broader historical events and the flow of history. Within the framework of this theory, the paper places particular emphasis on a significant book, '*Yawm wa layla*,' attributed to Yūnus b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Qummī. Authentic narrations mention that Abū Hāshim al-Ja'farī presented this book to al-Imām al-'Askarī, who approved and praised it. This book held an exceptionally high status in its time, as it received praise from two Imāms, Abū Ja'far al-Thānī and al-'Askarī. The chain of transmission (*isnād*) leading to al-'Askarī included prominent scholars and authors from the Imāmī community, ultimately reaching Abū Hāshim. In one narration, al-Imām al-'Askarī is quoted as saying, "this is my religion and the religion of my forefathers, and it is the truth entirely." In another narration, it is stated that al-'Askarī said, "Allah will give him light on the Day of Judgment for every letter in it." The study further focuses on this book, examining its attribution to Yūnus, its content, and its influence on subsequent Imāmī literature, particularly the famous four books. All of this is evaluated within the framework of the historical harmony theory, which aligns historical events and the flow of history with the narratives. Through the analysis of both the personality and the book within the context of the historical harmony theory, this paper aims to discern the real history and the imagined history that has been handed down, especially while considering the criticism or praise directed towards the book or Abū Hāshim. It seeks to understand whether such endorsements are based on ideological or historical-critical tools, thus providing a deeper understanding of the book and the narrative personality.



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With multiple peer-reviewed research papers on Shi'ism, the history of hadith, and Islamic thought, Ahmad has actively participated in over 35 international conferences across 15 countries worldwide.