

Ali Aghaei

Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā: An Exploration of its Authenticity, Compilation, and Content within Twelver Shi'i and Sunni Traditions

This paper presents a comprehensive examination of *Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā*, an eminent compilation of hadiths attributed to 'Ali ibn Mūsā ar-Riḍā, the eighth Imām in Twelver Shi'ism. These hadiths trace back to the Prophet through an uninterrupted chain of transmitters (*isnād*) of Imām's forefathers. Intriguingly, despite its rich confluence of theological, legal, ethical, and spiritual tents representative of nascent Imāmī thought, the significant scope of this compilation remains underexplored in scholarly discourses. The research unfolds in two distinct but intertwined issues. Firstly, it delves into the authenticity of *Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā*, taking into account its historical context. This exploration not only identifies its compilers and discerns their motivations but also uncovers the potential historical circumstances that might have influenced its compilation. Such scrutiny necessitates a comparison of the *isnāds* across varying renditions of *Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā* with hadiths found in other Shi'i and Sunni hadith collections. Secondly, acknowledging the compilation's deep-rooted affiliation with Imāmī Shi'ism, the paper will explore its reception and adoption within Sunni scholarly circles through a content analysis of *Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā*. This qualitative analysis will categorize the hadiths thematically and seek to understand the underlying messages, values, and worldviews they propagate. Particular attention will be given to its contribution to theological, ethical, legal, and spiritual topics, which may reflect various aspects of religious discussions during the period of its collection and dissemination. This paper will underscore the significance of *Ṣaḥīfat ar-Riḍā* not only as a collection of hadiths but as a valuable resource offering insights into the commonalities among Shi'i and Sunni traditions in the early Islamic period. The findings will contribute to the broader understanding of the intertwined heritage of Shi'i and Sunni hadith traditions.



Ali Aghaei

University of Paderborn

Ali Aghaei is a Research Associate at the Institute of Islamic Theology of the University of Paderborn. He holds a MA and PhD in Qur'an and Hadith Studies from Usul ad-Din College in Qom (2002) and Islamic Azad University in Tehran (2012). From 2004 to 2013, Aghaei contributed to the *Encyclopaedia of the World of Islam (Dāneshnāmeḥ-ye Jahān-e Eslām)* being a member of the Academic Board of the Encyclopedia Islamica Foundation, Tehran. In the academic year 2013/2014, he was a post-doctorate fellow in the EUME program of Forum Transregionale Studien (Berlin) and subsequently a Research Fellow in the Corpus Coranicum project at BBAW (2014-2015). He has conducted philological, palaeographical and codicological research on Qur'anic manuscripts first as a Research fellow in the French-German project Paleocoran at BBAW (2016-2017) and then in his own project Iranqoran, funded by BMBF hosted at BBAW (2017-2020). Since October 2020, Aghaei has taught hadith studies at the Paderborn Institute of Islamic Theology while pursuing his research interests in Qur'anic manuscripts.