

## The wax and wane of the Shia hadith school in Madā'in

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### **Introduction**

The hadith classes held by Imam Sadiq (as) in Kufa paved the way for the establishment of a Shia hadith school in that area. This led to the migration of hadith quoters from different places to Kufa and, thus, the propagation of the Kufi hadith heritage back to those places. Considering the vicinity of Madā'in City to Kufa, the presence of hadith advocates from that city was more noticeable than from other areas. Scholars in the field of hadith history have somewhat accurately characterized the well-known Shia hadith schools, but some schools such as that in Madā'in have unfortunately been ignored, hence remaining in dark. This negligence might have been due to the centrality of Kufa. The present study seeks to shed light on the development process of the Shia hadith school in Madā'in and the stages involved.

### **Materials and Methods**

Madā'in is known as an area to have fostered many hadith scholars. The education of even numerous Sunni scholars is attributed to that place. As a piece of evidence in this regard, a whole chapter in the book *al-Ṭaqhāt al-Kubrā* is devoted to both Shia and Sunni hadith quoters in Madā'in. For example, it makes references to famous Shia hadith circles, such as Banu Hakim Azodi Madā'ini, and eminent figures, such as Ali ibn Hadid Madā'ini. The existence of these people in Madā'in provides enough motivation for research on that hadith school. Based on a scrutiny of the recent hadith expert

opinions, one understands that ‘geography’ and ‘method of quotation and criticism’ have been the two main criteria for handling hadith issues in terms of ‘approach’, ‘school’ or ‘field’. Indeed, according to some researchers, those two criteria serve as a basis for classifying the ways of dealing with hadiths in three clean-cut domains. So, if the scholars and quoters in a certain geographical place do not use one single method of quoting or criticizing hadiths, the corresponding domain is referred to as ‘a hadith center’. Once those people deal with hadiths with a certain common method, the domain is called ‘a hadith school’. However, the case is ‘a hadith approach’ if hadith quotation and criticism is based on a certain school of thought regardless of geographical considerations. Owing to the accuracy and distinctiveness of these classification terms and, above all, their conformity with the practice of men of great authority in hadith science, the same classification is adopted in this research to assign the title ‘field’ to the set of hadiths diversely and disconcertedly handled by Madā’in quoters and critics. The present study is a trend research type conducted with a descriptive-analytical method, and the data are derived from library sources including hadith books, biographies, and history books.

## **Results**

There is a four-stage process to consider about the penetration of Shiism into Madā’in and the subsequent formation of a center for Shia hadiths there. The stages were as follows:

a. The ground breaking period: This first stage of Shiism formation occurred under Salman Farsi’s rule in Madā’in. It is to be noted that, after a three-year term of ruling over the city, Sa’d ibn Abi Waqhas wrote a letter to the second caliph and asked him to appoint Salman as a new ruler there. Upon taking permission from Imam Ali (as), Salman accepted the position offered by the caliph.

b. Advent of loving Shiism: The second stage in the Shi’ism process of the Madā’in Shi’ite hadith school is the emergence of "loving Shi’ism". Muslim conquerors set out to seize new territories in the name of Islam but, due to their sense of superiority inherited from the Jaheli era, did not properly behave the people of the conquered lands including Madā’in. In contrast, Imam Ali’s specific supports of Madā’in rulers rapidly pushed the Muslims in that city to love and advocate Shiite Islam.

c. Advent of political Shiism: The third stage of Shiite Islam propagation in Madā’in marks the advent of political or Iraqi Shiism. It started with a series of campaigns launched by the people of the city against the Omavid sovereignty. It is to be mentioned that, from the conquest of Madā’in until the martyrdom of Imam Hossein (as) in the year 61 AH, there were no unified or independent Shiite tendencies in the city.

d. Advent of ideological Shiism: The last stage of Shiism process is characterized with ideological or Imami features. This stage began with the movement of Imam Sadiq (as) from Medina to Kufa. As a matter of fact, what came up as ideological Shiism in the mid second century AH was the result of the previous connections between Madā'in muslims and Shia Imams. As found in this research, 32 authors with the name suffix Madā'ini have quoted hadiths from Imam Sadiq (as).

Waning of the Shia hadith school in Madā'in: In the early 4th century AH, Madā'in began to turn down into a village. After the establishment of Baghdad in the year 148 AH, non-Muslim merchants and businessmen from Madā'in started trading in industrial and farming products with the neighboring cities such as Kufa, Baghdad and Basra. As for the Shiites living in Madā'in, especially hadith advocates, they moved to better provided cities. They did it because, first of all, they were not as wealthy as non-Muslims so as to do trading and, secondly, they needed a rich and dynamic atmosphere where to enhance their religious teachings and hadith activities.

### **Conclusion**

The geographical proximity of Madā'in to Kufa was very effective in the establishment of a Shia hadith school in Madā'in. The role of Madā'in scholars in conveying the Imami hadith legacy to the next generations was very valuable; only during the second and third centuries AH, seventy Shiite authors in that city quoted more than 1400 hadiths. This hadith school owed its persisting effect to the documentation of hadiths. The written books of hadiths made it possible for the Madā'in school to survive, continue its interactions with other hadith centers, and benefit from the legacy of Kufi Imami school even after the hadith activities began to decline in Kufa due to political pressures and certain internal factors in the late second century AH. Little is known of the exact causes of the decline in the Kufi hadith center, but, based on some evidence; its activities are estimated to have survived toward the end of the third century AH.

**Keywords:** Madā'in, Hadith Circle, Shiism, Hadith history.