

Analyzing the traditions of Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar's range in Kāfi book

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Introduction

Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar Jufi is one of the companions of Imam Sadiq and Imam Kazim (as), whose name appeared 95 times in the series of Isnads in the book *Al-Kāfi*. He is one of those transmitters who have transmitted special topics related to the Imam's high position in the world, the knowledge of the Imam's encirclement of the universe, the luminous creation of the Imams, and traditions related to the past worlds. In this article, the range of Mufaḍḍal is introduced as a group of transmitters who are carriers of the above topics and who have master-student relationships and who have been accused of exaggeration (ghuluw) by the leading scholars. Considering the significant position of the book *Al-Kāfi* in the Shi'a ḥadith heritage, understanding Kulayni's intermediaries in accessing the traditions of Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar's spectrum will be an important point.

Materials and Methods

Books on rijāl rijāl are significant resources for understanding the history of the lives of transmitters, as well as their tendencies and biases. Assessing the authenticity or lack thereof of these transmitters is just one of the functions of these texts. Utilizing conventional methods in historical studies and analyzing available data from historical events and reports regarding transmitters enhances our understanding of the realities during the time of the Imams (as) and the prevailing discourse of their era. One notable historical reality within Shi'a ḥadith is the existence of differing opinions among the companions, reflecting various intellectual and theological inclinations that have led to the formation of distinct movements and schools of thought. At times, these differences have resulted in confrontations between these groups. In this article, Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar can be viewed not merely as a movement leader but as the head of a splinter group within the majority of ḥadith transmitters, opposing the faction of Hishām ibn Hakam. The shared themes in traditions, the master-disciple relationships, and the accusations of exaggeration are

considered criteria for distinguishing this group. This paper examines a series of Isnads in *Al-Kāfī* that relate to the traditions of Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar regarding the elevated status of the Imams in creation, their comprehensive knowledge of the universe, the luminous nature of their creation, and the ḥadīths concerning the realm of al-Dharr. The study aims to explore the connection between this series and Kulayni by employing a descriptive-analytical approach.

Results and Findings

Based on the chains of tradition that comprise the collection of traditions of the Mufaḍḍal in the book *Al-Kāfī*, it can be concluded that there are a total of 56 recognized chains through which the traditions of Mufaḍḍal spectrum were transmitted to Al-Kulayni. Among these 56 chains, 33 begin with the name Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, indicating that over 50% of these traditions reached Al-Kulayni through Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā. In 23 of these 33 chains, Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā obtained the reports from Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿīsā. Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā al-Attar, also known as Abu Jaʿfar, was recognized by Najāshī as a prominent Shīʿa figure in Qum and regarded as reliable. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿīsā was one of the notable scholars of Qum and the author of several works, including “*Al-Nawādir*” and “*aẓillāh*”. Given the thematic similarities between the traditions of Mufaḍḍal spectrum and the titles of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad's two books, it is highly probable that these works were among the sources through which some traditions of Mufaḍḍal spectrum were transmitted to Al-Kulayni. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿīsā al-Ashʿari was known for his stringent evaluation of transmitters, particularly in contrast to those who were lenient and inclined towards exaggeration (ghuluw) views. Nevertheless, it is observed that most of the traditions of Mufaḍḍal spectrum reached him via Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā, who was validated by Najāshī.

Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Aban al-Razi al-Kulayni, known as ʿAllān, was the uncle of Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulayni. In the chains of tradition for the reports of Mufaḍḍal spectrum, 10 traditions are attributed to Ali ibn Muḥammad, who also reported from Sahl ibn Ziyad and Salih ibn Abi Hamad. Al-Kulayni transmitted the largest volume of traditions in *Al-Kāfī* from Ali ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummi. However, in the chains of tradition for the reports of Mufaḍḍal spectrum, the name Ali ibn Ibrāhīm appeared only twice. In one chain, Ali ibn Ibrāhīm narrates from his father Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim from Hasan ibn Maḥbūb, while in the other; the intermediary of Mufaḍḍal to Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim is not mentioned. Hussain ibn Muḥammad ibn Amer al-Ashʿari, another scholar from Qum associated with Al-Kulayni, is mentioned five times in the chains of tradition for the reports of Mufaḍḍal spectrum. In most of these instances, Hussain ibn Muḥammad narrates from Maʿali ibn Muḥammad.

Conclusion

An examination of the chain of transmitters for the traditions of Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar in the book *Al-Kāfī* reveals that these ḥadīths are predominantly transmitted by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿIsā and Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā. Given the esteemed status of both Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā and Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿIsā, an exaggeration (ghuluw) interpretation of Mufaḍḍal's traditions in *Al-Kāfī* seems implausible. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿIsā, a prominent scholar from Qom, actively opposed both exaggerated (Ghālī) and lax transmitters in ḥadīth transmission. Additionally, the chain of transmitters for Mufazzal's traditions does not include Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Khalid al-Burqī. Therefore, the claim that Kulayni was a leading figure in the Mufaḍḍal ibn Umar movement and that Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Khalid served as a link between Kulayni and the Mufaḍḍal movement lacks a scientific basis.

Keywords: Mufaḍḍal Ibn Omar, Mufaḍḍal spectrum, Kulayni, Kāfī.