



Trans-denominational Narration in the Imami Hadith Tradition: A Re-examination of the Role of "*Moḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī Qazwīnī*" in the Narrative System of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*

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Abstract

Shaykh Ṣadūq, a preeminent Imami hadith scholar of the 4th century AH, began a new phase of his academic life by traveling to Rayy. On the

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other hand, Rayy had become a prominent hadith center due to the presence of Imami and Sunni scholars from across the Islamic world. The city's religious diversity, relative political freedom, and favorable economic conditions were also conducive to its growth. An examination of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works reveals that scholars from the hadith school of Qazwin were also active in Rayy. Therefore, the presence of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* in Rayy and his meeting with *Qazwīnī* scholars in this region adds to the significance of this study. "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*" is a Sunni hadith scholar from Qazwin whose name and memory are only found in *Ṣadūq*'s hadith writings. The appearance of the narrations from *Abul Ḥasan Asadī Qazwīnī* suggests that he was a Shi'i hadith scholar. However, with the lack of data about him in Shi'i biographical sources on the one hand, and the existence of rare information about him in Sunni narrative sources on the other, his activities and background can be identified. This article, using a descriptive-exploratory method, identifies the Sunni denomination of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*, studies this active *Qazwīnī* scholar in Rayy, and critically examines the consequences and reasons for his presence in the city. The transmission of Sunni narrations from Qazwin to Rayy and the influence of this *Qazwīnī* scholar on the scholarly foundation of *Ṣadūq* are among the most important consequences of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s presence in Rayy.

Keywords: Qazwin, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī Qazwīnī, Shaykh

Introduction

The 4th century AH was the golden age for the compilation of the Imami hadith legacy and the formation of important academic schools in the Islamic world. During this period, the city of Rayy, as a major hub for scholarly interaction between Islamic denominations, hosted great hadith scholars, including *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (d. 381 AH). Knowing the masters and narrative sources of this renowned hadith scholar has always been a fundamental topic in hadith research. Some of these masters were Imami narrators residing in Qom and Rayy, while others were Sunni scholars from various cities, including Qazwin. This article seeks to examine the role and position of one of Ṣadūq's lesser-known masters—*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī Qazwīnī*—in his narrative system. The importance of this research lies in its ability to, on the one hand, re-examine the links between the hadith schools of Qazwin and Rayy and, on the other, to illustrate a model of inter-denominational scholarly interactions in the 4th century AH.

1. Statement of the Problem

The region of Rayy in the 4th century AH, due to the strong presence of scholars from different denominations, had a unique academic environment compared to other hadith schools (Mustufī, 1913: 52; Muqaddasī, 1978: 2, 582-583) and provided a suitable ground for the presence and activity of Shi'i and Sunni thinkers (Kremer, 1996: 80-82). Among the notable masters whom *Shaykh Ṣadūq* met in Rayy and from whom he narrated a significant, albeit limited, number of traditions is "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*."

His name's mention in the chains of narration of *Ibn Bābawayh* raises the possibility that he was one of his Imami masters. However, multiple clues indicate that he was one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s Sunni masters. More importantly, due to his *Qazwīnī* origin and narration of hadith in Rayy, he can be considered a connecting link between the two hadith schools of Qazwin and Rayy. Research on him, in this respect, becomes doubly important.

Studying the masters of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, especially those who were Sunni, can reveal hidden aspects of religious and scholarly interactions in the 4th century. To know *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī* more accurately, two categories of sources are available: first, Shi'i sources, led by *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s own works; and second, Sunni sources, which can supplement his biographical and hadith analysis. Since *Shaykh Ṣadūq* is the first to mention him in Shi'i sources, the first step is to examine *Ibn Bābawayh*'s reports in his works.

The most comprehensive report from *Asadī* in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works is as follows:

"*Haddathanā Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī* in Rayy in Rajab of the year three hundred and forty-seven." (Ibn Bābawayh. n.d.: 233)

This report contains key elements for identifying his biographical and hadith identity (cf. Assessing the Trustworthiness of *Muḥammad*

Given that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* narrated hadith from him, he can be considered one of *Ibn Bābawayh*'s important masters, especially since Sunni biographical sources also provide valuable information about him. Based on this, it can be assumed that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, by utilizing *Asadī*'s narrations, established a bridge between the hadith heritage of Qazwin and the region of Rayy, and in doing so, contributed to strengthening the Imami hadith tradition.

The present study aims to; by analyzing the type of hadith narrated from *Asadī*, evaluating the existing data in *Ibn Bābawayh*'s works, and examining the biographical reports of Sunni scholars, highlights the role of this narrator in linking the two schools of Qazwin and Rayy. Finally, this research, while emphasizing the limitations of data about him, considers this scarcity not a weakness but an opportunity to expand the study of *Ṣadūq*'s Sunni masters and the model of interaction between Shi'i and Sunni academic schools in the 4th century.

2. Research Background

Studying hadith masters is an important and often neglected part of hadith history that can lead to the discovery of influential movements in the formation of narrative systems. In the early Islamic centuries, prominent hadith scholars with different intellectual leanings settled in various parts of the Islamic world, thus giving rise to different hadith schools. In this context, the hadith school of Qazwin, with the presence of prominent Sunni scholars, played an undeniable role in transmitting

hadith knowledge to other regions, including Rayy and Qom.

Shaykh Ṣadūq (d. 381 AH) is a famous hadith scholar whose hadith interactions with Sunni masters, especially those from Qazwin, are evident in his texts. A precise understanding of these masters can help better comprehend *Ibn Bābawayh's* sources of knowledge and narrative system.

One of the contemporary studies that has addressed a part of this topic is an article titled "*Qazwīnī* Masters of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and Their Role in the Formation of His Narrative System" written by Hossein Sattar (2023 AD/1402 AH). In this article, the author has attempted to provide a general picture of the Qazwin Hadith School and its influence on *Ṣadūq* by briefly introducing a number of *Qazwīnī* masters who are mentioned in *Ṣadūq's* works with the attribution "*Qazwīnī*" or "bil Qazwin." However, the innovation of the present research lies in identifying and introducing one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq's* hidden *Qazwīnī* masters named "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*," which, unlike other *Qazwīnī* masters, has no geographical attribution of Qazwin in his narrative identity. This has caused him to be overlooked by some researchers.

The present study, by simultaneously using Shi'i sources (such as the works of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *Kashshī*, *Najāshī*, and *Ṭūsī*) and Sunni biographical sources (such as *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, *Tarīkh Baghdād*, and **202** *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*), attempts to, while identifying this obscure

narrator, outline and explain the hadith system that connected Qazwin and Rayy.

Some related studies, although not primarily focused on *Qazwīnī* masters, have implicitly addressed the transmission of narrations from Qazwin to other schools. For example, research on *Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan Qaṭṭān Rāzī* and masters like *Abū Aḥmad ‘Askarī*, *Zīyād ibn Ja‘far Hamdānī*, and *Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Ushnānī* shows that the Rayy school, due to its extensive connections with neighboring regions, especially Qazwin, played an important role in gathering hadith. The present research, following the *ibid* path, aims to explain his role in shaping *Ṣadūq*'s scholarly character and providing a part of the Imami hadith heritage by emphasizing the link between Qazwin and Rayy and analyzing *Ṣadūq*'s reports about *Asadī* and the biographical descriptions about him.

It should also be noted that existing biographical sources, while useful in identifying chains of narration and the classes of narrators, are sometimes unable to determine the geographical identity of some masters. This research, by an intertextual reading of biographical, hadith, and geographical data, attempts to, with a new approach, shed light on one of these dark spots.

In summary, studies on local hadith schools like Qazwin are still in their early stages. Extensive research has been conducted on the hadith schools of Baghdad, Kufa, Medina, and Qom, but the Qazwin School

and its connection to prominent hadith figures like *Ṣadūq* require supplementary research. This study, as the first independent research on the role of one of *Ṣadūq*'s Sunni *Qazwīnī* masters, is a step towards completing Shi'i biographical research and gaining a more accurate understanding of the academic environment of Rayy in the 4th century AH.

3. Research Methodology

The method of this research is descriptive-exploratory with a historical-biographical approach. In the first stage, the research, by direct and documented reference to original Shi'i and Sunni biographical sources, such as the works of *Ibn Nadīm*, *Najāshī*, *Shaykh Tūsī*, *Ibn Hajar*, *Dhahabī*, as well as biographical sources like *Tarīkh Baghdād*, *Tarīkh Qazwīn*, and *Ṭabaqāt al-Muhaddithīn*, identifies and re-identifies the biographical and hadith identity of an unknown hadith scholar named "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*"; a person who played a narrative role in the hadith sources of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, but has not yet had a comprehensive biography provided in biographical research.

In the second stage, based on the method of content analysis of *Ṣadūq*'s hadith sources, especially in works such as *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhū al-Faqīh*, *al-Khiṣāl*, *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿi*, and *Maʿānī al-Akḥbār*, descriptive data are extracted, and by analyzing the chains of narration and the frequency or description, his influence on the formation of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s intellectual

The exploratory feature of the research is not merely in re-identifying this narrator, but in discovering the ecological contexts of the Qazwin School and analyzing its position in Ṣadūq's intellectual system. This analysis, beyond a purely biographical approach, seeks to uncover the logic behind Ṣadūq's selection of masters, the nature of his scholarly interaction with Sunni scholars, and the reciprocal influence of the Qazwin and Rayy regions on the compilation of his narrative heritage.

From this perspective, the research method is also historical-genealogical in addition to being data-driven; meaning that while identifying lesser-known narrators, it also attempts to outline how the institution of narration was formed in Qazwin and how it was transmitted from Qazwin to Rayy.

Thus, the present research has attempted to, by combining descriptive, historical-analytical, and biographical data retrieval approaches, highlight the contribution of one of the neglected figures of the Qazwin School to the formation of *Shaykh Ṣadūq's* scholarly character and to emphasize the necessity of re-evaluating the role of local schools in the production of Shi'i hadith.

4. *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*. A Narrator in the Hadith System of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*

Among the masters with few narrations whom *Shaykh Ṣadūq* used is *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*, whose fame and

presence in the history of Shi'i hadith is primarily due to *Shaykh Ṣadūq's* narrations. A careful examination of *Ṣadūq's* words in his various works indicates the use of different phrases and titles to refer to this narrator, the analysis of which can help to better understand his identity, status, and scholarly-geographical location. *Shaykh Ṣadūq* mentions him in his hadith writings in the following various forms:

1. *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 227, 233, 312, and 385);
2. *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 7, 28, 73, 79, 161, and 199);
3. *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali Asadī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 253);
4. *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī, known as Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī* (Ṣadūq, 1983: 2, 461);
5. *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali Asadī, known as Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7);
6. *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali Asadī* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1940:191, 322, 323);
7. Sometimes he narrates from him indirectly, through his father, *Ali ibn Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Bābawayh*, who was his direct teacher (Ṣadūq, 1983: 1, 28).

This variety in titles, especially the combination "*al-Ma'rūf bi Ibn Jarāda al-Bardha 'ī*," indicates a geographical and family identifier.

The title *al-Bardha 'ī* refers to the region of *Bardha'* in the vicinity of

Qazwin region, which was one of the important hadith exchange centers during *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s lifetime. The title "*Ibn Jarādah*" could also be a reference to one of his ancestors or an unofficial family nickname, which is sometimes very crucial in comparative biographical identification.

An analysis of all the narrations from him in *Ṣadūq*'s works shows that the *Shaykh* used *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī* for various topics, such as ethics, education, the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, exegesis, and the characteristics of the Shi'a. *Ṣadūq* also carefully selected hadith that were consistent with Imami theological principles and, in doing so, selectively narrated *Asadī*'s hadith within specific content frameworks.

An important point to consider in biographical analysis is the absence of any expression of mercy or praise for *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī* by *Ṣadūq*. While *Ṣadūq* usually shows respect for his trustworthy and close masters with phrases like "*Raḍī Allah 'anhu*" (may God be pleased with him) or "*Raḥimahu Allah*" (may God have mercy on him), such phrases are not found for *Asadī*. This issue could indicate the degree of his trustworthiness, the intensity of their relationship, or the time gap in receiving the narrations, which will be discussed in detail in the biographical analysis section.

A statistical analysis of this narrator's presence in *Ṣadūq*'s works can also clarify the quantitative aspects of his relationship with *Ṣadūq*. The following table shows the frequency of his hadith narrations:

No.	Book Title	Number of Narrations
1	<i>Amālī</i>	4 times
2	<i>Khiṣāl</i>	9 times
3	<i>Faḍā'il al-Shī'a</i>	1 time
4	<i>Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār</i>	3 times
	Total	17 times

An important distinguishing point is that one should not confuse *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Ṣalt* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 10) with *Asadī*. Although they have the ibid name, there is a clear distinction between them in terms of their grandfather's attribution. Such precision in biographical analysis is a fundamental step in accurately identifying *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s sources and distinguishing between his different masters.

Since none of the non-*Ṣadūq* Imami sources mention *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*, it becomes clear that the only channel for the transmission of hadith from this narrator to us is *Shaykh Ṣadūq* himself. This fact highlights *Ṣadūq*'s central role in transmitting narrations from the Qazwin School and shows the influence of *Ṣadūq*'s scholarly journeys and the link between the Rayy region and other hadith schools.

4-1. The Scholarly Network of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s Masters: An Analysis of Influence and Hadith Connections

208 A perusal of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works shows that *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad*

Asadī narrated from numerous and diverse masters. This diversity includes not only famous and prominent masters like *Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī* but also many who were unknown or of little note in the Shi'i and Sunni academic and hadith circles. The wide range of his masters indicates the extensive scholarly and hadith connections that *Asadī* established in various cities, especially Rayy and Qazwin.

Among his masters mentioned in *Shaykh Ṣadūq's* hadith sources are the following individuals:

- *Ruqayya bint Ishāq ibn Mūsā ibn Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 39; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 253; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7)
- *Ya'qūb ibn Yūsuf ibn Ḥāzim* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 227)
- *'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Marzubān* (Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 322)
- *Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Āmirī* (ibid, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 73, 79; 2, 641)
- *Muḥammad ibn Abī Ayyūb al-Nahravī* (ibid: 233, 385 Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 28, 161)
- *'Abdullāh ibn Zaydān* (ibid: 199)
- *Ali ibn al-'Abbās al-Bajilīyān* (ibid: 199; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 323)
- *Muḥammad ibn Jarīr* (ibid; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 178)
- *al-Ḥasan ibn 'Urwa* (ibid.)

- ‘*Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Wahbī* (ibid; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 178)
- *Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Wāsiṭī* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 312)
- ‘*Abdullāh ibn Sulaymān* (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 385; Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 161)
- Aḥmad ibn ‘Umayr (ibid.)
- Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ṣūfī (Ṣadūq, ibid: 6)
- ‘Umar ibn Abī Ghaylān al-Thaqafī (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 177)
- ‘Īsā ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Qurashī (ibid.)
- Ubay (ibid, p. 28; Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 323)
- al-Ḥasan ibn Ali ibn Naṣr Ṭūsī (ibid: 232)
- Muḥammad ibn Abī ‘Imrān (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 51)
- Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Hārūn ibn Yazīd (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 191)

Many of these individuals are defined within the Sunni tradition, and this, along with the tone of some narrations and specific names, strengthens the hypothesis of *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*'s Sunni denomination.

On the other hand, by referring to Sunni sources, one can also identify a number of *Asadī*'s masters. For example, some reports from *Sīyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’* state:

"He heard from Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb, Abā al-Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, ‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarīyy, and Ibn Jawṣā’." (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH:12, 277; vol. 16, pp. 233-234).

"*Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ* narrated from him" (al-Rāfi‘ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 246)

"*Muḥammad ibn Abī ‘Imrān*" (ibid.).

In the book *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir*, his masters are also listed as follows:

"He heard from *Abā al-Qāsim al-Baghawīyy*, *Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd*, *Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd*, *Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb*, *Abū ‘Umar ibn al-Naḥḥās*, *Abā al-Ḥasan ibn Jawṣā’*, and many others." (Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115)

Other hadith evidence also clarifies the identity of his masters:

In a narration, it is stated:

"*Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf ibn Bundār Qazwīnī* narrated from *Abī al-Ḥasan ibn Ḥarārah Asadī* who said: ..." (al-Rāfi‘ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 130-131)

Also, in another report, it is stated:

"I was informed by *Ishāq ibn Muḥammad ibn Marwān* that his father narrated to them ... *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda‘īyy* in Qazwin informed us ..." (ibid: 1, 188, 240)

From this evidence, it can be inferred that *Asadī* had an active presence in the hadith circles in the cities of Qazwin and Rayy and was connected to the academic circles of both cities. Some of his masters who were based in Qazwin transmitted the hadith circles of this city to Rayy, and in this regard, played a significant role in the movement and spread of hadith heritage between these two cities.

It is worth noting that the fame of some of his masters (like *Ṭabarī*) **211**

alongside the obscurity of most of the others and the lack of an explicit Shi'i denomination in Shi'i biographical sources, has led some researchers to consider his Sunni denomination probable based on a collection of cumulative presumptions.

4-2. Analysis of the Role of *Abul Hasan Asadī's* Students in the Imami and Sunni Narrative System

One of the effective methods for understanding a narrator's scholarly status and influence is to examine the circle of his students and narrators. Regarding *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*, the available sources, although providing brief information about his life and masters, explicitly name only a limited number of his students. However, through a study of narrative chains and hadith works, a relatively clear picture of the circle of his students and narrators can be obtained.

According to Shi'i hadith sources, the most important and well-known student of *Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī* is *Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Husayn ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī* (*Shaykh Ṣadūq*). He narrates hadith from Asadī repeatedly in his works. A noteworthy point is that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* sometimes refers to him only as "*Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*," and sometimes he mentions him alongside other masters with phrases like "*Akhbaranā*" and "*Haddathanā*," which indicates a direct scholarly and hadith connection between them.

For example, in his book *al-Khiṣāl*, *Ṣadūq* writes:

212 "*Haddathanā Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadī*, from *Muhammad ibn*

Abī 'Imrān, from *'Abdullāh ibn al-Faḍl*, from *al-Ḥasan ibn Maḥbūb*.." (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 51).

In the book *al-Amālī*, there are also examples of *Ṣadūq*'s hadith narrations from *Asadī*, and their repetition suggests that *Asadī* was a frequently narrated and trusted master of *Ṣadūq*.

In addition to *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, Sunni sources also mention the narration of hadith from *Asadī* by some individuals. For example, *Abū Sa'd al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ* is introduced as a narrator from *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī* in *Akḥbār Qazwin* (Rāfi'ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 246). Also, *Muḥammad ibn Abī 'Imrān* is another Sunni narrator whose name is found in the chains of narration from *Asadī*.

This evidence shows that the circle of *Asadī*'s students was not limited to a specific denomination, and figures from both hadith traditions—Shi'a and Sunni—narrated hadith from him.

Furthermore, the narration of hadith in the mosques of Qazwin, such as the narration of *Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī* from *Asadī* in the mosque of "*Abī Bakr al-Ustādh*" (Rāfi'ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 2, 130), as well as the narration of *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bardha'ī Qazwīnī* from him (Rāfi'ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188), indicates that *Asadī* had an active presence in the academic environment of Qazwin and that a circle of local narrators had also formed around him, although the old sources rarely refer to the names of these individuals directly.

Given the geographical spread and denominational diversity among *Asadī*'s students, it can be concluded that he played a key role in the

transmission of hadith traditions, especially in the region of Qazwin and Rayy, and that his influence on the formation of the hadith tradition of Qom and Rayy, through a student like *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, is undeniable.

4-3. Assessing the Trustworthiness and Denomination of *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*

Shaykh Ṣadūq's special attention to Sunni masters is an undeniable issue (Sattar, 2014 AD/1393 AH: 209). This approach in hadith interactions provided a ground for the presence of some Sunni masters in the Shi'i narrative heritage. In the process of compiling hadith works, hadith researchers sometimes encounter names for which there is no trace in Shi'i biographical sources and catalogs. This absence indicates that some narrators were not fundamentally discussed in Imami biographical sources, and one must look for their biographies in Sunni sources.

One of the prominent examples in this regard is "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*," for whom no precise information is available in Shi'i biographical sources, and no clear name or trace has been reported. It seems that he was one of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s non-Imami masters and was considered a hadith narrator in Qazwin. The proof of this claim is the following chain of narration, which mentions a hadith narration by him in Qazwin:

"... Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda'īyy in Qazwin informed us,
214 Ishāq ibn Muḥammad ibn Marwān informed me that his father ..." (al-

Rafi'ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188 and 240)

The narration of hadith from such a person by Shaykh Ṣadūq cannot be without reason and must have been based on logical and scholarly motivations and reasons. Among the clues that are noteworthy in understanding the hadith status of Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī, known as Abul Ḥasan Asadī, is his benefit from hadith and history knowledge, which resulted from his studentship under figures like Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy and Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277; Ibn Bābawayh, 1941 AD/1361 AH: 178).

In some Sunni sources, *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* is praised with prominent descriptions. For example, he is introduced as follows:

"The Imam, the *Hāfiẓ*, the Traveler, *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad, Asadī al-Barda'īyy*." (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277)

And it is also stated:

"And this *Muḥammad* was a great *Hāfiẓ*, a critic, and a prolific narrator." (Ibn 'Imad al-Hanbali, n.d.: 4, 255)

There are also views on the title "*al-Barda'īyy*." It is said that "*Barda* " is the name of a land in Azerbaijan:

"And *al-Barda'īyy*: with a *Fatha* on the *Bā*' and a silent *Rā*', is related to *Barda'a*, a city in Azerbaijan. Thus in the original and printed: "*al-Barda'īyy*" and in *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāẓ* (3/971) and *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāẓ* p. (387): "*al-Bardha'ī*" with a *dhal*." (Ibn 'Imād al-Hanbalī, n.d.: 4, 255)

Each of the titles used to describe *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* reflects his

scholarly dimensions and hadith status. The title "*Hāfiẓ*" in the Sunni hadith culture is a key term with a special meaning that, from the 3rd and 4th centuries AH onwards, was used to refer to hadith scholars with the ability to widely memorize hadith chains, narrators, and texts (al-Suyūṭī, 1979 AD/1399 AH: 1, 30-32).

The title "Imam" is another term that indicates the individual's trustworthiness and precision in hadith knowledge and is often used to introduce the most prominent Sunni hadith scholars. For example:

"That the *Hāfiẓ*, the Imam, *Taqī al-Dīn Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī*, the resident of Damascus, came." (al-Suyūṭī, 1979 AD/1399 AH: 1, 44)

"And as for the *Musnad* of the Imam *Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*..." (ibid: 1, 187)

The title "*Raḥḥāl*" (traveler) also indicates the dynamic and hardworking character of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* in his pursuit of knowledge. His presence in various cities such as Iraq, Egypt, and Syria (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277) confirms this characteristic. Rashid al-'Attar also recalls his extensive travels as follows:

"And he had a journey in which he gathered between Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and other regions and countries." (Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115)

He is also introduced as one of the famous hadith memorizers and prolific great scholars:

"One of the famous hadith memorizers and the prolific great ones."

Among other available information about him is the name of his father, who was known as "*Ḥarārah*," and *Asadī* himself was sometimes called "*Ibn Ḥarārah*":

"His father is known as *Ḥarārah*" (ibid; Ibn 'Imād al-Hanbalī, n.d.: 4, 255);

"*Ibn Ḥarārah*" (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 233).

Noteworthy points are also mentioned about his memory. For example, it is said:

"He narrated from memory more than thirty thousand hadith in Qazwin and Rayy, and he had no paper with him." (ibid.)

These reports indicate his astonishing memory power; he would narrate more than 30,000 hadith from memory without using any written text. It is clear that such a status could not be insignificant in the hadith environment of Rayy and Qazwin, where *Shaykh Ṣadūq* was also present.

Finally, the year of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s death is also mentioned in some sources:

"He died in Qazwin in the year three hundred and forty-eight" (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 234; Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115).

His death occurred in 348 AH in Qazwin. This time and place, along with other evidence, can provide a basis for a more accurate analysis of the probable meeting between *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and him.

4-4. *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s Direct Meeting with *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* in Rayy

Our knowledge about the academic life and hadith activities of *Abul* **217**

Hasan Muhammad ibn Ahmad Asadi is limited to a few brief and scattered reports. Only some of this data is subject to biographical analysis. In Shi'i sources, especially *Shaykh Saduq's* writings, there is only a small but unique report of his encounter with *Abul Hasan Asadi* in Rayy. This specific report is found only in *Shaykh Saduq's* works, and other authors of biographical and hadith books have not mentioned such a meeting. However, *Saduq's* narration in *al-Amali* clearly indicates a face-to-face meeting and listening to hadith from *Abul Hasan Asadi*:

"*Haddathanā Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadi* in Rayy in Rajab of the year three hundred and forty-seven." (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 233 and 385)

In the sixty-first session of *al-Amali*, which was held on a Friday in the year 368 AH (ibid: 384), *Shaykh Saduq* narrates a hadith from *Abul Hasan Asadi*. The third narration of that session is a narration that *Saduq* recited in the presence of the people of Nishapur and explicitly states that he obtained it from *Abul Hasan Asadi* in the city of Rayy in Rajab of the year 347 AH. The 21-year time gap between receiving the hadith and narrating it shows *Saduq's* precision and scholarly integrity.

From the chain of narration's structure and the terms used, several points can be inferred:

1. The term "*Haddathanā...bil Rayy*" suggests a face-to-face meeting, especially since the place of narration is also specified.

- 218 2. The use of the formula "*Haddathanā*" clearly indicates an audible

- narration, not through an *Ijāza* (permission) or correspondence.
3. Given *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s method of hadith narration and his effort to receive hadith directly from trustworthy masters, this type of encounter adds to the weight of the narration and gives it greater documentary credibility.
 4. The term "*Ḥaddathanā*," which is formally used in face-to-face hadith narration, also confirms direct listening from the master.

4-5. Determining the Time of the Meeting and Hadith Reception

According to the report in *al-Amālī*, the meeting between *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* took place in the city of Rayy in the year 347 AH (ibid: 233 and 385). This encounter indicates the simultaneous presence of two prominent figures in the city of Rayy. On the other hand, Sunni biographical sources have stated the year of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s death as 348 AH (al-Dhahabī, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 16, 234). Also, *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s father is considered one of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s students. Since *Ali ibn Bābawayh* died in 329 AH, it can be guessed that his meeting with *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* occurred in the final years of his life and that he was in a generation preceding his son.

The synthesis of these clues suggests that *Muḥammad ibn Ali ibn Bābawayh*'s meeting with *Asadī* took place in the last year of this prolific hadith scholar's life—i.e., 347 AH. After this meeting, the possibility of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s return to Qazwin is high, as sources like *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir* have reported his death in Qazwin (Rashīd al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115). Therefore, it can be assumed that

his presence in Rayy was temporary or that he was in transit between Rayy and Qazwin. It is also not far-fetched to assume that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, upon learning of his presence in Rayy, went to him to listen to hadith.

The content of the hadith and the manner of its recording confirm that *Ṣadūq*, from what he heard from him, selected and reflected in his works what was compatible with Imami theological principles. This encounter can show a part of *Ṣadūq*'s *Ijtihādī* (independent reasoning) process in selecting hadith.

4-6. The Dissemination of the Qazwin Hadith School in Rayy by *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*

The city of Rayy in the 4th century AH, with its open and relatively free academic environment provided a suitable ground for intellectual and hadith interactions. The cultural context of this city, due to the absence of bigoted movements and the presence of a healthy academic atmosphere, provided a suitable ground for the entry of scholars from different denominations. The presence of *Shaykh Ṣadūq* and his hadith activities, on the one hand, and the arrival of hadith masters from Baghdad (cf. Muẓaffar, n.d.: 86), Qazwin, Nishapur, and other academic centers, on the other hand, indicate Rayy's important status in the exchange of hadith heritage.

Among these figures is *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*, a prominent Sunni hadith scholar and a native of Qazwin. With extensive travels to different parts of the Islamic world, he had gained a wide circle of

hadith connections, but his longest stay was in Qazwin and Rayy. His temporary interaction with *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, which seemingly occurred only once, not only led to the transmission of hadith but also probably influenced *Ṣadūq*'s desire to begin his scholarly journeys (*Riḥlāt 'Ilmīyya*). At that time, *Ṣadūq* was still at the beginning of his journey, and such meetings could have encouraged him to connect with other masters.

Undoubtedly, *Ṣadūq* took a part of his ethical and theological teachings from *Asadī*; and although this meeting was short, it is considered one of the important channels for the transmission of the Qazwin hadith heritage to Rayy. This transmission, albeit limited, played a significant role in establishing Rayy's position as one of the hadith hubs.

The analysis of these interactions is a part of the unknown history of hadith. The communication network that *Ṣadūq* established in Rayy was able to spread the hadith of various hadith scholars from the East to the West of the Islamic world and played a role like the flow of blood in the body of Islamic culture. A part of these efforts is due to *Ṣadūq*'s own scholarly character, and another part is due to the environment that Rayy provided for him.

Ultimately, the meeting with *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* can be considered the starting point for a strong line of communication between Qazwin and Rayy in the field of hadith. Thus, the city of Rayy can be considered a mirror reflecting the hadith heritage of Qazwin in this **221**

era; a city where various religious leanings found a chance to emerge and *Ṣadūq* was able to benefit from this diversity for the sake of the Imami tradition.

4-7. Analysis of the Chains of Narration of *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*

4-7-1. In the Works of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijālī Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations and Chain Analysis
1	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad (al-Bardha'ī)	al-Amālī	p. 227	Virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS)	Direct (hearing), narrated in Rayy
2	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 233	Manners and Ethics	Direct, date of narration: Rajab 347 AH in Rayy
3	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 312	Exegesis	Direct
4	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Amālī	p. 385	Sermons	Direct
5	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 7	Characteristic s of the Shi'a	Direct
6	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 28	Knowledge	Indirect, through Ṣadūq's father (Ali ibn Ḥusayn)

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijālī Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations of Chain and Analysis
	al-Asad Asadī					
7	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 73	Reward of Deeds	Direct
8	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 79	Imamate	Direct
9	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 161	History of Prophets	Direct
10	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī	ibid	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 199	Ethics	Direct
11	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asadī	(Probably the ibid)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 253	Merits	Narrates from Ruqayya bint Ishāq
12	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Asad Asadī al-Ma'rūf bi Ibn Jarādah al-Bardha'ī	ibid (with full title)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 2, p. 461	Occultation	Direct
13	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali al-Asadī al-Ma'rūf bi	ibid	Faḍā'il al-Shi'a	p. 7	Virtues of the Shi'a	Direct

Narration No.	Narrator's Name in the Chain (in Arabic)	Full Name and Rijālī Identity	Source Book (Shaykh Ṣadūq)	Volume/ Page No.	General Subject of the Narration	Observations and Chain Analysis
	Ibn Jarādah al-Bardha'ī					
14	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al- Asadī	ibid	Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār	p. 191	Exegesis	Direct
15	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al- Asadī	ibid	Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār	p. 322	Imamate	Direct
16	Abulḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al- Asadī	ibid	Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār	p. 323	Exegesis	Direct
17	(Through his father)	(Indirect)	al-Khiṣāl	vol. 1, p. 28	Knowledge	Indirect (Ijāza/correspondence), narrated from Ṣadūq's father who narrated from Asadī

4-7-2. In Sunni Sources

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
1	Name and Titles	al-Dhahabī, Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'	"The Imam, the Ḥāfiẓ, the Traveler, Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad, Asadī al-Bardha'īyy"	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī	Confirmation of identity, the titles "Ḥāfiẓ" and "Imam" indicate his high status among Sunnis.
2	Description and Virtues	Ibn 'Imād al-Ḥanbalī, Shadharāt al-Dhahab	"And this Muḥammad was a great Ḥāfiẓ, a critic, a prolific narrator"	ibid	Emphasizes his extensive memorization, criticism, and prolific narration.
3	Masters (Teachers)	al-Dhahabī, Sīyar	"He heard from Ḥamīd ibn	1. Ḥamīd ibn Shu'ayb;	Connection with major and well-

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
		A'lām al-Nubalā'	Shu'ayb, Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, 'Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarīyy, and Ibn Jawṣā'	2. Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy; 3. 'Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarī; 4. Ibn Jawṣā'	known Sunni masters.
4	Masters (Teachers)	Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, Nuzhat al-Nāẓir	"He heard from Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy, Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd, Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd, Ḥamīd ibn Shu'ayb, Abu 'Umar ibn al-Naḥḥās, Abul Ḥasan ibn Jawṣā', and many others"	1. Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy; 2. Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd; 3. Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd; 4. Ḥamīd ibn Shu'ayb; 5. Abū 'Umar ibn al-Naḥḥās; 6. Abul Ḥasan ibn Jawṣā'	A much more extensive and important list of masters, showing his wide connections.
5	Students	al-Rāfi'ī, Akhbār Qazwin	"Abū Sa'd al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ narrated from him"	Abū Sa'd al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ	One of his students who was himself a Ḥāfiẓ.
6	Students	(Indirect report via chain)	Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī narrated hadith from him in the mosque of "Abī Bakr al-Ustādh" in Qazwin.	Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī	Indicates his teaching activity in Qazwin and having a hadith circle.
7	Students	(Indirect report via chain)	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda'īyy Qazwīnī narrated from him.	Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda'īyy Qazwīnī	Indicates his local students in Qazwin.
8	Place of Activity and Narration	al-Rāfi'ī, al-Tadwīn fī Akhbār Qazwin	"Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda'īyy in Qazwin informed us..."	-	Explicitly states his hadith narration in the city of Qazwin.
9	Travels (al-Raḥḥāl)	Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār, Nuzhat al-Nāẓir	"And he had a journey in which he gathered	-	Confirms the title "al-Raḥḥāl" and his travels to Iraq, Syria, and Egypt

No.	Subject/ Data Type	Source (Sunni)	Data / Quote	Narrator / Person ID	Observations and Analysis
			between Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and other regions and countries"		to acquire hadith.
10	Memory and Prolific Narration	al-Dhahabī, Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'	"He narrated from memory more than thirty thousand hadith in Qazwin and Rayy, and he had no paper with him"	-	A testimony to his extraordinary memory and narration of more than 30,000 hadith from memory.
11	Nickname and Father's Attribution	ibid	"His father is known as Ḥarārah" and "Ibn Ḥarārah"	His father was known as "Ḥarārah."	Information for comparative identification and distinguishing from homonyms.
12	Death	ibid	"He died in Qazwin in the year three hundred and forty-eight" (348 AH)	-	Important: The date of his death (348 AH), which is key for comparison with Ṣadūq's meeting date (347 AH).
13	Death	Rashīd al-ʿAṭṭār, Nuzhat al-Nāẓir	Ibid	-	Confirmation of the death date in other sources.

5. Analysis of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s Chain Data

5-1. Examination of Omissions, Changes, and Distortions of Names

1) **Distortion of names.** The most important case is the distortion of his geographical attribution. In Shi'i sources (*Ṣadūq*), he is mainly referred to by the relation of "*Asadī*" or "*al-Barda'īyy*." An examination of Sunni sources shows that the correct nisba is "*al-Barda'ī*" (relative to the region of "Barda'a" in Azerbaijan). This difference may be due to a scribe's error or a change in pronunciation over time.

2) Omissions in the chains of narration. In *Ṣadūq*'s chains, his name is sometimes abbreviated to "*Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Asadī*," which the omission of his grandfather's name ("Ali") and his full relation of ("*al-Barda'īyy*") can lead to a *homonymy* with other narrators (such as *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn al-Ṣalt*). This highlights the need for precision in accurately identifying narrators based solely on their kunya and father's name.

3) Distortion in the names of masters. In Sunni sources, the name of one of his masters is mentioned as "*Ibn Jawṣā'*," while it may be narrated differently in some Shi'i chains. This issue requires a precise comparative analysis of all his chains in both traditions.

5-2. Analysis of Direct and Indirect Narrations and an Examination of Masters and Students

1) Direct narrations (listening). The vast majority of *Ṣadūq*'s narrations from *Asadī* is direct and is narrated with explicit phrases such as "*Ḥaddathanā... bil Rayy*." This indicates a face-to-face meeting and the high credibility of these narrations with *Ṣadūq*.

2) Indirect narration. There is only one case of indirect narration where *Ṣadūq* narrates from *Asadī* through his father (*Ali ibn Ḥusayn*) (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 28). This shows that *Ṣadūq*'s father was also one of *Asadī*'s students, and this scholarly connection goes back a generation.

***Asadī*'s masters (based on Sunni sources).** His network of masters is very extensive and consists of prominent Sunni figures:

- *Ḥamīd ibn Shu‘ayb*
- *Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy* (one of the greatest Sunni hadith scholars)
- *Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd* (son of the author of *Sunan*)
- *‘Abdullāh ibn Wahb al-Dīnawarī*
- *Ibn Jawṣā’*
- *Abū Muḥammad ibn Sa‘īd*
- This list shows that *Asadī* benefited from the purest hadith sources of the Sunni tradition.

3) *Asadī*'s students:

- *Shaykh Ṣadūq* (his most important Imami student)
- *Abū Sa‘d al-Sammān al-Ḥāfiẓ* (one of the prominent Sunni *Ḥuffāẓ*)
- *Ibrāhīm ibn Yūsuf Bundār Qazwīnī* (a local narrator in Qazwin)
- *Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Barda‘īyy Qazwīnī* (a local narrator in Qazwin)
- This combination demonstrates his role as a connecting bridge between the two sides.

Despite *Asadī* being Sunni, the vast majority of the narrations narrated from him by *Ṣadūq* revolve around purely Shi'i concepts such as the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, the Imamate, and the characteristics of the Shi'a. This demonstrates *Ṣadūq*'s intelligent and purposeful selection.

5-3. General Narrative Status of *Ṣadūq* in Relation to His Works

- 228** - Trans-denominational narration. *Ṣadūq*, with great prudence, used

trustworthy Sunni masters to strengthen and support Imami theological principles.

- Using memorized narrations. *Ṣadūq's* narration from *Asadī*, who knew "Thirty thousand hadith from memory," shows that *Ṣadūq* had access to memorized narrations that were in the memory of hadith scholars (not just in books).
- Emphasis on direct chains. *Ṣadūq's* insistence on mentioning the exact meetings ("*Bil Rayy fī Rajab* of the year three hundred and forty-seven") indicates his critical and precise approach in the science of hadith.

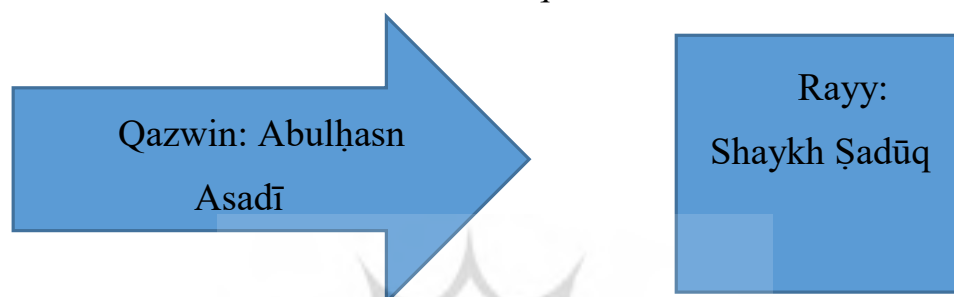
5-4. *Asadī's* Role in *Ṣadūq's* Narrative System

In the narrative system of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, *Abul Hasan Asadī* played the following key roles:

- 1) **A bridge for the transmission of the Qazwin heritage to Rayy.** He was the link between two important hadith schools, and *Ṣadūq* gained access to a treasure trove of *Qazwīnī* Sunni hadith through him.
- 2) **A source for strengthening Shi'i concepts.** *Ṣadūq*, through careful selection of narrations, used him as a Sunni source for narrating hadith that directly benefited the Imami tradition. This work gave the narrations additional weight and credibility in inter-denominational debates.
- 3) **A model for scholarly interaction.** *Ṣadūq's* interaction with *Asadī* is a practical example of scholarly interaction based on fairness and

documentation in the 4th century; in which an Imami scholar, in search of truth, goes to a trustworthy and pious Sunni scholar.

- 4) **Providing a part of the biographical network infrastructure.** The identification of *Asadī* and his masters' helps in better understanding the vast narrative network that *Ṣadūq* used.



6. Consequences of the Presence of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī Qazwīnī* in the Region of Rayy: Scientific and Cultural Impacts on the Rayy Hadith School

The presence of *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*, a Sunni *Qazwīnī* narrator, in the city of Rayy and his meeting with *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, although limited, had significant consequences in the field of scholarly interactions and the transmission of narrations between the two hadith regions of Qazwin and Rayy. An examination of *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works shows that he carefully selected from the narrations transmitted by *Asadī* those that were consistent with Imami principles. For example, in *al-Amālī*, *Ṣadūq* explicitly states that he heard these narrations from *Asadī* in the year 347 AH in the city of Rayy (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 233, 385). This limited but important interaction had several scholarly and cultural

6-1. *Ṣadūq's* Methodical Interaction with Sunni Masters and Avoiding Unsubstantiated Narrations

Given the limited number of *Ṣadūq's* narrations from *Asadī* (about 17 narrations in various works such as *al-Khiṣāl*, *al-Amālī*, *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār*, and *Faḍā'il al-Shi'a*) and the absence of any expression of mercy or praise for him in the narrations, it becomes clear that *Shaykh Ṣadūq* had a methodical and selective approach in his interaction with this narrator (Ibn Bābawayh, 1983 AD/1362 SH: 1, 7; idem, n.d.: 191). The selection of these hadith only occurred when their content was compatible with Imami theological and narrative criteria. This method is a manifestation of the rationality and hadith caution reflected in *Ṣadūq's* hadith-writing character (Sattar, 2013 AD/1393 AH: 210).

6-2. The Transmission of Narration from the Qazwin School to Rayy by *Asadī*

In Sunni biographical sources, including *al-Tadwīn fī Akḥbār Qazwin*, it is stated that *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* narrated in Qazwin and held sessions (al-Rāfi'ī, 1956 AD/1376 AH: 1, 188 and 240; 2, 130). Also, *Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'* describes him as a "*Raḥḥāl*" who was also present in various cities such as Baghdad, Syria, and Egypt (al-Dhahabī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 12, 277). His presence in Rayy in the year 347 AH, when *Ṣadūq* received narrations from him, indicates the direct transmission of *Qazwīnī* hadith knowledge to Rayy through him.

6-3. An Example of Inter-denominational Interactions in the Open Academic Environment of Rayy

The open academic environment of Rayy in the 4th century, especially

during the Buyid rule, allowed scholars from different denominations to engage in dialogue and narration alongside each other (Musavi and Sattar, 2021 AD/1400 SH: 125). *Ṣadūq*'s acceptance of narrations from narrators like *Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Qaṭṭān* and *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* is an example of this interaction. Although the number of these narrations is small, it shows a path that *Ṣadūq* was pursuing to benefit from the Sunni scholarly heritage within the framework of Imami criteria.

6-4. The Content-Based Influence of *Asadī*'s Narrations in *Ṣadūq*'s Works

An analysis of the content of *Asadī*'s narrations shows that their themes are often ethical, educational, and relate to the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS). For example, narrations in *Faḍā'il al-Shi'a* and *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār* are transmitted that directly address the characteristics of believers and the virtues of the Family of Muḥammad (PBUH) (Ibn Bābawayh, n.d.: 7; Ma'ānī al-Akḥbar: 322). *Ṣadūq* cautiously and selectively incorporated these narrations into his works to preserve the Imami theological framework while benefiting from the Sunni tradition (Isma'ilizadeh, 2003 AD/1382 SH: 156).

6-5. The Highlighting of Interaction between the Two Hadith Schools of Qazwin and Rayy

Although the data about *Asadī* is limited, this very data shows that he was a part of a wider scholarly network that formed the connecting link between Qazwin and Rayy. *Asadī*'s scholarly travels, the narrations transmitted in Qazwin, and the face-to-face meeting with

232 *Ṣadūq* in Rayy is evidence of this connection (Rashīd

al-‘Aṭṭār, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 115). This interaction shows that in the 4th century AH, the flow of hadith was not limited by religious boundaries but was based on scholarly criteria and inter-denominational dialogue.

In summary, a precise analysis of *Abul Ḥasan Asadī*'s role in *Shaykh Ṣadūq*'s works, although based on limited sources, provides a valuable opportunity for a re-examination of a part of the hadith interactions between Sunni and Imami schools; an interaction that bore fruit in the scholarly context of the city of Rayy and played a role in preserving the Shi'i narrative heritage.

Conclusion

This study is an attempt to re-examine one of the lesser-known narrators in the Imami hadith tradition, namely *Abul Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ali ibn Asad Asadī*; a Sunni Qazwīnī narrator whose name is recorded in a limited but significant way in the hadith works of *Shaykh Ṣadūq (Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī)*. A precise examination of biographical and hadith data in Shi'i and Sunni sources showed that this narrator was not only one of the prominent Sunni hadith scholars in the 4th century AH but also played an important role in the transmission of the Qazwin hadith heritage to the city of Rayy and in indirectly influencing the narrative structure of *Ṣadūq*'s works.

In the first instance, an analysis of the presence of *Asadī*'s name in *Ṣadūq*'s works showed that he is mentioned in a collection of hadith texts such as *al-Amālī*, *al-Khiṣāl*, *Ma‘ānī al-Akḥbār*, and *Faḍā'il al-* **233**

Shi'a, with various titles and nicknames, and a total of about 17 narrations are transmitted from him. Although this number seems relatively small, a qualitative analysis of these narrations revealed that their main themes are in the fields of ethics, the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt, exegesis, and theological issues; fields in which the discursive intersection between Shi'a and Sunni is more than in other topics. This very fact shows that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, in narrating these narrations, acted selectively and with a specific purpose, not by coincidence.

From a biographical perspective, this article also proved that *Abul Hasan Asadī* was never addressed with terms of mercy such as "*Raḍī Allah 'anhu*" or "*Raḥimahu Allah*" in Shi'i sources, which itself can indicate the denominational distance between him and *Ṣadūq*. On the other hand, in Sunni biographical sources such as *Sīyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, and *Nuzhat al-Nāẓir*, he is praised with important titles such as "*al-Ḥāfiẓ*, *al-Raḥḥāl*, *al-Naqqād*, *al-Imam*," and there are even reports of his high memorization power in narrating more than thirty thousand hadith without using a written text. These descriptions not only highlight his status in the Sunni tradition but also justify why a prominent Shi'i hadith scholar like *Ṣadūq* would refer to him.

Another important point addressed in this research is the special geographical and academic position of the city of Rayy in the 4th century AH. The open and pluralistic academic environment in Rayy, especially during the Buyid period, provided a context for interaction between Islamic denominations. This environment allowed *Shaykh*

Ṣadūq to meet with non-Imami narrators like *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* and to benefit from their knowledge within a specific framework. *Ṣadūq* not only narrated from *Asadī* but also his manner of narration (with the phrases "*Ḥaddathanā ... bil Rayy*," explicitly in the year 347 AH) shows that this encounter was face-to-face and audible and had high biographical importance.

In the local studies dimension, the article clarified that *Abul Ḥasan Asadī* was a native of Qazwin, but in sources, he is also known by the title "*al-Barda īyy*," which refers to a region in Azerbaijan. However, numerous hadith and biographical pieces of evidence showed that he had an active presence in Qazwin and Rayy and that his hadith sessions were held in both cities. *Ṣadūq*'s narration from him in Rayy is a strategic point in the transmission of the Qazwin Sunni tradition to the Shi'i scholarly and narrative context of the city of Rayy. This point also proves that the role of the Qazwin School in the formation of *Ṣadūq*'s scholarly character is greater than being limited to Imami masters.

Another achievement of the article was the precise identification of *Asadī*'s masters and students, which showed that he had an active position in a network of extensive scholarly connections in the Islamic world of that time. Among his prominent masters are *Abul Qāsim al-Baghawīyy* and *Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī*, and among his students are *Abū Sa'd al-Sammān* and *Shaykh Ṣadūq* himself. This diversity in scholarly connections not only adds to his narrative credibility but also shows a kind of link between the Sunni and Shi'i hadith traditions.

Nevertheless, this very case study was able to provide a model for

re-examining *Ṣadūq*'s other obscure masters and reconstructing the forgotten scholarly network between the Sunni and Imami hadith schools in the 4th century AH. This article showed that even narrators with a small volume of narrations can be key links in the flow of knowledge, inter-denominational interactions, and the intellectual structure of great Imami hadith scholars.

It is suggested that future research, using more precise document analysis methods, should examine other Sunni narrators in *Ṣadūq*'s works to shed more light on the hidden dimensions of scholarly interactions in the early Islamic centuries.

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