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RECONSIDERING AND INVESTIGATING THE NAME “HAMAD IBN OTHMAN”, AS ONE OF THE PROMINENT NARRATORS OF SHIITE HADITH AND DETERMINING HIS AUTHENTICITY

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ABSTRACT

The determination of right from wrong was gradually becoming difficult and complicated for Hadith science researchers and scholars upon getting distant from the era of Hadith issuance. This same issue urged the thinkers and researchers of the HADITH area to explore the biographies of the HADITH narrators so that they might gain an insight over the validity of their speeches. Some heightened the importance of such cognition to the extent that the determination of the authentic from weak HADITH without scrutiny was deemed improbable. Therefore, biographical evaluation became twice as much important with the pass of time. “Hamad Ibn Hassan” was one of the famous Shiite narrators whose biography has been most frequently evaluated by the scientists of the field. Since he has been a disciple of Imam Sadeq (PBUH), Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH) and there are many narrations cited from him and his narrations have been the foundations of many other Shiite Hadith narrators, the precise knowledge of his authenticity or otherwise can be followed by validation or invalidation of a large and robust part of Shiite Hadith system. The issue is well illustrative of the importance and necessity of the subject with which the current research paper has dealt. The present study, meanwhile presenting accurate information about Hamad’s name and surname, demonstrates his reliability and validity. The study has been conducted based on a library research method.

Keywords: Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab, Al-Fazary, Fellows of Consensus, Trustworthy Man

INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Statement of the Problem:

Besides the great many of the discussions regarding the authenticity or unreliability of Hamad Ibn Othman, the important point about him, which has also been frequently discussed in writings by the scientists of biographical evaluation, is the unity of two names for a single person and/or the differentiation of two persons with the uniqueness of their names. The names “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Fazary” and “Hamad Ibn Othman Al-Naab” have been mentioned repeatedly in Shiite books.

Now, the important question is that whether “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Fazary” and “Hamad Ibn Othman Al-Naab” are both a single appellation used for two persons and/or they refer to the different surnames of a single person? After investigating the authenticity of Hamad, the foresaid question will be dealt with herein.

Although the knowledge of Hadith and biography is not new and newly emerging and there are many books written on them, it has to be pointed out that dealing with the biography of every single Shiite hadith narrators and investigation of their authenticity within the format of a separate research and a well-established article is a very difficult and complex task. Thus, the

present study is somehow independent and new and it can pave the road for the forthcoming researches of this same kind.

Having investigated the authenticity of Hamad Ibn Othman, the present article deals with expressing the differences of the two aforementioned names and it will be finally concluded based on results obtained from the text.

Hamad's Biography:

In showing the authenticity and reliability of Hamad Ibn Othman, it only suffices to say that he was realized as a member of fellows of consensus¹ (see also Horr Ameli, 1993, v.30, pp.221-223; Tusi, "Ekhtiyar Ma'arafah Al-Rijal (Rijal Al-Keshi)", (no date), v.2, p.673). Najjashi has mentioned that his name was "Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Fazary" and then calls him and his brother, Abdullah, as trustworthy scholars. Hamad Ibn Othman narrates from Imam Sadeq (PBUH), Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH). He died in 769 in Kufa. During the later eras, a great many of Shiite Hadith narrators have cited quotes from him (Najjashi, 1995, p.143).

But, he has been called by such a surname as "Al-Naab" by Sheikh Tusi (see also, "Al-Fihrist, 1996, p.115) and Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Khalid Barqi (see also, 1963), p.48); he has also been admired by such epithets as "trustworthy man" and "high rank" by the Sheikh. Keshi, as well, has also mentioned him by such a surname as "Al-Naab" and knows him and his brothers, Ja'afar and Hussein, as the offspring of Othman Ibn Ziyad Al-Rawasi and underlines the virtuousness and trustworthiness of them all (see also, Tusi, "Ekhtiyar Ma'arafah Al-Rijal (Rijal Al-Keshi)", (no date), v.2, p.670).

Hamdüyeh quotes Sheikh in saying that Hamad was one of the men the accuracy of what he called authentic was also confirmed by the entire assistants and his jurisprudential degree and scientific rank were confessed by everyone (see also, Ameli, 1990, pp.154-155; Helli, 1996, p.125; Mazandarany, 1995, v.3, p.114). There are many famous narrators who have cited his narrations like Ibn Abi Amir, Hasan Ibn Ali Al-Washa'a, Ibn Ali Ibn Fazzal, Hajjal, Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abi Nasr and such others as Fazzalah Ibn Ayyub, Ja'afar Ibn Bashir, Tha'alabah Ibn Maimun and Ja'afar Ibn Muhammad Ibn Yunes. The phrase "Ebrahim Ibn Hashem quoting Hamad Ibn Othman" has been iteratively mentioned in Al-Kafi (see also, Mazandarany, 1995, v.3, p.116).

However, Ibn Davud (see also, Helli A, 1971, p.84) and Allameh Helli (see also, Helli, H, 1996, p.125) and Tafreshi (see also, Hosseini Tafreshi, 1997, v.2, pp.152-154) have used the name giving it two separate titles and they apparently know them different from one another. In a translation and study of the biography of "Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Fazary", Allameh Helli makes a precise reference to a statement by Najjashi; also, in a translation of a work on "Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab", he expresses a statement similar to Sheikh Tusi's.

Reasons Behind the Appellation Unity of the Two Figures:

¹ The title "fellows of consensus" is a term widely used in science of biographical evaluation to refer to a special group of narrators from second and third hegira century who had been instructed in Imam Baqer (PBUH), Imam Sadeq (PBUH), Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH)'s schools and whose narrations as well as their scientific rank and their jurisprudential position had been confirmed. This group was consisted of 18 individuals according to the most popularly held ideas, though some others have mentioned that they even topped to 22. Hamad Ibn Othman was one of them

First of all, Sheikh Tusi knows “Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab” as an assistor of Imam Sadeq (PBUH) (See also, Tusi, “Al-Abwab (Rijal Al-Tusi), (1994), p.354) while Najjashi enumerates “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Razary” amongst the assistants of Imam Sadeq (PBUH), Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH). So, if “Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab” is considered to have not perceived the presence of Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH), he might have been a person other than “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Razary” who has had such an honor.

Second of all, Najjashi points to the brother of “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Razary”, named Abdullah, and has also praised him while some other biographical evaluation scientists name Hussein and Ja’afar, not Abdullah, as brothers of “Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab” (see also, Helli H, (1996, p.125 and Tusi, “Ekhtiyar Ma’arafah Al-Rijal (Rijal Al-Keshi)”, (no date), v.2, p.670) so it is very likely that these two persons have had similarities in their names. Thirdly, as it was mentioned before, the grandfather of Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab, was Ziyad Al-Rawasi according to the scientists of biographical evaluation while the other person’s grandfather has been Amro Ibn Khalid. So, it is made clear that the two persons had parts of their names in common.

But, accepting the appellation similarity, another question is raised as to could have Sheikh Tusi and/or Najjashi or the other biographical evaluation scientists forgotten to mention the name of one of the most famous Shiite narrators? To answer the question, the surname differences have to be proved.

Reasons Behind the Surname Differences of a Single Person:

It was mentioned before that Najjashi has mentioned that “Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid Al-Fazary” died in 679 in Kufa. Keshi, as well, exactly mentions 679 and Kufa as the death date and place for Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab. So, it becomes more probable that the two names with two different surnames have in fact belonged to one person. On the other hand, the death date is indicative of the idea that “Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab”, besides being an assistor of Imam Sadeq (PBUH), has also perceived the presence of Imam Kazem (PBUH) and Imam Reza (PBUH) because Imam Reza (PBUH) lived the period between 727 and 782. So, considering this latter explanation the reason proving the unity of the names of the two persons is found holding true.

But, the fact that can be taken as a more strong reason giving rise to the oneness of the two names is the epithets and the inter-clan binds. It can be explained as stated in the following statements: as put by Sheikh, Hamad Ibn Othman, Al-Naab, has had guardianship bound to “Qani” tribe (see also, “Al-Abwab (Rijal Tusi)”, 1994, p.186). Qani was a branch of the large Qatfan clan (see also, Jawhary, 1955, v.6, p.2450). On the other hand, Hamad Ibn Othman Ibn Amro Ibn Khalid was known as Fazary which was also a branch of the large Qatfan tribe (See also, Jawhary, 1955, v.2, p.781). Thus, considering the idea that these two names had been both belonging to the same tribe, it is envisaged more probable that the same person had been called by two surnames. In other words, it is deemed more likely that Hamad Ibn Naab and Hamad Ibn Othman have been two epithets of one person.

Ayatullah Khou’ei, as well, responds to some proofs proving the differentiation of the two by presenting reasons suggesting the unification of the two names: “according to Najjashi and Sheikh, Hamad has been one of the most famous Shiite Hadith narrators and has authored a book. So, with such a degree of importance and fame, Najjashi and Sheikh should have



mentioned the other person's name if these two names belonged to two different persons and they should have not missed the mentioning of the name of the other. In the meanwhile, Sheikh Saduq and Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Khalid Barqi, as well, have translated only one name".

Moreover, Sheikh and Najjashi both affirm the idea that Muhammad Ibn Al-Valid Ibn Khalid Al-Khazar is the narrator of the book "Hamad Al-Naab" and "Hamad Ibn Othman". And, this is well indicative of the unity of the two persons' names.

As for the reason why Najjashi mentions Abdullah and Sheikh points to Hussein and Ja'afar as Hamad's brothers, it can be said that the three of them have been Hamad's brothers. But, as put by Keshi, "Hamduyeh quotes the Sheikh in asserting that both Hussein and Ja'afar were considered as reliable narrators meaning that the authenticity of Abdullah had not been ensured; whereas, Najjashi, confiding in the authenticity of Abdullah, mentions his name to confirm it and, in doing so, he withdraws from mentioning the name of Hussein and Ja'afar who had been more famous and the rendering of their names has also been given in separate.

It can be stated in regard of the differences in the names of the persons' grandfathers that Ziyad Al-Rawasi might have been one of Hamad's ancestors and Amro Ibn Khalid could have been a more distant forefather of him (Khou'ei, 1992, v.7, pp.223-227).

Generally, the individuals were attributed to their more famous and more distant forefathers as was common and exercised in the genealogy in the past and the names of several persons were omitted from the hierarchy of the descent. That was because the higher ancestors were more famous. Thus, the possibility put forth by his highness Khou'ei could not be disregarded. It is very fascinating that Sayyed Khou'ei, positing a large deal of discussions in this regard, finally, announces the debate useless and states that "Hamad is a reliable and trustworthy person in any case and it does not make any difference if it is a name for two persons or one person" (See also, Khou'ei, 1992, v.7, p.227).

CONCLUSION:

It can be concluded from the topics introduced in the current research paper that Hamad Ibn Othman is one person featuring two different epithets. That is because it was not unnatural for a person to have several surnames in the past. The evidence for such a saying can also be seen amongst the other narrators. For example, the name of a famous narrator, called Ali Ibn Esma'eil, can be pointed out in this regard. This latter person has also been pointed to as Ali Ibn Al-Sedi which was for the reason that Esma'eil had been given the epithet "Sedi" (see also, Tusi, "Ekhtiyar Ma'arafah Al-Rijal (Rijal Al-Keshi)", (no date), v.2, p.860 and Ameli, 1991, p.368). also, it can be stated that it does not make any difference if it is considered that two persons commonly shared the name as far as Hamad's authenticity has been affirmed by the entire scientists of biographical evaluation. The important thing is that his narrations are valid and acceptable.

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