

Shi'ite Authors in Islamic History

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The pioneer in this field was Asbagh bin Nabatah Tabi'i who was one of the closest friends and companions of Amir-al-Muminin Imam Ali(A.S.). Ash-Shaikh has said in Al-Fahrist that Ad-Dawri reported through him the account of the battle against Imam Husain (A.H.). He has also given the authorities for it.

He died during the first century.

The first one to write a book on Islamic History was Aaban Bin Uthman al-Ahmar Tabi'i. He wrote Kitab-ul-Mabda' Wal-Mab'ath Wal-Maghazi Wal-Wafat Was-Saqifah War-Raddah. Both Ash-Shaikh and An-Najashi have mentioned this book alongwith their authorities. They have said that the inhabitants of Basra, Abu 'Ubaidah Mu'mar bin al-Muthanna and Abu 'Ubaid Muhammad ibn Sallam, received a lot of information from it and very often quoted from it in connection with the accounts of poets, genealogy and incidents. He died in 140 A.H.

Other writers in this field are the following:

1.Muhammad bin Sa'ib al-Kalabi.

Ibn-un-Nadim has mentioned him in his Fahrist among those scholars of Kufa who were well-versed in history and the lives of people. He died in 146 A.H.

Abu Mukhnif Lut bin Yahya al-Azdi al-Ghamidi. .2

He was one of the prominent citizens and historian of Kufa.

He wrote a number of books including:

(i) Al-Maghazi (i) Futuh-ish-Sham (i) Al-'Iraq (iv) Khurasan (v) Al-Jamal (vi) As-Siffin (vii) An-Nahr (viii) Al-Gharat (ix) Maqtal-ul-Husain (A.S.) etc. Ibn-un-Nadim says in Al-Fahrist?" I have read the opinions of scholars written in the hand of Ahmad bin al-Harith al-Khazzar that Abu Mukhnif is more informed about Iraq, its affairs and conquests. Same is the case of Al-Mada'ini in respect to Khurasan, India and Fars and of Al-Waqidi in respect to Al-Hijaz and Sirah (Biography of the Prophet). They are all at par in respect to the conquests of Syria.» Two out of them are Shi'ites, Abu Mukhnif and Al-Waqidi. The former died during the second century.

Nasr bin Muzahim Al-Manqari .3

Ibn-un-Nadim has mentioned him in Al-Fahrist as from the generation of Abu Mukhnif. He

wrote (i) Al-Gharat (ii) Siffin (iii) Al-Jamal (iv) Maqtal-u-Hajar (v). Maqtal-ul-Husain (A.S.) He has other books in this field to his credit. He died during the second century

Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yassar al-Madani. .4

He is the author of As-Siyyar Wal-Maghazi. Ibn Hajar has testified his being a Shi'ite in At-Taqrīb and our own friends have mentioned him among the Shi'ite Scholars. Other scholars say that he was the most well-informed about all the battles in which the Holy Prophet(S.A.W.) participated (Maghazi). He knew them in minute details and in a very scientific way. Ibn Khathir Ash-Shami writes in his History about Ghazwah Bani Lhyan, "Al-Baihaqi has mentioned this battle to have taken place in the 4th year after the Hijrah but I take it to have happened in the 6th year after the Hijrah, following the leader of the writers of battle-accounts in his own age as well as after, that is Ibn Ishaq, as Imam Ash-Shafi'i has said about that whosoever wants to get detailed accounts of battles, he should refer to Muhammad bin Ishaq because it is his field."

Ibn Ishaq was the first person to have written the Biography of the Prophet (As-Sirat). The author of Kashf-uz-Zunūn says while writing about 'Ilm-us-Sirat (Art of Biography of the Prophet), that the first one to write in this field was the famous Imam (pioneer) known as Muhammad bin Ishaq. Then he writes under the letter M (mim) that Maghazi (battles) of the Holy Prophet(S.A.W.) were collected first of all by Muhammad bin Ishaq. Some people say that the first one to write in this field was 'Urwah bin Zubair.

As-Suyuti has said in Al-Awa'il, "The first one to write on battles led by the Prophet was 'Urwah bin Zubair and the first one to collect the details about such battles was Muhammad bin Ishaq.» His saying that Urwah bin Zubair began writing the accounts of battle is strange because the scholars do not recognise him. This is why the author Kashf uz-Zunūn said that "some people say" which indicates the weakness of such an idea. Furthermore it contradicts the statement given by As-Suyuti himself that the first one to have collected the details of the battles fought by the Holy Prophet(S.A.W.) was Muhammad bin Ishaq. Even if we try to arrive at a compromise and say that Ishaq collected the accounts of battles fought in particular and Urwah bin Zubair did the same in general, the contradiction stays because Ibn Ishaq remains the first of all to have collected the accounts of battles in Islam. He died in 150 or 151 A.H

Hisham bin Muhammad bin Sa'ib al-Kalabi. .5

Ibn Nadim has written in Al-Fahrist about Muhammad bin Sa'd, who was calligrapher of Al-Waqidi, that he told about Al-Waqidi to have said that he (Hisham) was well aware of the history of the Arabs, and events connected with it. Then he (Al-Waqidi) talked about Hisham's

works and mentioned a number of books having been written in every field. Out of these books which he mentioned and which total to about 30, some are the following:
(i) Al-Ahlaq Bain-ul-Qaba'il, (ii) Al-Maathir Wal Buyutat Wal Munafarat Wal Ma'udat (iii) Akhbar-ul-Awa'il (iv) Fima Yuqarib-ul-Islam Min Amr-il-Jahiliyyah (v) Akhbar-ul-Islam (vi) Akhbar-ul-Buldan (vii) Ash-Sha'r wa Ayyam-il-Arab (viii) Al-Akhbar Wal Asmar.
Ibn Khallakan says that he was one of the famous memorizers. Ibn Khallakan has also mentioned a number of books on history written by Hisham.
.He died in 206 A.H

Muhammad bin 'Umar al-Waqidi. .6

Ibn-un-Nadim has said about him that he was a Shi'ite of good faith but always adhered to Taqiyyah. He was the person who observed that Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (A.S.) was the miracle of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) just as the Rod of Moses was the Miracle of Moses or bringing the dead back to life was that of Isa bin Maryam (A.S.) etc. etc. He was a master scholar in field of battle-accounts, biographies, conquests and general events. He left behind him 600 book-cases, every one of which was carried by two men. Before that books worth two thousand dinars were sold to him. He had two slaves to himself who were engaged in writing work day and night. He wrote (i) At-Tarikh-ul-Kabir, (ii) Al-Maghazi, (iii) Al-Mabath, (iv) Akhbar-u-Makkah (v) Futuh-ush-Sham, (vi) Futuh-ul-Iraq, (vii) Al-Jamal (viii) Maqtal-ul-Husain (ix) As-Sirah (the biography of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) etc. He died in 207 A.H

Al-Ya'qubi, Ahmad bin Abi Ya'qub .7

He is the author of well known book on history known as Tarikh al-Ya'qubi which has been printed and published in Leiden in two volumes. It begins with the creation and comes down to .259 A.H

Ahamd bin Muhammad bin Khalid al-Barqui .8

He wrote Kitab-ut-Tarikh and Kitab-u-Akhbar-il-Umam (just possible both books are one and the same). He also wrote Ansab-ul-Umam and Al-Maghazi. These have been mentioned in Al-Fahrist of Ash-Shaikh and by and by An-Najashi.
.He died in 274 A.H

Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Sa'id Thaqafi .9

An-Najashi and Ash-Shaikh in Al-Fahrist both have mentioned a number of books on history written by him. They have given the authorities establishing the identity and validity of these books. Some of them are (i) Al-Maghazi (ii) As-Saqifah, (iii) Al-Jamal (iv) Siffin (v) Al-Hakain

(vi) An-Nahr (vii) Al-Gharat (viii) Al-Maqatil etc. etc.

.He died in 283 A.H

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Zakariyyah bin Dinar .10

He was an ally of Bani Ghilab of Basra. An-Najashi reports that he was one of the prominent personalities of Basra and was very well versed in history having wide information An-Najashi has also mentioned the books written by him on history alongwith their authorities.

.He died in 289 A.H

Muhammad bin Mas'ud al-'Ayyashi.11

He wrote biographies of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Uthman and Mu'awiyah. His death occurred during .the third century

Abu Muhammad Ahmad bin A'tham al-Kufi .12

According to Mu'jam-ul-Udaba', he was a Shi'ite and wrote a book on conquests upto the period of Harun-ur-Rashid as well as a book of history upto to the period of Al-Muqtadir.

He died in the early fourth century.

According to the Encyclopaedia of Islam, Ibn A'tham al-Kufi Muhammad bin Ali was an Arab historian. He wrote a book of history in the style of story-tellers. He was under the influence of Shi'ism.

.He died around 314 A.H

Muhammad bin Mazid bin Mahmud al-Bushanji .13

According to Bughyat-ul-Wi'at, he is the author of Al-Haraj Wal-Maraj which is about the history of the time of Al-Musta'in and Al-Mu'tizz. He also wrote Akhbar-ul-'Uqala' il-Majanin.

Ash-Shaikh has also mentioned him in his Rijal.

.He died in 325 A.H

Abu Ahmad bin Abdul Aziz Yayha al-Jaludi al-Basri .14

An-Najashi has said about him that he was the Shaikh of Basra and its historian. He has also mentioned a great number of books on history and biography, which will need a lot of space to copy them here. Ibn Nadim has said in his Al-Fahrist that he was one of the most prominent Imamite-Shi'ites and one of the great reporters of history and biography. He has further said at another place that he was an historian who wrote a number of books on history and biography.

.He died after 330 A.H

Abu Bakr Suli, Muhammad bin Yahya bin Yahya bin Abbas.15

He is the author of a large number of books on literature and history which have been mentioned by Ibn Nadim, who has said that As-Suli reported something in favour of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib(A.S.) for which he was summoned to be beheaded.
.He died in 330 or 335 A.H

Muhammad bin Human al-Katib al-Iskafi .16

He wrote Tarikh-ul-A'immah which has been mentioned by An-Najashi alongwith its authorities.
.He died in 336 A.H

Al-Mas'udi, Ali bin al-Husain .17

He is called to the Imam of History. He is author of Maruj-udh-Dhahab and Akhbar-uz-Zaman.
.He died in 346 A.H

Abu Bakr al-Ji'abi, 'Umar bin Muhammad .18

An-Najashi has said that he wrote Kitab-u-Akhbar-i-Aal-i-Abi Talib, Akhbar-i-Baghdad, and Akhbar-i-Ali bin al-Husain (A.S.) He died in 355 A.H

Abul Faraj al-Isfahani, Ali bin al-Husain al-Marwani Zaidi .19

He is the author of famous book Al-Aghani which has no parallel in history. It was the book to get Sahib bin Ibad dispensed with the load of thirty camels and then presented it to Saif-ud-Dawlah, who, in return, rewarded him with one thousand dinars. Another book written by Abul Faraj is Maqatil-al-Talibin.
.He died in 355 A.H

Hasan bin Muhammad bin al-Hasan al-Qummi .20

He wrote Tarikh Qum for Sahib bin Ibad, which was translated into Persian by Hasan bin Ali bin Abdul Malik al-Qummi in 865 A.H. Hasan bin Muhammad died during the fourth century

Sudduq, Muhammad bin Ali bin Babawaih al-Qummi .21

.He also wrote a book on history. His death occurred in 381 A.H

Sahib, Isma'il bin Ibad-.22

He wrote (i) Kitab-ul-A'yad, (ii) Al-Wuzara', (iii) Al-Khala'if (iv)Akhbar-u-Abil 'Aina' and (v) Tarikh-ul-Mulk Wa Ikhtilaf-id-Duwal.
.He died in 385 A.H

Abul Hasan Ali bin Muhammad al-'Adawi Shamshati .23

According to An-Najashi, he prepared an abridgement of Tarikh-ut-Tabari and supplemented it with events upto date. He also brought the history of Musal (Kitab-ul-Musal) upto date. He further prepared an account of the descendants of Ma'ad bin 'Adnan and their lives etc. .He died during the fourth century

Abu-un-Nadar al-Atabi, Muhammad bin Abdul Jabbar .24

.He is the author of Tarikh-ud-Diyalamah

Hakim al-Naishabouri, Muhammad bin Abdullah .25

He is the author of Tarikh-i-Naishabour. According to Tadhkiratul Huffaz, no one made such an attempt before him. Both, the author Tadhkiratul Huffaz and As-Sam'ani have testified and affirmed his being a Shi'ite. .He died in 405 A.H

Abu Sa'id Mansur bin al-Husain al-Aabi .26

He was a minister of Majd-ud-Dawlah bin Buwaih and the author of Nathr-ud-Durur and Tarikh-ur-Rayy. Tha'alabi has written in Tatimmat-ul-Yatimah that Al-Aabi has written a book on history which has no parallel at all. .He died in 422 A.H

Abul Hasan al-Bihaqi, Ali bin Zaid .27

He was one of descendants of Khuzaimah bin Thabit Zu-Shahadatain. He is the author of Tarikh-e-Bihaq known as Al-Yawm Sabzwar. It is written in Persian. Al-Bihaqi was the first one to write a commentary on Nahj-ul-Balaghah and not Al-Qutb Rawandi as assumed by Ibn Abil Hadid. He has many other books to his credit which have been mentioned in Mu'jam-ul-.Buldan and Kashf-uz-Zunun. He died in 565 A.H

Qutb-ud-Din Sa'id bin Hibatullah Rawandi .28

He is the author of Minhaj-ul-Bara'ah which is a commentary on Nahj-ul-Balaghah. He died .during the sixth century

Ibn-ul-Aabar al-Andulusi, Muhammad bin Abdullah .29

According to Nafh-ut-Tib, he wrote Durur-us-Simt Fi Khabar-us-Sibt. The Encyclopaedia of Islam tells us that he wrote a number of books on history. The statement of Nafh-ut-Tib .implies that he was a Shi'ite as we have mentioned in his life-account. He died in 658 A.H

Ali bin Anjab alias Ibn-us-Sa'i al-Baghdadi .30

He is the writer of a well-known book on history called as Tarikh-u-Ibn-is-Sa'i. According to Kashfuz-Zunun, it spreads over 30 volumes.
.He died in 674 A.H

Safi-ud-Din Muhammad bin Ali bin Tabataba alias Ibn-ut-Tiqtaqi .31

He is the author of Munyat-ul-Fudala' Fi Tawarikh-il-Khulafa'-i-Wal Wuzara'. This book is usually known as Tarikh-ul-Fakhr because of the fact that it was written for Fakhr-ud-Din Isa Bin Ibrahim, the ruler of Musal. It has been printed and published from Egypt many times as well as from Germany in 1860 A.D. through the efforts of a German Orientalist. Similarly it was published from France in 1895 A.D. through the efforts of the French Orientalist Darenburk. It was translated into French by Amar Hindushah translated it into Persian and brought upto date in 724 A.H. and titled it as Tajarib-us-Salaf. It was published from Tehran. Ibn-ut-Tiqtaqi died .in 709 A.H

Wamal-ud-Din Abdur Razzaq bin Ahmad Shaibani alias Ibn-ul-Fawti .32

He is the author of Al-Hawadith-ul-Jami'ah which is the history of the seventh century of the Hijrah. It has been published from Baghdad.
.He died in 723 A.H

Muhammad bin Mahmud alias ibn-un-Najjar al-Baghdadi .33

He wrote the History of the City of Baghdad and added to the book written by Khatib al-Baghdadi

Shaikh Hasan bin Ali bin Ahmad al-'Aamili al-Hanini.34

He is the author of Haqibat-ul-Akhyar Wa Juhainat-il-Akhbar which deals with history.
.He died in 1035 A.H

Iskandar Baig is the author of 'Aalam Aara-e-'Abbasi which is written in Persian. He died .35 during the eleventh century. 36. Ahmad bin al-Hasan bin Ali bin al-Hurr al-'Aamili al-Mashghari.

He is the author Durr-ul-Masluk which is about the Prophets, successors of the prophets, caliphs and kings. A copy of it is available in the Library of the Iranian Parliament in Tehran. Another copy is available in the Central Library of the holy shrine of Imam Reza(A.S.) in .Mashhad. He died during the eleventh century

Shaikh Muhammad bin Mujir al-'Anqani.37

He wrote a brief History of Jabal 'Aamil for the period from 1073 to 1152 A.H.

.He was alive in 1153 A.H

Mirza Taqi Khan Sepehr .38

He was a contemporary of the Nasir-al-Din Shah Qajar and his son Muzaffir-ud-Din Shah Qajar. He is the author of Nasikh-ut-Tawarikh which is voluminous book in Persian and unique of its kind. He died during the fourteenth century. 39.

Shaikh Nawruz Ali bin Muhammad Baqir alias Fadil ul-Bastami He is the author of Firdaws-ut-Tawarikh which has been published.

.He died in 1309 A.H

Source: Hasan al-Amin, Shorter Shi'ite Encyclopaedia