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SCIENTIFIC HERITAGE AND ACTIVITIES OF ABU JASSOS

Abstract: *The article embraces information about the life and scientific journeys of Abu Bakr Jassas, and his maters and students.*

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Introduction

Trips in quest of knowledge were prevalent in the era of Abu Bakr Jassas and it made scholars renowned and big-hearted. Observing the life and career of famed scientists of the 10th - 12th centuries, we can witness to fruitful journeys, which reflected their raging thirst for knowledge, to further education under the tutelage of prominent figures abroad. Long-lasting travels granted them the possibility of acquiring new practice and applying diverse scientific manuscripts. Those journeys could normally last for several years.

Abu Bakr Jassas also went to a few cities, which were the hearts of science, to sharpen his knowledge via the expertise of famous scholars. He went on his initial journey from Ray – his Motherland to Baghdad, one of the scientific and cultural capitals of Islam, in 325 AH when he was 25 years old. At that time, Baghdad had become scientific focal point for many commentators (scholars of tafseer), scholars of Hadith and experts in fiqh (Islamic jurists), whom Abu Bakr tried his utmost to take advantage of. Especially, he learned fiqh inside out under the guidance of mostly renowned Hanafi scholars. He journeyed to Akhwaza in 335 AH when Baghdad was badly hit by a low standard of living. After a full recovery, he returned to the city[8].

In Baghdad, he partook in scientific consultations of his master, Abul Khasan Karhi. He managed to learn fiqh thoroughly from his teacher which made him a perfect scholar in piety and

asceticism. Clearly, booming erudition of Abu Bakr created mutual reverence between him and his master. As a man of bright intellect, Abu Bakr Jassas ascribed his achievements to Karhi, his master, whose teachings had a remarkable impact on his works. Later, Karhi decided to send him to Nishapur – the hub of science, as he believed in the promising future of his student.

Heeding master`s suggestions, Abu Bakr headed off to Nishapur in the company of Hakim Naysaburi, a prominent scholar of Hadith. Sadly, his teacher left this world in 340/952 AH, when Jassas was in Nishapur. Abu Ali Shashi temporarily carried on Karhi`s affairs till Jassas came back to Baghdad. Soon, Abu Bakr held the position of his master[8].

Hafiz Imam Zahabi recounts Abu Bakr`s visit to Asfakhan: “Abu Bakr Jassas had an impressive command of Hadith. In Nishapur, he met with Abul Abbas Asamm and his peer scholars, in Baghdad with Abdulbaqi ibn Qanee and Daalaj ibn Ahmad and the scholars ranking with them, and in Asfakhan he conversed with Tabarani and many other scientists”[18]. However, the exact date of his trip to Asfakhan is not provided in sources.

To conclude, Abu Bakr availed himself of every moment of his journeys efficiently. Long and arduous years away from home granted him the title of an eminent Hanafi scholar in fiqh.

It should be noted that, masters have a pivotal role in conducting a research into the life and activity of famed scholars. Since, a student`s horizon, mindset,

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religious convictions and scientific credentials take shape in harmony with teacher's admonition and guidance. As mentioned above, during his journeys, Abu Bakr Jassas received teachings of several scholars, which honed his scientific and cultural competence.

Rendered sources and historical founts mention nine of Jassas's mentors. However, Dr. Safwat Mustafa's carried out a deeper investigation in this regard. Relying on Abu Bakr's works, he enumerated eighteen of Jassa's masters: "Ahkam al-Quran" and "Al-fusul fi-l-usool" have reference to fifteen of them, two from "Sharh Muhtasar at-Tahawi", and another one form "Al-jami al-kabir". The Doctor discovered the list of the teachers by sourcing from Abu Bakr's reported speeches starting as "He narrated hadith...", "He informed us...", "As he recounted us...", "He recounted me..." and "He said..."[8].

The scholar's masters can be categorized into two. First, those who are mentioned in the translations and historical sources:

1. The most acclaimed master of Abu Bakr, was a great and pious imam, (a religious leader), Abul Hasan Ubaidullah ibn Husayn ibn Dallal ibn Dalham Karhiy (260-340 AH). He lived in Baghdad and learned the fiqh of the Hanafi school of thought inside out. He acquired the science of Hadith from Ismail ibn Iskhaq Qathiy and Muhammad ibn Abdullah Hazramiy. Ibn Shahin, Abu Amr ibn Haywa, Qathi Abdullah ibn Muhammad Akfaniy, Abu Bakr Jassas and other scholar are considered to be students of Karhiy. Alongside with being a famous scholar in Islamic Jurisprudence, Karhi was a man of letters and well-informed of usool and fooru. He then presided the Hanafi board and scholars were arriving there from different corners of the world to get the tutelage of Abu Bakr who had already won worldwide recognition. Karhi was a devout person – fasting and offering prayer profusely, destitution and deprivation had a zero impact on his perseverance. He authored "al-Muhtasar" on fiqh and "Risala" on usool (principles). Likewise, the scholar wrote a commentary on "al-Jami al-kabir" and "al-Jami as-saghir", works by Muhammad ibn Hasan Shaybani. Ibn Kamal Pashsha Imam mentioned him in the third level of the Hanafi scholars. In default of solutions from the leader of madhab (school of thought) to certain matters, those jurists had ability to make rulings relying on their independent reasoning. However, Karhi's unique stances in terms of usool ranked him above the third level. Approaching to final moments of his life, illness made him bedridden. As he was unable to cover treatment expenditures, his disciples decided to send a message to Sayfuddawla ibn Hamadan requesting for financial assistance.

When Karhi found out about that, he prayed to the Almighty: "Oh, Allah! Send my sustenance by the way I used to receive!". Imam Karhi passed away prior to the arrival of help. His students distributed ten

thousand dirhams given by Sayfuddawla to the impoverished on behalf of the deceased. Undoubtedly, Imam Karhi's piety, deep knowledge and experience hugely impacted on Abu Bakr's life and works. The scholar frequently cites his master's statements in his works, like: "My mentor, Abul Hasan, says that...", "As my mentor says...". Similarly, Abu Bakr Jassas narrated some hadiths through Karhi[19-35].

2. Abdulbaqiyy ibn Qane. He was Abul Husayn al-Umawiy (265/878–351/96), authored "Mu`jam as-sahaba", and he was a skilled hadith narrator (hafiz), scholar. Abdul Husayn travelled a lot. The inhabitants of Baghdad considered the hadiths he learned by heart trustworthy. Dariqutniy remembered the moments he memorized hadith and narrated them correctly and with occasional errors[9-12].

3. Abu Umar Ghulam Saalabiy – Muhammad ibn Abdulwahid ibn Abu Hisham al-Baghdadi al-Mutarraz al-Bawardiy was a linguist, also known as Ghulam Saalab. However, scientific experts doubted his credibility in terms of science of lexicon, but trusted him as a hadith narrator. Honoured figures, clerks and scholars attended Saalab's lectures to learn his books[13-15].

4. Abul Abbas Naysaburiy. Abul Abbas Muhammad ibn Yaquub ibn Yusuf ibn Maaqal Ibn Mannan al-Umawiy Naysaburiy (247/861-346/957) was a stalwart man who carried the epithet "al-Asam". But he did not like this nickname. He was a well-known scholar of hadith in his time. Abul Abbas collected hadiths in Isfakhan, Mecca, Egypt, Asqalan, Beirut, Damascus, Hims, Tursus, Riqqa, Kufa and Baghdad. Dependability of his narrations is not questioned[8].

5. Abdullah ibn Jaafar ibn Faris Asfakhaniy. Abdullah ibn Jaafar ibn Doorstwaykh al-Farisiy (258/871-374/958) was a scholar-grammarians and authored instructive and precious works. According to Al-Khatib Baghdadi, some mentioned him as a da'eef (weak) hadith narrator. However, several prominent scholars of Hadith and faqihs (Islamic jurists) exonerated him of the foregoing accusations. Ad-Daruqutniy and others received Abdullah ibn Jaafar's education. He wrote many books on grammar and literature[37-39].

6. Sulayman ibn Ahmad Tabaraniy. Imam al-Allama al-Khujja Abul Qasim Sulayman ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyub ibn Muteer ash-Shamiy al-Lahmiy at-Tabaraniy (260/873 – 360/970) was born in Bayt al-lahm. He tripped to Sham, Mecca, Medina, Yemen, Egypt, Baghdad, Kufa, Basra, Isfakhan and many other cities to get knowledge and to hear hadiths. He narrated some thousands of hadiths through his master, and created "al-Mu`jam al-kabeer", "al-Mu`jam as-sagheer", "al-Mu`jam al-awsat" other works. Sulayman ibn Ahmad died at the age of hundred[18].

7. Hakim Naysaburiy. Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Hamaduya ibn Naeem Zabbiiy Tahmaniyy

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Naysaburiy, aslo known as Abdullah Hakim was a famous hadith narrator. He journeyed to Iraq, Hijaz, Khorasan and Mawarannahr in search of hadith. He played a central role in establishing ties between Banu Buwayh and Samanids. As the historian Ibn Kasir depicts, Hakim was a pious man with a deep sense of fiduciary duty, honest, energetic and a self-restraint scholar. “al-Mustadrak ala as-sahihayn”, Hakim’s work, still retains its importance in the science of Hadith. As mentioned above, Abu Bakr Jassas was in his company when Hakim was headed for Nishapur. Despite Jassas was younger than him, Hakim acquired the science of Hadith from Abu Bakr[8].

8. Daalaj ibn Ahmad Daalaj Sijistaniy Baghdadiy. In his time, he was imam, faqih and muhaddith in Baghdad. Sijistan is Daalaj ibn Ahmad’s hometown and he spent considerable part of his life in Khorasan, Baghdad, Basra, Kufa and Mecca. Similarly, the scholar is known as the teacher of Hakim Naysaburiy and Imam Daraqtuniy. Abu Bakr Jassas narrated hadith through Daalaj ibn Ahmad in his book, “Sarkh Mukhtasar at-Tahawiy”[8].

9. Abu Sahl Zoujajiy. His name and death date are not mentioned in the rendered sources. Certain historians suggest that Zoujjajiy was a student of Abu Bakr Jassas, while some believe that he was Jassas’s peer. But, Doctor Safwat Mustafa, relying on the early books on the Hanafi school of thought, such as “al-Fawaeed al-Bahiya” and “al-Jawaheer al-mouziya”, asserts that Abu Sahl Zoujajiy was the teacher of Abu Bakr[8].

Second category of the scholar’s masters are mentioned in “Ahkam al-Quran” and other works. They are:

1. Abu Bakr Ali Farisiy. Hasan ibn Ahmad ibn Abulghaffar Nahwiyy was admired for his impressive level in the Arabic language. He was born in Fasa, Iran and later moved to Baghdad. Abu Bakr Ali Farisiy tripped to many cities. He authored many books related to the Arabic grammar, namely “at-Tazkeera”, “al-Izah” and “at-Takmila”. Some of Abu Bakr’s works make reference to him[8].

2. Muhammad ibn Bakr Basriy. He carried honorable titles as a sheikh (leader), a trustworthy scholar, muhaddith (hadith narrator), muhaddith of Basra. Likewise, he narrated “Sunan”, a work by Abu Dawood. His name is frequently mentioned by Abu Bakr Jassas in his work “Ahkam al-Quran”. He always remembered his master in his narrations from “Sunan Abi Dawood” and in other chains of narrations[8].

3. Abdurahman ibn Siyma. Abu Husayn Mujbri Baghdadiy educated Abu Bakr in Baghdad.

Similarly, as Abu Bakr Jassas says in his works, he had been under the tutelage of several masters like Jaafar ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Wasitiy, Abul

Qasim Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Iskhaq Marwaziyy, Abu Bakr Moukram ibn Ahmad Cadiyy, Cadi Abu Jaafar Nasafiyy and Abu Jaafar Ustrushaniyy. However, their biographies are not provided within sources[8].

As Ibn Abulwafa enumerated Abu Bakr Raziyy’s students: “Prominent scholars learned fiqh from him, namely Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Musa Khorezmiyy, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Mahdiy Jourjaniyy who was the teacher of Quduriyy, Abulfaraj Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Umar, also known as Ibn Maslama, Abu Jaafar Muhammad ibn Ahmad Hasafiyy, Abul Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Tayyib Kammariyy who was father of Ismail, the cadi of Wasit.” And there are other students of the scholar who have not been included in sources[1].

1. Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn Musa al-Khorezmiyy (d.403/1012). Muhammad al-Khorezmiyy, one of the faqihs of Baghdad, was peerless in terms of making rulings (fatwa) and teaching. He was several times offered the post of cadi and he did not accept it. Al-Qaatiyy considers him a reformer of the fourth centennial. As-Saymiriyy acquired foundations of the fiqh science from him. When Abu Bakr Ahmad died, his body was washed by as-Samiyy, his disciple[2-4].

2. Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Mahdiy, Qoudriyy’s* master (d. 398/1007), was one of the famed faqihs. The author of “Hidaya” mentions him as a man who was able to make ruling relying on the Quran and Hadith. He narrated hadiths. In the final days of his life, he suffered from paralysis and was buried adjacent to Abu Hanifa’s grave[36].

3. Abulfaraj Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Umar, also known as Ibn Maslama (377/948 – 415/1024). He lived in Baghdad, and was a far-sighted, trustworthy man who performed acts of worship a lot[36].

4. Abu Jaafar Muhammad ibn Ahmad Nasafiyy (d.414/1023), was a celebrated Hanafi scholar of fiqh. He led an ascetic life and was a pious, morally pure, uncomplaining and a materially poor man with a lot of knowledge. He was not far from poetry. He has a famous work named “at-Taaliqa fi al-hilaf”[16-17].

5. Abul Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Zaafaraniyy (d.393/1002). His real name was Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abdus ibn Kamil Abul Hasan. There some references to him in “Hidaya”. Zaafaraniyy was a scholar of fiqh who was a righteous and loyal man. Al-Hatib narrated the hadith “Whosoever deliberately fabricates a lie on my behalf...” through Zaafaraniyy[36].

6. Abul Husayn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Tayyib Kammariyy, father[5] of Ismail who was the

* Al-Qouduriyy: Imam Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad Abul Husayn al-Bagdadiyy al-Qouduriyy (362/973 – 428/1037), he was trustworthy, honest, and a prominent hanafi scholar of his time.

He authored a famous work “Mukhtasar al-Qouduriyy, Sharkh mukhtasar al-Karhiyy” and many others. He died in Baghdad.

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cadi of Wasit, also known as Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Tayyib ibn Jaafari ibn Kammar Kammariy Wasitiy Tahhan Abul Husayn (d.417/1023). He was a fair faqih (jurist) who lived in Iraq. Later, his son ascended to the post of cadi of Wasit [6-7].

Similarly, relying on Saymiriy's suggestion, Abu Bakr Jassas had many other students who were not mentioned in records[1].

Clearly, Abu Bakr Jassas's both masters and students provided him a huge assistance in being a celebrated hanafi scholar. In other words, his scientific

journeys and unwavering support by those mentors made Abu Bakr a highly-relied faqih. As he made trips, the number of his masters and students kept increasing. Later, further efforts to preserve teachings and principles of the scholar were made by his students and disciples. It is safe to say that Abu Bakr Jassas's exemplary attitude and treatment towards his masters and students can determine the norms of "master-student" ties. And this very fact corroborates the importance of studying his life and scientific career.

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