

D. 2568



HADİS TETKİKLERİ DERGİSİ
Majle İeouh al-eadih/ JOURNAL OF HADITH STUDIES
VI * 1 * 2008

Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi/Journal of Hadith Studies/مجلة بحوث الحديث

Altı Aylık Akademik Hadis Araştırmaları Dergisi

Cilt/Volume: VI Sayı/Number: 1 Yıl/Year: 2008

ISSN 1304-3617

SÜHA Danışmanlık Araştırma Yayıncılık adına Sahibi ve Genel Yayın Yönetmeni/Owner and Publisher

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Dergide yayınlanan makalelerin ilmi, fikri ve hukuki sorumluluğu yazarlarına aittir.

Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi (HTD) Index Islamicus tarafından taranmaktadır. *Journal of Hadith Studies* has been indexed by *Index Islamicus*.

Yönetim ve Dağıtım/Administration and Distribution

SÜHA Danışmanlık Araştırma Yayıncılık, Toygar Hamza Mah., Hacı Mutlu sok. No: 7

34672 Üsküdar/İSTANBUL/TÜRKİYE, +90 (216) 334 82 07, +90 (216) 391 89 55 (Fax), +90 (536) 226 74 60

Web: <http://www.hadisevi.com> E-mail: editor@hadisevi.com, abone@hadisevi.com

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Hesap No/Bank Account: Akbank Kadıköy Şub.: 170251-3 (Ataullah ŞAHYAR)

Fiyatı/Price: Türkiye: 10 YTL (2008 Yılı abone/Subscription Rates for 2008: Kurumlar: 20 YTL,

Normal: 17,5 YTL, Öğrenci-Öğretmen 15 YTL, Yurtdışı/Abroad: 60 S veya 50 €)

On the Use of 'Fitrah' as a Measure in Determining Whether a Narrated Hadith Belongs to the Prophet Muhammad

Selçuk COŞKUN, Assoc. Prof. Dr.*

"Bir Hadisin Hz. Peygambere'e Ait
Olup Olmadığını Belirlemede
'Fitrat' Kriterinin Kullanımı
Üzerine"

Özet: Hadis ilminin ilgilendiği en önemli hususlardan biri; bir hadisin gerçekten Hz. Peygamber'e ait olup olmadığını tesbit etmektir. Bu amaçla, genel anlamda, iki metottan istifade edilir. Bunlardan biri sened (al-sanad) tenkidi, diğeri ise metin (al-matn) tenkididir. Bu çalışmada, klasik kaynakların 'metin tenkidi' kriterleri arasında olduğuna işaret ettiği, ancak hakkında yeterli bilgi sunmadığı 'fitrat' ölçüsü araştırılmıştır. Konuyla ilgili genel çerçevenin sunulduğu girişten sonra, asıl konu üç başlık altında sunulmuştur. Bunlardan birinde, âyet ve hadisler ışığında 'fitrat' kavramı incelenmiş, diğlerinde; 'temiz fitrat' ölçüsünden hareketle bir hadisin sıhhati hakkında karar verebilme imkânı tartışılmış, son aşamada da, bir hadisin sıhhatini belirlemede, 'temiz fitrat' yerine 'fitri özellikler'in ölçü olarak kabul edilmesinin daha uygun olacağı savunulmuştur.

Atıf: Selçuk COŞKUN, "Bir Hadisin Hz. Peygambere'e Ait Olup Olmadığını Belirlemede 'Fitrat' Kriterinin Kullanımı Üzerine", *Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi (HTD)*, VI/1, 2008, ss. 29-46.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hadis, Sünnet, Sıhhat, Fitrat, Rivayet, Metin Tenkidi.

I. Introduction

There have been two major issues in the field of hadith, following its emergence. One of which is to determine whether a hadith belongs to Prophet Muhammad, and the other is to understand the meaning of the hadith that has been decided to belong to The Prophet. The first issue has been in general a concern of *muhaddithîn* (traditionists) which this paper deals with, while the latter is a concern of *fuqahā* (Islamic judicts).

In the field of Hadith, two methods have been employed to determine whether a narrated hadith belongs to the Prophet. One of them is the critics of *sanad* (the chain of narrators), and the other is that of *matn* (text). In case of *sanad*, the hadith narrators/transmitters (*al-ruwāt*) have been investigated in detail and based on the reliability of the narrators the hadith has been accepted or rejected. One can observe a similar logic in today's communication era

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where a statement like “information gathered from reliable sources...” implies that the reliability of a source is essential for that of the information. However, the reliability of the source of information has not in general been considered to guarantee that of the information. Even if the narrator (*al rāwī*) is reliable (*thiqah*), he may be mistaken due to the nature of human beings who are prone to errors, and it is quite possible that the critics of hadith may have overlooked at this case which may have arisen due to the human factors. These techniques is based on investigation of a person, called narrator (*rāwī*) by another one, called muhaddith, under certain criteria and make a decision about him/her (*narrator*). The decisions being made are related to whether the narrator is reliable (*thiqah*) or not. If the rawī (narrator) is reliable, his narrative (*al marwiyy*) is considered to be acceptable (*sahīh* or *hasan* (good)), otherwise, his narrative is classified as weak (*da'if*) or made up (*mawdū'*) and evaluated as such.

Despite all this, all of the decisions made about narrator depends on reasoning of *al Jarh and ta'dīl* (a technical phrase used regarding the reliability or otherwise of traditionists and narrators) scholars. It is possible to arrive at misleading conclusions as a result of the process of *ijtihād* (extrapolation) due to the error prone nature of extrapolation itself.

There may be two major sources for deviation from true reasoning:

1) Even if the narrator is reliable (*thiqah*), he/she may occasionally be mistaken as he/she is also a human being since human beings are not absolutely free of errors. Therefore, the information provided by the narrators may not be as precise as one would like to.

2) Jarh and ta'dil scholars may not have a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of human beings that they aim to get to know (identify). Sometimes, these scholars may have given their decisions under the influence of external effects. Therefore the deviation from the true reasoning may have originated from the Jarh and ta'dil scholars as well.

As a result, due in part to the failure of complete identification of narrator and in part to the Jarh and ta'dil scholars's human nature, unreliable decisions may have arisen. The situation becomes rather evident considering different decisions made about a narrator by Jarh and ta'dil scholars. The founder of Hanefi Madhhab Imām al-A'zam Abū Hanifah is a prominent example of this case.¹

¹ For details, see Ibn 'Adiyy, Abdullah al-Jurjānī, *al-Kāmil fi Du'afā' ar-Rijāl*, Revised by Suheyl Zakkār, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut 1988, 3th edition, vol. VII, pp. 5-9; az-Zahabi, Abū Abdillāh Shamsuddin, *Tazkirah al-Huffāz*, revised by Wazāratu'l-Maārif al-Hindiyya, Dāru lhyā' at-Turās al-Arabī, vol. I, p. 168.

Knowing the fact that in social sciences one can not be mathematically precise, the hadith scholars provide two important rules to express this possibility. One such rule is that "Both *sahih* and *da'if* (weak) decisions about hadith depends on extrapolation", and the other is that "Both *sahih* and *da'if* decisioning depend on external data (*zahir*) not on reality (*nafs al-amr*)."² It is exactly at this point that the critique of text comes into play. To reduce the weakness of the critique of *sanad*, an effective technique called the critique of text (*matn*), has to be used along with it. In case of the critique of text, one tries to understand whether a text that constitutes a hadith does not belong to Prophet Muhammad by using several criteria. It is possible to summarize these criteria as follows:

Determining whether a hadith; (1) is contrary to the verses of Qur'an; (2) is contrary to other reliable (*sahih* or *hasan*) hadith, (3) includes some expressions indicating that it may be a made up (mawdu'), (4) is contrary to implementations of companions (*sahabis*) of the Prophet, (5) contains extreme expressions that Prophet Muhammad would have never used, (6) is contrary to common sense (*aql al-salim*), (7) is contrary to historical events, (8) contains expressions that a human nature would reject, (9) mentions a certain date that about upcoming (future) events, (10) is contrary to the cognitive sense's of human beings.³

It is important to notice that all the items above contain implications on inconsistencies not on compliance. Because, it is a serious evidence for an account (*khobar*) to contain expressions against Qur'an or common sense or historical events or rather other reliable Sunnah to conclude that it can not be hadith. Because, it makes no sense to think of Prophet Muhammad to act against any one of such mentioned items.

² For details, see al-Laknawī, Abū al-Hasanāt Muhammad Abdulhayy al-Hindī, *ar-Raf wa at-Takmil fi al-Jarh wa at-Ta'dil*, revised by Abdulfattāh Abū Ghudda, Dār al-Aqsā, Beirut 1987.

³ For details, see Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al-Manār al-Munif fi as-Sahih wa az-Za'if*, Revised by Abdulfattāh Abū Ghudda, Maktabah al-Matbūah al-Islāmiyya, Halab 1970; Ali al-Qārī, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a fi al-Akhbār al-Mawdū'a*, Revised by Muhammad Ibn Lutfi as-Sabbāgh, al-Maktabah al-Islāmī, Beirut-1986, second edition, starting p. 282; Muhammad Jamāluddīn al-Qāsīmī, *Qawā'id at-Tahdith*, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyy, Beirut, starting pp 165; Jalaluddin as-Suyūti, *Tadrib ar-Rāwī*, revised by Ahmad Ōmar Hāshimī, Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, Beirut 1989, p. 223; Muhammad Muhammad Abū Zahw, *al-Hadith wa al-Muhaddithūn*, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, no date available, starting pp. 482; Musfir Ibn. Ghurmullah ad-Dumaynī, *Hadiste Metin Tenkidī Metodları*, translation to Turkish by İlyas Çelebi and the others, Kitabevi, İstanbul 1997; Muhammad at-Tahhān, *Taysīru Mustalah al-Hadith*, Maktabah al-Ma'ārif, Riyād-1985, 7th edition, p. 90; Ahmed Naim Babanzade, *Sahih-i Buhārī Muhtasari Tecrid-Sarih Tercemesi ve Şerhi*, DİB Yayınları, Ankara 1987, I, starting pp. 282.

Yet, for an account (*khābar*) to comply with Qur'ān, common sense, other Sunnah, historical events etc. does not by itself guarantee that it is a hadith. Because it is quite possible for any one besides Prophet Muhammad to make statements that comply with the items just mentioned. Therefore, one often reads statements like "the meaning is correct, but not a marfū hadith" in books that collect made up (*mawdū'*) hadiths.⁴

Besides the criteria we outlined above, we believe that if an account contains expressions that contradict with basic features of human *fitrah*,⁵ then it may be used as a criterion to conclude that it may not be a hadith.

II. Fitrah in Field of Hadith and Qur'anic Verses

The word *fitrah* in a Qur'anic verse reads "As a monotheist, turn your face to religion (*dīn*) and the *fitrah* of Allah as upon which He has created the mankind..."⁶ The word *fitrah* also has been mentioned in several hadiths which we list below:

1) Every child was born in a state of *fitrah*; then his parents guide him to be a Jew, Christian or fire worshipper (*majūsi*). Think of a young of animal being born in a healthy state. Have you ever seen among the young of animals any defect in their ears, lips, nose or legs?⁷

2) Every child is born on *fitrah*. Later, his/her parents guide him/her to become a Jew, Christian or fire worshipper. If his/her parents are Muslim, he/she becomes a Muslim as well. Every child born gets struck by Satan in two sides except the son of Maryam.⁸

3) "O God! I fully submit to you. I turned my face to you. Hope guidance in my business from you. I trust you and seek refuge from you and I am afraid of you. There is no one to seek refuge and rescue besides you, you are the only savior. O God! I believe in your book and Prophet you have sent" After these statements, The Prophet said that if one makes the statements above and dies

⁴ See. Ali al-Qārī, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a* p. 336.

⁵ The meanings of the concepts such as "Fitrah", "Sibgah" and "Hanif" have been investigated in the author's dissertation (see Selcuk Coskun, *Bir Eğitimi Olarak Hz. Peygamber'in İnsan Analizi*, Erzurum: EKEV, pp. 230-314). On a followup paper, hadiths have been investigated within the framework of fitrah (see. Oş Memleketik Üniversitesi, Teologia Fakültesinin İlimi Curnali, Kırgızistan-Oş 2001, Vol. 2, pp. 15-30) In this paper, the author aims to investigate whether concept of fitrah can be used to determine reliability of a hadith.

⁶ al-Rūm, 30

⁷ Bukhārī, Janāiz (name of chapter), 80 (number of bāb) (II (vol.), 97 (p.)), 93 (II, 104). ; Bukhārī, Tafsīru Sūrah al-Rūm, 1 (VI, 19); Mālik, Janāiz, 52 (I, 241)

⁸ Muşlim, Qadar, 22 (IV, 2048), 25 (IV, 2049)

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in that night, he will die in a state of *fitrah*.⁹

4) Five actions are due to *fitrah*. Those are to become circumcised, to shave between the legs and under the arms, to trim mustache and to shorten finger nails.¹⁰

5) A different narrated version of this hadith reads; "Five things are due to *fitrah*."¹¹

6) To trim mustache is due to *fitrah*.¹²

7) Ten actions are due to *fitrah*: To trim mustache, to shorten finger nails, to wash between fingers, to grow beard, to brush teeth using miswak, to wash mouth and nose, to shave between the legs and under the arms, to clean relevant parts of body after use of toilet.¹³

8) Washing mouth, providing water for nose, using toothbrush (*miswak*), trimming mustache, shortening finger nails, shaving between legs and under arms, washing between fingers, washing relevant parts of body after case of toilet and circumcising are due to *fitrah*.¹⁴

9) To shave between legs, to trim finger nails and to trim mustache are due to *fitrah*.¹⁵

10) The Prophet was offered two glasses, one filled up with milk, and the other with wine during the night of al Isrā in Bayt al Makdis. He looked at the glasses and accepted the one with milk. Then *Jibrīl* (The angel of al wahy) said that "Thanks God who guided you to *fitrah*, otherwise your followers would go astray."¹⁶

11) The Prophet Muhammad, while talking about his *Mi'rac* (the ascension of the Prophet), uses the following expressions: "I was offered a glass of wine, a cup of milk and a dish of honey. When I accepted the milk, *Jibrīl* said that your acceptance of milk is due to you and your followers (*ummah*) being on the state of *fitrah*."¹⁷

⁹ Bukhārī, Da'awāt, 7 (VII, 147); Bukhārī, Wudū', 75 (I, 67)

¹⁰ Bukhārī, Isti'zān, 51 (VII, 147); Ibn Mājah, Tahārah, 8 (I, 107); Muslim, Tahārah, 50 (I, 222)

¹¹ Bukhārī, Libās, 63 (VII, 56); Ibn Mājah, Tahārah, 8 (I, 107)

¹² Bukhārī, Libās, 63 (VII, 56)

¹³ an-Nasāi, Ziyāh, 1 (VIII, 126); Ibn Mājah, Tahārah, 8 (I, 107); Muslim, Tahārah, 56(I, 223); Abū Dāwud, Tahārah, 29 (I, 61).

¹⁴ Ibn Mājah, Tahārah, 8 (I, 107)

¹⁵ Bukhārī, Libās, 64 (VII, 56)

¹⁶ Bukhārī, Ashriba, 1 (VI, 240); Bukhārī, Tafsiru Sūrah 17, 3 (V, 224); Muslim, Ashriba, 92 (III, 1592)

¹⁷ Bukhārī, Menāqib al-Ansār, 42 (IV, 249).

12) "...then I left, meanwhile *Jibril* has offered me a glass of wine and milk. I drank the milk. Then *Jibril* told me that "you have chosen the *fitrah*."¹⁸

13) My followers (*al ummah*) will continue to be in the state of *fitrah* until the mix of increased number of stars (*al Qiyamah*) unless they perform the Maghrib Prayer (*salāh al maghrib*) at the time later than it is due.¹⁹

14) While talking about his *al Mi'rāc*, Prophet Muhammad mentions about his seeing a spectacular crowd and says that seventy thousand of his followers will enter paradise without any questioning. His companions do not ask him about who the followers would be. Then Prophet leaves the meeting. Later on, some of the Companions claims that those followers are themselves and while some others claim that those are the children who are born in a state of *fitrah* and islam.²⁰

15) Prophet Muhammad, while interpreting one of his dreams, said that: As for the tall man I have seen in Rawda, he was Prophet Ibrahim. And the children around him were all the children who died in a state of *fitrah*.²¹

16) The Prophet would enter residential areas during the *Facr* times (down) and wait for *azan* to be called. Upon the hearing of *azan* he would change his mind to break into the residential area. Once he heard of a man saying God the greatest, God the greatest (*Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar*). Then he said that "The man is in a state of *fitrah*."²²

17) Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri (d. 124/741) said that "Funeral prayer is performed for every child even if he was born by a woman who committed adultery. Because that child was created and born upon Islamic *fitrah*."²³

18) The Prophet during the *Facr* time would say that we reach at the morning as muslim in the state of islamic *fitrah* ...²⁴

19) Based on the use of word *fitrah* in the hadith and Qur'anic verses outlined above, hadith interpreters (*Shārihs*) have given various meaning for the word *fitrah*.

In conventional literature, the word *fitrah* that was mentioned in hadith and Qur'anic verses was interpreted as "creation (*khilkah*),"²⁵ "*Islām*,"²⁶ "first

¹⁸ Muslim, *Imān*, 259 (I, 145); Bukhārī, *Anbiyā*, 24 (IV, 125)

¹⁹ Ibn Mājah, *Salāh*, 7 (I, 225); Abū Dāwud, *Salāh*, 6 (I, 168)

²⁰ al-Tirmidhi, *Qiyamah*, 16 (IV, 545).

²¹ Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, vol. V, p. 9.

²² Muslim, *Salāh*, 9 (I, 228).

²³ Bukhārī, *Janāiz*, 80 (II, 97).

²⁴ Dārimī, *Istīzān*, 54 (II, 378)

²⁵ See. Ibn Hajar al-Askalāni, *Fath al-Bārī*, Dār Ihyā at-Turās al-Arabī, Beirut, vol. III, pp. 193-194; al-'Aynī, Badruddin, *Umdah al-Qāri Sharhu Sahih al-Bukhārī*, Dār al-Fikr, vol. VIII, pp.

creation,”²⁷ “pure creation,”²⁸ “religion (*dīn*),”²⁹ “*sunnah*”³⁰ and “nature.”³¹ It is possible to combine these interpretations under three concepts as “religion”, “a special creation” and “*sunnah* of prophets”. Accounting for context (*siyāq and sibāq*) of hadiths and Qur’anic verse, we can incorporate the above mentioned three features by defining *fitrah* as follows:

Fitrah is a special being that does exist in all human beings as of their birth and does not change in time and able to keep its posture unless there are external effects. It is the source and essence of all features that lead human beings to the truth and God.

This definition includes religion. Because religions in one sense have been sent to protect *fitrah* from being degenerated due to external effects and to develop and protect the potential features that do exist in *fitrah*. Accordingly, while a portion of *fitrah* is related to God, the rest is related to human beings. In this sense, *fitrah* acts like a compass that God has placed inside each human being to always point to the truth unless being influenced by negative effects.

At the same time, *fitrah* contains the Sunnah of all previous Prophets as well. Because their Sunnah leads to a path that was prescribed by God. And God always warns about the truth that He is contended with. The sunnah of all Prophets are divine rules that holds at every time and location and this understanding complies with the religion and serve the same purpose mentioned above. Therefore, this understanding also complies with *fitrah* and serves to develop the features related to *fitrah*.

As mentioned above, the third implication of *fitrah* is “special creation” which contains the other two implications.

Expressions of *fitrah* in different words or being assigned to different meanings tell us nothing but views of the same object from different perspec-

177–178, vol. III, p. 188.

²⁶ See. Bukhārī, Tafsīr as- Sūrah al-Rūm, 1 (VI, 20); al-‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. I, p. 164, vol. III, p. 188.

²⁷ See. Abū al-Baqā, Ayyub Ibn. Mūsā al-Husaynī al-Kūfī, *al-Kulliyāt Mu’jamun min Mustalahāh wa al-Furūq al-Lughawī*, Revised by Adnān Darwish and Muhammad Mudarī, Muassasah ar-Risālah, Beirut 1992, p. 429, 697.

²⁸ See. Rāghīb al-Isfahānī, *al-Mufradāt fi Garīb al-Qur’ān*, Revised by Mahmud Sayyid Keelānī, Dāru’l-Ma’rifā, Beirut, p. 382.

²⁹ See. al-‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. VIII, pp. 177–179

³⁰ See. al-‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. II, p. 272.

³¹ See. Ibn al-Asīr, Majduddīn Abū as-Saādāt al-Mubārak b. Muhammad, *an-Nihāyah fi Gharīb al-Hadīs*, Revised by Tahir Ahmad az-Zāwī and Mahmud Muhammad Tannāhī, Maktabatu Ismailiyyān, Irān 1347 h. , vol. III, p. 457.

tives. No matter how it looks from different perspectives, the object being described is the same.

Considering all of these approaches, the following features concerning *fitrah* became visible: (1) *Fitrah* does exist in every human being. Accordingly, no matter what the belief, rank, race or religion of parents are, every human being is born in the state of *fitrah*. (2) *Fitrah* may lose its purity due to some external effects. (3) The essence of *fitrah* does not change in time and location. That is, the *fitrah* at the time Prophet Ādam is the same as the *fitrah* of mankind of our time. The feature of *fitrah* remains unchanged as well. Islam advises human beings to take lessons from the past as the *fitrah* remain unchanged. In words of Qur'an, Islam advises us to take lessons for contemporary issues by considering the events that has taken place earlier, because human beings have the same features of *fitrah*. (4) Another point being emphasized in this definition is that *fitrah* is a core that involves a collection of many features. Every single feature in this collection does perform its preassigned duty in compliance with the other's. Loss of balance in one or more of these features causes *fitrah* to lack purity. This type of unbalanced *fitrah* fails to lead to true path anymore. As a result, deterioration in *fitrah* originated features take place. For example, sexual desire is one of the feelings God has placed into human being's *fitrah*. There are ways to meet this desire without losing the balance in *fitrah*. Going beyond the boundaries prescribed by God will lead to an imbalance both in this feeling and the *fitrah* itself. In this situation *fitrah* begins to lose its purity. (5) Another point to be made is that *fitrah* has a function that always guides and points to the truth.

III. Determining Whether a Hadith is Sahih or Mawdu' Based on the Guiding Feature of Pure Fitrah

As Prophet Muhammad pointed out from time to time, Islam is a religion of easiness (facility).³² Considering the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad on facilitating nature of religion, various conclusions can be drawn. However, investigation of these hadiths from the point of view of *fitrah*, we can arrive at the following conclusion. Islam is a religion of easiness. Because this religion complies with *fitrah*. Human beings do not face difficulties to accept and act upon rules that comply with their *fitrah*. For this reason, it is easy, pleasant and spontaneous for *fitrah* that has not lost its purity to accept and act upon a religion. Other similar hadiths also indicate that *fitrah* and religion are harmonious.

There are various opinions about determining whether a hadith belongs to

³² For example see Bukhārī, 'Imān, 29 (I, 15); an-Nasāī, 'Imān, 28 (VIII, 122); Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. V, p. 69.

the Prophet Muhammad by means of critique of text without referring to the critique of *sanad*. Among such opinions are the ones supporting the view that *pure fitrah* can be a criterion to determine whether a hadith belongs to the Prophet.

Camaluddīn Qāsimī quotes the following from the work of Abu'l-Hasan Ali Ibn Urwa al-Hanbalī called *Kawākib* about "*qalb*" being able to determine fabricated news:

"*Qalb* (heart)" has the ability, when in pure state, to distinguish between superstitious and justice, truth and lie, evil and *hidāyah* (guidance). In particular, if *Qalb* (heart) has the feature of enjoying the spiritual light comes from The Prophet (*al-Nūr al-Nabawī*) and display brilliance, then it does distinguish what is right from the wrong even if the statement includes fabricated expressions based on reliable evidence or weak evidence associated with a reliable text. Such a *Qalb* knows and distinguishes all of these. Because the sayings of Prophet can not be concealed from *aql* (mind) that is quite capable of understanding. It is for this reason that The Prophet says "Be afraid of a believer's *ferāsah* (sagacity) because he looks through the light of God". On the other hand Mu'āz Ibn al-Djabal says "The reality has a light just like a road has". Likewise, Shāh al-Kirmānī says "If a person follows the Sunnah of the Prophet in daily affairs and performs innate consultation (*murāqabah*) and keeps his eyes from looking at what is forbidden for him/her and guides himself to eating *halāl* then he/she makes no mistakes in his *ferāsah* (sagacity).

Ka'b Ibn Mālik, after loosing his sight, would say "Shut up! I smell lie from your mouth" if a person were to lie in his presence. And when he heard of a made up hadith, he would be able tell that it is indeed made up.³³

Shaykhul-Islām Abu'l-Abbās Ibn Taymiyyah said that "When a *qalb* with *taqwā* (piety, righteousness) makes a choice over an issue, it would be a choice that conforms to *Sharīah*."³⁴

To summarize, either the confession of fabricator, or disorder in his/her expressions, or even other evidences may lead to the determination of a made up hadith. Those who possesses *imān* (faith), *taqwā*, *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *sidq* (honesty) may discern, by the virtue of such features, truth from those telling the truth, lie from those telling lie and made up hadith from those who create them. For example, Sulayman al-Darānī used to call Ahmad Ibn 'Āsim al Antaqī "agent of *Qalbs*" due to his power of *firasah* (prophecy).³⁵

The saying of the Prophet that "Consult with your *qalb* even if people ask

³³ See. al-Qāsimī, *Qawā'id at-Tahdīth*, pp. 165–166

³⁴ al-Qāsimī, *Qawā'id at-Tahdīth*, p. 168.

³⁵ al-Qāsimī, *Qawā'id at-Tahdīth*, pp. 171–172.

you to behave according to a fatwa given on a certain issue"³⁶ has the same idea behind it. Notice that all the discussions above indirectly point to a pure *fitrah*. Indeed, the conditions for human beings such as refraining from unlawful and contending only with lawful aims at protecting the *fitrah*. As we have mentioned earlier religion can be considered as a field for protecting and developing *fitrah*. al-Qāsimī defines virtue of a person with such attributes as *qalb* and supports his view with some events that have taken place in the past.

As a result, to point being emphasized by what we call pure *fitrah* or what al-Qāsimī calls *qalb* is the following: Human beings have spiritual capacity which is beyond worldly measures to distinguish true and false. However if this capacity is to be used to determine whether a hadith belongs to Prophet Muhammad then we believe it would be more appropriate to call it *fitrah* rather than *qalb*.

Yet, the issues such as who possesses *pure fitrah* that has guiding feature and criteria for determination of it makes the criterion of *fitrah* as a subjective one. However, the main point in determining whether a hadith is genuine or made up is to be as precise as possible. In this case, the use of criterion of *pure fitrah* alone may lead to an uncontrolled measure of no use. Although we assume that *fitrah* is a value that God has placed into human beings, we do not think that it is a well-defined measure that every one may accept.

In this sense, there are similarities between unacceptance of guiding feature of *fitrah* alone and the information obtained through *al kashf* (vision) by *sufists*. Scholars working in the field of hadith assume *kashf* and vision as a way, possessed by some people, of obtaining information. However, due to being unable to verify this information and being prone to exploitation, they do not use it as a reliable method for determining reliability of hadith. Therefore, different views have arisen between the scholars of hadith and *sufists*. It is known that Ibn 'Arabī rejected this approach of the scholars of hadith as follows:

There are many hadiths, believed to be authentic, that people with spiritual sense do not act upon as they know that such hadiths are not indeed authentic. However, just because such hadiths pass the test of critique of *sanad*, believers of critique of *sanad* continue acting upon them. On the other hand, there are many hadiths, believed to have weak *sanad*, upon which people with spiritual sense continue acting as they know by means of their spiritual sense that such hadiths are indeed authentic.³⁷

As pointed out by al-Aclūnī, decision about a hadith being reliable or made

³⁶ For a discussion of reliability of the hadith, see al-Ajlūnī, Ismail Ibn Muhammad, *Kashf al-Khafā*, Tsh. Ahmad al-Qalāsh, Muassasah ar-Risālah, Beirut 1983, vol. I, p. 136.

³⁷ al-Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khafā*, vol. I, p. 9.

up is given based on external data such as critique of *sanad*. But in reality, it is possible for a hadith believed to be reliable to be made up and vice versa.³⁸

However, as pointed out above, we should act according to external data. The use of criteria such as *fitrah*, vision, spiritual sense whose reliability and range of validity are impossible to test may lead to subjective interpretations.

The expression of prophet Muhammed indicating that “one should act upon external data and that secrets are all belong to Allah”³⁹ is the evidence that external data are to be taken as a basis.

As a result, accepting that pure *fitrah* will lead to the understanding of reliable and made up hadith, we believe that such understanding will have a value for only the person with *pure fitrah* and that such approach will be rather subjective in providing general decisions on the authenticity of a hadith.

IV. Possibility for Features of Fitrah to be Criteria in Determining the Reliability of Hadith

As we have already mentioned, *fitrah* is a concentrated core consisting of many humanly features.⁴⁰ These features, in light of Qur’ān and hadith can be classified as natural capability of aql, innate sense and innate habits.⁴¹

Natural capabilities, innate sense and habits are mentioned in Qur’ānic verses and hadiths in a variety of ways. Sometimes one of these innate features is emphasized to exist in human beings, while some other times decisions are given on the assumption that such a feature does exist in human beings. For example, in the Qur’ānic verse “...Human being was created as weak”⁴² emphasizes the existence of an innate habit, while in the verse “Have they not pondered upon themselves? Allah created not the heavens and the earth, and that which is between them...”⁴³ it is assumed that human beings are given natural capability of thinking and asked to behave accordingly.

³⁸ al-Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khafā*, vol. I, p. 8.

³⁹ For relevant hadiths, see ad-Dāraḳutnī, Ali b. Ömar, *Sunan*, Dār al-Ma’rifah, Beirut 1966, vol. IV, pp. 206–207; as-Suyūṭī, Jalaladdin, *al-Jāmi’ as-Saghīr*, Dāru Tair al-’Ilm, Jidda, vol. I, p. 225; Ibn Abdilbarr, *at-Tamhīd*, Wazāratu Umūm al-Awqāf and Shu’ūn al-Islāmiyya, al-Maghrib 1387, vol. X, p. 157.

⁴⁰ For *fitrah* and features related to it, see Yasien Mohamed, “Fitrah and Its Bearing on the Principles of Psychology”, *The American Journal Of Islamic Social Sciences*, Volume 12, Spring 1995, Number 1, pp. 1–18.

⁴¹ For more information, see Coskun, Selcuk, *Bir Eğitimi Olarak Hz. Peygamber’in İnsan Anlayışı*, Ekev Yayınları, Erzurum, pp. 264–314.

⁴² al-Nisā, 28.

⁴³ al-Rūm, 8

From this point of view, it is appropriate to give brief information on natural capability of mind (*aql*), senses and habits which are possessed from birth and on.

Human beings, due to their *fitrah*, are wise. However, natural capabilities within the concept of mind display variety in concentration. Some of the natural capabilities mentioned, in direct or indirect manner, in Qur'anic verses and hadiths are memory,⁴⁴ remembrance,⁴⁵ attention,⁴⁶ understanding,⁴⁷ comparison⁴⁸ and ability to think.⁴⁹ While a person may be strong in memory, the other may be in that of thinking (judgement). There may be differences in this sense, yet every healthy human being possesses such common natural capabilities.

Furtermore, human beings possess innate feelings (senses). Some of the innate senses mentioned, direct or indirect manner, in Qur'anic verses and hadiths are bashfulness,⁵⁰ hopefulness and fear,⁵¹ anger and mercy,⁵² love and hatred,⁵³ happiness and sorrow,⁵⁴ competition,⁵⁵ sexual feeling⁵⁶ and possession.⁵⁷

⁴⁴ See. Bukhārī, 'Ilm, 25 (I, 30); at-Tirmidhī, 'Ilm, 7 (V, 34); Abū Dāwud, Aqdiyah, 27 (II, 336), 'Ilm, 10 (II, 346); Ibn Mājah, Muqaddima, 16 (I, 78); Muslim, Musafirīn, 257 (I, 555).

⁴⁵ For example see al-An'ām, 44, 70; al-A'rāf, 2, 3, 165, 201; al-Baqarah, 282; an-Nāzi'āt, 35; Abū Dāwud, Janāiz, 77 (II, 237); at-Tirmidhī, Janāiz, 60 (III, 370); Ibn Mājah, Janāiz, 47 (I, 500).

⁴⁶ See. Bukhārī, 'Imān, 39 (I, 19); Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. II, p. 403, IV, 402; Dārimī, Fadāil al-Qur'an, 12 (II, 538).

⁴⁷ Abū Dāwud, Maḥdī, 1 (II, 508), Ādāb, 18 (II, 676); Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. I, p. 330.

⁴⁸ Bukhārī, 'Ilm, 4 (I, 22). Moreover, in most of the hadith on "emsāl", attention is drawn to humans' natural capability of comparative thinking and suggestions are given for the use of this capability. See, ar-Rāmahurmuzī, *Kitāb al-Amsāl al-Hadīth*, Revised by Ahmad Abdulfattāh, Muassasah al-Kutub as-Sakāfiyya, Beirut-1988.

⁴⁹ See. ar-Rūm, 8; al-A'rāf, 176, 184; al-Hashr, 21; an-Nahl, 17, 44; al-An'ām, 50; al-Baqarah, 219, 266; Bukhārī, al-Amal fi's-Salāh, 18 (II, 65); Muslim, Salāh, 19 (I, 292); Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. II, p. 353.

⁵⁰ See. Bukhārī, Anbiyā, 54 (IV, 252), Ādāb, 77 (VII, 100), 'Ilm, 8 (I, 24), 'Imān, 3 (I, 8), Nikāh, 41 (VI, 135); Ibn Mājah, Zuhd, 17 (II, 1400), Nikāh, 11 (I, 601)

⁵¹ For example see Bukhārī, Musāqāt, 5 (III, 76), Riqāq, 19, (VII, 183), 29 (VII, 186), Daawāt, 41 (VII, 159), Jihād, 25 (III, 207-210); an-Nasāi, Isti'āza, 5 (VIII, 256).

⁵² See. Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. IV, p. 226; Bukhārī, Ādāb, 76 (VII, 99-100), Mardā, 9 (VII, 5); Mālik, Sadaqah, 14 (II, 1000); Ibn Mājah, Iqāmati's-Salāh, 48 (I, 315); Muslim, Birr, 66 (IV, 1999).

⁵³ See. al-Baqarah, 216; Bukhārī, Ādāb, 42 (VII, 83), 96 (VII, 112), 'Imān, 6 (I, 9), 9 (I, 9), Manāqibu'l-Ansār, 4 (IV, 223); an-Nasāi, 'Imān, 2 (VIII, 95); Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, vol. IV, p. 286.

⁵⁴ See. Ibn Mājah, Tahārah, 78 (I, 529), Zuhd, 19 (II, 1402); Bukhārī, Riqāq, 27 (VII, 186).

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Some of the innate habits that exist in human beings are to have tendency of being hurry,⁵⁸ forgetful and ungrateful,⁵⁹ weak in creation,⁶⁰ influential or influenced.⁶¹

Various criteria are used in the process of decision making. The same situation holds for the field of hadith as well. If one is in the process of seeking a criterion in determining whether a hadith belongs to Prophet Muhammad, the most important point to be considered is to make sure that the field of applicability of the criterion be determined as precisely as possible. Keeping this point in mind, it is more appropriate to use innate features which are clearly defined, felt and observed by every human being in determining whether a hadith belongs to the Prophet instead of the use of *fitrah* itself which is the essence of all innate features and hard to define its boundaries.

We would like to give a single example on this issue. To play or to have a good time is a feature that exists in human *fitrah*. Unlike angels or animals, which are one-sided creatures, human beings have features that exist both in angels and animals. For this reason, human beings are creatures whose needs are hard to meet and they have rather various and complicated ways of getting satisfied. This is due to the *fitrah* of human beings. It is quite natural that behaviours implied by *fitrah* have positive impacts on society and individuals. Since such behaviours meet some needs of humans, as at least they cause them to revise.

A man's training of his horse; teasing and playing with his wife or archery⁶² were considered as appropriate by the Prophet. Likewise, it is known

⁵⁵ This general feeling includes jealousy, envy and envy without malice. For the hadith of the Prophet related to this feeling in direct or indirect manner, see Ibn Mājah, Nikāh, 56 (I, 643); Bukhārī, Nikāh, 107 (VI, 157), Manāqib al-Ansār, 20 (IV, 231); an-Nasāi, Nikāh, 16 (VI, 69).

⁵⁶ See. Bukhārī, Tafsīr as-Sūrah Māida, 9 (V, 189), Nikāh, 3 (VI, 117), Libās, 6 (VII, 35); Ibn Mājah, Nikāh, 2 (I, 593)

⁵⁷ See. Āli 'Imrān, 14; Fajr, 20; Bukhārī, Vasayā, 9 (III, 189), Zakāh, 47 (II, 127), Riqāq, 11 (VII, 176), 15 (VII, 178).

⁵⁸ See. Abū Dāwud, Jihād, 97 (II, 53); at-Tirmidhī, Daawāt, 64 (V, 482); at-Tirmidhī, Birr, 66 (IV, 322), Sawm, 13 (III, 82-83).

⁵⁹ For example see al-A'lā, 6; al-Kahf, 63, 73; Bukhārī, Salāh, 31 (I, 105), 'Ilm, 16 (I, 26), al-Anbiyā, 24 (I, 127); Muslim, Masājid, 89 (I, 400), Siyām, 171 (II, 809); Ibn Mājah, Muqaddima, 3 (I, 11).

⁶⁰ See. Bukhārī, Nafaqāt, 1 (VI, 189), an-Nasāi, Qasāma, 29 (VIII, 37).

⁶¹ For example see Bukhārī, Bad' al-Halq, 6 (IV, 79); Bukhārī, Tahajjut, 5 (II, 43); Abū Dāwud, Talāk, 17 (I, 674); Ibn Mājah, Muqaddima, 13 (I, 67).

⁶² al-Nasāi, Hayl, 8 (VI, 222).

that Prophet has not intervered *Habashians* playing in *Masjid*.⁶³ Also, according to Ibn Mas'ūd's statement they were given permission to have a good time in wedding ceremonies⁶⁴. All of these indicate that such behaviors were considered appropriate in Islam.

Furthermore, we know that The Prophet has not prevented girls singing songs accompanied by snare drum in the wedding ceremony of Rubeyyi' Bintu Mu'avviz.⁶⁵ The Prophet has also indicated that it would be better for 'Ā'ishah accompanying a bride in her first night of marriage, to be escorted by girls singing songs and playing snare drum.⁶⁶ These are some of the indications that such entertainments are appropriate in Islam.⁶⁷

Abū Bakr has attempted to prevent a group of girls singing next to 'Ā'ishah has gained no permission to do so from Prophet.⁶⁸ Also, the hadith that in a religious festival (*Iyd*) Prophet asks "Ā'ishah whether She would like to watch people playing with their spear and upon her positive response, he encourages people to continue playing while allowing⁶⁹ 'Ā'ishah to watch them is an evidence indicating the existence of such feeling. The following expression of 'Ā'ishah is also important in this sense: "*Habeshians* were playing with their spears. The Prophet used to stay in front of me, allowing me to watch them over his shoulders, as long as I would like. Think of the state of mind of a young girl and that what she would do hearing people play."⁷⁰ al-'Aynī mentions that young ladies enjoy entertainment and express extreme desire to watch people playing and try to entertain themselves as their time permits.⁷¹

All of the above indicate that people have the innate feeling for play and entertainment and one way or another would like to satisfy such feelings. The important point here is that Prophet has not prevented such activities, rather he has granted permission for such activities.

It is not realistic to think of a hadith contrary to satisfaction of such feelings that Prophet has not prohibited, rather he has granted permission for, provided that they remain within reasonable limits and do not go against fundamental dynamics of Islam. However, there are some severe reactions for such

⁶³ Bukhārī, *Salāh*, 69 (I, 117).

⁶⁴ al-Nasāi, *Nikāh*, 80 (VI, 135).

⁶⁵ Bukhārī, *Maghāzī*, 12 (V, 15).

⁶⁶ Bukhārī, *Nikāh*, 63 (VI, 140); Ibn Mājah, *Nikāh*, 21 (I, 612).

⁶⁷ See. al-'Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. XX, p. 149.

⁶⁸ Bukhārī, *Jihād*, 81 (III, 228); Bukhārī, *'Idayn*, 2 (II, 2); Bukhārī, *'Idayn*, 25 (II, 11); al-'Aynī, a. g. e. , VIII, 270.

⁶⁹ Bukhārī, *Jihād*, 81 (III, 228); Bukhārī, *Salāh*, 69 (I, 117).

⁷⁰ Bukhārī, *Nikāh*, 82 (VI, 147).

⁷¹ al-'Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, vol. XVI, p. 279.

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innate feelings in some accounts claimed to be hadith. One of such news reads "those who play chess have been cursed."⁷² And another one reads "May God curse those who sings and listens to a song."⁷³

It is determined, by means of critique of *sanad* that such news are not hadith.⁷⁴ However, as mentioned above, a decision on a hadith based solely on critique of *sanad* may not be quite reliable. To reduce such probability, critique of text is required. When the criterion that "Hadith being against to innate features" is applied to such accounts, it implies that such accounts are indeed made up. Because, the accounts towards the total removal of feelings of entertainment that people possesses from birth or those even indicating that people with such activities would be cursed means the denial of *fitrah*. However, no such situation does exist in the implementations of Prophet mentioned above.

Based on our thesis that religion is sent by God to bring happiness for the life in the world and hereafter, and humanbeings were created by God, and therefore there will not be a conflict between religion and *fitrah* of human beings. It is obvious that Prophet would follow the same line and make no statements against *fitrah*. Therefore, it appears that an account confirmed to be made up hadith through the critique of *sanad* will remain to be made up due to being against innate features of human beings.

However, concerning the innate features that will be used in determining that a hadith does not belong to Prophet, the following points have to be taken into consideration:

1) It is difficult to determine the scope of innate features individually and as a whole. Yet, determined innate features and their reflections can constitute a method in determining that a hadith does not belong to Prophet. In other words, an account that clearly contradicts with a determined innate feature should raise doubts about its authenticity. Later on, if further evidence is found to support these question marks then the news should be disregarded. Thus the news gets rejected for being against not only one but also all the criteria of text, which results in a solid justification for its rejection. For example, such an account as "Whoever marries a woman for her wealth will be deprived by God of her wealth and beauty"⁷⁵ is against the feeling of ownership that exists in human nature. To emphasize the density of this feeling in human na-

⁷² See. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al Manār al Munif*, p. 134; Ali al-Qāri, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a*, p. 469.

⁷³ See. al-Ajlūnī, a. g. e. , II, 186.

⁷⁴ See. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al Manār al Munif*, p. 134; Ali al-Qāri, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a* , p. 469.

⁷⁵ as-Suyūti, *ad-Durar al-Muntasira fi al-Ahādīth al-Mushtahira*, revised by Muhammad Abdulkadir Ata, Dār al-I'tisām, Cairo, p. 377.

ture, The Prophet says "Human beings even having a possession of a valley made up of gold would like posses another one and such a desire continues until their burrial"⁷⁶ which is a fact known to every one. Therefore, an account that rejects the feeling of ownership should be considered as suspicious of being against the feeling of ownership and has to be investigating furthermore from different points of view. As a result of such investigation, it is seen that aforementioned hadith contradicts another hadith reads that "Four features of a woman are considered essential in marriage: Namely, her wealth, lineage, beauty and piousness. You prefer the pious one so as to lead a pleasant life"⁷⁷. Based on this hadith, The Prophet indicates that a woman can be preferred for marriage due to her wealth as well; however the pious one is recommended. Therefore, an account prohibiting marriage with a woman because of her wealth is against both the feeling of possession and other hadiths and thus it can not belong to the Prophet.

2) Another point to be taken into account is that this technique has to be used to determine that a hadith does not belong to the Prophet rather than that it belongs to him. Because it is quite possible that any one besides The Prophet must have made a statement conforming to the innate feature of a human being.

Therefore, this point of view may lead to accounts that are not hadith to be mistakenly considered as hadith. But, it is impossible for the Prophet to make a statement or act against the innate features of human beings. Therefore, attribution of such news to the Prophet would make no sense. For example accounts claimed to be hadith reads "Forgetfulness is due to human nature"⁷⁸. This statement is not against human *fitrah* and is inspired by Qur'anic verses and hadiths. However, it would be a mistake to claim that it belongs to the Prophet. Because according to the scholars of hadith this statement is not a hadith as it stands⁷⁹. In an investigation aimed at determining whether a hadith belongs to The Prophet, the meaning of the statement alone does not mean a lot. Because what is investigated is not whether the statement is true or false, rather whether it belongs to The Prophet or not. Indeed, books that collect made up hadiths refer to many such statements as "True in meaning but wrong in attributing to The Prophet".

Hence, it is obvious that it would be a mistake attributing every statement that makes sense to The Prophet. In this sense, innate features of human beings can be a criterion in determining that a hadith does not belong to the

⁷⁶ Muslim, Zakāh, 117 (II, 725).

⁷⁷ Abū Dāwud, Nikāh, 2 (I, 624).

⁷⁸ Ali al-Qārī, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a*, p. 354.

⁷⁹ See. Ali al-Qārī, *al-Asrār al-Marfū'a*, p. 359.

Prophet rather than that it belongs to Him.

2) Final point to be made is that a hadith that seems to contradict with known innate features should not be rejected immediately; rather it has to be interpreted within the scope of innate features and be rejected only if this interpretation fails. For example, one of innate habits of humans is to be in a hurry. It is a feature that can not be underestimated, and has been mentioned in Qur'ānic verses such as "Humans are very hasty"⁸⁰ and "Humans are created of haste"⁸¹. However, it has been narrated that Prophet has said in a hadith "Things performed in hurry are due to the involvement of satan."⁸² At first this hadith may seem to be against innate feature human and thus has to be rejected. However, considering all the hadiths related to being in a hurry and determining the balance within this habit, it is understood that a hadith of this nature points to a reality in that it guides humans to be in a hurry in performing good actions while prohibiting such tendency for the actions believed to be in wrong directions. For example, The Prophet has suggested to hurry in breaking fast during *Ramadān*,⁸³ and giving a name to a newly born child⁸⁴ and also performing the *Maghrib Prayer (Salāh al maghrib)*.⁸⁵ Therefore, The Prophet has not underestimated or disregarded the existence of this feeling, rather he suggested that this feeling be used in good actions and prohibited its use in evil doings. Thus, in this way he established the balance within the same habit.

V. Conclusion

In determining whether a hadith belongs to The Prophet or not, hadith scholars have used the methods known as critique of *matn* (text) and *sanad*, and developed perfect methodologies as a result. However, application of such methods involves the human factor. To contribute to such process, we believe that innate features can be taught of belonging to critique of text can be a criterion.

Allah has created humans and sent them religion so that they can lead a pleasant life here in the world and the life hereafter. For this reason, there should not appear any conflict between the religion and innate features of humans that they possess from the birth. If such hadiths exist, it is not possible for them to belong to The Prophet. However, while reaching such a decision, the points mentioned above have to be taken into consideration. As a result of an

⁸⁰ al-Isrā, 11.

⁸¹ al-Anbiyā, 37.

⁸² at-Tirmidhī, Birr wa Sīla, 66 (IV, 322).

⁸³ See. at-Tirmidhī, Sawm, 13 (III, 82, 83).

⁸⁴ See. at-Tirmidhī, Ādāb, 63 (V, 121).

⁸⁵ See. Bukhārī, Tahajjut, 30 (II, 53); Muslim, Musafirīn, 55 (I, 491).

investigation that has been carried out in light of the points mentioned above, if an account that disregards or go against innate features of human beings has been attributed to the Prophet, then it can be concluded that it does not belong to the Prophet.

“On the Use of ‘Fitrah’ as a Measure in Determining Whether a Narrated Hadith Belongs to the Prophet Muhammad”

Abstract: One of the fundamental issues in the area of hadith is to determine whether a hadith belongs to the Prophet. In this context, two common methods are used in general, one of which is the critique of text while the other is that of sanad. In this study an analysis is carried out by means of fitrah, which is studied within the context of critique of text in conventional literature but has not been emphasized at a satisfactory level. The material is organized as follows: Following the introduction where the motivation is laid out, the analysis is presented in three subsections. In the first section the concept of fitrah has been discussed in view of hadiths and relevant verses of Quran. In the following section the possibility of decision making on the authenticity of a hadith based on the measure of pure fitrah has been discussed. Finally in the last section we advocate the idea that in determining the authenticity of a hadith features of fitrah have to be used as a criteria, instead of pure fithrah.

Citation: Selçuk COŞKUN, “On the Use of ‘Fitrah’ as a Measure in Determining Whether a Narrated Hadith Belongs to the Prophet Muhammad”, *Hadis Tetkikleri Dergisi (HTD)*, VI/1, 2008, pp. 29-46.

Key words: Hadith, Sunnah, authenticity of hadith, fitrah, narration, critics of text.