

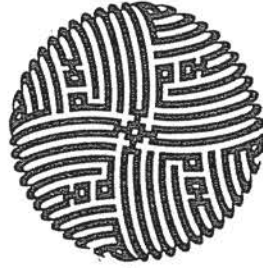
ISSN: 2149-3979



The Journal of Theological Academia

year: 2018 issue: 7-8 a bi-annual international journal of academic research

SUNNAH



ilahiyat akademi

yl: 2018

sayı: 7-8

altı aylık uluslararası akademik araştırma dergisi

Causes of Hadith Opposition in the First Hijri Centuries

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Abstract

The Prophet's religious authority, as in his health, continued after his death. This authority, which is accepted by the vast majority of Muslims, has occasionally been questioned by some individuals and groups. The opposition of the hadith, which is rejected or restricted the religious authority of the hadeeth, emerged from the early stages of Islam. In this article, the reasons for the hadith opposition seen in the first Islamic centuries were held. We discussed this very important issue in the relevant part of our doctoral dissertation. Although nearly thirty years have passed, the subject is still up to date. In the light of new information and the new tests, we have concluded to reevaluate the subject once again. In this article, the reasons of the hadith opposition are examined under the main headings and with many examples. Not only the evidence and the examples are presented in the article, but also these examples have been tried to analyze psychologically the causes of emergence of negative attitude towards the hadith in the people living in these periods. Thus, the reader will have reached a level of knowledge about the characteristics of the period. In the context of hadith, it appears that as of today and throughout the history, there will be people or groups opposing the hadiths in the future. However, it can be hypothesized that they will remain marginal but active.

Key Words: Hadith Opposition, The Prophet, Sunnah, Kalam

İlk Hicri Asırlarda Hadis Karşıtlığının Nedenleri

Özet

Hız. Peygamber'in dini otoritesi, sağlığında olduğu gibi, vefatından sonra da devam etmiştir. Müslümanların büyük çoğunluğu tarafından kabul edilen bu otorite, zaman zaman bazı kişi ve gruplarca sorgulanmıştır. Hadisin dini otoritesini reddeden veya sınırlandıran hadis karşıtlığı, İslâm tarihinin erken dönemlerinden itibaren görülmeye başlanmıştır. Bu makalede hadis karşıtlığının İslâm'ın ilk asırlarına tekabül eden kesiti ve hadis karşıtlığının nedenleri incelenmiştir. Oldukça önemli sayılabilecek bu konuyu, doktora tezimizin ilgili kısmında da müstakil olarak ele almıştık. Aradan yaklaşık otuz yıl geçmiş olmasına rağmen, konu hala güncelliğini korumaktadır. Biz de yeni bilgiler ve yeni tahliller ışığında konuyu bir

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kez daha ele almayı uygun gördük. Bu makalede hadis karşıtlığının nedenleri ana başlıklar halinde ve çok sayıda örnekle incelenmektedir. Sadece deliller ve örnekler serdedilmekle yetinilmemiş, bu örneklerden hareketle, söz konusu dönemlerde yaşayan insanların hadise karşı olumsuz tavır geliştirmelerinin nedenleri zihinsel olarak tahlil edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Böylece okuyucu dönemin özellikleri hakkında da bir bilgi seviyesine ulaşmış olacaktır. Hadis karşıtlığı bağlamında bugün itibarıyla görünen odur ki tarih boyunca olduğu gibi, gelecekte de hadislere menfi yaklaşan kişi veya gruplar var olacaktır. Fakat bunların marjinal, ancak aktif nitelikte kalacakları şimdiden var sayılabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hadis Karşıtlığı, Hz. Peygamber, Sünnet, Kalam

It is a fact that some people and groups/early-sects assumed a negative attitude towards the hadiths (and the sunnah) at the very beginning of Islamic history. However, it is difficult to identify the precise time when this negative approach began. It is not possible to identify the emergence of any kind of opposition to the hadiths during the lifetime of the Prophet, in the first half of the period of companions or even until the emergence of the Kharijites at the earliest. This is because the oldest evidence we have about opposition to the hadiths is the first Kharijites (Haruriyye), who expressed a negative approach towards the hadiths, as we will address in the following pages.

According to this narrative, they are the first factious people to come to mind during the time of the Prophet, they appear to be good Muslims, at least on the surface, and therefore, it is impossible for them to dare to oppose the hadiths. It can also be said that the environment was not suitable for hadith opposition after the death of the Prophet until the martyrdom of Uthman. Suitable conditions began to emerge with the martyrdom of Uthman and the political, social and kalam atmosphere facilitating the development of negative attitudes towards the hadiths, which are one of the prominent commandments of Islam. The development of some personal methods by some of the companions for the purpose of identifying the authenticity of the narratives that they had heard for the first time (persistence), should not be considered as anti-hadith but as the first examples of the emergence of the methodology of criticism of the hadiths. For example, when the hadith, *"if a dog, donkey or a woman passes by in front of a person who prays, his prayer becomes invalid"* is mentioned, Aisha said, *"You equated us with dogs. The Prophet used to pray and I used to lay on the bed between him and the qiblah. When I needed something I slowly removed myself from there in order to not be opposite him"*. This is an example of a hadith criticism in the early period. It is quite common for the companions to approach narratives that they had heard of and have no information about, in this manner or in a similar one. These are not related to hadith opposition, but are

merely examples of the efforts of the companions to identify the correct form of the hadiths.¹

Since the reasons of the hadith opposition will be discussed here, its history and variations will not be addressed. However, the hadith opposition will be defined and the elements included in this definition will be briefly explained so that the framework of the issue can be established.

We consider mentioning the definition we made at the beginning of our doctoral thesis here to be appropriate: *"Denying the position that the Qur'an gives the Prophet and the matter of needing following him, in thought and practice, fully or partially, without any reasonable and scientific cause means denying the hadiths."*² According to the Qur'an, the Prophet is not only responsible for conveying the Qur'an, but also for explaining the Qur'an (disclosure), being a role model for morality and worship, and providing solutions to the problems of the ummah in matters that the Qur'an does not address. In other words, it is imperative for Muslims to abide by the *religious* statements and acts of the Prophet.

However, his acts in *non-religious* settings are not binding. The expression, *"Thought and practice"*, included in the definition refers to the theoretical and practical dimensions of the hadiths and the sunnah. Because we witness that the groups which were seen as hadith opposers formed their world views without taking the hadiths into account. Elements of this can be observed in the Kharijites and some Sufis³. Nevertheless, addressing the narratives and subjecting them to criticism in line with the methods followed for the identification of the authenticity of the hadiths, became a religious and scientific imperative. It is impossible to consider these methods and the actions taken solely to identify the authenticity of the narratives as part of hadith opposition. Consequently, exclusion of a hadith (or sunnah), completely or partially, is included in the elements of definition of the hadith opposition. Now, we can examine the reasons of the emergence of the hadith opposition based on the foundation of this definition.

We can say that the most significant factor of the hadith opposition which began to emerge in the early periods of Islamic history was the *"political environment"*. This is because there is a strong connection and interaction between political events and human thoughts. This connection and interaction can manifest itself as, *"the effect of human thoughts on political developments"*. However, it is also

¹ For examples of the methods of hadith criticism by the companions, see Musfir Garamullah ad-Dumeyni (ed-Damini), *Mekâyisü Nakdi Mutîni's-Sunne*, Riyadh 1404/1984.

² Hadis İnkârcıları, Seba Pub., Ankara 1998, 25

³ We cannot use the word "Sufi" as, *"a person who is committed to Sufism"* during the first centuries. This is because Sufism, as a philosophical movement was born a few centuries later, in approximately the 3rd Hijri century. Here, the term, "Sufi" is predominantly used for ascetic people. Nonetheless, the asceticism movement and philosophy was effective in the formation of Sufism later on, while Sufism was effective in the emergence of the cults. For more information, see Mehmet Necmeddin Bardakçı, *"Doğuşta Günümüze Tasavvuf ve Tarikatlar"*, Rağbet Pub., İstanbul 2015.

true that extraordinary events and developments that disrupt the social structure, which occur in the political arena (such as assassination attempts, successful or failed coups, massacres), cause changes in the people's thought systems. According to this narrative, the martyrdom of Uthman (18 AH Dhu al-Hijjah 35/June 17, 656 AD) was a very serious assassination in history, and a **milestone for evil**, which set in motion the beginning of the incidents of instigation in Islamic history and triggered conflicts that would last for centuries. Obedience to Ali, after the martyrdom of Uthman, was not enough to provide peace. The Battle of the Camel broke out between the army led by Aisha and Ali's army (13 Jumada al-awwal 36 AH/ November 7, 656 AD). During this war, there were companions on both sides and a lot of them lost their lives. Following this battle, the Battle of Siffin (36 AH/657 AD) and the Incident of Judges took place between Muawiyah and Ali. Many companions also lost their lives in the Battle of Siffin. In a few years, very serious incidents broke out in the political arena, civil wars were fought, the state was destroyed, the blood of companions was shed and a caliph was martyred. While the beloved grandson of our Prophet, Hasan, continued his case to become the next caliph for a while, he later gave up on this demand. The brutal martyrdom of Husayn, the younger grandson of our Prophet, in Karbala on 61 AH/680 AD after the death of Muawiyah, was one of the most painful events of the political arena during the first century.

It is possible to refer to the period of political unrest which began in Hijri 35 with the martyrdom of Uthman and continued until the martyrdom of Husayn in 61 AH, as the period of "*Great Instigations*".

We mentioned the effects of political events on people's thoughts above. At this point, the question we should ask in terms of our topic is as follows: *What kind of a cause and effect relationship is there between these political events and the hadith opposition? In other words, how could some people and groups be affected by this atmosphere while developing opposition to the hadiths?*

Criticism of the Companions

Considering the companions in relation to their historical roles, we could say that they have two historical duties, one of which is related to the "*Qur'an*", and the other is related to the "*Prophet*". The companions created the Mushaf by compiling the Qur'an between two covers (cem'), right after the death of the Prophet. Secondly, they made an effort for the Qur'an to be well-understood by interpreting it in all aspects. A portion of this effort consists of the conveyance of the hadiths and the sunnah. Therefore, the historical duty of the companions in relation to the Qur'an would be completed in this way. One of their duties in relation to the Prophet was the conveyance of his words and actions as accurately as possible to future generations. Their second duty can be described as being actual role models for the experience of the sunnah.

Whether the companions were able to maintain the environment of peace and quietude in the political arena which they took over from the Prophet is debatable, but it is evident that they performed their duties in relation to the Qur'an and the Prophet. In this respect, the Islamic ulema (followers of the sunnah) cultivated the idea that the companions were fair from a very early period. The fairness of the companions indicates that they successfully completed their duties in relation to the Qur'an and the Prophet, but does not include any ideas indicating that they are free of sin. In our opinion, the most important reason why the companions were excluded from disaffirmation and revision is the possibility that such disaffirmation of this generation, who were the first carriers of Islam, could lead to the emergence of suspicions around the Qur'an and the sunnah which are the main sources that they conveyed. Because, the idea that, *"the accuracy of news is directly proportional to the reliability of those who convey it"*, constitutes the main principle of disaffirmation and revision. This is why, "there were no people in dispute over the fairness of the companions apart from some innovation groups."⁴ Khatib Baghdadi (d. 463 AH) states the following on the subject matter in a more explanatory manner: "Acting on a hadith whose attribution is contiguous from the Prophet until the final communicator, can only be possible if it becomes certain that all communicators were fair. While it is necessary to investigate their state in all aspects, the state of a companion who attaches a hadith to the messenger. This is because the fairness of the companions gained credibility as Allah informed that they are fair, informed them that they are honest people and sent down verses in relation to them."⁵ These opinions, compiled by the scholars who lived a few centuries later, actually express the Islamic ummah's general opinion of the companions in the first century. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of society accepted the leadership of the companions and did not question them at this point. However, the revolt committed against a companion for the first time, and in a way that would create quite serious consequences, was such a far cry from this environment. With this revolt, a great companion, who is the caliph of the Muslims, was not only seriously criticized but also martyred as a result of this revolt. According to this narrative, points on which Uthman is criticized are as follows: 1. He had the Mushafs burned after compiling the Qur'an; 2. During trips, he prayed without shortening his prayer time; 3. He considered himself to be more superior than the messenger and degraded Abu Bakr and 'Umar to a lower level; 4. His absence in Badr and the Pledge of Ridwan, and his return from Uhud⁶. Those who revolted had decided that Uthman made big mistakes, he should fear God and repent, and resign from his position as caliph.⁷ *"The companion is the first link in the chain that carries the Prophet's words and actions to us. This first link is very important, particularly in terms of the hadith narratives because they are not like other communicators,*

⁴ Ibn Hajar, Isabe, 1/10

⁵ Baghdadi, Kifaye, 93.

⁶ Ibn Al-Arabi, Avasim, 61.

⁷ Taberi, Tarih, 4/333

and heard the hadiths directly from their sources. If the reliability of the one who first heard the words from their source is compromised, doubts will ensue over the authenticity of the communicated hadith. Therefore, the criticism of the companion would directly have a negative impact on the reliability and authority of the hadith."⁸In fact, examples of this can be seen in the attitudes of the first sects; the Kharijites, the Gulat-i Rafiza, and some followers of innovation. The first Kharijites, who left Ali's army and withdrew to Harura, did not accept the narratives of the companions who participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin, and the parties in the Incident of Judges, as they accused them of blasphemy⁹. According to this narrative, dialogue between Aisha and a woman is a striking example of the hadith opposition of the Kharijites: "A woman asked Aisha, 'After anyone is clean, should she pray later on to make up for it (the prayer she couldn't perform during menstruation)? According to this narrative, Aisha replied, 'Are you a Haruriyah (Kharijite)? We had our periods while we were with the Prophet and he did not command us to do that (or 'we didn't do that')."¹⁰ There are a couple of points that attract our attention in this example; it is understood from this dialogue that the women who menstruated and could not pray did not perform an additional prayer later on to make up for it on her clean days, and this was an established practice at that time (sunnah). So, this rule was not just based on a narrative, but it was also evidenced by the established practice. Therefore, it is observed that the Kharijites took into account neither the narratives nor the established sunnah. It can be said that one of the most important reasons for this anti-hadith and anti-sunnah attitude of the Kharijites is their negative opinions of the companion, while another reason is the disappointment they experienced in this political platform. The reason for their disappointment is the fact that their wishes from and expectations of Ali and the other companions whom they gathered around, were not met. Because, they demanded from Ali that the women around Aisha should be considered as prizes, and that he rejected the decisions made by the judges. These did not happen, in fact, the circle around them was getting smaller by the day. The disappointment of the Kharijites in the political arena drove them to opposition. They then developed a religious approach that criticizes the companions.

The development of a negative point of view towards the companions by the Rafizi groups constitutes one of the reasons why they rejected the hadiths. One of the scholars who pointed out the impact of the criticism of the companions in hadith opposition is Suyuti (d. 911 AH/1505 AD). According to him, "One of the strangest behaviors of the Rafizis is their consideration of the companions as perverse and their rejection of the hadiths as they are the narratives of these perverse people"¹¹. Watt makes the following assessment in relation to the Rafizis: "A natural result of the

⁸ Çakın, Hadis İnkarcıları, 35.

⁹ Baghdadi, Abdulkahir, Fark, 55 et al., Sehistani, Milel, 1/201, Eş'ari, Makalât, 87 et al.

¹⁰ Al-Bukhari, Hayz, hadith no: 321, 1/71

¹¹ Suyuti, Miftah, 45.

essential doctrine of the Rafizis was the following: The majority of the companions who had a special position in Islam rebelled against the commandment of the Prophet, since they did not recognize Ali as the caliph after the death of the Prophet. Hence, they did not deserve to convey his hadiths. Rafizis were undermining the sensitive structure of the hadith, which is the basis of the Shariah, or the law of Islam, which in turn undermined the developing influence and power of the class of hadith and legal scholars.”¹²

The Political Environment

The political unrest, the panorama of which we provided in the beginning, laid the foundation for negative movements of thought surrounding the companions, while leading to the emergence of different tendencies in relation to the hadiths. As we mentioned earlier, political events may deeply affect the thought structure of the society and cause a number of changes. The state of civil turmoil that broke out after the martyrdom of Uthman and continued for a long time, brought some Muslims and groups face-to-face with some very complicated problems. A product of the political conditions by their nature, these events which needed to be resolved under those same conditions gained a religious identity through the explanations and interpretations of the following generations. In other words, while the emergence and development of these events could be explained by societal conditions, they were tried to be resolved under religious laws. Considering our subject matter, political groups referred to the hadiths rather than the Qur'an to be able to justify their cause and to prove the erroneous ways of their opponents. While the narratives that were known to be true were interpreted to serve certain purposes, some groups did not refrain from fabricating hadiths. The hadith material, which was actually pure, was contaminated for the first time through politics, and the stagnant waters were blurred by politics. For example, the following hadith was claimed to have been stated by the Prophet as it was supposedly conveyed by Aisha, *“I am the master of mankind and Ali is the master of the Arabs”*¹³. The oddness of this narrative is its conveyance from Aisha. If Aisha knew this hadith, she would not have fought with Ali, who is the master of the Arabs; on the contrary, she would have stood beside him. Another narrative that is fabricated in the political arena is as follows: Abd Allah bin Mesud narrates: *“I was with the Prophet on the night a group of genies visited him. The Messenger took deep breaths. I asked him, ‘What is this state of yours messenger?’. He said, ‘I was informed of my death’. Then I said, ‘So, designate a caliph’. He asked, ‘Who?’... I said: ‘Ali b. Abi Talib’. Upon this, he said, ‘I swear to the one who holds my life in his hand that if they obey Ali, they will all go*

¹² Watt, *Islamic Philosophy*, 53.

¹³ Hakeem, Mustedrek, hadith no: 4625, 3/133. Hakeem states that he cannot say that the attribution of this hadith is authentic according to the conditions of Al-Bukhari and Muslim due to Umar bin Al-Hasan being included in the attribution. His zahab says that Umar bin Hasan al-Rasibi fabricated this hadith. Taberani also narrates this hadith through Enes b. Malik, and rules it to be a sole hadith. Taberani, *Mu'cemu'l-Evsat*, hadith no: 1468, 2/127.

to heaven"¹⁴. As it can be seen in this narrative, the caliphate of Ali was praised by the Prophet himself and Muslims were encouraged to obey him. It is obvious that this narrative was fabricated by the followers of Ali, most probably the Rafizis. The counter group would either attribute a different meaning or reject such narratives that praise a political figure. However, it is also observed that the opposers did not idly stand by and fabricate hadiths. Followers of Muawiyah also fabricated hadiths referring to the virtues of Muawiyah. One of these is the following hadith, "There are three reliable individuals in the eyes of Allah: I, Gabriel and Muawiyah"¹⁵. While Muawiyah's followers fabricated the hadith, "If you see Muawiyah reading a sermon in my minbar, accept him (submit to him)"¹⁶. The followers of Ali spread the narrative, "If you see Muawiyah reading a sermon in my minbar, kill him."¹⁷

In such an atmosphere where political events have become blurred in the minds of the people, what kind of an attitude could Muslims have on hadiths in the face of the spreading of such narratives among the people? It is evident that the ulema had warned the public against such narratives since the early days and tried to discard the fabricated narratives as much as possible. However, it may be considered that the people who did not have the ability to distinguish the authentic narratives from the fabricated ones directed the suspicions they had in themselves to the hadiths. Obviously, such a negative reaction can be possible for people who were exposed to a great number of fabricated hadiths. Because, it is a common occurrence that those who are exposed to negativities more frequently fall into the misconception that the overall atmosphere only consists of such negativities. As a matter of fact, it is possible for people working in some professions, such as those in law enforcement who constantly encounter crimes and criminals due to their job, to have a negative outlook on life in general. It is also natural that there are certain variations in the way doctors, who constantly come into contact with disease and patients, view society and life. In the field of divinity, it is a common occurrence for experts who come across numerous fabricated narratives due to the nature of their field, to develop a suspicious attitude towards the hadith canon. It can be argued that the circumstances were not so different during the first centuries. In an environment complicated by politics, it is possible that political parties develop suspicion towards narrated materials on a personal or group level.

This negative environment did not end with the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin, it lasted until the martyrdom of Husayn (61 AH/680 AD). Hadiths concerning Hasan and Husayn may have been discussed a little after the caliphate rivalry, or after 61 AH. For example, one of these is as follows: "The night I ascended to the sky, I saw that the following was written on the gate of heaven: La ilaha illa Allah Muhammedun Resulu'llah, Ali is the beloved subject of Allah, Hasan and Husayn are good

¹⁴ Ibn al-Jawzi, *Mevzûat*, 1/346.

¹⁵ Sevkani, *Fevâid*, 404; Suyuti, *Leâli*, 1/418.

¹⁶ Ibn al-Jawzi, *Mevzûat*, 2/27; Suyut, *ibid*, 1/418.

¹⁷ İbn Arrâk, *Tenzihu'ş-Şerîa*, 2/8; Sevkani, 407.

subjects of Allah."¹⁸ Political rivalry and conflicts not only created the disaster referred to as, "*the instigation*", but also created serious doubts with respect to the authority and value of the hadiths in the minds of some Muslim individuals and groups.

External Attitudes

We mentioned the Kharijites above, while discussing the anti-hadith groups that initially emerged. We can assume that the Kharijites and hence, the Kharijite nature, played a significant role in this opposing attitude. They developed very marginal ideas in a very short period of time. However, it must be noted that we cannot precisely identify the chronological course of the Kharijite ideas, since they were conveyed to us through later works. Nonetheless, it is clear that beliefs such as the "takfir of the companion", arose and developed early in history; in fact, right after the Battle of Siffin. As it can be seen in the example of Aisha that we provided above, it can be said that they adopted an attitude (which involved claiming that only the Qur'an was taken as the basis) against the narratives and the sunnah in the same period. In this respect, the descriptions of the Kharijites in later sources are true. For example, their slogan, "*la hukme illa lillah/There is no other than Allah to command*",¹⁹ reflects the Incident of Judges and the companions and obviously their approach, which involves invalidating the narratives with regards to the foregoing. The Kharijites, particularly a group of them called Azariqa, "*only took the Qur'an into account and ignored the sunnah. For they, like the Jews and Christians, considered the cruelty of the prophets to be permissible, and they approved a prophet to become a disbeliever before or after he was anointed.*"²⁰ They, "*also ignored hadiths containing a commandment that was not available in the Qur'an, other than hadiths explaining concise verses.*"²¹ The advice of Ali to Abd Allah Ibn Abbas for him, "*to submit evidence only from the Qur'an and not try to convince the Kharijites based on hadiths*"²² before sending him to the Kharijites as a messenger in order to convince them, is a meaningful example demonstrating that the Kharijites did not have a positive attitude towards narratives.

We mentioned earlier that one of the reasons that led the Kharijites to reject the hadiths was, "their disparagement/takfir of the companions". We provided the evidence in relation to this in the relevant section. Here, we will discuss another important reason that led them to oppose the hadiths, which is the nature of the Kharijites and the Kharijite state of mind. The majority of the Kharijites were Bedouins. It can be assumed that they also had in their midst, some people from

¹⁸ Ibn al-Jawzi, *İlel*, 1/257.

¹⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabakat*, 3/32.

²⁰ Seheristani, *Milel*, 1/211, Izmirli, *Muhassal*, 82.

²¹ Yaltkaya, *İslam'da İlk Fikri Hareketler*, 12.

²² Suyuti, *Miftah*, 35.

faraway lands such as Yemen, and maybe some people from the tribes who revolted at the time of Abu Bakr.²³ If our prediction is correct, that a significant Bedouin population as well as some rebellious tribesmen were within the Kharijites, the reason why they displayed a negative attitude towards the narratives and the sunnah that is not available in the Qur'an, can be explained more easily. The attitudes that the Kharijites displayed and the accusations they made during their dialogue with Ali demonstrate how superficially they perceive the events. One of these accusations is concerned with the question of why women from the ranks of Aisha are not shared as odalisques despite the fact that the goods in her army are considered as booty, as she was defeated in the Battle of the Camel. The second item of accusation is concerned with the question of why the title, "amir al-muminin" was deleted without any settlement upon the objection of the followers of Muawiyah to this title in the Incident of Judges. Another accusation directed to Ali by the Kharijites is the following statement of Ali to the judges: "*If I'm worthy of being a caliph, make me one, if I'm not, don't*".²⁴ As it can be seen in these examples, the impact of the Bedouin nature of the Kharijites is obvious in their opposition to the hadiths. The Bedouins are not curious about the background of thoughts and events; they do not take into account the wisdom and reasoning behind the words and behaviors. They make superficial assessments by assuming that people, behaviors, ideas and events are only what they seem to be. The impact of the Bedouin nature on the negative view of the narratives is obvious and it is possible to see traces of this state of mind in any era and any society.

Religious and Cultural Interaction

Islam emerged in a geographical region that is far from major cultures, religions and civilizations. There were Jewish communities and some Christians in Hejaz. In addition, inhabitants of Mecca and Medina were encountering different communities in Damascus in the north and Yemen in the south during their commercial trips. It cannot be stated that the Hejaz Arabs were unaware of these civilizations and cultures; however, their communication and interaction with them was quite limited with no effect whatsoever on Arabian beliefs and way of life.

During the very early period, during the time of the four caliphs, northern Africa, the Middle East and Iran were conquered and *Ma wara'un-nahr* was very close. The conquest of Middle Asia also began in the first century. Before Islam, many diverse religions and cultures existed in this wide region. Islam arrived while these were active and naturally interacted with these religions and cultures. At this point, we may focus on what effects these foreign factors had on the emergence of the hadith opposition by painting a picture of the religions and cultures of the countries that joined the world of Islam.

²³ Çakın, *Hadis İnkarcıları*, 99.

²⁴ For accusations directed to Ali by the Kharijites, see Baghdadi, *Fark*, 58-60.

Eastern Anatolia, the Syrian and Iraqi basin and Iran was a stage for struggles for dominance between the Byzantine and Persian states²⁵. It can be argued that there were also struggles for power between the cultures and religions in addition to these two states. The effect of the Byzantine Empire in this region manifested itself as the spread of the Hellenistic Greek culture and Christianity.²⁶ Monophysites, who had separated from Orthodox Christianity and had been subjected to their oppression, had settled in the region of Syria.²⁷ In Egypt, particularly the city of Alexandria was a lively center of the Hellenistic culture.²⁸ The philosophical movement of Neoplatonism was quite active in Alexandria.²⁹ While the cities of Antakya, Nusaybin, Urfa and Harran remained under Byzantine control for a very long time, they still held their position as the center of Mandeism.³⁰ The most prevalent belief systems in pre-Islam Iran were Magianism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism and Mazdakism.³¹ Buddhism, Magianism, Christianity, Judaism and Manichaeism were present in Middle Asia.³²

Now we can examine whether the religious and cultural diversity had any effect on the rejection of the hadiths and if so, the scale of such effect. First of all, it must be noted that Islam arrived in these regions with two significant bases of power: The Qur'an and the sunnah. The basis of the sunnah is primarily the way the companions experience the religion and the narrated materials. So, Islam did not only conquer those regions but also brought with it its own value system, resources and way of life, and presented these to the masses. While an idealist Muslim could assume that this system of values and way of life was readily accepted and adopted by the local communities, it can easily be predicted that it was not so easy. It appears that the local beliefs and cultures continued for a long time and it is possible to see traces of them even today. We may consider that the local communities may have developed several opinions towards Islam. Undoubtedly, many people preferred Islam by wholeheartedly adopting its universal values and way of life. Otherwise, it would not be possible for Islam to take hold across such a large region. It can be said that even these people continued to hold on to their previous beliefs, traditions, cultures and ways of life by combining them with Islam and making them compatible with it.³³ It is possible to view this approach as positive for Islam. Because, according to our prediction, anti-hadith movements did not come out of the masses which adopted this attitude. However, as a second approach, the local communities made the effort to maintain

²⁵ Barthold, *İslâm Medeniyeti Tarihi*, 10.

²⁶ O'leary de Lacy, *İslâm Düşüncesi ve Tarihteki Yeri*, 11.

²⁷ Mantran, *İslâm'ın Yayılış Tarihi*, 89; Bayraktar, *İslâm Felsefesine Giriş*, 35 et al.

²⁸ Ahmed Emin, *Fecr*, 85.

²⁹ O'Leary, 16.

³⁰ For more information, see: Bayraktar, 38-40; Barthold, 10.

³¹ Nasr, *Seyyid Hüseyin, Religion in The Middle East*, 96-98.

³² Kurt, *Orta Asya'nın İslâmlaşma Süreci*, 219-229.

³³ See: Emin, *Fecr*, 94.

their beliefs and cultures under the cloak of Islam and created a number of sects at this point. For example, according to some theories, the Mujassima and Mushabbiha sects in Islam carry traces of Zoroastrianism which comes from the religion of Iran. According to Zoroastrianism, "the manifestations of nature" are "Godly formations"; in this respect, they referred to the sun as "the eye of God" and the light as "the son of God".³⁴ For this reason, the Mujassima and Mushabbiha sects fabricated hadiths that expressed similitude, while rejecting hadiths that exonerated Allah.³⁵ In this example, the effect of pre-Islamic beliefs on the negative attitude towards the hadiths can be clearly seen. The term "zindiq" is used for members of sects such as Mujassima and Mushabbiha, and planned, purposeful movements aimed at distorting Islam. The members of pre-Islamic religions and cultures are presented as the origin of zindiqism. The impact of Greek philosophy and Zoroastrianism is mentioned in the development of the kalam system of Mu'tazila.³⁶ For example, according to Aristotle and Plato, god is a being that oversees the good deeds in the universe and has no part in evil. According to Zoroastrianism, there are two powers (two gods) in the universe. These two powers, which are light and darkness, are in constant battle. All the good deeds in the universe are created by the good power (Ahuramazda), while all the bad deeds are created by the evil power (Ehrimen). Mu'tazila also rejected the hadiths which expressed that both good and evil come from Allah. As it is known, the following sentence is included in the hadith of Gabriel, "to have faith in destiny and the arrival of both good and evil from Allah". The rejection of this approach of destiny, and hence the narratives that identify them, has existed since the emergence of Mu'tazila.³⁷

The Nationalist Policies of the Umayyads

Islam appealed to all races as it is a universal religion. Allah states: "We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you." (49.Al-Hujurat. 13) The Prophet also revealed the view of Islam on humanity by saying the following in his farewell sermon: "a Persian has no superiority over an Arab and an Arab has no superiority over a Persian"³⁸.

It is observed that this principle was complied with until the period of the four caliphs. However, nationalist policies were gradually put in practice as the Umayyads came to power and distinctions were made between Arabs and those

³⁴ See: Emin, Fecr, 99.

³⁵ For examples of hadiths fabricated by these sects, see: Kandemir, Mevzu Hadisler, 46.

³⁶ See: Emin, Fecr, 99 et al.; Gazali, Faysal, 58.

³⁷ Işık, Kemal, Mutezile'nin Doğuşu ve Kelami Görüşleri, AÜİF Pub. Ankara 1967, 41. For discussions on Mu'tazila's partial rejection of the hadiths, see: Kamil Çakın, Hadis İnkarcıları, Seba Pub. Ankara 1998.

³⁸ Ahmad ibn Hanbal narrated this hadith through an unknown companion. See: Musnad, hadith no: 23489, 38/474. Al-Bayhaqi evidenced the unknown companion as Jabir by narrating the same hadith through Abu Nadra via Jabir ibn Abd Allah. See: Al-Bayhaqi, Şuabu'l-İman, hadith no: 4774, 7/132.

who were not Arabs. In addition to the Islamic way of worship and morality, Arabian (particularly Hejaz) culture was tried to be presented to societies that are not Arabians through the hadiths and fiqh with the impact of the developing nationalism. For instance, the sociological identification of the Prophet³⁹ emphasizing the political leadership quality of the Quraysh among the Arabs of the Hejaz region through the hadith, "imams are from the Quraysh", is interpreted in a way that would close the paths of those who are not Arabians for political power. Therefore, other communities who did not consider themselves to be any different from the Arabs adopted a reactionary attitude towards these nationalist comments. It is obvious that such reactions can sometimes be directed directly towards the hadiths. The fact that fiqh scholars do not consider a non-Arabian to be equal of an Arabian woman, and someone who is not from the Quraysh to be equal to a woman from the Quraysh in terms of equality in marriage, is a clear example of the effect of nationalism on fiqh.⁴⁰ It is possible to provide more of these examples. Here, it would be useful to emphasize the point that people have the instinct to protect the cultural values which they adhere to. Consisting simply of the experience of the culture in normal times, this quality gains a defensive and protective nature against an external threat of the culture. Reactive attitudes emerge against the counterculture and its members. Here, the counterculture for the local people is the Arabian culture and the means by which it is conveyed is seen to be the hadiths and fiqh. This defensive instinct may have had a serious effect in the spread of Shiism in Iran among Persians and some Turks, as well as the adoption of the Hanafi-Maturidi sects by Turks. Philip Hitti makes the following point in relation to this: *"However, the spirit of this nation (he implies the Persians) that was led to obedience would become alive again, also resurrecting its neglected language."*⁴¹ Like Persians, it is evident that Turks are also resistant to assimilation. Brought to the capital of the Islamic country either as slaves or soldiers after the conquest of Middle Asia, Turks did not give in to the cultural hegemony of the Arabs. Jean-Paul Roux, cites the following observations of Von Grünebaum: *"...but what was even more exciting than that was their (Turks') resistance against assimilation; their commitment to the country they were born in cannot be seen as a simple form of nostalgia; on the contrary, it includes frightening consequences. Because for Turks, the commitment of the community to each other came before the sense of belonging to the Muslim community, even though they had settled at the heart of Islam."*⁴² Turks who became Muslims came up with Persian as an alternative to Arabic by reviving Persian as a language

³⁹ It has been conveyed in this manner from Ali under arrest, by Ma'mar ibn Rashid (Fadailu Quraysh, hadith no: 19903, 11/58). An authentic attribution of the same hadith is also available (Al-Bayhaqi, es-Sunenu al-Kubrâ, hadith no:16540, 8/247). In sources such as Hadith Al-Bukhari and Muslim, it is also authentically conveyed as, *"this (caliphate) is on Quraysh..."* (Al-Bukhari, Menakib, hadith no: 3500, 4/179).

⁴⁰ For detailed information on equality in marriage, see: Mehmet Dirik, *İslâm Aile Hukukuna Göre Evlenme Eşler Arasında Denklik, İslâm Hukuku Araştırmaları Dergisi* 2015, 26/229-262.

⁴¹ Hitti, *İslâm Tarihi*, 1/240.

⁴² *Türklerin Tarihi*, 185.

against Arabization after they arrived and settled in Iran before they went to Anatolia⁴³ and stood against Shafiism and Ash'arism, which were preferred by the Arabs, by adopting Hanafism and Maturidiyya in fiqh, all of which seem to be a result of the reviving self-defensiveness against nationalism. Bayraktar makes the following assessment on this: "...in addition to this, as a result of their efforts to demonstrate that their culture is more superior than the Arabian culture, with the impact of the 'shu'ubiyyah' movement in Islamic history, which we may refer to as 'nationalism' or 'tribalism', translations to revive their thoughts of old Iran and re-present them in the new environment..."⁴⁴

In such an atmosphere, it can be considered that (some of) the nations who had tended to protect their national assets, may have opposed (some) hadiths which they considered to be the carrier of the Arabian culture, which they opposed believing it to be an opposing and aggressive culture. The efforts of the Muslim armies who victoriously entered Middle Asia to instill some practices which are not part of the essence of religion as the absolute commandments of the Prophet, led to the adoption of a negative attitude towards the hadith and sunnah culture. Attaching importance to such superficial matters rather than the many principals of Islam such as justice, equity, fairness, cooperation and mercy, may have led to the emergence of an antipathy to arise against the hadith materials. For example, the abolition such practices during the time of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz enabled the people of Ma wara'un-nahr to become closer to Islam. Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz equated the statuses of the local community - the Mevali and the Arabs. He gave a share of the winnings to the local people who participated in the wars and forbade them to apply taxation. The governor of Khorasan, Al-Jarrāh ibn Abdallah, worried that tax revenues would decrease, and requested from the caliph that locals should be required to be circumcised, saying that he doubted the sincerity of the locals. Getting angry at this, the caliph reprimanded Al-Jarrah by telling him that, "he's more inclined to start an instigation than them", and dismissed him from his position after a while.⁴⁵ We see a striking example of the wrong policies of the Umayyads in this incident. It is possible to assume that similar attitudes were expressed many times. All this not only delayed the Islamization process of the local people but also led to the development of negative attitudes towards the hadiths, which are considered to be the carriers of Arabian culture and dominance.

The First Discussions on Kalam

⁴³ "It was absolutely not a coincidence that the Turks frequently engaged in defending Iran either on purpose or not. Ghaznavids and Seljuqs spoke Persian, allowed the Iranian art to display its authenticity to the fullest extent and Iranian literature reached its highest level during their period" (Jean-Paul Roux, *Türklerin Tarihi*, 186).

⁴⁴ Bayraktar, 76.

⁴⁵ Kurt, *Orta Asya'nun İslâmlaşma Süreci*, 175.

It is possible to mention four sects that emerged by discussing some of the main kalam issues right after the incidents of instigation: 1-Kharijites; 2-Murji'ah; 3-Jabriyya; 4-Qadariyya. The Kharijites had begun to verbalize that the murtekibu'l-kebire (a believer who committed a great sin) was bound to go to hell unless he did not repent.⁴⁶ The Kharijites were referring to the companions with this statement. This formed the basis for their idea of the "disparagement of the companions" which we mentioned above. The Murji'ah, which appeared in the early period, argued that the determination of the status of the murtekibu'l-kebire must be delayed until the Last Day (remaining silent on this issue and leaving the decision to Allah), as an opposition of the views of the Kharijites on the companions. The Murji'ah stated at the beginning that the practices would not damage the faith.⁴⁷ They, then improved this to mean that even bad practices (sins) would not damage the faith. While faith was considered to simply consist of knowing about Allah, sometimes elements such as "verbal admission" and "loving Allah" was added to it.⁴⁸ The thought that there would not be any increase or decrease in faith was included in the principles that the Murji'ah developed at this stage. Probably in an attempt to save the companions from takfir, the Jabriyya argued that people had to take the actions they took and were not responsible for them. The following statement was their slogan: "We are obliged to perform the deeds we perform, we cannot afford to perform anything else".⁴⁹ Unlike this strict "fatalist" approach of the Jabriyya, the Qadariyya sect - which would be represented by the Mu'tazila later on - argued that "human willpower is free and the freedom of willpower would require responsibility".⁵⁰ Their most important slogan was: "La kader, el-emru bi'l-unf/there is no destiny, the deed is right under your nose."⁵¹ This means that "something only happens if you make it happen, otherwise, it does not; the choice and the power is yours".

While each of these sects gave new meanings to verses within their own thought systems, they rejected the hadiths that did not conform to their opinions. Let us consider the Kharijites; it is impossible for this group of people to accept the hadiths conveyed from the Prophet, which praise the companions and emphasize their exemplary nature and leadership, as the Kharijites subject the companions to takfir and consider those who committed a great sin to be bound to hell for eternity. Since they subject those who committed a great sin to takfir, it is natural for them to not accept the hadiths, indicating that the Prophet will intercede for sinful believers. It is evident that they reacted suspiciously to authentic narratives that verbalized the virtues of some companions, for example, Ali who is someone never to be

⁴⁶ Sechristani, Milel, 1/198.

⁴⁷ Ahmed Emin, Fecr, 279.

⁴⁸ Esari, Makalât, 133-134.

⁴⁹ Ahmed Emin, Fecr, 283.

⁵⁰ For the views of this sect, which is also known by the name Jahmiyya, see: Abu Sa'id Uthman ibn Sa'id ad-Darimi, Kitabu'r-red alâ'l-Cehmiyye, Beirut 1402/1982.

⁵¹ Muslim, hadith no: 8, 1/36.

forgiven by them. Hadiths fabricated against the Kharijites may also have reinforced their hadith opposition. For example, in one of these, Abd Allah bin Ebi Evfa asks (Said ibn Cemhan): *'What did they do to your father?'*. When Said says: *'Azariqa killed my father'*, Ibn Ebi Evfa tells him: *'May Allah curse them, the messenger informed us that they are the dogs of hell'*.⁵² Such fabricated narratives must have also angered the Kharijites.

As the Qadariyya/Jahmiyya/Mu'tazila sects rejected destiny, they interpreted the verses in this respect and rejected the narratives that confirmed destiny. For instance, when Imran ibn Husain asked the Prophet, *"if those who deserve to go to heaven and those who deserve to go to hell are known (as of now)";* the Prophet replied, *"yes"*. Then, when Imran asked, *"why anyone would perform any good deeds in that case"*, the Prophet said, *"Each person (each living being) is inclined to do what is in their nature/that deed is facilitated for them"*.⁵³ It is impossible for this narrative, which is conveyed as authentic in the hadith collection, to be accepted by the Qadariyya. Yet again, *"the forty days hadith"* which states that a person's time of death, livelihood, deeds and whether s/he is bound for heaven or hell are all determined while the person ⁵⁴is in the mother's womb was not accepted by these sects since they were in opposition to their systems. Sometimes we observe that hadiths identifying destiny are given a different meaning by the Mu'tazila.⁵⁵

Effects of Philosophy

Here, we focus specifically on the Greek philosophy. It is possible to say that the acquaintance of Muslims with Greek philosophy began with the conquest of the regions of Egypt, Damascus and Iraq. The foundation of the Bayt al-Hikmah institutions at the time of the Caliph Me'mun and the translation of philosophical books to Arabic was at a later time. Me'mun ascended the throne in 193 AH and performed his duty as a caliph until he died in 218. During this time, he was the most influential person in the officialization of the sect of Mu'tazila. Philosophy had a clear impact, which began during the period of Me'mun and continued for a while afterwards. Nonetheless, the acquaintance of Muslims with philosophy is at an earlier time and its role in hadith opposition is undeniably apparent. The ideas of the Greek philosophers, Aristotle and Plato were influential in the kalam of Mu'tazila.⁵⁶ Aristotle had tried to reach the idea of a perfect God. While he had freed God from many imperfections, he had envisioned a God with no power of

⁵² Suyuti, Hasâis, 3/18.

⁵³ Muslim, Kader, hadith no: 9(2649), 4/2041.

⁵⁴ For detailed information on this hadith, see: Murat Arslan, *Kırk Gün Hadisinin İsnad ve Metin Yönünden Değerlendirilmesi*, Unpublished Master Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Ens., Ankara 2006.

⁵⁵ For the views of Mu'tazila on destiny, see: Abdulhamid Sinanoğlu, *İslâm Düşüncesinin İlk Özgürlükçü Hareketi Mutezile'nin Kader Anlayışı*, KSÜ İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi 2006, 7/69-92.

⁵⁶ Nader, Albert Nasri, *Felsefetü'l-Mutezile*, 1/58.

creation.⁵⁷ Plato on the other hand, considered a God who at least created the good things.⁵⁸ Aristotle's idea of a God with no power of creation and Plato's idea of a God who creates what is good is evident in the discussions of the Mu'tazila on e'alu'l-ibad (human acts). Gazali also pointed out the parallelism between the Mu'tazila and Greek philosophy.⁵⁹ For example, according to the Mu'tazila, Allah does not create cruelty or evil.⁶⁰ In fact, Allah also did not create profanity or disbelievers.⁶¹ Not everything is in the power of Allah.⁶² According to the Mu'tazila, Allah is fair. Therefore, He cannot be considered as the creator of evil. Then evil must be the deed of humans or demons who are responsible for their acts.⁶³ According to Ahmed Emin, the Mu'tazila believe that the acts of the subjects, whether they are good or evil, are not created by Allah; human willpower is free, and humans are creators of their own actions.⁶⁴ While addressing the views of the Mu'tazila on e'alu'l-ibad, Ebu'l-Muzaffer el-İsferayini states: *"One of the issues they agreed on is the following: Subjects create their own acts. All living beings such as a person, mosquito, honeybee, ant, insect or fish are creators of their own acts. It is not Allah who created their acts. He cannot afford anything that the subjects do."*⁶⁵

In these quotes, it is possible to clearly see the parallel between some views of the Mu'tazila and the views of the Greek philosophers. However, it is also evident that narratives in opposition to this system of thought were rejected while this system of thought was being established. In the context of the ideas developed as a result of these interactions, it is seen that authentic narratives on destiny were chosen to be rejected as a result of the Mu'tazila's approach of destiny which can be formulized as, *"humans create their own destinies"*. In fact, the number of narratives within the hadith literature, indicating that, *"the destiny of a person is determined by Allah and good and evil comes from Allah"*, which also constitute the approach of destiny of the followers of the sunnah, are quite high. This issue is expressed in the following way in the Gabriel hadith which is considered to be authentic: *"faith in destiny and faith in the arrival of good and evil from Allah"*.

We know that the Mu'tazila rejected some hadiths. Here, we only gave an example of their rejection of the hadith of destiny. The Mu'tazila did not abide by the hadiths on such issues, and created different ideas, which can be considered to be a result of philosophical influences as well as many other factors. The hadith

⁵⁷ Bolay, Aristo Metafiziji, 101. *"Aristotle, and most of the Greek philosophers, did not like the idea of creation since it was based too much on divine intervention. So, they believed that mankind and the surrounding world has always existed and will continue to exist"* (Hawking, 19).

⁵⁸ Platon, Devlet, II. Kitap, 70.

⁵⁹ Faysal, 58.

⁶⁰ Kadi Aduljabbar, Tenzih, 78.

⁶¹ Kadi, ibid, 69.

⁶² Kadi, ibid, 27.

⁶³ Tritton, A. S., İslâm Kelamı, 84; Suyûri, İrşâd, 130.

⁶⁴ Duha'l-İslâm, 3/45.

⁶⁵ Isferayini, Tabsir, 38.

opposition of the Mu'tazila is perhaps not a simple *nass* opposition and can be considered as the product of a broader point of view that is more fundamental and systematic. Philosophical influence is just one of the factors here, the real target may require to be addressed on a much wider plane. That is: **Actually, the Mu'tazila were not just against the hadiths, they were against the wide range of established Islamic traditions and religious values, which are represented by the traditions and manifested themselves in the hadiths and through the companions.** At the time the Mu'tazila gained strength (the time of Ma'mun), Islamic civilization had certain centers of attraction. These included the region of Hejaz, the region of Egypt and Damascus, the region of Iraq, the region of Ma wara'un-nahr and the region of Yemen. These centers were different in a various fields such as methodology, reading and assessment of *nass*, and approaches to the basic Islamic sciences. However, the most obvious common characteristic of all of them was their attribution of the value to the Qur'an and the hadiths (sunnah) as the source of the religion. Therefore, an Islamic system of life had been created based on a foundation of the Qur'an and the sunnah, and enriched with tradition. Was the objection of the Mu'tazila an objection against this system? What did the Mu'tazila want to do by attributing value to Greek philosophy and by translating the old books of Greek philosophy to Arabic? Did they want to remove Islamic civilization based on the Qur'an and the sunnah, which is dominated by traditions, from an Islamic approach under the influence of Hejaz and Ma wara'un-nahr and lead it towards a different civilization; the Mediterranean civilization? If that is the case, we can assume that the first supporters of Westernization in the history of Islam was the Mu'tazila. Actually, they have infiltrated the government since the period of Ma'mun and preferred a top-down change by benefiting the power of the state, which indicates that we should also consider this possibility. It would not be wrong not to consider the Mu'tazila's hadith opposition as intellectual satisfaction of the mind and address it within the framework of this extensive project for the change of civilizations. But we also need to mention that this subject matter requires further research.

Limiting the Role of the Hadiths and the Sunnah in the Understanding of the Qur'an

We can categorize the role of the hadiths and the sunnah in the understanding of the Qur'an under four headings: 1 - Statement (declaration) of the concise verses; 2 - Interpretation of verses using a general rule so that they have a specific meaning; 3 - Ensuring that cognate verses become specific; 4 - Creation of new rules for topics that are not addressed in the Qur'an. When carefully examined, it can be seen that the hadiths and the sunnah play an extensive and significant role in the understanding of the Qur'an. Performance of these roles to the fullest extent would not only provide guidance for understanding of the verses, but also ensure that the verses are free of the arbitrary interpretations of the people who would like

to understand them. The method followed from a very early period to ensure that the Qur'an is understood, is as follows: The verbal or practical sunnah of the Prophet was checked, then, the practices of the companions were considered, and finally, the tabi'un and tabi'al-tabi'in ulema were consulted. This charismatic method of reference provides a serious obstacle for the arbitrary interpretation of the verses.

While this is the general case, there have always been groups and individuals who wanted to interpret the verses based on their own systems of thought with respect to judgement and cognition. We mentioned above, the fatwas of the Kharijites on the practice of prayer at a later time for women who menstruate, which was against the sunnah. If the Kharijites considered the sunnah on this topic as evidence, they would have to apply the practices at the time of the Prophet and would not break away from the ummah. Since the Kharijites and Rafizis of the first groups did not take into account this deterministic function of the sunnah, they subjected the verses to different interpretations while developing their own systems of thought. On this aspect of the Kharijites, Abd Allah ibn Abbas said: *"While they believe in the specifics of the Qur'an, they have a very hard time about cognate verses"*.⁶⁶ The interpretations of the Kharijites on deception and kaade reflect their approach. The founder of the Azariqa, Nafi ibn al-Azraq (d. 65 AH/684 AD) and the founder of the Najdat, Najdah ibn 'Amir (d.?), had a disagreement in the matter of deception and kaade. Nafi thought that deception was not permissible and kaade was blasphemous. He provided the following verses as evidence to support this opinion of his, *"A group of them fear humans as if they fear Allah"*, (4.An-Nisa.77) and, *"They strive in the cause of Allah and do not fear the blame of a critic"* (5.Al-Ma'idah. 54). As it can be seen in these verses, Muslims are not supposed to hide their ideas and beliefs or misrepresent them and not participate in the war and stand back (kaade). Najdah said that deception was permissible and provided the following verses as evidence for his opinions, *"except when taking precaution against them in prudence"* (3.Ali 'Imran.28), and, *"a believing man from the family of Pharaoh who concealed his faith"* (40.Ghafir.28). However, these verses had nothing to do with discussions that emerged later on, such as the discussion on deception and kaade. Nonetheless, these two imams of the Kharijites felt the need to prove their opinions through the verses. In fact, reading the verses in the context of their reason for being sent would prevent them from being used for ideological purposes in this manner.

There is an expression that is attributed to 'Umar, which is as follows: *"Some people will come up and get into discussions with you based on the cognate verses of the Qur'an. Stand up against them through the sunnah. Undoubtedly, the companions of the sunnah are the ones who know the book of Allah the best."*⁶⁷ There are some striking points in these statements. First of all, it is mentioned that the groups use the cognate verses and interpret them with an ideological purpose. Secondly, it is

⁶⁶ Al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan*, 3/181.

⁶⁷ Al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan*, 3/177.

advised to stand up against these groups through the sunnah. Here, the deterministic and limiting role of the sunnah (and the hadiths) in the attribution of a different meaning to the cognate verses are pointed out. Because, if the hadiths and the sunnah are accepted as the highest level of authorized sources for understanding the verses, the arbitrary and ideological meanings would no longer be valid. The term, *"the companions of the sunnah"* in the statement, *"the companions of the sunnah are the ones who know the book of Allah the best"*, is actually a definition from a later period. *The companions of the sunnah* refers mostly to hadith and sunnah scholars of the post-*tabi'un* period. But this term clearly states the undeniable role of the sunnah in knowing, understanding and experiencing the Qur'an. In the 7th verse of the Ali 'Imran surah, it is stated: *"It is He who has sent down to you [O Muhammad], the Book. In it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, 'We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord.' And no one will be reminded except those of understanding."* Here, the verses are divided into two groups - specific and cognate. It is stated that Muslims should take into account the specific verses while thinking, transferring Islam into their lives or creating their world views. It is pointed out that the interpretation of the cognate verses belongs to Allah. This is important because Allah's interpretation means that another verse is sent down or the Prophet attributes a different meaning to the verse. While this makes the cognate verses specific, it also prevents the verses from being interpreted in a purposeful way. *"A disbeliever, zindiq, an ignorant or innovative person; anyone can be included in this verse. While attributing a different meaning to this verse, Katade states: 'If the ones implied in this verse are the Kharijites and their groups, I don't know who else they can be!' This interpretation was conveyed by reference to Abu Umamah."*⁶⁸ Taberi makes the following statement in reference to the purposeful attribution of a meaning to the cognate verses: *"The heart of an innovative person is inclined to the cognate, he will get into a conflict with the deserving ones by attributing a different meaning to some of the cognate verses of the Qur'an. He will deny the implications of the clear and specific verses in order to leave the believers who are on the right path in doubt. Any innovative group, whether Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, Sebeiyye or Haruriyah, Qadariyya or Jahmiyya, attempts to attribute a different meaning to cognate verses."*⁶⁹

There is an interesting point here. Various groups claimed that the verses they referred to for supporting their own ideas were specific, while those by which their opposers supported their own ideas were cognates. Razi mentions the following while addressing this issue: *"You should know that you can't find even one sect in this world, which doesn't identify a verse that is not in compliance with the sect's view as cognate. In such a case, it all reaches a horrific level. Don't you see Jubba'i? He*

⁶⁸ Qurtubi, 4/13.

⁶⁹ Al-Tabari, *Jami al-Bayan*, 3/181.

says: *'Jabriyya attributes lies, cruelty and the deeds that they can't be bothered to do to Allah and bases this on cognate verses.'*⁷⁰ Actually, the Mu'tazila's method in understanding and interpreting the cognate verses is not so different from this. For instance, Kadi Abduljabbar tried to attribute different meanings to nearly four hundred verses in his book, *Mutesabihu'l-Kur'an*, but he benefited from only fourteen hadiths while doing so. Some of these fourteen hadiths are evidence of the contrary view, and Kadi Abduljabbar only mentioned these for purposes of criticism. Asserted by his opposers, these hadiths were given different meanings through constraint, just like the Qur'an verses were. While referring to the freedom that the Mu'tazila applies in attributing different meanings to verses, Lalkai says: *"When it comes to taking and experiencing the book of Allah as it is and in terms of its wisdom, the Mu'tazila did not act in accordance with the information contained in any verse and understood the verses not the way they are understood by the salafs but through attributing different meanings to them in line with their new opinions."*⁷¹ Lalkai represents a salafi approach with these statements. In this respect, he appears to have closed the door on new interpretations on nasses. The attribution of different meanings to verses by the salafs and their approaches, obviously do not represent the absolute and final meaning. The idea of Islam will always have the opportunity to approach the truth a little more through new opinions. While the opinions and comments of the salafs are very important, being open to new ideas was probably also the scientific attitude of the salafs themselves. For example, the Mu'tazila/Jahmiyya did not accept the idea that Allah would be seen on the Last Day. One of the verses they base this opinion on is: *"Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision"* (6.Al-An'am.103).⁷² However, there are authentic hadiths indicating that Allah can be seen by the believers on the Last Day, and one of such hadiths is as follows: *"We were sitting next to the Messenger. He looked at the full moon and said, 'you will see your lord as you effortlessly and clearly see this moon'."*⁷³ It appears that the Mu'tazila created its system of thought first, and then, either attributed different meanings to hadiths that did not conform to that system, or rejected them. Because hadiths are really of great assistance in understanding the Qur'an.

Animosity Towards Islam

Earlier, we mentioned that the Muslims encountered local religions and cultures with the first conquests and that the people of the conquered countries did not immediately choose Islam and continued their old beliefs and traditions. It is known that people who were not Muslims or only appeared to be Muslims, but had a certain level of intellect, tried to spread their beliefs either openly or secretly. It is

⁷⁰ Razi, Tefsir, 2/601.

⁷¹ Lalkai, Sheerh, 1/12.

⁷² Razi, Tefsir, 8/377-380; Ibn Taymiyyah, Mecmua, 1/100.

⁷³ Al-Bukhari, Tevhid, 179; For more information on the matter of Ru'yetullah, see: Talat Kocuyigit, *Kur'an ve Hadiste Ru'yet Meselesi*, AÜİF, Ankara 1974.

mentioned that these people who used different methods, attributed different meanings to verses, fabricated hadiths or rejected them. For instance, while discussing the reasons for hadith fabrication, Ibn al-Jawzi mentions that some Jews and Zoroastrians who chose Islam after the first conquests, had to live under Islamic rules and appeared as if they were Muslims due to fear, preferred to fabricate hadiths because of their racial instincts and for the purpose of distorting the thought structure.⁷⁴ According to Ahmed Emin, *"most of the various nations had a certain history when they chose Islam. They began to incorporate the history of their own nation with Islam and spread it among Muslims. They were doing this with a nationalistic, or similar, feeling. Many Jews who were well aware of the Jewish history and knew about the incidents that, particularly the Torah and its annotations informed, had become Muslims. They began to narrate this information to the Muslims. Sometimes, they just connected the information in respect of the Qur'an interpretation, while at other times they simply shared this information in the context of the history of other nations."*⁷⁵ These are assessments that are mostly made in respect of the fabricated hadiths. However, it is also possible to make the same assessments in terms of the rejection of the hadiths. For instance, according to Ibn Taymiyyah, who used hypocrisy and zindiqism with similar meanings and stated that they consist of old Mandaeans and polytheists, *"the real purpose of zindiqs is, to reject the Book and the Wisdom (sunnah)."*⁷⁶ Gazali also divides zindiqs into two groups, one of which consists of those who reject the Last Day and the creator of the world, and the second of which consists of those who reject the emotional sorrows and joys on the Last Day.⁷⁷ Here, while those who are in the second group particularly, reject the blessings of the heaven that is declared through so many narratives, also happen to reject those narratives. *"First appearing by arguments between individuals and expression of innovative ideas, zindiqism then became the quality of perverse groups referred to by several names. Sects known for their zindiqism, such as the Nusayris, Ismailis, Qarmatians and Batinis emerged. It is obvious that the main motive for their emergence is overthrowing Islam through various methods as they could not leave their old cultures and religions behind. One of the oldest of these, the Rafizis, preferred to abandon the sunnah and the ihtijaj."*⁷⁸ There is another aspect of the hadith opposition. The fabrication of hadiths by the enemies of Islam has an indirect effect on the rejection of the hadiths. It is obvious that ill-willed people who fabricate hadiths are aware of this. So, the beliefs and practices of Muslims were tried to be distorted by putting forward unreal hadiths, while the reliability of the hadith legacy was damaged and the hadith scholars were disparaged by attributing these fabricated hadiths to hadith scholars. *"They were attacking the sunnah and were trying to create suspicion of its state of hujjat, authenticity*

⁷⁴ Mevzuat, 1/7.

⁷⁵ Fecr, 157.

⁷⁶ Mecmua, 3/15.

⁷⁷ Faysal, 14-15.

⁷⁸ Suyuti, Miftah, 3-4.

and its communicators."⁷⁹ When hadith history is examined, it can be seen that the *zindiqs* fabricated many hadiths. However, they fabricated these hadiths, not because of their commitment to the hadiths, but in order to create suspicion for Muslims and to tarnish the hadith scholars.⁸⁰ For instance, Muhammad ibn Shuja es-Selji was fabricating hadiths indicating similitude and disparaging the hadith scholars by attributing these to them.⁸¹ Another aspect of the animosity towards Islam appears as the creation of doubts over the accuracy of the Prophet's discourses. For example, according to the *Batinis*, "*The Prophet told people things that did not match with reality, even though He knew these weren't true. According to them, all prophets lied (engaged in suitable affairs) to the public since they thought it was in the interest of the public.*"⁸² We see a similar approach in the movement of "*historicism*". According to this method, which is applied especially for the explanation of the parables and verses in relation to the universe in the Qur'an, the Qur'an included and used the parables that were commonly known and told by the Arabs at those times as they are, did not take an interest in finding out whether these parables included true information or not, and simply settled with relaying its message through them. Actually, none of these parables were historically authenticated, they were just parables that were told by the Arabs. Verses in relation to the universe and the creation are also like this. For instance, the creation of the universe in six days was the belief of the Arabs rather than an expression of reality. The Qur'an only emphasized that it was Allah who created the universe by referring to this belief. In reality, there is no such thing as the creation of the universe in six days. Therefore, a movement similar to the one that is spreading today under the name of "*historicism*" was also available in the past in the discourses of some groups on the Prophet and the institution of prophecy. While Gazali considers Brahmanists, Dahris and Sanaviyyah (the dualists) to be the *zindiq* groups who reject the Prophet⁸³, Ibn Taymiyyah considers Qalandaris and Nusayris to be in the same category.⁸⁴ "*Qalandaris were also opposed to the sunnah of the Prophet, like others. They tried to instill doubt in Muslims about the sunnah, which is the second authentic source of Islam, and expressed their animosity by stating that most of the hadiths consist of narratives conveyed by just one or a few communicators, and those that were conveyed by many communicators are very few.*"⁸⁵ Animosity towards Islam is an important factor that cannot be underestimated in terms of the hadith opposition. As we mentioned before, the role of the hadiths and the sunnah is quite significant for understanding Islam and reflecting it in life; therefore, they were adopted as the second original source of Islam after the

⁷⁹ Sibai, *es-Sünne ve Mekânetuhâ*, 2.

⁸⁰ Ekrem Ziya, *Buhus*, 32-33.

⁸¹ Zehebi, *Mizan*, 3/577.

⁸² Ibn Taymiyyah, *Risaletu Meârici'l-Vusul*, 3.

⁸³ Faysal, 4-5.

⁸⁴ *Mecmua*, 1/52.

⁸⁵ Abu Shahba, *Difa*, 6.

Qur'an. However, it can clearly be seen that the activities of the enemies of Islam over centuries caused the unknowing and ignorant public to have doubts about the hadiths.

Ignorance and Doubt

Ibn Abd al-Barr mentions in his book, *Camîu Beyânî'l-İlm*, that some groups of the public who did not have the intellectual sufficiency in the area of the hadiths were inclined to have doubts about the hadiths, and provides the warnings of some companions in relation to this. According to what he conveys, Abd Allah ibn Masud (d. 32 AH/652 AD) warns Ubaidullah ibn Abd Allah ibn Utba by saying: *"don't narrate people a hadith that they won't be able to understand! Otherwise, some of them will engage in instigation"*. His father, Urwah told Hisham (d. 145 AH/762 AD) the following: *"If I had narrated just one hadith to people who don't have the required mental capacity, they would commit blasphemy through that hadith."* While giving Ayyub similar advice, Abu Qilabah (d. 104 AH/722 AD) told him: *"don't narrate even one hadith to a person who doesn't have the wisdom to understand it; because, that hadith would hurt that person instead of providing him/her benefit"*. Abd Allah Ibn Abbas (d. 68 AH/687 AD) warned those around him by saying: *"narrate people the hadiths they'd be able to understand; would you have liked them to deny Allah and His messenger?"*⁸⁶ Ignorance in the science of hadiths and the factor of doubt created by this ignorance were a significant element that led some people to reject the hadiths. The public, in particular, is quite inclined to fall into doubt. It would make sense to consider the above warnings from this perspective. For instance, while the companion, Imran ibn Husain (d. 52 AH/672 AD) was narrating a hadith in the prayer room, one of the people there stood up and said: *"O Abu Nujaid! Forget these hadiths, tell us about the Qur'an"*. Imran responds to the man as follows: *"You and your friends read the Qur'an. Can you tell me about prayer, the conditions of prayer and its rakats? Are you able to find in the Qur'an that the isha, evening, morning, noon and afternoon prayers consist of four, three, two and four rak'ats, respectively?..."* The man prayed for Imran by telling him: *"You gave me life, I hope God gives you life"*.⁸⁷

Ignorance causes a person with superficial knowledge in Islamic rules to see such level of knowledge as sufficient and to make wrong judgements through simple and unmethodical criticism. While Zayd ibn Suhan (d. 36 AH) was narrating a hadith, a Bedouin came near him. By the way, Zayd's left hand was severed from the wrist down at the battle of Nahavand. The Bedouin tells Zayd, *"Your hadiths thoroughly surprise me. And your (severed) hand creates doubts in my mind"*. With these words, the Bedouin implies that Zayd's hand may have been cut due to theft. When Zayd told him: *"Why does my hand create doubts in your mind? My severed hand is the*

⁸⁶ For narratives see: Ibn Abd al-Barr, *Abu Umar an-Namere al-Qurtubi, Camîu Beyânî'l-İlm ve Fadlihi*, inv.: Ubai al-Ashbal az-Zubeiri, Daru Ibn al-Jawzi, Suud 1414/1994 (2 vol.), 1/539-542.

⁸⁷ Naisaburi, *Müstedrek*, 1/109.

left one", the Bedouin replied: "Well, I don't know if the right or the left hand is cut for theft". Then, Zayd ibn Suhan says: "How right the almighty Allah is in saying: 'The Bedouins are stronger in disbelief and hypocrisy and more likely not to know the limits of what [laws] Allah has revealed to His Messenger'" (9.At-Tawbah.97)⁸⁸. Their ignorance in the hadiths had a negative impact on the way people specializing in other sciences viewed the hadiths. These groups of people who cannot understand the wisdom in the words and actions of the Prophet are obviously insufficient in their capacity. Ibn Taymiyyah establishes this as follows: "Actually, the kalam scholars of Jahmiyya and Mu'tazila argued with the zindiqs, but these arguments were inefficient as they didn't involve the awareness of the facts that Muhammad relayed, and judgements through mental premises."⁸⁹ On another occasion, Ibn Taymiyyah points out the ignorance of some of the scholars on the hadiths by saying: "They don't mention the view that forms the basis for the salaf, and pointed out by the Book and the sunnah; because, they don't know it".⁹⁰ Addressing a parable teller who does not know about the al-nasikh (abrogating) and wal-mansukh (abrogated) status of the hadith, Ali says: "you are destroyed and you destroyed".⁹¹ Telling parables provides respect to the person who does so in the eyes of the public. Ignorant groups of the public think that these people have a deep scientific knowledge. Ali revealed the ignorance of the parable teller with a simple experiment. Although the doubt of the ignorant groups over the authority or authenticity of the hadith can be excused to a certain degree, the ignorance of those who appear to be experts in Islamic disciplines in relation to the hadiths cannot be excused. Because, it is witnessed that one of the reasons why the public approach the hadiths with suspicion is the ignorant scientists. After mentioning the example in the al-nasikh, Hemedani crowns the topic with the following example as well: "There is an apparent conflict between the following hadiths: 'The most evil witness is the one who testifies even though s/he is not called' and, 'The best witness is the one who testifies without being called'. Due to this apparent conflict, someone who is not a canonist would find hadiths that are similar to the first one and come to the conclusion that the second one is wal-mansukh. S/he will reach this conclusion since s/he does not know the conditions of the al-nasikh, but there are ways to eliminate the conflict. The first hadith is attributed to a person who testifies when there is no need, without being called. This is clearly seen in the following narrative of Imran ibn Husain: The Prophet said: 'the most benevolent ummah is this generation that I'm sent for. This is followed by the next ones... Then a community who attempts to testify even though they are not called emerges'. In this case, the second hadith is attributed to a person who testifies due to a requirement. That is the most benevolent witness."⁹²

⁸⁸ Ahmed Emin, Fecr, 82. Ibn Sa'd, Tabakatu'l-Kübrâ, inv. Muhammed Abdülkadir Atâ, Daru'l-Kütübi'l-İlmiyye, Beirut 1410/1990 (8 vol.), 6/176.

⁸⁹ Ibn Taymiyyah, İslam Hidayeti, 96-97.

⁹⁰ Mecmûa, 3/25.

⁹¹ Hemedani, İ'tibar, 6.

⁹² İ'tibar, 9.

Attribution of different meanings and interpretation play a significant role in understanding the hadiths and eliminating the inconsistencies observed between some narratives. The book, *“Te’vilu Muhtelifu’l-Hadis”* by Ibn Qutayba constitutes a good example of this issue. In this book, the objections of the kalam scholars, especially those of Mu’tazila and Jahmiyya, are addressed and responded to. Here, we will be content in mentioning one of the many examples provided in this book. According to what Ibn Qutayba conveys, one of the hadiths that the opposers object to, is the following: *“If the Qur’an is placed in a leather cover and thrown into fire, it wouldn’t burn”*⁹³. The opposers who tried to burn the pages of the Mushaf by placing it in leather covers and saw/observed that they burned, took action based on their experience. They tried to burn the mushaf by taking the hadith literally and when they saw it burned, they had doubts over its authenticity. After Ibn Qutayba criticizes the opposers, he offers a very meaningful response to them. He says: *“This hadith has a different meaning attributed to it, which they are not aware of, I will hopefully explain it now. In the context of the attribution of a different meaning to this hadith, Asmai said: ‘If the Qur’an was placed inside a human (in his/her heart) and then, if that person is thrown in fire (in hell), the fire wouldn’t burn it’. Asmai meant to say that if Allah taught the Qur’an to a Muslim and made him/her memorize it, that Muslim wouldn’t burn in hell even if s/he has some sins. As a matter of fact, Abu Unamah said: ‘Read and memorize the Qur’an. Other pages should not waste your time. Allah would not torment a heart that grasped the Qur’an’. So, the body was made to look like the envelope/container that it was placed inside, like a leather cover.”*⁹⁴

As it can be seen in these examples, one of important reasons for rejecting hadiths is ignorance. The science of hadith is one of the most extensive and difficult Islamic sciences due to its literature as well as its methodology. In this respect, it requires a lot of time and effort. It is a fact that even intellectuals who are not hadith scholars are insufficient when it comes to the hadiths, let alone the ignorant groups of the public.

Conclusion

While there are many reasons for the rejection of the hadiths, it can be said that **three of these reasons** play a more significant role.

The **institution of politics** which functioned positively and constructively in the time period between the time when the Prophet was alive and until the martyrdom of Uthman, functioned as a mechanism that disappointed large masses of people, caused societal trauma and led people to approach their basic values with suspicion. At the end of this process, the authority of the generation of

⁹³ Ahmad, Musnad, hadith no:17409, 28/627; hadith no: 17421, 28/636; Al-Darimi, Musnad, hadith no: 3413, 2/1054. The hadith was considered to be weak because Ibn Lahia was included in its attribution.

⁹⁴ Te’vil, (el-Mektebu’l-İslâmi), 291.

companions was damaged and challenged, a lot of blood was shed, the institution of politics turned into a dynasty, different meanings were attributed to the Qur'an based on the opinions of the groups and the reliability of the hadiths was seriously damaged. Hence, we are able to see both the constructive and destructive effects of the **institution of politics**.

When Islam came, it also brought a clean and pure faith with it. This faith was simple, plain and sufficient. The effects of paganism on the society was eliminated and Islam was as far away as possible from the diffusion of other religions. However, as a result of the need to clarify the events that occurred within the internal dynamics of Islamic society itself and communication with the members of other religions, **the first discussions on kalam** began. Soon enough, the information with regards to faith at the beginning of Islam, which appeared to be pure, simple and sufficient, lost its purity as a result of many speculative discussions and questions and answers, and the environment of faith became blurred. By the time the first hijri century ended, people were in a position where they were unable to know what to believe or not to believe in; and to not be able to decide what was right and fair, and what was wrong and unfair. **Discussions on kalam** managed to create this environment.

Muslims had to live side by side with people of **foreign religions and cultures** following the first conquests. These cultures that the local people had was a result of centuries of accumulation. Muslims had to resist these and protect their own identity. The local cultures sometimes lived on with an Islamicized identity, while at other times they fueled animosity. The ignorance of the people also added to these factors.

In such an atmosphere, many established values and traditional institutions were damaged, and of course hadiths were also exposed to criticism and a loss of authority. It is possible to say that this negativity was effective in a minority of the society. Because, in the eyes of the Muslim public and the public ulema, the hadiths and the sunnah always maintained their quality of being one of the undeniable foundations of Islam and the hadith opposition mostly remained as the attitude of marginal individuals and groups.

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