

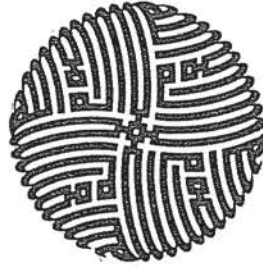
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Use of Textual Criticism in Imami Shia for Interpretation of Narratives between the 3rd and the 11th Centuries (9th-17th)*

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Abstract

With the emphasis on the importance of textual criticism in the evaluation of narratives in hadith methodology during the last century, an increasing number of studies have examined and employed different topics about textual criticism both in Sunni and Shi'ite academic circles. In this context, some studies have focused on the efforts of textual criticism laid out in the historical process. Yet, a historical analysis investigating the practice of textual criticism in a detailed way has not yet been done, and the present study hopes to fill this gap. The Shi'ite hadith tradition between the III-XI/IX-XVII centuries has been examined within its different periods, and an overview of the approaches/practices of textual criticism in each period has been provided. Each historical period has been investigated through its representative scholars and their work. Consequently, it has been found out that textual criticism has been practiced by Shi'ite scholars since the third/ninth century. The concept of ghuluww (exaggeration) necessitated the practice of textual criticism in the Shi'ite hadith tradition, and textual analysis has been employed as a primary approach in the evaluation of narrations regarding ghuluww. Textual criticism, which was also employed in the study of narrations concerning fiqh, lost its popularity after the seventh/thirteenth century, when a methodology based on isnad began to be more commonly used.

Key Words: Ḥadīth, Shi'ism/Shiah, textual criticism, ghuluww, Akhbārīs, Uṣūlīs, qarīnah.

III-XI. (IX-XVII) Asırlar Arasında İmâmiyye Şîa'sının Rivayetleri Değerlendirmede Metin Tenkidi Kullanımı

Özet

Son bir asırlık süreç içerisinde, rivayetlerin değerlendirilmesinde metin tenkidinin en az isnad tenkidi kadar önemli olduğuna ve tarihi süreçte hadis usulünde metin tenkidine gereken önemin verilmediğine dair vurgunun artması sonucunda, metin tenkidine yönelik

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çalışmalar, hem Sünnî hem de Şîî ilim çevrelerinde artış göstermiştir. Bu bağlamdaki çalışmaların bir kısmını tarihsel süreçte ortaya konan metin tenkidine dair çabaların tespiti oluşturmaktadır. Şîâ'da metin tenkidinin, dönemsel olarak ayrıntılı bir şekilde ortaya konduğu bir çalışma ise yapılmamıştır. Bu çalışmada, III-XI/IX-XVII. asırlar arasındaki süreç karakteristik özelliklerine göre dönemlere ayrılarak Şîâ tarafından metin tenkidi bağlamında ortaya konan yaklaşımlar ve uygulamalara dikkat çekilmeye çalışılmıştır. Tarihsel dönemler, her dönemi en doğru şekilde yansıtacak alimler ve eserlerinden oluşan örneklemeler üzerinden incelemeye tabi tutulmuştur. Ulaştığımız veriler Şîâ'da metin tenkidinin III/IX. asırdan itibaren, Şîî alimler tarafından başvurulan bir yöntem olduğunu göstermektedir. Guluv olgusu, Şîâ'da metin tenkidine erken dönemlerden itibaren ihtiyaç duyulmasını beraberinde getirmiş ve tarih boyunca guluv içerikli rivayetlerin ayıklanmasında metin tenkidi temel yöntem olarak kullanılmıştır. Fıkhi konulardaki rivayetlerde de yaygın olarak kullanılan metin tenkidi, VII/XIII. asırdan itibaren isnad merkezli bir anlayışın hâkim olmasının ardından söz konusu etkinliğini kademe kademe yitirmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hadis, Şîîlik/Şîâ, metin tenkidi, guluv, Ahbârîler, Usûlîler, karîne.

Introduction

The principal role of the hadiths in the emergence of the Shiite tradition, just as the role they play in the tradition of Ahl As-Sunnah (the People of Sunnah), serves as the most significant reason for the need for further studies in this field. Its approach to the hadiths and specific characteristics of its literature necessitates profound examination of the Shiite understanding, and its undeniable impact on the emergence of different disciplines, such as interpretation, fiqh, and kalam, requires relevant studies to be furthered without exclusion of those conducted in the listed disciplines.

Identifying the accuracy and acceptance criteria for narratives is significant for an examination of the Shiite understanding of the hadiths. Being aware of the essential criteria for acceptance or denial of a narrative would help us understand the types of narratives which contributed to the rise of the Shiite tradition. One of the characteristics peculiar to the Shiite understanding of the hadiths is that the criticism of isnad (the chain of transmitters), which is a fundamental method to decide whether to accept or reject a narrative, was first used in a more systematic way in the seventh Hijri century, which is quite late and only after this period it was able to gain a central position in the examination of narratives. In other words, rather than considerations of narrators and chains, textual criteria has become the determinant in the examination of narratives within the foundation period of the Shiite understanding of the hadiths. This determinative role of textual criteria has continued throughout the history of Shiite studies on the hadiths, and reached the peak of its impact within the last century. Although it is not quite possible to speak of a systematical and concrete textual criticism in Shiite hadith interpretation, textual criticism in Shiah is worth studying due to the determinative role of the criteria about the narrative texts in the interpretation process. As the ultimate aim,

in order to understand and reveal what textual criticism actually means in Islamic tradition, as well as in many other issues, this one should also be discussed from a comprehensive perspective that takes all denominations/schools into consideration, instead of a *Sunni-oriented* approach.

Unlike the criticism of *isnad*, textual criticism, in both Sunni and Shiite understandings of hadith interpretation, have not gone through a conceptualization process and its principles have not yet been explained in detail by the guide books of *usul*. Therefore, the textual criticism that we analyze within the Shiite perspective does not correspond to a clearly defined concept. This study aims to identify which textual issues have an impact on the acceptance or rejection denial of narratives, on the basis of different periods and scholars who dominated these periods. This study covers the process between the 3rd-11th/9th-17th centuries. The periods between the 9th-13th/17th-19th centuries are not included in the study due to the dominant prevalence of the Systematic Akhbari approach. By nature, this approach prevented any considerable criticism within the given period. In addition, the period between the 13th/19th century and today, which can also be termed the modern period, should be analyzed in a different study/studies due to the dimensions of change textual criticism has gone through within this period.¹

At this point, it may be thought that the analysis could have covered the process starting from an earlier time. As a response, we can say that as it is observed in all relevant areas that the emergence of the Shiite understanding of hadith interpretation was also highly related to the perception of *imamate* (leadership). Accordingly, Shiite scholars think that the compilation of the hadiths ended with the death of the Prophet and continued in the period of the Twelve Imams. According to the Shiite understanding of *imamate*, imams have the trait of infallibility, they undertake all responsibilities given to the Prophet except for prophecy, and they have been taught the entirety of knowledge revealed to the Prophet. That is why their words are equal to those of the Prophet. As a result of this, hadith recording practices were furthered by the Shiites after the Prophet and throughout the period of the imams. However, the comprehensive works that compile all studied narratives and the works of criticism of these narratives could only be initiated in the second half of the third Hijri century. Although it is possible to find traces of a content-oriented criticism relating to some narratives attributed to the imams by the *ghulat*, the current information we have does not allow us to identify whether a considerable effort was made by the Shiites in the period of the imams to undertake any textual criticism.

In this study, the term *Shiah* refers to the school of *Imamiyyah* or the *Twelvers*, which adopts the understanding of the Twelve Imams. Textual criticism,

¹ For a published article about textual criticism studies conducted in this period, and for more information about the topic itself, see: Peyman Ünügür, *Şîa'da Metin Tenkidi*. Dissertation, A.Ü.S.B.E., 2017.

on the other hand, refers to a method of examination which is based on the criteria of textual analysis and often conducted in order to reach a decision of accepting or rejecting a narrative. "Narrating with meaning, qalb, idraj, ziyadah, iztirab (contradiction),² ikhtisar and taqti'a (dissection), revision, distortion and lahn" are known as the issues encountered in textual examination. However, they cannot be associated with textual criticism."²

1. Textual Criticism in the 3rd and 4th Centuries/Segregation of Narratives Containing Ghuluww

Most parts of this study examine the activities that can be considered to be textual criticism from the second half of the third Hijri century and the whole of the fourth Hijri century. Also, it is seen that the efforts of textual criticism in the second half of the third century and the whole of the fourth century were focused on the narratives originating from the ghulat. Ghulat is mainly composed of people who associate themselves with at least one of the Twelve Imams, who are known as the descendants of the Prophet, in order to legitimize their extremist ideas. Today, it is understood that they often used the narratives they fabricated in line with their ideas and attributed them to the imams. The narratives originating from the imams which contain warnings about the fabricated narratives attributed to them by the ghulat indicate that there has been an awareness of the ghulat's narratives since the early periods.³ Criticisms of the Shiite kalam authorities, who lived in the third/ninth century, against the narratives originating from the ghulat and the steps taken by the scholars of Qom, the representatives of early period Akhbaris, to segregate the narratives containing ghuluww include the first studies of textual criticism conducted by the Ithnā'ashariyyah as a school of thought.

1.1. A General Overview of Factors in the Sources of Narration

The first written Shiite sources of narration are the *originals*, which were composed by members of the congregation of the imams. Authors of the *originals* compiled the narratives they had heard from their imams in books which can also be considered to be *hadith chapters*. It is claimed that the number of the *originals* reach up to 400.⁴ The *originals* have also formed a basis for the comprehensive

² M. Hayri Kırbasoğlu, *Alternatif Hadis Metodolojisi*, (Ankara: Otto, 2015), p. 182.

³In this context, in a famous narrative, it is mentioned that a friend of el-Muğîra b. Saïd infiltrated İmam Muhammed Bâkir's (d. 114/733) friends, brought the narrative books he got from them to Muğîra, and that Muğîra allowed his extreme ideas to intervene in the words of imams by secretly changing these books. (Keşşî, *İhti al-Ma'rifeti'r-ricâl*, tah. Mustafavî, (Beirut: The Center of Neshari al-a'al al-al-Alâme al-Mustafavî, 2009), p. 241.) In a narration ascribed to İmam Rızâ (d. 203/818), it has been pointed out that the narratives of the imams about the coercion and simile were utterly made up by the gulat. (Assembly, *Bihâru'l-envâr*, (Beirut: Muessesetu Mul-Vefâ, 1983), III, p. 294.)

⁴ Muhaqqiq al-Hilli, *Mu'teber*, (Qom: Muessesetu Seyyidi's-Şuhedâ, 1364), I, p. 26.

sources of narration which were first written at the end of the third Hijri century. However, only a few of the originals have survived to the present day, and they contain only a limited number of narratives.⁵

It can be said that the ideas of the Imami school of theology had not yet taken shape and emerged as a systematic school within the period when the narratives were compiled in the *originals*⁶ and this situation resulted in an enabling environment for extremist ideas to influence Shiah. In other words, this environment was full of uncertainties in terms of the perception of imamate and thus, allowed groups that demonstrated divine or extraordinary qualities to the imams to express and disseminate their ideas freely,⁷ and the narratives were inevitably impacted by this movement.

According to Imami Shiah, the basic problems relevant for the ghulat are: Attribution of divinity to those other than Allah, and incarnation;⁸ attribution of prophecy to those other than the Prophet Muhammad;⁹ attribution of imamate to those other than the Twelve Imams;¹⁰ similitude;¹¹ believing in the occultation of someone other than the twelfth Imam;¹² the understanding that implies a lack in knowledge of Allah (beda);¹³ believing in someone else's return as the Mahdī other than Muḥammad ibn Al-Ḥasan;¹⁴ reincarnation;¹⁵ tafwidz;¹⁶ al-ghaib mutallaqa;¹⁷ declining responsibilities;¹⁸ and distortion of the Qur'an¹⁹ and others.²⁰

⁵ For detailed information about the *originals*, see: Majid Ma'arif, *Tārīh-i Umūmī-yi Hadīs -bâ Rūykerd-i Tahliī-*, (Tehran: İntişârât-e Kevîr, 1396), p. 241-252; Bekir Kuzudişli, *Şîa ve Hadis*, (Istanbul: Klasik, 2017) p. 187-224.

⁶ Metin Bozan, *İmâmîyye Şîa'sının İmamet Tasavvuru*, (Ankara: İlahiyât, 2007), p. 34. Bozan argues that the process of emergence was furthered, to a certain extent, even after this period.

⁷ Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shi'ite Islam*, (Princeton-New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1993), p. 19-33.

⁸ Muhammad Jawad Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa ve Fırkehâ-yi İslam tâ Karv-i Çeharom*, (Tehran: İntişârât-ı İşrâkî, 1379), p. 178. See also: Ashâbu'l-Kisâ (Ibid, p. 169), Ehl-i Hak (Ibid, p. 170), Bezi'iyye (Ibid, p.171).

⁹ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 164, 178.

¹⁰ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 173,

¹¹ Ehl-i Tefrit/Muşebbihe (Meşkûr, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 170), Bezi'iyye (Ibid, p. 171), Cevâriyye (Ibid, p. 173), Cevâriyye (Ibid, p. 173)

¹² Vâkife (Ibid, p. 166), Cevâriyye (Ibid, p. 172)

¹³ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 170-171.

¹⁴ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 182. See also: Beyâniyye (Ibid, p. 171)

¹⁵ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 170, 171, 179,

¹⁶ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 172, 184.

¹⁷ The groups that attribute divinity to the imams or believe in tafwidz can be considered within this scope.

¹⁸ Mashkur, *Tārīh-i Şîa*, p. 180.

¹⁹ In his "*Kur'an'ın Bilinmeyen Kısımları*" (The Unknown Parts of the Qur'an), published in Journal Asiatique in 1982, Garcin de Tassy mentions Surat al-Nurayn, which is claimed to have been removed from the Qur'an, and provides Dabistân-i Mazâhib, which was written in Farsi in the 17th century, as his reference. In addition, another copy found in India includes Surat al-wilaya, which is also claimed to have been removed from the Qur'an. However, Mashkur states that each of these so-called chapters is untrue. Mashkur, Ibid, 154-156; Amir Moezzi, *The Divine Guide*, (New York, 1994), p. 80.

Looking at the comprehensive Shiite hadith books, which have been written since the end of the third Hijri century, we do not see any narrative that attributes divinity to someone other than Allah, prophecy to anyone other than the Prophet Muhammad, and reflects ideas, such as reincarnation, which are directly attributed to the ghulat. However, in these sources, there are a lot of narratives about extraordinary characteristics, particularly attributed to the imams. Presence of these narratives, which can also be considered as tafwidz, brings to mind the possibility that the Imami Shiah may not have shown the same sensitivity for criticizing the narratives about imamate, which are known to contain tafwidz.²¹ Another presumption of the facts is that narratives with ghali content subsisted in Shiite sources through narratives of tafwidz.²² Therefore, to identify the ghali elements in the sources of narration, the narratives released by the mufawwidah should be particularly taken into consideration.

Modarressi, a modern Shiite author, gives particular importance to the issue of tafwidz. According to him, the mufawwidah should be analyzed in a different category than the ghulat, who are noted for deifying the imams. He defines the mufawwidah as, "the new ghulat" who do not deify the Prophet or the imams, but attribute deific powers to them, such as having limitless knowledge and control over the universe. According to the mufawwidah, these powers have been gifted to them. Therefore, they are not natural but secondary. Modarressi also suggests that the narrators defined as ghali in the books of *rijal* are members of the groups of the ghulat that stayed out of the mufawwidah.²³ This situation enabled narratives and thoughts that contain tafwidz to gain a place within Shiah.

Although tafwidz is seen as a problem by Shiite scholars in some aspects, extremist ideas such as attributing limitless knowledge to the imams are legitimized as positive tafwidz. Thoughts by Al-Majlisi (d. 1110/1698-99), the author of a famous book of hadiths called *Bihar al-anwar*, who followed the way of Akhbaris but also used Usuli methods in his works, should be mentioned in this regard so as to have an understanding of the overall Shiite approach about the issue of tafwidz. In his work, Al-Majlisi created an separate chapter for "Banishment of Ghuluww". In this chapter, he divides tafwidz into two categories, namely, positive tafwidz and negative tafwidz. Negative tafwidz refers to the understanding that

²⁰For discussions of Iranian scholars about whether issues such as occultation, beda, return of the Mahdi, which find a common ground for the imami and ghulat, were integrated into the Shiite tradition in its early or late periods, and more importantly, whether they were adopted with the impact of the narratives containing ghuluww or not, see: Amir Moezzi, *Ibid*, p. 129-130; Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 29-31; Nimetullah Safari, *GâliyanKâvesî Der Cereyanha ve Berâyendeha ta Pâyân-i Sede-yi Sevvom*, (Meşhed, 1378), p. 361.

²¹ These narratives suggest extremist thoughts which entrust the control of the universe, the authority to punish and reward on the Last Day, and those similar to the Prophet Muhammad and the Twelve Imams.

²² Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 33-34.

²³ Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 23-25; For a similar classification, see: Mohsin Kasimpur, "Berresî-yi Tahlîlî-yi Taâbîr-i Nâzir ber Guluv ve Tefvîz-i Ravîyân der Menâbî-i Rical-i Şfa", *Do Faslname-yi Hadî Pejuhî* 5 (1390): 83-87.

attributes certain powers that belong to Allah, such as to create and to give, to the imams. This is the understanding of the people of *ghulat*. Positive *tafwidz*, on the other hand, is defined as a handover of the responsibilities in religious affairs from the Prophet to the imams, and thus they should be accepted.²⁴ Al-Majlisi tries to identify the limits of *tafwidz* in his work using different narratives that do not contain extremism. According to this identification and the given narratives, knowing all languages spoken on earth is a requirement for *imamate* and it can be considered within the scope of positive *tafwidz*. Similarly, the suggestion that imams have been authorized by Allah to decide what is *halal* (lawful) or *haram* (unlawful) just like the prophets is also regarded as a matter of this type of *tafwidz*.²⁵ Another narrative mentioned by Al-Majlisi under this title is one of the most significant narratives which actually corroborates the idea of negative *tafwidz* through its content. According to a narrative from Muhammed ibn Sinan²⁶ (d. 220/853), who is indicated to be a member of the *ghulat*, Allah had created the Prophet, Ali, and Fatimah two thousand years before all other creatures and they witnessed the entire creation process of everything. And then Allah authorized them to judge and control everything and decide what is *halal* and what is *haram*.²⁷ At this point, it is understood that Al-Majlisi interprets the control mentioned in this narrative as the control over religious affairs and thus, regards this narrative as accurate. Moreover, he argues that the understanding of *imamate* given in this narrative is the midway point between the overstatement (idea of the *ghulat*) and the understatement (idea of the *muqassirun*). *Muqassirun* refers to the scholars of Qom and some *kalam* authorities. Al-Majlisi denounces some *kalam* authorities and narrators for understating the characteristics of the imams. According to this, the *muqassirun* regarded a number of *siqa* narrators as weak because of their narratives about the imams, which claim that they are faultless and have the knowledge of everything that has happened and will happen.²⁸ Al-Majlisi's considerations about the narratives transmitted by Muhammad ibn Sinan indicate that he limits the authority given to the imams to religious affairs, and has a different perception of *imamate* in ontological terms. Moreover, he does not criticize the information mentioned in the narrative, suggesting that the imams had a different story of creation. On the other hand, the aforementioned points he suggests while criticizing narrators and *kalam* authorities, indicate that he supports an understanding that attributes the knowledge of everything to the imams.

²⁴ Al-Majlisi, *Bihârû'l-envâr*, XXV, p. 209-212.

²⁵ Al-Majlisi, *Bihâr*, XXV, p. 199-201.

²⁶ Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Rical*, (Qom: Daru'l-hadîs, 1422), p. 92; Kashshi, *Ihtiyâru ma'rifeti'r-ricâl*, inv. Hasan al-Mustafawi, (Lebanon: Merkezû nesri âsârî'l-allâme el-Mustafavî, 2009), p. 504; Al-Najashi, *Rical*, (Qom: Muessesetu'n-nesri'l-Islâmî, 1429), p. 328.

²⁷ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, (Tehran: Dâru'l-kutubi'l-Islâmiyye, 1363). I, p. 441.

²⁸ Al-Majlisi, *Bihâr*, XXV, p. 209. At this point, it is understood that he refers to the *kalam* authorities who were actively involved in studies before the emergence of the systematic movement of *Usulis*. Accordingly, the *Usuli* understanding that emerged after Al-Mufid accepts the idea that the imams were exempt from both sins and mistakes as an essential principle of the religion.

These narrations by Al-Majlisi include another significant dimension in terms of the topic we are discussing. By referring to the muqassirun, Al-Majlisi points out that the criticisms of these kalam authorities and narrators against the narratives originating from the ghulat is rather content-oriented. According to Al-Majlisi, they regarded a lot of narrators as weak based on the problematic content narrated by them. In our opinion, these suggestions can be considered to be strong evidence indicating that the reliability of the chains were identified through the content during the early periods.

The consistency between the content of written sources from the early period, which are available today and referred to by the ghulat, and the narratives of Shiite sources that contain tafwidz, is another significant topic for our discussion. Today, we have two different books representing the ghali understanding and these books are known to have been written in the second century. A handwritten copy of *Umm al-Kitab* was found at the beginning of the last century and most of the scholars studying on the book accepts it to have been written in the second Hijri century.²⁹ This book contains the answers given by Imām al-Bāqir to the questions asked by Jabir al-Ju'fi and the other scholars.³⁰ The other book is the one consisting of the answers given by Ja'far al-Sadiq to the questions from al-Mufaddal ibn Umar al-Ju'fi, who is known to be a student of his.³¹ This book is called, *Kitab al-haft wa'l-azilla* or *Al-Haft al-shareef* and it is composed of the doctrines of Batiniyya, which form the basis of the Isma'īlism and Nusayriyah sects.³² Although the general consensus is that these books were compiled in the second Hijri century, the changes that have occurred within the historical process to the copies we have are open to discussion.³³ However, it is possible to say that *Kitab al-haft wa'l-azilla* provides a general framework for the ideas about tafwidz as well as appropriate content for us to study. In this regard, the common issues seen in both *Kitab al-haft* and the narratives presented in the fundamental sources of Shiah include; the suggestion that Allah had created souls of the imams two thousand years before the other creatures, and these souls were praying for Allah around the ninth heaven³⁴;

²⁹ Turkish translation: İsmail Kaygusuz, (Demos, 2009). For more information about the book, see: Halm, *Shiism*, trans. Janet Watson, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), p. 157; Daftary, *Şi'ī Islam Tarihi*, trans. A. Fethi Yıldırım (Istanbul: Alfa-Tarih, 2016), p. 67; Stephanie Haught Wade, *The Umm Al-Kitab: A Study In Syncretism* (Postgraduate Thesis, University of Arkansas, 1990), p. 7.

³⁰ For more information about the revelation of this text at the beginning of the 20th century and the process of publishing in different languages, see: Sean W. Anthony, "The Legend of 'Abdallāh ibn Saba' and the Date of Umm al-Kitāb", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 21/1 (2011): 2-4.

³¹ Muhammad ibn Sinan, who was a follower of al-Mufaddal ibn Umar, is considered to be the author of this book. Al-Najashi mentions a book, titled *Al-Adilla*, which is attributed to him: *Ricāl*, p. 328.

³² *el-Heftu'ş-şerīf*, inv. Mustafa Ghalib, (Beirut: Dāru'l-Endelus, 1977). For considerations about the book, see: Daftary, *Şi'ī Islam Tarihi*, p. 237-240.

³³ For a chapter-based date identification of *Kitab al-haft wa'l-azilla*, see: Mushegh Asatryan, *Heresy and Rationalism in Early Islam: The Origins and Evolution of the Mufaddal-Tradition* (PhD Dissertation, Yale University, 2012), p. 239-241.

³⁴ *Kitābu'l-heft*, p. 68, 181.

birth stories of the imams which are different from other humans³⁵; other similar narratives that attribute ontologically different characteristics and superiority to the Twelve Imams, and claim that the imams could speak all languages spoken on earth³⁶; the suggestion that the ninth heaven is placed on water, and this water is associated with the infinite knowledge the imams have³⁷; the suggested fact that the imams have Allah's hidden treasures of knowledge³⁸; and other similar narratives about the scope and source of the knowledge the imams have.

In light of the aforementioned information, we will initially examine the efforts by narrators and kalam authorities in the period between the third/ninth and the fourth/tenth centuries to criticize the ghali considerations and narratives based on their content, as also mentioned by Al-Majlisi.

1.2. First Cases of Criticism About Narratives Originating From the Ghulat/Mufawwidah

Under this title, we will analyze the Shiite kalam authorities and the early period Akhbari scholars, who were rather interested in the narratives containing ghuluww that emerged as a result of the intensive work of the ghulat sects in the second/eighth and the third/ninth centuries. In this respect, we try to identify whether scholars from these two groups have undertaken considerable works of textual criticism regarding these narratives, and to reveal the essence of identified works. The analysis has been based on the narratives about the knowledge of the imams. The scholars whose approaches are analyzed in this study lived during the third/ninth and the fourth/tenth centuries, a period when the school of the Twelvers/Imami and the other Shiite sects prominently differed from each other.

1.2.1. Criticism of Narratives Containing Ghuluww About the Knowledge of the Imams by Shiite Kalam Authorities

Narratives about the source and scope of the knowledge of the imams stand out as the most manipulated area by the ghulat in terms of fabricated hadiths, which were used to attribute posthuman characteristics to them. The narratives provided in Shiite sources which contain warnings for the imams also corroborate this suggestion. One of these narratives states that Ja'far al-Sadiq warned his companions about those attributing characteristics such as the knowledge of everything that has happened and will happen on earth, or having control over the entire universe to him by saying, "May Allah damn those narrating something we have never said as if we have"³⁹. In another narrative, it is suggested that someone

³⁵ *Kitābu'l-heft*, p. 87-90.

³⁶ *Kitābu'l-heft*, p. 68.

³⁷ *Kitābu'l-heft*, p. 79.

³⁸ *Kitābu'l-heft*, p. 80-81.

³⁹ Al-Saduq, *l'tikādāt*, (Qom: Peyām-e Īmam Hādī, 1391), p. 109.

comes to Ja'far and tells about the words narrated by others about him. According to these rumors, the imam knows the numbers of all raindrops, stars, leaves on all trees, as well as the amount of water in the seas and the soil on earth. In response, Ja'far states that these are impossible and only Allah can have such superior knowledge.⁴⁰

It is observed that the narratives regarding the source and scope of the knowledge the imams had, and those containing *ghuluww* have formed a basis for criticism of scholars from other sects against Shiah since the third Hijri century. A narrative mentioned in *Basa'ir* of Al-Saffar also confirms this fact. According to this narrative, which is narrated by Ali, he never went to bed before learning the revelations about halal, haram, sunnah, commandments and prohibitions, and what and who they target, from the Prophet in person. Until this point, this narrative does not differ from the others mentioned in *Basa'ir* in terms of the knowledge of the imams. However, the rest of this narrative provides historically significant information. Adherents of Mu'tazila denied this narrative when they heard and claimed that it was something impossible that they were always together in the same place. Shiite Muslims informed Zayd ibn Ali, who is the narrator of this statement, about this opposition.⁴¹ In response, Zayd reminded them of the days the Prophet and Ali were in separate places and states that the Prophet taught the knowledge revealed in the days they were separated to Ali when they came together and asked them to deliver this information to the adherents of Mu'tazila who opposed this narrative.⁴²

Although there is no trace of a critical approach against Imami Shiah in this narrative, the other information given in the same narrative confirms a considerable interaction between Imami Shia and Mu'tazila in the second half of the third Hijri century, when *Basa'ir* was written. Secondly, based on the information given in this narrative, regardless of any actual criticism from Mu'tazila, it can be concluded that there was a critical attitude toward the approach of Imami Shia and the narratives that formed a basis for this approach. Moreover, the Shiite Muslims were confused about this issue.

Fadl b. Shadhan (d. 260/874) and Ibn Qibba al-Razi (d. 319/931) are among the scholars who responded to the criticism against Shiah through rejections or other types of academic works. According to a modern author called Bayhom, the fact that the kalam authorities, who constituted a major school of Shiah in the pre-occultation period, considered sources other than the Prophet as *ghuluww*, and

⁴⁰ Al-Majlisi, *Bihâr*, XXV, p. 179; Muhammad Hasan al-Ahmadi, "Galiyan ve Endişe-yi Tahrîf-i Kur'ân", *Ulu'm-e Hadîs* 2/52 (1388): 192. For some criticism by modern Shiite authors about narratives containing *ghuluww* regarding the knowledge of the imams, see: Nematollah Salehi Najafabadi, *Guluw*, (Tehran: Intişârât-e Kevîr, 1384), p. 14-15; Hashim Maruf al-Hasani, *el-Meozuat fi'l-âsâri ve'l-âhbâr-arz ve dirâse-*, (Beirut: Dâru't-taâruf li'l-matbûât, 1987), p. 260-261.

⁴¹ Zayd ibn Ali, the narrator of this information, is the brother of Imâm al-Bâqir, who is the founder of the Zaidiyyah sect and the fourth imam of the Imami Shiah.

⁴² Al-Saffar, *Basâiru'd-deracât*, inv. Hasen Kûçebağî, (Tehran: Munteshirâtü'l-alemî, 1404), p. 217.

criticized relevant narratives in terms of textual properties.⁴³ One of these authorities, al-Fadl b. Shadhan (d. 260/874), responded to the criticism addressed by Ahl Al-Sunnah against Shiah about the source of the knowledge the imams had in his work, *el-Īdāh li'r-reddi fi sâiri'l-firak*.

Al-Fadl b. Shadhan discusses the criticism against the knowledge of the imams in a chapter about *Sahifah Alawiyyah*, which is a book claimed to have been written by Ali. According to this, Sunni scholars blame Imami Shiah for accepting the deific inspiration as a source of the knowledge the Prophet's family had besides his teachings. They claim a narrative about Ali to be the basis of this claim. This narrative states that Ali could comprehend the revelation of Allah only through an understanding taught by Him and this understanding can be nothing but His inspiration.⁴⁴ After mentioning this narrative, al-Fadl emphasizes that the information provided is not supported by Shiah. As evidence, he cites another narrative claimed to have originated from Ali. According to this narrative, Ali stated that there is nothing (no source of knowledge) they had but Allah's revelation and the *Sahifah*. According to al-Fadl, this narrative refers to the fact that the imams only had the book revealed by Allah, which contains everything human beings need in their daily lives, and the *Sahifah*, which is an interpretation of this book. Al-Fadl also suggests that *Sahifah* was a corpus composed of 100 volumes in which the Prophet Muhammad presented every necessary piece of information about halal and haram to Ali, and it was inherited to the imams after Imam Ali. He also argues that Sunni Muslims did not accept this fact.⁴⁵

From this suggestion from al-Fadl about the criticism made by Sunni scholars, where he clarifies his view of the knowledge the imams had, we can understand that he accepted the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as the only source of knowledge for them. The fact that Al-Fadl mentions an untrue narrative referred to by Sunni scholars to Ali shows that some of the pre-occultation narratives about the nature and source of the knowledge the imams had are inconsistent narratives. Therefore, it is understood that Al-Fadl not only reveals his attitude toward these kinds of narratives, but also responds to the criticism made by Sunni scholars. It can also be suggested that he does not accept the narratives which claim that the imams received inspiration and/or revelations about the *ghaib* (the unseen) because of their content.

Ibn Qibba al-Razi is another Shiite kalam authority who responded to the criticisms from the adherents of Zaidiyyah, generally about the narratives originating from the *ghulat*, and specifically those about the knowledge of *ghaib*

⁴³ Tamima Bayhom-Daou, "The Imam's Knowledge and The Qur'an According to al-Fadl b. Shâdhân al-Nisâbûrî", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 64/2 (2001): 190.

⁴⁴ However, this narratives cannot be found in Shiite sources today.

⁴⁵ Al-Fadl b. Shadhan, *el-Īdāh li'r-reddi fi sâiri'l-firak*, inv. Jalāl al-Din al-Husayni al-Urmawi, (Beirut: Muessesetu't-Târihu'l-Arabî, 2009), p. 460-464. Al-Fadl's approach, which rejects these narratives, accepts the possibility that the Prophet Muhammad might have guided Ali to write an 100-volume corpus during his prophecy of twenty-three years full of sufferings.

attributed to the imams. The rejection, authored by Ibn Qibba against the aforementioned sect of Islam, was narrated by Al-Saduq in *Kamal Ad-Din*.⁴⁶ According to Ibn Qibba, the reason for the increase in the number of narratives containing ghuluww is that lesser known narrators of the time were taken as references for narratives due to *husn al-dhan* (good opinion). The imams received complaints due to the increasing severity of this situation and as response, they ordered their companions to take only the narratives of consensus into consideration. However, they did not obey this order and continued the conventional practices. It was not possible for the imams to know everything added to their narratives. Because, they did not have the knowledge of ghaib. There is no question regarding the accuracy of the narratives about imamate, as all of them are considered mutawatir. Accordingly, all controversial issues are associated with khabar al-wahid. Khabar al-wahid does not provide any information and could either be true or untrue.⁴⁷

The information narrated by Ibn Qibba depicts this situation in a more clear way. According to this information, he explicitly accepts the existence of narratives which pose a source of criticism against Zaidiyyah, propounds that they cannot be accepted due to their content mentioning the ghulat as the origin, and suggests presenting these narratives for consensus as a method for clarification. This is sound evidence which indicates a critical attitude adopted towards the narratives circulated among Shiah in a fairly early period, and the content-oriented approach seen in this attitude.

1.2.2. The School of Qom and Ghuluww-Oriented Textual Criticism

Qom, which is considered to be the most operative Shiite center of Islamic sciences of the third/ninth and the fourth/tenth centuries, is the first city in Iran where the Shiite understanding gained dominance. The Ash'arites, an Arabic tribe originally from the Yemen area, settled in Qom and had a significant influence on the propagation of the Shiite understanding in this region after being relegated from Iraq by the Umayyad Caliphate for being followers of Ali and playing active roles in rebellions. It is also suggested that eleven people from the Ashari family, who migrated to Qom at the beginning of the second Hijri century, were companions of Imām al-Bāqir and al-Sadiq and initiated the hadith studies in the region.⁴⁸ Today, it is understood that Qom has served as a shelter for Shiite scholars escaping from the pressure of the Umayyad Caliphate and become the center of compilation (of hadiths) for Shiah. It is thought that narratives from the imams were first brought together in Qom and then those originating from the ghulat were

⁴⁶ Al-Saduq, *Kemālu'd-dīne tamānu'n-ni'me*, (Beirut: Mensūratu'l-a'lemī, 1991), p. 98-125.

⁴⁷ Al-Saduq, *Kemālu'd-dīn*, p. 112.

⁴⁸ Suheyly Piruzfer, Muhammed Mehdi Âciliyâne Mâfûk, "Hânedân-i Eş'arî ve Te'sir-i ân ber Siyer-i Tahavvul-i Mekteb-i Hadîsî-yi Kum", *Hadîs Pejûhî* 3/5 (1390): 8; Habip Demir, *Horasan'da Şîlik-İran'da Şîliğin Tarihsel Kökenleri*, (Ankara: Otto, 2017), p. 103-104.

eliminated during the compilation process. The first two of the *al-Kutub al-Arba'ah* (the Four Books) are al-Kulayni's⁴⁹ (d. 329/941) *Kitab al-Kafi* and Al-Saduq's (d. 381/991) *Man la yahduruhu al-Faqih*. Both of them are considered to be the most important Shiite scholars raised in Qom.⁵⁰

There are a number of interesting facts which support the suggestion that the Qom scholars adopted an uncompromising attitude toward the ghali narrators. Among those includes facts such as, allowing others to kill those having ghali thoughts or expelling them from Qom, as well as intellectual activities such as writing rejections for ghali ideas. Al-Najashi mentions a number of relevant books in *Rijal*, which were written for this purpose but have not survived to the present day.⁵¹ In this way, they must have tried to build barriers against the narratives originating from the ghulat by exposing ghali narrators of the time together with their ideas.

Two modern Shiite authors, namely, Modarressi and Kadivar, attach relatively higher importance to this attitude of the school of Qom toward the ghali narrators. According to them, the claims suggesting that the imams had the knowledge of ghaib, that they were entrusted by Allah, and those attributing purity to them were rejected by the scholars of Qom for being extremist ideas.⁵² One of the most significant points taken as reference by Modarressi and Kadivar for this consideration were that the early period Akhbaris considered *sahw an-nabi* within the scope of ghuluww, and Al-Saduq mentions a relevant narrative in *Man la yahduruhu al-Faqih*, which is followed by a statement from his teacher, Ibn al-Walid, who says, "the first degree of ghuluww is to reject *sahw an-nabi*".⁵³

It is clear that the precautions taken by the scholars of Qom against the ghulat and the tafwidz authorities indicate intolerance against extremist ideas. However, whether these precautions completely annihilated the idea, especially that of the scholars of Qom, alleging a superhuman prophet (as argued by Modarressi and Kadivar) or not, should be discussed in an independent study. To determine this, we will examine the place of the narratives about the knowledge of

⁴⁹ Al-Kulayni was a member of Qom's population and the fact that 80 percent of the narratives in *Kitab al-Kafi* were directly, and 10 percent indirectly, narrated by the Qom community proves his association with the school of Qom. For the information provided by Jafarian about Al-Kulayni's sources of the narratives, see: Rasul Jafarian, *Tarih-i Teşeyyu' Der Iran Ez Agâz Ta' Karn-i Dehom-i Hicri*, (Qom, 1375), I, p. 209.

⁵⁰ Ali Zuhayr as-Sarraf, "Medresetu Kum er-rivâi fi muvâceheti'l-gulât", *Mecelletu Merkezi Dirâsâti'l-Kûfe* 1/34 (2014): 31-32.

⁵¹ Najashi, *Ricâl*, p. 177, 354, 448.

⁵² Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation*, p. 41-42; Muhsin Kadivar, "Kurâat-e Ferâmuş Şode", (1385), <http://kadivar.com/?p=238>.

⁵³ Al-Saduq, *Men la yahduruhu'l-fakih*, (Qom, 1404), I, p. 358-360. However, it is not possible to claim that we have the necessary evidence to prove that the other scholars of Qom, except for Al-Saduq and his teacher, Ibn al-Walid, accepted the phenomenon of *sahw an-nabi* or associated those who rejected it with ghuluww. Therefore, we cannot say that what Modarressi and Kadivar attribute to the scholars of Qom is accurate.

the imams in Saffar's *Basa'ir al-darajat*, Al-Kulayni's *Al-Kafi*, and the works covering Al-Saduq's narratives regarding faith and theological issues.

Criticisms of Narratives Containing Ghuluww About the Knowledge of the Imams

Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Saffar al-Qummi (d. 290/903) is one of the earliest scholars of Qom and an author of a comprehensive book of hadiths. Looking at the content of this book, it is understood that he wrote *Basa'ir al-darajat*, which consists of forty chapters and begins with an introduction, to bring together the narratives about the traits of Ahl al-Bayt. Narratives about the knowledge of the imams in *Basa'ir* can be divided into four categories according to their sources. These sources mentioned in different narratives are; the Qur'an, teachings of the previous prophets, and the knowledge narrated from the Prophet Muhammad in form of text, a book written by Fatima based on the Jibril's teachings (Book of Fatimah), and the revelations or inspiration. The narratives about the knowledge of the imams given in *Basa'ir* include those considered as having originated from the early ghulat period alleging that the imams had the knowledge of ghaib,⁵⁴ they continuously received divine inspirations besides the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad⁵⁵, which were considered as having originated from the ghulat in the early period by Shiite kalam authorities, as well as the narratives alleging that the imams had been created two thousand years before all other human beings and were gifted the knowledge of everything, and others similar to these which were consistent with the early period mufawwidah sources of the ghulat. This can be regarded as an indicator of the fact that not all recognized Shiite scholars of Qom maintained a distance from the ghulat and the narratives containing ghuluww. On the other hand, the fact that al-Saffar, as a prominent scholar of Qom, used narratives of the ghulat a lot in his book shows that he did not attempt to criticize the content of these narratives.⁵⁶

In order to understand whether Al-Kulayni has a significantly different approach from Al-Saffar toward ghali narratives, it would be useful to make a comparison between the narratives about the knowledge of the Imams.

In *al-Kafi*, there are around 348 narratives which are directly or indirectly relevant to the knowledge of the imams. These narratives and issues explained therein can be listed as follows: The imams had the knowledge of the earth and the sky and they could speak about the ghaib;⁵⁷ they got information from the angels;⁵⁸ they could recognize their followers by face;⁵⁹ they had the knowledge of

⁵⁴ Al-Saffar, *Basâir*, p. 118-121.

⁵⁵ Al-Saffar, *Basâir*, p. 268-272, 356-358, 361-364.

⁵⁶ For an isnad-oriented analysis and criticism of the narratives about the knowledge of the imams, see: Kuzudişli, *Şia ve Hadis*, p. 226-252.

⁵⁷ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 173.

⁵⁸ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 175-176.

⁵⁹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 184.

everything about the future of other people, including deaths and births and everything that had happened or would happen until the day of judgment;⁶⁰ the Prophet and the imams could see the practices of other people and were aware of them;⁶¹ they had a written list of the adherents of Shiah;⁶² they could have the knowledge of the earth and the sky, and everything that had happened and would happen only through the knowledge of the Qur'an;⁶³ they had *al-Jamia*, which includes the knowledge of halal and haram, *al-Jafr*, which contains the all the knowledge of all the prophets and scholars who had ever lived, and the *Book of Fatimah*, which contains the knowledge of everything that will happen in the future;⁶⁴ they were presented with the knowledge of everything that would happen that year in each Laylat al-Qadr;⁶⁵ their knowledge increased every Friday night;⁶⁶ Allah informed the Prophet Muhammad and the imams of everything He ordained;⁶⁷ the imam asked Allah about everything related to ghaib and He revealed what they asked of them;⁶⁸ they knew the number of all deaths;⁶⁹ they were informed of or received an inspiration about everything they needed to know;⁷⁰ they had the knowledge of the essence of all creatures and everything on earth and in the sky in virtue of the *ruh al-qudus (holy spirit)*, and thus were protected from mistakes and ignorance;⁷¹ they could answer every question, understand every languages spoken by human beings and animals;⁷² as well as what was in their minds, and their intentions;⁷³ they were gifted with the entirety of knowledge revealed by Allah as soon as they were born;⁷⁴ they also learned practices of all creatures by virtue of a column raised in front of them after birth;⁷⁵ all souls were presented to the imams before creation, and thus they could recognize their adherents.⁷⁶

Therefore, it is evident that narratives that reflect the understanding of ghuluww are consistent with those mentioned in *al-Basa'ir* and there is no critical approach that excludes any of these narratives. It is, for sure, not a coincidence that in chains of a majority of these aforementioned narratives, the narrators regarded to

⁶⁰ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 197-225.

⁶¹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 219-220.

⁶² Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 224.

⁶³ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 229.

⁶⁴ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 238-240.

⁶⁵ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 247.

⁶⁶ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 254.

⁶⁷ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 256.

⁶⁸ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 257.

⁶⁹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 259.

⁷⁰ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 264.

⁷¹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 272.

⁷² Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 285.

⁷³ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 343-345.

⁷⁴ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 385-387.

⁷⁵ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 387.

⁷⁶ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 438.

be from the *ghulat* or *mufawwidah* by Shiite sources were mentioned. In this respect, among the narratives provided in *Usul al-kafi* and listed above, those alleging that the imams had the knowledge of *ghaib*;⁷⁷ that they could recognize their adherents by face;⁷⁸ that they had the knowledge of everything that would happen to others, including deaths and births, and everything that had happened and would happen until the day of judgment;⁷⁹ that they were presented the knowledge of everything that would happen that year in each *Laylat al-Qadr*;⁸⁰ that their knowledge increased every Friday night;⁸¹ that they had the knowledge of the essence of all creatures and everything on earth and in the sky in virtue of the *ruh al-qudus*, and thus were protected from mistakes and ignorance;⁸² that they were gifted with the entirety of the knowledge revealed by Allah as soon as they were born;⁸³ that they also learned the practices of all creatures by virtue of a column raised in front of them after birth;⁸⁴ that all souls were presented to the imams before creation, and thus they could recognize their adherents,⁸⁵ were narrated by those noted for *ghuluww* and had consistent content with the *ghali* opinions presented in *Kitab al-haft wa'l-azilla*.

What is important for our study is that these instances support the opinion that Al-Kulayni did not adopt an attitude that takes the criteria of accuracy into account while compiling the narratives in the *originals*. It is also understood that *al-Kafi*, or the chapter which contains narratives about faith, is not different from al-Saffar's *al-Basa'ir* in terms of the *ghali* content. On the other hand, it seems impossible to say that as a prominent scholar of the Qom school, which is noted for its struggle against the *ghulat*, Al-Kulayni was rather successful in the identification and segregation of extremist opinions embedded in the narratives. Therefore, this

⁷⁷ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 353. About Ahmad b. al-Husayn b. Said b. Hammad b. Said b. who were mentioned in the chain, Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî (*Ricâl*, p. 40-41), Al-Najashi (*Ricâl*, p. 77-78), and Shaykh Tusi (*Fihrist*, p. 65) report the narratives showing his *ghulat* origins.

⁷⁸ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 184 (Muhammad b. Jumhur was also mentioned in the chain and regarded as having *ghali* opinions and being corrupt in terms of sectarianism. Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 92; Najashi, *Ricâl*, p. 337).

⁷⁹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 197 (Sahl b. Ziyad, as mentioned in the chain, was regarded as corrupt (*fasid*) in terms of the act of narration, and the religion as a whole: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 66-67; Najashi, *Ricâl*, p. 185).

⁸⁰ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 247 (Sahl b. Ziyad is mentioned in the chain).

⁸¹ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 254 (Mufaddal b. Umar is mentioned in the chain as superior in rhetoric and sermon: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 87; Kashshi, *Ricâl*, p. 331-340; Najashi, *Ricâl*, p. 416).

⁸² Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 272 (In the chain, Muhammad b. Sinan is noted as being a liar and fabricating hadiths: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 92; Kashshi, *Ricâl*, p. 504; Najashi, *Ricâl*, p. 328).

⁸³ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 385-387 (Muhammad b. Sulayman ad-Daylami, as mentioned in the chain, is noted for being a weak reference and having extremist views, as well as being corrupt in terms of sectarianism: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 91).

⁸⁴ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 387 (In the chain, Muhammad ibn Sa'dan is noted as a follower of *ghuluww* for having extremist ideas: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 90).

⁸⁵ Al-Kulayni, *Kâfi*, I, p. 438 (Salih ibn Sahl, as mentioned in the chain, is noted for being *ghali*, a liar, and a fabricator of hadith: Ibn al-Ghadâ'irî, *Ricâl*, p. 69. A narrative from Kashshi corroborates this idea: Kashshi, *Ricâl*, p. 350).

finding invalidates allegations of those attributing the absence of a compilation for mawḏū' (fabricated) hadiths in the early periods of Shiah to a movement of segregation maintained by the authors of major hadith collections led by al-Kulayni.

As another significant figure in the early period, Akhbarism, Al-Saduq (d. 381/991) had a distinctive character compared to previous Akhbari scholars. He did not take narration as the basis for most of his works but tried to systematize the Imami understanding, and adopted a realistic approach in this regard. Although the main content of his works is composed of narratives, he differs from the general Akhbari attitude, which accepts literal meanings of narratives without questioning, with his distinctive explanations, particularly in terms of the interpretation of narratives. It is also seen that Al-Saduq expresses his critical approach against extremist ideas and narratives in a more explicit way. In the introductory chapter of *al-I'tiqadat*, which is known as the first well-structured work of Shia that explains the belief of Imami, he denounces the understanding of similitude-corporeality, bases his opinions about tawhid upon verses of the Qur'an, and expresses that any other understanding from that framework is insufferable and the narratives that support such understandings are fabricated. Accordingly, he thinks that any narrative that is inconsistent with the Qur'an is untrue, even when mentioned in the works of the Shiite scholars.⁸⁶ This principle corresponds to a fundamental criterion of textual criticism, which is reference to the Qur'an.

As he travelled to and stayed for a while in Baghdad, it is highly possible that al-Saduq had the opportunity to be acquainted with the opinions of the school of Mu'tazila in Baghdad. Accordingly, Newman regards his view as mentioned in al-Tawhid, which opposes the understanding of similitude and his emphasis on certain values such as tawhid and justice, as a reflection of the influence of Mu'tazila.⁸⁷

The examples which indicate Al-Saduq's reference to the concept of interpretation within the scope of the narratives about the knowledge of the imams are significant for our subject matter. A narrative in his *Ma'ani al-akhbar*, which widely addressed the speech delivered by the eighth imam of Shia, Ali ar-Rida (d. 203/819), in a mosque in Merv, talks about the characteristics of the imams. The narrative, which also discusses the knowledge of the imam, emphasizes that the imam should have everything he needs in order to show others the true path to follow. According to this narrative, the Imams should be able to answer questions about the future and understand all languages spoken by human beings.⁸⁸ Al-Saduq narrates this information but also states that this knowledge should be

⁸⁶ Al-Saduq, *I'tiqadat*, (Qom: Peyâm-i Imam Hâdi, 1391), 3-4.

⁸⁷ Andrew J. Newman, "The Recovery Of The Past: Ibn Bâbawayh, Bâqir Al-Majlisî And Safawîd Medical Discourse", *Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* 50 (2012): 111.

⁸⁸ Al-Saduq, *Ma'ani'l-akhbâr*, (Beirut: Dâru'l-ma'rife, 1979), p. 95-102.

limited in some aspects. According to him, the knowledge of the imam should be derived from the teachings of the Prophet. And they were taught everything they needed by him before his death. Also, it is not possible for imams to receive divine revelations after the Prophet's death.⁸⁹ In essence, many narratives transmitted by Al-Saduq constitute evidence showing that he sees no harm in attributing a vast amount of knowledge to the imams, as long as it has been conveyed by the Prophet. According to the aforementioned narrative, the imams had a list of their followers and enemies up until the day of judgment, they also had a 35 meter long al-Jami'a, which contained human beings' every need until the day of judgment, and the big and small al-Jafr, which was written on a piece of leather and described every single judgments in Islamic fiqh.⁹⁰

At this point, Al-Saduq states that the imams did not receive any direct revelation from Allah, either in order not to place them in a position equal to prophets, or to close the door to this understanding for some extremist opinions based on the characteristics attributed to the imams. Accordingly, the editor Ali Akbar Ghaffari feels the need to express his dissent to this suggestion and states in a footnote that his words contradict a number of extant narratives regarding this subject.⁹¹ Looking at the narration of the aforementioned statement from Ibn Qibba⁹², we can say that Al-Saduq implicitly accepted the fact that the imams cannot have the knowledge of ghaib, or at least took up a position against the narratives that he associated with the ghulat and the mufawwidah.

It is seen that Al-Saduq, who tries to limit the knowledge of the imams to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad on one hand, cites the narratives alleging that they received the knowledge of ghaib in sources other than from the Prophet himself. The narrative mentioned in *Kamal al-din*, *al-Basa'ir*, and *al-Kafi*, alleging that the knowledge of everything that would happen in a year was revealed to the imam of the time, can be cited as an example to this.⁹³ There are narrative containing ghuluww in different works of Al-Saduq. Some of the narratives from al-Mufaddal ibn Umar, who is regarded as a significant representative of the mufawwidah, can also be cited as examples in this context. The imams' different stories of creation, and being presented to the other creatures as prominent servants of Allah,⁹⁴ the extraordinary births of Ali and Fatima⁹⁵, and the narratives about the allegation that souls of innocent people had been created a few thousands of year before the others are among them.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ Al-Saduq, *Ma'âni'l-ahbâr*, p. 102.

⁹⁰ Al-Saduq, *Ma'âni'l-ahbâr*, p. 102-103.

⁹¹ Al-Saduq, *Ma'âni'l-ahbâr*, p. 102.

⁹² Al-Saduq, *Kemâlu'd-dîn*, p. 112.

⁹³ Al-Saduq, *Kemâlu'd-dîn*, p. 305.

⁹⁴ Al-Saduq, *Kemâlu'd-dîn*, p. 240; *Uyûnu ahbâri'r-Rîza*, inv. Husayn al-A'lamî, (Beirut: Muessesetu'l-A'lemî, 1984), II, p. 61; *Ma'âni'l-ahbâr*, p. 108.

⁹⁵ Al-Saduq, *el-Emâli*, (Qom: Muessesetu'l-bi'se, 1417), p. 194-195, 691.

⁹⁶ Al-Saduq, *Ma'âni'l-ahbâr*, p. 108; *Kemâlu'd-dîn*, p. 315-316. The information in these narratives about the differences between the creation of innocent souls and those of others is shown in a variety of different

Findings from Moezzi in a similar study support the findings we obtained throughout this research. Moezzi argues that there is no significant difference between Al-Saffar, Al-Kulayni, and Al-Saduq, in terms of the content of the narratives about the knowledge, power, and creation of the imams, except for the declining number of narratives cited in their works.⁹⁷ Another considerable difference seen in Al-Saduq's work is that he uses his mechanism of interpretation as a tool of defense against criticisms that may be addressed to the narratives and he tries to isolate the narratives that could normally be considered as ghuluww through interpretation.

In our opinion, the findings we have revealed up to this point may lead us to make the following inference: The uncertainties existed before the completion of the systematic internal development of Ithnā'ashariyyah/Imami, particularly those that emerged in the second/eighth and the third/ninth centuries, and prepared the ground for the rise of different groups of ghulat established on the basis of partisanship to Ali. With time, these groups used the narratives they fabricated and attributed to the Shiite imams in order to propagate their ideas and rally supporters. When these narratives started to become popular among the Shiite population, they brought about a counter-view against extremist ideas and the first reactions against ghali groups were received directly from the imams. Today, it is understood that kalam authorities like Al-Fadl ibn Shadhan and Ibn Qibba, who lived in the third Hijri century, adopted remarkable critical approaches which can be considered within the scope of textual criticism. It is also seen that particularly the school of Qom, which was active in the fourth/tenth century, played a significant role in this regard by struggling against the ideas of the ghuluww, their representatives, and other extremists, and tried methods of relegation (from Qom) and intimidation. According to Shiah, this attitude of the school of Qom helped segregation of narratives containing ghuluww within the compilation process and as a result of this attitude we cannot see such narratives in the Four Books (*al-Kutub al-Arba'ah*). The information provided in different sources confirms this struggle against the members of the ghulat in Qom.⁹⁸ However, as expressed within Shiah, it is not possible to say that these efforts were sufficient to segregate all ghali narratives and to prevent them being included in fundamental sources of the hadiths. Even the limited information about ghali elements in Shiite sources is sufficient to indicate that there are a significant number of narratives originating

sources. In some narratives it is cited as two thousand years, while according to others it is fourteen thousand years.

⁹⁷ Mohammed Ali Amir Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism*, trans. David Straight, (New York: University of New York Press, 1994), p. 15-18.

⁹⁸ At this point, we can mention some intellectual activities to demonstrate rejections against ghali ideas. Najashi cites a lot of books in his *Rijal*, which were written but have not survived to the present day. For examples, see: Najashi, *Rical*, p. 177, 354, 448. For more information about the attitude of the scholars of Qom toward the ghulat, see: Ali Zuhayr Sarraf, "Medresetu Qom er-rivā' fī muvāceheti'l-gulāt", *Mecelletu Merkezi Dirāsati'l-Kufe*, 1:34 (2014).

from the ghulat and the mufawwidah in the books authored by the scholars of the school of Qom, including the Four Books.

In our opinion, one of the most significant reasons for the fact that scholars of Qom could not completely protect their works from ghali narratives despite the struggle against the ghulat, is the uncertainty in terms of the definition of ghuluww and the resultant failure of Akhbari scholars to get over the ghali ideas. Although it is seen that they applied a method of segregation, particularly against narratives that attribute divinity to someone other than Allah and similar, as a marginal point of extremist ideas, it is certain that they could not ensure an equally meticulous criticism on the narratives containing ghuluww about the matter of imamate. For instance, it is not possible to say that it was easy for those who supported the understanding of imamate at the time to admit the impact of the ghulat on the necessity for imams to have knowledge of everything. This situation may be associated with the fact that the concept of imamate was a building block of Shiah and thus, it was too difficult to adopt an objective attitude toward the narratives containing ghuluww about imamate. Today, it is understood that the narratives containing ghuluww about superiority of the imams therefore have stayed out of content-oriented criticism. In addition, it is highly possible that the scholars of Qom did not narrate anything from the ghulat due to their uncompromising attitude against those who lived in the same period and place as them but stood out due to extremist ideas. However, it is also possible that they accepted and included in their works, the ghali narratives about imamate which were fabricated and attributed to an imam but narrated by someone else who was known to have no extremist ideas. In this regard, it may be suggested that the systematic use of textual criteria by these scholars prepared the ground for the narratives that attribute posthuman characteristics to the prophet and the imams and can be found in different sources.

It is clear that Al-Saduq has a different perspective than the classical understanding of Akhbaris. Despite the considerable quantity of ghali narratives in his works, he adopts a different approach when it comes to the narratives about certain topics, such as knowledge of the imams, and tries to resolve the contradiction between these two acts by referring to the method of interpretation. The declining number of such narratives in his works and the effective use of interpretation can be regarded as an indicator of the possibility that he took into consideration certain criteria relating to content during his judgment about the accuracy of narratives. However, it is impossible to say that he used the criteria for textual examination in an effective way.

Another notable situation is the reflection of the differentiation between the ghulat and the mufawwidah seen in the narratives cited in different sources. As argued by Modarressi, the opinion that extremist ideas of the ghulat, such as attributing divinity to someone other than Allah, lost its impact over time due to the aggressive reactions within Shiah, and the ghulat was replaced by the mufawwidah who attributes posthuman characteristics to the imams and the

rarefied ghali approach of the mufawwidah was admitted by Shiah over time. These findings allow us to make the following inference: The rising reaction among Shiah against the early period ghulat brought about more careful examinations of their narratives, and a significant quantity of these narratives were eliminated during the compilation process of comprehensive hadith collections. Marginal narratives of entities such as the Mughiriyyah and the Khattabiyyah, which are considered to be more extremist compared to those of the mufawwidah in this regard, could not even find a place in *al-Basa'ir*, while the narratives attributed to the mufawwidah were able to survive to the time of Al-Saduq, despite the decline in quantity.

The reason for our emphasis on the narratives about faith in examination of the acceptance or rejection of the narratives circulated within the dominant period of the early Akhbaris, is the fact that the Shiah, who were struggling against the ghulat and the mufawwidah within the same period of time, adopted a content-oriented approach to segregate the narratives originating from them and, although partially, this approach can still be monitored. However, it does not seem possible to say the same for narratives on issues of fiqh. The absence of textual criteria, such as consistency with the Qur'an, the sunnah, and ijma, which are frequently mentioned by Shaykh Tusi in *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* and *al-Istibsar*, are not cited in al-Kafi and al-Faqih of al-Kulayni and Al-Saduq, respectively. This complicates the possible identification of whether they predicate their opinions about the accuracy of the narratives regarding the details of some textual criteria. On the other hand, absence of a significant study by Shiite scholars to gather fabricated hadiths in the early periods or even until the last century poses a significant obstacle that prevents the identification of the Shiite perspective for the reasons behind the fabrication of these narratives which do not fit the scope of ghuluww.

2. Development of Textual Criticism between the 5th and the 13th Centuries

The Akhbarism, which became the dominant ideology about one and a half centuries after the end of the Imami period, gave way to the Usuli understanding, which had a chance to flourish under the rule of Buheyvis (334/945-447/1055), at the end of the fourth Hijri century, and this understanding preserved its dominance among Shiite scholars during the following period, except for about two centuries when the Akhbarism rallied again. Therefore, in the following part of the study, we will attempt to reveal the changes in the role attached to textual criteria in the examination of narratives during the period of Usuli understanding. Accordingly, we think that an analysis by characteristics seen in sub-periods of this long process would help to undertake a proper analysis of the development observed in textual criticism.

2.1. Usuli School of Baghdad and Criteria-Oriented Textual Criticism

Al-Shaykh Al-Mufid (d. 413/1022), Sharīf Murtadhā (d. 436/1044), and Shaykh Tusi (d. 460/1067) lived in Baghdad in the period of Buhayvis, which can be considered as the brightest time of Shiah in terms of both theological and administrative activities. These people are noted for their leadership in the Shiite Muslim community, which they ensured by playing significant roles in the systematization of the Usuli understanding.

According to Stewart, who is a modern researcher, the Shiite legal system adapted/borrowed its building blocks and principles from the Sunni tradition of justice and this process began before *the Major Occultation*. The consistencies between Sunni works of fiqh and the standard order of contents applied in *al-Kafi* by Al-Kulayni, who died in 329/941, is an indicator of this situation.⁹⁹ Watt regards this situation as a significant indicator of Sunni dominance in Islamic thought.¹⁰⁰

We cannot say that this Sunni influence seen in Shiite theological (usul) studies was effective during the early stages of Shiah toward the narratives in their own sources. Accordingly, the approaches of Al-Mufid, Murtadhā, and Shaykh Tusi, which we will analyze in this study, indicate that they preferred certain textual criteria to isnad for decisions regarding the acceptance or rejection of the narratives. This situation is different from the isnad-oriented understanding of the hadiths mostly adopted by Sunni Muslims.

Al-Mufid followed his father to Baghdad at a young age and took lessons from prominent Sunni and Shiite scholars there. Al-Mufid is accepted to be one of the first Shiite scholars who attended regular classes from both Shiite and Sunni teachers. It is also narrated that he took kalam lessons from Mu'tazila's scholars in this period when the Mu'tazila school of Basra had influence in the region.¹⁰¹ As a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence (usul al-fiqh), Al-Mufid holds a significant place in the emergence of the Usuli understanding of the hadiths with the principles he applied in the use of the news (khabar) he received.

In his other works, Al-Mufid mentions the criteria for the acceptance or rejection of content in the narratives. At the end of *al-Tazkirah bi-usul al-fiqh*, he describes two different types of narratives that can be used as hujjat in religious affairs and calls them *the khabar mutawatir* (successive narration) and *the khabar supported by qarinah* (indirect evidence). Mutawatir is a category of narration used for the narratives told by a majority that cannot be accused of telling lies. On the other hand, the narration supported by qarinah refers to *khabar al-wahid*, which is

⁹⁹ Devin J. Stewart, *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to The Sunni Legal System*, (University of Utah Press, 1998), p. 129, 131).

¹⁰⁰ W. Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, (Edingburg, 1973), p. 278).

¹⁰¹ Waheed Akhtar, *Early Shi'ite Imamiyyah Thinkers*, (New Delhi, 1988), p. 79-83. For more information, see: Halil Ibrahim Bulut, *Şia'da Usulîğin Doğusu ve Şeyhî Mufîd*, (Ankara: Araştırma Pub., 2013), p. 55-61, 98-114, 129-165.

defined as the narration that is supported by traditions and ijma. Any khabar which cannot be proved through any evidence mentioned above, cannot be taken as hujjat or reference.¹⁰²

The issues he revealed about a narrative from Al-Shaykh Al-Saduq, which attributes the knowledge of practices committed by all servants of Allah, are significant in terms of constructing an outline of Al-Mufid's understanding of criticism. Al-Mufid criticizes this narrative both in terms of its chain and certain aspects of its text. According to Al-Mufid, the isnad of this hadith is uncertain as it cannot be taken as a reference alone. Moreover, in Arabic, knowing something does not mean creating it. He also clearly states that the narratives about this issue are contrary to the Qur'an.¹⁰³ Accordingly, in his explanation about this issue, he says that the Qur'an is a reference for the hadiths and the narratives and - sahih or saqim - all the narratives should be proved by verses from the Qur'an. It is also observed that Al-Mufid uses the narratives that support the status of the Qur'an as a reference. According to a similar narrative attributed to Imam al-Rida, the imam is asked whether he has the knowledge of the practices undertaken by all servants of Allah, and he responds to this question by stating that this narrative is contrary to the verse saying, "Allah is disassociated from the disbelievers, and [so is] His Messenger".¹⁰⁴ According to this verse, if Allah was the creator of practices, it would not be possible to say that He is disassociated from them.¹⁰⁵

It is also observed that some narratives containing fiqh-related issues cannot avoid criticism by Al-Mufid. In a booklet he wrote for the people in Mosul about the time of fasting during the month of Ramadan, Al-Mufid tries to confute the allegation of those, including Al-Saduq and Al-Kulayni, who state that the time of fasting which is obligatory for Muslims is thirty days every year without any exception and takes certain narratives they mention in their works as references. As for the narratives about this issue, first, he states that these narratives have already been criticized for being *shadh* and having problems in terms of isnad, and then says that they are included in chapters which mostly include the narratives that cannot be taken as references alone. On the other hand, he thinks that these narratives¹⁰⁶ are contrary to the Qur'an, the sunnah, ijma al-ummah, as well as the findings by Muslims and non-Muslims who have performed calculations to identify of the periods of time in which they were written.¹⁰⁷

Al-Mufid's strong reference to the accuracy of chain aside from the text, explicitly indicates a system of isnad used by the Shiite scholars of the time.

¹⁰² Al-Mufid, *et-Tezkira bi-usulil-fikh*, inv. Al-Mahdi, (Najaf, 1993), p. 44-45.

¹⁰³ He does not mention these rejected narratives. Likewise, it is seen that in *Al-I'tiqadat*, Al-Saduq also expresses his opinion about this issue but does not cite the narratives he refers to. *I'tikadât*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁴ At-Tawbah, 9/3.

¹⁰⁵ Al-Mufid, *Tashihu'l-i'tikadât*, inv. Husayn Dargahi (Qom: Mu'temeru'l-a'lemî, 1413), p. 42-45.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Kulayni, *el-Kâfi*, IV, p. 28-29.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Mufid, *Cevâbâtü ehli'l-Musul fi'l-adedi ve'r-ru'yeti* (s.l. el-Mu'temeru'l-a'lemî, 1413), p. 21-22.

Accordingly, the emergence of the works of dignitaries which contain *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl* (discrediting and accrediting) during the fourth/tenth century when some fundamental hadith collections of Shiah, such as Al-Klayni's *al-Kaḥī* were also written, indicates that *isnad* was used as a criterion for the reliability of narratives. For this reason, the fact that theology scholars who lived in the period of foundation attached a central role to text in the examination of narratives cannot be interpreted as an absence of a system of *isnad* within Shiah.

Among the disciples of Al-Mufid, Murtadhā is one of the most outstanding figures due to his attitude toward *khābar al-wahid*. To understand Murtadhā's approach to textual criticism, we should first talk briefly about his understanding of *khābar al-wahid*. Murtadhā explicitly declares that *khābar al-wahid* cannot be considered as *hujjat* in religious affairs. His opinions about this topic can be seen in *Rasā'il*, which is a compilation of responses he has given to the questions addressed to him. Among them, in response to a question asked by the people of Mosul about his opinion on the use of *khābar al-wahid*, which was released by *siqa* narrators, among Shiite scholars as *hujjat* in shariatic issues, he states that reference to these suspicious narratives about issues that are well-known and proved by accurate information is unnecessary. Accordingly, the narratives that are suspicious due to the uncertainty about narrators' honesty cannot be accepted as *hujjat* in issues regarding faith and shariah.¹⁰⁸

According to Murtadhā, who claims the invalidity of practices grounded upon *khābar al-wahid* and mentions the reasons for this invalidity, the most significant reason is that it is impossible to rely on *khābar al-wahid* based on the *isnad*. Accordingly, to be able to claim that practices can be grounded in *khābar al-wahid*, we should first be sure of the fairness of its/their narrator(s). And fairness requires steadfastness (*istiḳāmah*) in faith. However, most of the *fiqh*-related narratives are narrated by *Wakifis*, as well as those known for having ideas of *ghulat* and believing in incarnation, and members and followers of *Khattabiyya* and *Muhammise*. Similarly, most of the population of Qom were supporters of force and similitude. Therefore, there is no narrative that has not been influenced by *Waqifah* or the *ghulat* in terms of text or *isnad*. As the criterion of fairness is not applied to every single narrator in the case of *khābar mutawatir*, narrations by such persons are not seen as a problem. Murtadhā also responds to the question about grounds for abstaining totally from practicing based on *khābar al-wahid* by saying that *khābar mutawatir* is enough to know the necessities regarding the sects (*mazhabs*) followed by the imams. Few of the judgments, on the other hand, are based on the words of the imams which have been accepted without objection.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Murtadhā, *Rasā'il*, (Qom: Daru'l-Kur'ani'l-Kerim, 1405), I, p. 210-211.

¹⁰⁹ Murtadhā, *Rasā'il*, III, p. 309-313. For a detailed explanation about inappropriate nature of *khābar al-wahid* to be a *hujjat* in faith and shariatic issues, see: *ez-Zerā ilā usūli's-ṣerīa* (Qom: Muessesetu'l-Īmam Sādik, 1429), p. 364-386.

Despite his firm opposition to khabar al-wahid, although within a limited framework, Murtadhā provides some explanations in his works about the pathways to follow when reference to khabar al-wahid is necessary. It can be suggested that he, in one sense, identifies a method to determine the conditions under which khabar al-wahid can be taken as a reference for those who, unlike himself, does not discard these narratives completely. What concerns us here is Murtadhā's attitude that gives priority to the text, as exactly seen in this case. We see one of his explanations about this topic in a chapter in *Al-Amali*, where he examines narratives about praise and vilification. In this chapter, Murtadhā discusses the starting point for accepting or rejecting khabar al-wahid. According to Murtadhā, accepting or rejecting khabar al-wahid is only about positive or negative "evidence".¹¹⁰ He suggests that if a narrative does not explicitly contradict with this evidence, the narrative and given evidence can be accommodated. This accommodation is ensured through different methods such as particularization of the general (tahksis al-'amm) or clarification of the ambiguous (bayan al-mujmal) etc. However, as there is also khabar al-wahid that does not give precise information, it is inevitable that one would encounter certain situations where an accommodation between the Qur'an and khabar al-wahid is impossible. Each type of khabar should be subjected to this process and the judgment made through evidence and hujjat should be enforced. If the khabar cannot be accommodated through evidence and cannot be interpreted despite all efforts, there is no need to deal with that specific narrative anymore. The narrative is set aside with all its problems and defects.¹¹¹

In *Al-Amali*, Murtadhā presents fewer narratives than Al-Saduq, Al-Mufid, and Shaykh Tusi, and tries to interpret these narratives directly through the Qur'an and rational evidence, without looking at their isnad. Because of his negative view of the hadith narrators in general, he considers examining and evaluating chains of khabar al-wahid unnecessary and thinks that a narrative should only be accepted after an analysis based on certain textual criteria.¹¹² His method to accept or reject a narrative is built upon the interpretation of its compliance with the fundamentals of the religion, particularly the Qur'an, or rational evidence. A narrative is acceptable as long as it complies with these fundamentals or can be interpreted through them.

¹¹⁰ Although he does not list all of this evidence in the mentioned chapter, there and in other parts of the book he explains that they are the fundamentals of the religion, namely, the Qur'an, the sunnah, ijma and rational evidence: Murtadhā, *Emali*, edited by Muhammed Ebu'l-Fadl Ibrahim (Dārū Ihyāi Kutubī'l-Arabi, 1954), I. p. 318-323; II, p. 340-341.

¹¹¹ Murtadhā, *Emali*, II., p. 350, 396.

¹¹² On the other hand, the weakness of some narratives he mentions in his work as *very weak* is associated with the chain of the given narrative. Therefore, it is seen that Murtadhā takes the weakness of chains into account during the examination of certain narratives individually. However, his use of these somewhat strained interpretations of the narratives which he considers weak indicates that he focuses a majority of his attention on the content of texts in terms of acceptance or rejection.

Any narrative that cannot be interpreted in terms of compliance with the mentioned evidence is considered invalid.¹¹³

Al-Mufid and Murtadhā's attitudes towards textual criticism are closely related to their perspectives on the narratives. They are of the same mind about the fact that khabar al-wahid does not present precise information, and both scholars give priority to textual criteria in the acceptance or rejection of narratives. However, it is clear that Murtadhā has a firmer stance against the use of khabar al-wahid as hujjat compared to Al-Mufid. These attitudes can be seen in the works of each of these scholars. It is seen that, as an Usuli scholar, Al-Mufid, who harshly criticizes khabar al-wahid stating that the narratives that do not comply with the fundamental textual criteria should not be accepted, and khabar al-wahid in general cannot be taken as reference in issues related to faith,¹¹⁴ includes a number of narratives, particularly those about imamate and other related topics, in his works. There are certain cases where Al-Mufid suggests that rational analysis is not possible in some situations and they can only be explained with revelation-based (*sam'i*) evidence (which he believes is supported with indirect evidence). It is observed that he refers to other narratives in such situations. His use of narratives in *Al-Irshad* and *Al-Amali* can be given as an example in this regard. It is clear that he takes care to choose narratives supported with some indirect textual evidence when making references in the aforementioned issues. It is also seen in these examples that he considers certain evidence, such as compliance of content with the Qur'an, to carry a narrative beyond the scope of khabar al-wahid and uphold the given narrative as evidence for faith-related issues.

Unlike Al-Mufid, Murtadhā often abstains from referring to narratives and mentions relatively few narratives in his works, particularly when it comes to faith-related issues. Looking at this approach, it is possible to say that the most fundamental factor in his acceptance or rejection of narratives is textual criticism. It can also be said that one of the most fundamental factors that distinguishes his approach from Al-Mufid's is this aforementioned practice. In terms of the acceptance or rejection of a narrative, Al-Mufid places the emphasis predominantly on the question about whether the text is supported by indirect evidence but does not necessarily ignore the factor of isnad. According to Murtadhā, however, the most fundamental reference to consider in the acceptance or rejection of narratives, or even the determination of the narrators' fairness is the text of the narrative. On the other side, the factor that puts Murtadhā in a more consistent position than Al-Mufid is the way he puts theories in practice, which is more successful than the former. Looking at Al-Mufid's *Al-Irshad* and Murtadhā's *al-Shāfi* to identify the basics of each understanding regarding imamate, it is observed that these

¹¹³ For examples from *Al-Amali*, see: Murtadhā, *Emāli*, II, p. 50-53, 340-341. Murtadhā's criticism against the distortion in the Qur'an as given in *Zahira*, see: Murtadhā, *Zahira*, Beirut: Muessesetu'-Tārīhi'l-Arabi, 2012, p. 361-364.

¹¹⁴ Al-Mufid, *et-Tezkiratu bi-usūli'l-fikh* (Najaf, 1993), p. 44-45.

understandings about imamate differ from each other and Al-Mufid centers his works more upon narratives and even occasionally narrates those attributed to the ghulat.¹¹⁵ In other words, both of these scholars predicate the issue of imamate, which they consider to be fundamental evidence, upon rational evidence, they use this evidence to accept the narratives that corroborate their understanding of imamate, and exhibit fairly different attitudes in terms of including these narratives in their works. Unlike Al-Mufid, Murtadhā generally abstains from using this rational justification (textual criticism for the purpose of acceptance) as an instrument to accept weak narratives or even narratives containing ghuluww.

Compared to Murtadhā, Shaykh Tusi has a more moderate approach in terms of practice based on khabar al-wahid, and argues that khabar al-wahid can be taken as hujjat in shariatic issues. Shaykh Tusi presents wide coverage of the issue of khabar al-wahid in *Uddat al-Usul*, which is one of the first Shiite written works in the field of *usul*, and analyzes this issue under certain titles such as evidence that supports ahad narratives to be considered as hujjat in religious affairs, types of khabar, and the necessary conditions that allow practice based on narratives.¹¹⁶ Moreover, the introduction of *Al-Istibsar*, which is one of his two works considered within the *Four Books*, presents explanatory information about the types of khabar and the criteria that allows practice based on them. According to this, *khabar* can be divided into two categories, namely, mutawatir and non-mutawatir. Khabar mutawatir gives precise information, requires practices to be based on itself, cannot be considered as weak or strong or be preferred to another khabar, and is not in conflict with any other khabar. Khabar non-mutawatir, on the other hand, is composed of two types of khabar, one of which presents precise information. Precise information is given by the khabar, accompanied by indirect evidence. This type of khabar is also considered mutawatir and requires practicing. There is a large range of indirect evidence that corroborates any kind of khabar and all of them are text-oriented. Agreement upon rational evidence and their requirements, and agreement upon the Qur'an, maqtu` sunnah, and the issues on which Muslims and the true sects have consensus are among this evidence. Compliance with at

¹¹⁵ For narratives about the scope of the knowledge the imams had, see: Al-Mufid, *Irşād*, (Beirut: Muessesetu Âli'l-beyt, 1995), I, p. 35; II, p. 225. Al-Mufid claims in the introduction of this book, where he presents information about Ali, that he came into the world in Baitullah and in an unprecedented way, but does not give any other explanation or narrative to clarify how the incident happened. It is understood that in this part he refers to the narratives explaining that Fatimah bint Asad gave birth to her son, Ali ibn Abu Talib, in Kaaba, and some extraordinary events were observed at the same time as this birth (Al-Saduq, *İlelu'ş-şerâi'*, (Beirut: Dâru'l-Murtazâ, 2006), I, p. 137). The narrators mentioned in the chain of this narrative the inclusion of al-Mufaddal ibn Umar and Muhammad ibn Sinan. In addition, a similar narrative is mentioned in *Kitab al-haft*, which is regarded as one of the first written works of the ghulat and attributed to Muhammad ibn Sinan (p. 87-90).

¹¹⁶ Shaykh Tusi, *Uddetu'l-usûl*, inv. Mohammad Reza Al-Ansari, (Qom, 1417), I, p. 63-155. For an article by İbrahim Kutluay about this topic, see: "İmâmiyye Şiası'na Göre Haber-i Vâhidin Hücciyeti Problemi (Şeyh Tûsî Özelinde), *Marife Bilimsel Birikim*, 28/2 (2014): 63-84.

least one piece of this evidence puts any kind of khabar into the category of that which can be the basis for practices.¹¹⁷

Shaykh Tusi mentions these four pieces of evidence in *Uddat uṣūl*. In this work, he initially refers to this evidence within the scope of fabricated news. According to this, contradiction with one of these four pieces of evidence indicates that the given news is not true¹¹⁸. Then, he discusses the same issue within the context of the evidence that proves the reliability of khabar al-wahid. According to Shaykh Tusi, the evidence needed to prove any khabar al-wahid, which does not give precise information, are as follow:

- First of all, the content should comply with rational evidence and its requirements. Accordingly, content of a narrative may include prohibition, allowance or suspension. For instance, in the absence of contrary evidence to a prohibitive narrative, the given prohibition should naturally be practiced. The same requirement applies to the narratives containing allowance and suspension.

- Secondly, the content should comply with injunctions of the Qur'an¹¹⁹ in terms of its specific and general aspects, as well as evidence or meaning. Each of these criteria serves as evidence for the reliability of content.

- The third indirect evidence is compliance of the khabar with the mutawatir sunnah. Compliance of the content of a khabar with the mutawatir sunnah means absolute accuracy and a basis for practice.

- The last of these pieces of evidence is the compliance of the content of khabar with ijma (general consensus) of Shiah (firqa al-muhiqqa).¹²⁰

According to Shaykh Tusi, compliance with the Qur'an means compliance with its zahir, umum, evidence and meaning; while compliance with the sunnah means compliance with sarih issues, evidence, meaning and general aspects. It is important to know the terms used by Shaykh Tusi within the context of compliance with the Qur'an and the sunnah to have a general idea about the scope of these criteria.

It is clear that what is meant by zahir or sarih aspects of the Qur'an and the sunnah is the meaning directly referred to by each word. Shaykh Tusi describes some research in the field of *'umūm al-lafz*. According to him, some scholars argue that a text which allows specification will not reveal its zahir aspects, while others suggest that this kind of text can be evaluated by looking at the general context. Shaykh Tusi declares that he accepts the latter.¹²¹ *Fahw al-khitab* refers to the validity of a single jurisprudence for similar issues based on its acceptance by consensus,

¹¹⁷ Shaykh Tusi, *Istibsār*, (Najaf, 1375), p. 3-5.

¹¹⁸ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, I, p. 92.

¹¹⁹ The author states that the term "nass", in this regard, refers to mutawatir recitation (qira'at). From this point of view, nass, zahir, and sarih have the same meaning.

¹²⁰ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, I, p. 143-145.

¹²¹ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, II, p. 425-426.

although not directly expressed in wording. Shaykh Tusi presents the verse from the Qur'an which prohibits saying so much as "uff" to parents, and says that the word "uff" herein includes prohibition of all offensive behavior, such as beating and insulting, as the textual indications.¹²²

He discusses the issue of *dalil al-khitab* in detail in his *Uddat* and states that this topic is controversial among Usulis. According to the first group led by Al-Shafi'i, any judgment based on words told within the context of a single event applies to other events regarded in the same category based on their effective causes. Besides this, the opposite of any judgment also applies to the opposite situations (*mafhum al-mukhalafah*). The connotative meaning of *mafhum al-mukhalafah* is, "the word's reference to invalidity of the pronounced meaning as it does not meet one of the criteria required by judgment about the silent meaning".¹²³ In Islamic jurisprudence, this phenomenon is called *mafhum al-mukhalafah*, and it has been adopted as a method for judgment by most of the Sunni Usulis.¹²⁴ Shaykh Tusi states that the second group of scholars, including Murtadhā, does not consider *mafhum al-mukhalafah* within the scope of *dalil al-khitab* and he also adopts the second approach.¹²⁵ In other words, according to Shaykh Tusi, *dalil al-khitab* is valid for the situations within the scope of *mafhum al-mukhalafah* and in this case, bears a similar meaning to *fahw al-khitab*.

After listing the evidence (*qarinah*), Shaykh Tusi adds the following significant words: This evidence does not only apply to the *khobar* itself but also to its content. Even when the content of the *khobar* complies with this evidence, there is still a possibility that it may have been fabricated. If a narrative does not have at least one piece of this evidence, it is literally a *khobar al-wahid*. This kind of *khobar* is abandoned if it contradicts with the Qur'an, the *sunnah*, or *ijma*. In case it does not contradict with at least one of them, another *khobar* is sought to find out opposite narratives. If there are any, then reasons for preference are taken into consideration.¹²⁶

According to Shaykh Tusi, who mentions the evidence regarding the text, in case of a contradiction among narratives, one of two contradicting narratives is preferred based on the following criteria: (1) If one of the two narratives complies and the other contradicts the Qur'an or *maqtu` sunnah*, the former is preferred as a basis for practice and the latter is abandoned. (2) If at least one of the narratives

¹²² Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, II, p. 437.

¹²³ Zaki al-Din Shaban, *Islām Hukuk İlminin Esasları*, translated by İbrahim Kâfi Dönmez (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Pub., 1996), p. 31.

¹²⁴ Mustafa Çil, "Hanefi Usulünde Fâsid Sayılan İstidlallerden İstifade İmkanı", *Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 2 (2014): 67.

¹²⁵ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, II, p. 467-470. However, as an Akhbari scholar who lived in the Mutaahhirun period, Al-Majlisi considers *mafhum al-mukhalafah* within the context of *dalil al-khitab*: *Melâzu'l-ahyâr*, (Qom: Mektebetu Ayetullah el-Mer'eşî, 1406), I, p. 20.

¹²⁶ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, I, p. 145.

complies with the *ijma* of the *firqa al-muhiqqa*, this consistent narrative is preferred. (3) If both situations are not applicable as reasons for preference, then the narrators are taken into account. A narrator who is known to be fair is preferred, while one noted for being unfair is rejected. If both narrators are known to be fair, the *khobar* narrated by more narrators is preferred to the other. (4) If there is no difference between narrators in terms of fairness and number, the contrary one to the words of *Al-'Ammah* is accepted, while the consistent one is abandoned.¹²⁷ Most of the other conditions mentioned by Shaykh Tusi are about chains and characteristics of narrators.¹²⁸

Shaykh Tusi's emphasis on the possibility that a narrative may be fabricated even when supported with indirect evidence is noteworthy. In our opinion, his consideration that puts the narratives supported by the aforementioned textual evidence into the second after *mutawatir* narratives in terms of reliability and practicability while mentioning the issues related to chains only as a criterion to apply when one of two opponent narratives should be preferred, allows us to make significant inferences about Shaykh Tusi's approach toward different narratives. First of all, these findings show that Shaykh Tusi is hesitant to attribute the narratives given in the available sources directly to the Prophet or one of the imams without any doubt. In other words, he abstains from regarding a narrative as accurate based on its *isnad*. In our opinion, the most fundamental reason for this attitude is Shaykh Tusi's distrust in terms of the number of narrations. This is also indicated by his reliance on the evidence of a narrative but not the narrative itself when it is supported with indirect evidence, and this approach helps him meet *Al-Mufid* and *Murtadhā* on common ground. The point that differentiates him, particularly from *Murtadhā's* approach toward narratives, is that he considers *khobar al-wahid* as evidence for shariatic issues despite his distrust. Regardless of what motives encouraged Shaykh Tusi to accept *khobar al-wahid* as evidence in shariatic issues, it is obvious that as an influential scholar of his time, he did not remain indifferent to the narratives, which served as a significant instrument for researchers. Also, it is seen that his distrust for the quantity of narratives led him to prioritize the textual evidence against those regarding the narrators and the chains.

Interpretation is a significant practice that cannot be ignored in discussions about the criteria in textual criticism of Shiah. By nature, interpretation is a subjective practice. Inevitably, the interpretation of a narrative is shaped by the knowledge, consciousness, and personal characteristics of the interpreter. In this respect, a narrative which is rejected by someone based on rational evidence can be accepted by another through interpretation. This also applies to the other evidence.

¹²⁷ According to Shiah, a stalemate situation in terms of the resolution for a conflict between two narratives leaves open the possibility that one of these narratives is emanated in accordance with the sect of *Al-'Ammah*. *Al-'Ammah* is a term used by Shiah before *Ahl As-Sunnah* as a conceptualized term. Later on, it began to be used as a comprehensive term which covers all accepted groups within its scope.

¹²⁸ Shaykh Tusi, *Udde*, I, p. 145-148.

Therefore, the subjective nature of interpretation influences the criteria used in textual criticism by narrowing their scope of implementation. It seems like this nature of interpretation allowed Shaykh Tusi, who, as an Usuli scholar, accepts the idea that khabar al-wahid cannot form evidence in faith-related issues in theory, to stretch this principle in practice. Attribution of the fiqh-related narratives in *Al-Istibsar*, which contradict with the criteria for textual criticism, to interpretation and recommendation can be considered as an indicator of this attitude.¹²⁹

2.2. The Usuli School of Hillah and Declining Impact of Textual Criticism

Al-'Allama al-Hilli (d. 726/1325), or indeed, his teacher Ahmad b. Tawus (d. 673/1275) before him, lived in a period when isnad was accepted as a primary criterion for practices grounded in khabar al-wahid. It is well-known that the Sunni influence on theological studies increased in this transition period. In this regard, it is seen that especially the late period Akhbaris strongly criticized the scholars of theology, who follow the way of Al-'Allama al-Hilli, and accuse them of adapting the Sunni understanding of theology to Shiah.¹³⁰

We are of the opinion that a study with a historical perspective about the period between Shaykh Tusi and Ibn Tawus could assist with clarification of this issue. In this regard, it is inevitable that the changing balance of power in the given period did not influence the mazhabs in different aspects. It is observed that the fall of the Twelver Buheyvi hegemony in Shaykh Tusi's period, and the new rule under Sunni Abbasids, who regained power in the region with the support of the Seljuks, resulted in the suspension of theological studies conducted by Shiite scholars until the emergence of Ibn al-Tawus. The intellectual studies and ideas of this period could not go beyond regeneration of those produced by the Usuli School of Baghdad.

The more suppressive attitude of Sunni Abbasids against Shiah, which was just relieved from the threat of Shiite Buheyvi rule, is a predictable situation. Therefore, it is highly possible that the Shiite scholars of the time (447/1055-654/1256), who lived in the areas ruled by Abbasids and the Seljuks and thus could not further their scientific and administrative activities, were under the influence of

¹²⁹ As it is seen in *Al-Istibsar*, Shaykh Tusi does not abandon the *shadh* narratives that do not meet the criteria of textual criticism, instead, he interprets or recommends them in accordance with the Shiite understanding. On the other hand, he states that the recommended narratives cannot be considered in the scope of *fard* and *wajib*. Shaykh Tusi suggests that some narratives which cannot be accepted according to the rational evidence, can be used for practices through interpretation. Accordingly, he states that the same situation is also seen in a lot of verses in the Qur'an, which are seemingly contradictory to rational proof: Shaykh Tusi, *er-Rasâilü'l-aşr*, (Qom: Muessesetu'n-neşri'l-İslâmî, 1414), I, p. 325.

¹³⁰ Amin al-Astarabadi, *Fevâidu'l-Medeniyye*, (Qom: Muessesetu'n-Neşri'l-İslâmî, 1424), p. 123-124, 128; Hurr al-Amili, *Vesâilü's-Şia*, (Qom: Muessesetu Âl-i Beyt, 1409), v. 30, 259; Kashani, *al-Vâfi*, (Isfahan: Menşûrâtu mektebeti'l-imâm, 1406), p. 14-15..

theological studies conducted by the Sunni scholars. This influence may also have played a significant role in the change made in the Shiite understanding of hadith studies, considering that the scholars could only be free in terms of intellectual activities under the Ilkhanate rule, which began about two centuries later. In other words, within the period of Usuli understanding, which was systematized by Al-Mufid, the intellectual activities were mainly about fiqh and therefore, no independent work of hadith studies was authored until the tenth/sixteenth century. The Shiite understanding of theology stayed under the rule of Sunni administrations for about two centuries following the rise of the Usuli School in the period of the Buheyvi rule (334/945-447/1055) and encountered a period of stagnation. The power struggle of the Seljuks against the Shiite Buheyvi and Fatimid rules led them to support the Sunni understanding against Shiah. The Nizamiyyah was founded for this purpose and contributed to the power of the Sunni understanding with the scholars educated by them.¹³¹ In our opinion, the Shiite scholars had a chance to observe the ruling Sunni understanding within this period and used this observation in the Shiite understanding when they regained an environment of freedom for scientific studies under the Ilkhanate rule.¹³² The isnad-oriented hadith understanding of Shiah can also be mentioned as a result of this period. At this point, a question can be asked about the reason for why the Sunni influence on the Shiites was seen in later periods despite the fact that the Shiite-Sunni interaction had already begun in Baghdad under the rule of the Buheyvis. In our opinion, the reason can be sought in the fact that Shiah was supported by the ruling administration to conduct scientific studies freely, and furthered these studies with the confidence arising from this environment of freedom. Therefore, it is acceptable that Shiah witnessed its highest level of productivity within this period and produced the scientific works using its internal dynamics, and without being influenced by external powers.

Textual Criticism by Ibn Tawus (d. 673/1275) and Al-'Allama al-Hilli (d. 726/1325) as Representatives of the Attribution-Oriented Approach

The classification that divides khabar al-wahid into four different types is known to have been suggested for the first time by Ibn Tawus.¹³³ However, some scholars argue that it was put forward by one of his disciples, namely, Al-'Allama al-Hilli.¹³⁴ According to this classification, khabar al-wahid can be sahih, hasan, muwassaq, and da'if (weak). One of the most significant examples of the isnad-oriented works in the field of rijal by Ibn Tawus is *'Hall al-Ishkāl fi Ma'rifat al-Rijāl'*.

¹³¹ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, *Selçukluların Dini Siyaseti*, (Istanbul: Tarih ve Tabiat Vakfı, 2002), p. 232-234.

¹³² For more information about the Mongol-Shiah relations in the period of the Ilkhanate rule, see: Andrew Newman, *Twelve Shiism—Unity and Diversity in the Life of Islam*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 122 et al.

¹³³ Muhsin al-Amin, *A'yānu's-Şīa*, inv. Hassan al-Amin (Beirut: Dāru't-ta'aruf li'l-matbū'ât, 1983), p. 190.

¹³⁴ Muhammad Amin al-Astarabadi, *Fevâidu'l-Medeniyye*, p. 109.

With this work, Ibn Tawus became the first author who collated the five major sources of rijal in one book.¹³⁵

As an indicator of the transition to an isnad-oriented approach in hadith studies, together with Ibn Tawus, the textual criteria used in the criticism of narratives was replaced by criteria about attributions. Looking at studies by Al-'Allama al-Hilli in this regard, it is observed that he no longer considers the criteria about content as a reliable reference for practices based on khabar al-wahid. Al-'Allama gives priority to conditions about narrators, instead of the criteria about content.

In *Mabadi 'al-wusul*, Al-'Allama al-Hilli gives some explanations about the acceptance of khabar al-wahid as hujjat among the ummah at the beginning of the relevant chapter. He then lists the acceptance criteria for khabar al-wahid. According to him, a narrator should be intelligent, baligh (reaching puberty), fair, and have the ability to protect the narratives.¹³⁶ The author provides a different classification for khabar al-wahid under the title, *mardud* (rejected) narratives. The first category is composed of only informative khabar al-wahid. In case no decisive evidence is found to support the content of a narrative within this scope, it is rejected. The second category consists of khabar al-wahid that contains information required to be practiced. If these narratives are about the issues of *umum al-balwa*¹³⁷, they need to be accepted. It would not be incorrect to suggest that in this classification by Al-'Allama, the condition that requires decisive evidence for the narratives in the first category, which seems to cover both faith-related narratives and kalam issues, can be interpreted as a requirement regarding the content to comply with the Qur'an, the sunnah, and ijma. Therefore, it can be said that he furthers the tradition of other Usuli scholars who do not use khabar al-wahid as evidence in faith-related issues unless it is corroborated with indirect evidence, and also takes the textual criteria as reference for textual criticism on narratives.¹³⁸ However, when it comes to fiqh-related narratives, he prefers khabar al-wahid to *umum al-balwa* and clearly shows the importance he attaches to isnad in the acceptance and rejection of narratives.

In the following chapters of his book, Al-'Allama mentions the determinants of preferences in cases of a conflict between narratives. According to this, the narratives which are narrated by a higher numbers of narrators, have reliable isnad,

¹³⁵ These five books are Necîşî's Ricâl, Mainrifê'si of Keşşî, the Ricâl and Fihrist of Tûsî, and Ibn al-Gadârî's Ricâl also known as the Duafâ. Hallu'l-işkâl has not reached us as a whole. Sheikh Hasan, the son of eş-Şehîdu's-Sânî, removed some parts of the work that had reached him and added some new chapters to it and named the book Tahrîru't-Tâvûsî: (Beirut: Muessesetu'l-alemî li'l-matbûât, 1988).

¹³⁶ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Mebâdiu'l-vusûl*, (Tehran: Mektebu'l-i'lâmi'l-İslâmî, 1404), p. 206.

¹³⁷ It is a fiqh term that refers to incidents that are hard to get rid of or not possible to be unknown due to prevalence: Mustafa Baktır, "Umûmü'l-Belvâ", *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 2012), 42: 155.

¹³⁸ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Mebâdiu'l-vusûl*, p. 209-210.

well-known narrators, and superiority in terms of religious affairs should be given priority. Then, he discusses some other issues regarding narrators. According to this, the narratives of canonist narrators, those narrated by people who have better knowledge of Arabic, witnessed the narrated event, have demonstrated significant attendance at gatherings of scholars, and who are stronger in terms of protectiveness are preferred. In addition to these, Al-'Allama suggests some textual criteria and says that narratives should be narrated in wording, rather than meaning, be Makki, not Madani,¹³⁹ the wording should be clear (fasih, without any defect) etc. Another preference based on textual characteristics is what he mentions as the issue of practicing based on narratives, which concerns us more than others. According to this, narratives that are practiced by some scholars are preferred to those never practiced.¹⁴⁰

In *Mukhtalaf al-Shi'a*¹⁴¹, Al-'Allama uses the criticism of isnad as the fundamental method for the examination of narratives. There are lots of narratives rejected by him based on his criticism of isnad. Among these include those he rejected due to inaccuracy of the relation with chains and the imams they are attributed to,¹⁴² as well as those he found to be unreliable due to the ghali narrators mentioned in chains.¹⁴³ However, we cannot say that he completely discards the practices of textual criteria in his approach. On the contrary, it is observed in some parts of *Mukhtalaf* that he does not rely on some narratives that he regards as sahih, even after an analysis of isnad based on the criteria of textual criticism.¹⁴⁴ The way he mentions narrators about ablution of the whole body reveals his opinion about acceptance or rejection of narratives based on the criteria of textual criticism. Accordingly, the author states that opposing narrators are mentioned in cases where ablution of the body is necessary according to the Qur'an and ijma, and narratives that contradict with the Qur'an and ijma cannot be credited.¹⁴⁵ In this book, although limited in number, we can find practices of textual criticism and the criteria regarding ijma, usul al-mazhab, and dissent from the other narratives etc.¹⁴⁶ Al-'Allama occasionally refers to rational evidence, one of which is *bara'ah az-zimmah*. He suggests that washing ihram is not wajib, but mustahab and *bara'ah az-*

¹³⁹ The reason for this is explained by the scarcity of Makki narratives.

¹⁴⁰ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Mebadi'u'l-vusul*, p. 234-238.

¹⁴¹ In this part, Al-'Allama discusses conflicts observed in fiqh-related opinions of Shiite scholars together with the evidence these opinions are based upon and then expresses his preferences in this regard.

¹⁴² Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelefu's-Si'a*, (Qom: Muessesetu'n-neşri'l-İslâmî, 1413), I, p. 228.

¹⁴³ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 238, 249, 257, 260, 280; VII, p. 6, 8 (As it mentions Muhammad ibn-Sinan in its chain). For other narratives he rejected because of certain problems in the chains, see: p. 227, 271, 316, 413, 429, 440, 460, 479

¹⁴⁴ For a case where he does not take a lot of narratives as references in judgment, although he regards them as sahih based on *Bara'ah az-zimmah*, but instead refers to recommendations, see: Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 349.

¹⁴⁵ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 328-329.

¹⁴⁶ For examples, see: Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 212, 230, 351. Opposition to Ijma (consensus): I, p. 297; Dissent from other narratives: VII, s. 356; Opposition to usul al-mazhab: VII, s. 367;

zimmah should be taken as references in this case (as there is no clear judgment about it). For this reason, he does not accept the narrative which claims that washing ihram is wajib, but refers to a recommendation.¹⁴⁷ It is also seen that Al-'Allama frequently mentions the concept of *mashhur* (famous) in *Mukhtalaf al-Shi'a*. He mentions a *mashhur* judgment (fatwa) in every studied case, and then presents the opinions of some Shiite scholars which are contrary to the *mashhur*. Lastly, Al-'Allama reveals his opinion in this regard and refers to recommendations in terms of the narratives which are contradictory to his ideas on certain issues and the fatwas on which the narratives are based.¹⁴⁸ It is also observed that Al-'Allama applies the interpretation of narratives that contradict the *mashhur* opinion as a practice of his within the scope of the famous fatwa¹⁴⁹. In another case where he expresses his attitude regarding the concept of *mashhur*, Al-'Allama states that he is in favor of considering a narrative *mashhur* only because of its content without discussing its isnad (famous/common practice) against another one he regards as *mursal*.¹⁵⁰

The essential point that makes Al-'Allama different from Shaykh Tusi is that he tends to take isnad as a reference in the acceptance or rejection of fiqh-related issues. The most fundamental criterion considered by Shaykh Tusi in the acceptance or rejection of fiqh-related narratives is the compliance with the criteria regarding the content. Accordingly, he suggests that attribution should be considered only when textual criticism does not reach a resolution in cases where narratives contradict each other. Unlike Shaykh Tusi, it is clear that Al-'Allama gives priority to the narrator and the chain in such cases. However, in his practices Al-'Allama does not necessarily discard the criteria for textual criticism, particularly the concept of *mashhur*.

2.3. The School of Jabal 'Āmil and Discrediting Textual Criticism

Jabal 'Āmil is a significant center of science, which is located in today's Lebanon. The center is one of the most important institutions after the school of Hillah, which reinvigorated the Usuli understanding under the Ilkhanate rule following a period of stagnation after the term of the founder, Usulis (413/1022-460/1067). It is thanks to Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Makki al-Shahid al-Awwal (d. 786/1384)¹⁵¹ that Jabal 'Āmil could rise as a center of science for Shiah. The

¹⁴⁷ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 315-316. For an example about discretionary status of having bath on Fridays, see: I, p. 318.

¹⁴⁸ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 263, 272, 290, 318.

¹⁴⁹ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, I, p. 297.

¹⁵⁰ Al-'Allama al-Hilli, *Muhtelef*, II, p. 38-39.

¹⁵¹ Al-Shahid al-Awwal stayed for about five years in the city of Hillah and became certified by distinguished scholars of the time, including Ibn Al-'Allama al-Hilli. He traveled to famous Sunni centers of sciences, such as those in Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo, and took lessons from about forty different Sunni scholars.

waning influence of the school of Hillah is also another factor that accelerated the rise of Jabal 'Āmil within this period.¹⁵²

Shahid al-Awwal suggests that khabar al-wahid can be accepted if it meets the criteria about content aside from those regarding the chains. In terms of content analysis, he mentions the same conditions offered by Shaykh Tusi.¹⁵³ It is noteworthy in terms of his approach toward khabar al-wahid that he puts sufficient emphasis on textual conditions as the criteria for the acceptance or rejection of narratives, despite being trained at the school of Hillah which is isnad-oriented. He especially highlights reputation as a criterion for textual criticism. In this respect, in a lot of cases he considers famous practices or practices of the companions of the imams as a criterion for the acceptance or rejection of khabar al-wahid.¹⁵⁴

Al-Shahid al-Thani is the most influential representative of the School of Jabal 'Āmil during the following periods. He is known as the first scholar of Shiah who interprets narratives within the scope of *dirayat al-hadith* (comprehension of hadith). The fact that he adapted the terminology used in his relevant works from Sunni studies is known and stated by a number of Shiite scholars, including his son.¹⁵⁵

It is understood that Zayn al-Dīn ibn 'Alī, who is a scholar of the school of Jabal 'Āmil, adopts a different approach to the founder of his school, Shahid al-Awwal, in narrative criticism. Compared to Shahid al-Awwal, who places sufficient emphasis on the practices of the companions as well as reputation in the acceptance or rejection of narratives, Al-Shahid al-Thani thinks that text does not play any role when regarding a narrative as reliable. According to this opinion, the text should only be considered in rare cases. And these rare cases are *maqlub*, *musahhaf*, *muztarib*, and *mazid* narratives. Strength or weakness of a narrative depends on certain characteristics of its narrator, such as fairness, protectiveness, and faith, or the presence of a situation that damages contemporaneousness of its isnad.¹⁵⁶ Here, as also argued by Shahid al-Awwal (in his classification), he does not mention the concept of reputation that could deem weak hadiths to be acceptable. Accordingly,

¹⁵² Öljeitü, the emperor of Ilkhanate, adopted Shiah as his denomination, but the last two succeeding emperors of the state, namely, Amir Chupan and Abu Sa'id, pursued a rigid policy against Shiah following his death. (Jafar al-Muhajir, *el-Hicrâtu'l-Āmiliyyetu ila Iran fi'l-asri's-Safevî*, (Beirut: Daru'r-ravza, 1989), p. 108.)

¹⁵³ Shahid al-Awwal, *Zikra's-Şia fi ahkâmi's-şer'ia*, (Qom: Muessesetu Āl-i beyt li-ihyâi't-turâs, 1419), I, p. 48-49.

¹⁵⁴ For Shahid al-Awwal's opinions on the concept of *mashur*, see: *Zikra*, I, p. 51-52. See also: *Zikra*, p. 419-420, 444.

¹⁵⁵ Al-Hurr al-Amili, *Emelu'l-âmil fi ulenâi Cebeli Āmil*, (Qom: Dâru'l-kitâbi'l-İslamî, 1362), I, p. 86, 88-91; Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, (London, 1985), p. 320.

¹⁵⁶ Al-Shahid al-Thani, *el-Bidâye fi ilmi'd-dirâye*, inv. Muhammad Reza al-Husayni al-Jalali (Qom, 1421), p. 22; *er-Riâye fi ilmi'd-dirâye*, inv. Abd al-Husayn Muhammad 'Ali Baqqal (Qom: Mektebetu A'yetullah el-Mer'asî, 1433), p. 74.

narratives should be from the period before Shaykh Tusi so as to be considered in terms of reputation. According to Al-Shahid al-Thani, practices based on textual properties of narratives that are weak in terms of isnad were first seen in Tusi's period and then many other fiqh scholars followed his way without feeling any need to research these narratives. In other words, those coming after Shaykh and his followers thought that their reliance on the content of weak narratives (khabar) resulted from the most well-known practice of the time.¹⁵⁷

Al-Shahid al-Thani expresses his negative attitude toward the concept of the reputation that has emerged, together with Shaykh Tusi. Accordingly, his comment in *Istiqsa'* about forgetting to recite Surah Al-Fatihah during a prayer can be given as an explicit example of this approach. According to the narrative he discusses, if someone forgets to recite Surah Al-Fatihah at the qiyam (standing phase), then he should recite the Surah before ruku' (bowing) with isti'adha (asking refuge with Allah from the accursed devil). However, Al-Shahid states that reciting Al-Fatihah with isti'adha, as mentioned in the narrative, contradicts the mashhur practice. He then adds that being sahih in terms of its chain is a more valid reason for the acceptance of a narrative compared to its reputation.¹⁵⁸

Zayn al-Din ibn 'Ali has quite a firm attitude toward the narratives of fiqh-related issues. He emphasizes that any fatwa based on the content of a narrative would be untrue. However, it is seen that he does not apply the same meticulous care for narratives about virtues of practices, and he argues that the general opinion is in favor of accepting these narratives. Additionally, in his opinion, these narrative do not serve any purpose but pure benevolence. He also points to the narratives which are narrated in both Shiite and Sunni sources and collated under the title, "man balagha", and "al-tasamuh bi adillat al-sunan" (the principle of charity) upon which these narratives are based.¹⁵⁹ One of the narratives transmitted by the author is as follows: "Whoever receives information about merits of practices from a (supposedly) divine source and undertakes this practice only for this promised merit, he/she will be given that even when it is not the case".¹⁶⁰ According to the principle of tasamuh, weak narratives can be accepted as the basis of practices based on their chains.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ However, these words should not be interpreted to be to mean that Al-Shahid al-Thani accepted a reputation that emerged before Shaykh Tusi and adopted this practice as a basis in his approach to narratives. Accordingly, Al-Shahid al-Thani highlights that the understanding of Murtadhā, who does not accept khabar al-wahit as hujjat, was the prevailing opinion of the previous period. In this respect, it would not be wrong to say that Zayn al-Din ibn 'Ali was of the opinion that the reputation of narratives could not have emerged in a period before Shaykh Tusi.

¹⁵⁸ Al-Shahid al-Thani, *Istiqsa'*, (Qom: Muessesetu Āl-i beyt, 1419), VI, p. 42-43.

¹⁵⁹ Al-Shahid al-Thani, *Riāye*, p. 92-94; *Şerhu'l-bidāye fi ilmi'd-dirāye*, Qom, 2011, 29-30.

¹⁶⁰ Al-Kulayni, *Kāfi*, I, p. 87. See also: Meclisi, *Bihār*, II, p. 256.

¹⁶¹ For more information about the criteria of "et-Tesāhul(tesāmuh) bi-edilleti'l-sunen", see: Ali Akbar Qelantari, "Tesāmuh Der Edille-yi Sunen", *Pejûheş-e Ulûm-i İslâmî* 17 (2010).

In his *Istiqsa'*, which was written as an annotation to Shaykh Tusi's *Al-Istibsar*, Al-Shahid al-Thani discusses the types of khabar mentioned by Tusi in the introduction of his work. As mentioned before, Shaykh Tusi divides khabar into two fundamental categories, namely, mutawatir and non-mutawatir. Moreover, non-mutawatir khabar can be analyzed in two categories. These are the khabar supported with indirect evidence (qarinah) and the khabar which is not reinforced with any indirect evidence. Al-Shahid al-Thani examines the evidence suggested by Shaykh Tusi, namely, compliance with the Qur'an, the decisive sunnah, and ijma, under independent titles. One of the most significant issues emphasized regarding these criteria is the uncertainty he sees in these principles. According to Al-Shahid al-Thani, the meaning of compliance with rational evidence is not clear. Rational evidence consists of two types. The first is the rational evidence that does not follow any other injunction. *Al-baraah al-asliyyah* is one of the first examples he gives in this regard. The second is the rational evidence which is associated with another injunction. For instance, an order for a practice also refers to the banishment of its opposite. Similar problems are also seen in the principle of compliance with the Qur'an. One of these problems is that the evidence of the Qur'an¹⁶² is based on speculative rulings and, according to Al-Shahid al-Thani, the same applies to the decisive sunnah.¹⁶³

According to a significant allegation about Al-Shahid al-Thani and scholars of Jabal 'Amil who adopted his opinions after him¹⁶⁴, these scholars formed the basis for the Systematic Akhbarism, which would emerge a while later than them, by emphasizing the use of khabar al-wahid in fiqh which is against the prevalence of jurisprudence.¹⁶⁵ In this regard, Al-Shahid al-Thani took a step that weakened the school of Usulis against the rising Akhbari understanding by predicating the decreasing practical functionality of textual criticism, which gained an established place in the Shiite tradition of usul in the fourth Hijri century, on a theoretical basis. In our opinion, this allowed narratives containing ghuluww narratives to regain an important place in the Shiite understanding. In this regard, there is a significant function in textual criticism in Shiah, which has been practiced in contexts of different criteria since the first century, which differs from the textual criticism implemented by Ahl As-Sunnah. In the tradition of Ahl As-Sunnah, textual criticism was first implemented in an effective manner in regulatory works where fabricated narratives mentioned in the originals are identified. In Shiah, on the

¹⁶² He examines the evidence of the Qur'an in four categories: zahir, umum, fahwa, and dalil al-khitab. The categories he mentions for the decisive sunnah are sarih, evidence, umum, and fahwa.

¹⁶³ Al-Shahid al-Thani, *Istiksâ'*, I, p. 13-18, 29.

¹⁶⁴ As a disciple and a friend of Al-Shahid al-Thani, Husayn ibn Abd al-Samad al-Amili (d. 984/1576), and as a follower of his father, Ibn Al-Shahid al-Thani (d. 1011/1602) can be mentioned in this regard.

¹⁶⁵ For opposing opinions of Modarressi and Stewart in this regard, see: Modarressi, *An Introduction to Shi'a Law: A Bibliographic Study*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1984), 52-53; Devin Stewart, "The Genesis Of The Akhbârî Revival", *Safavid Iran and Her Neighbors*, ed. Michel Mazzaoui (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2003), p. 172-173.

other hand, similar sources that bring fabricated hadiths together were authored thirty years ago.¹⁶⁶ Herein, we try to highlight that the Usuli scholars who accepted that there are fabricated narratives in the works of the authors of the Four Books (*al-Kutub al-Arba'ah*), Al-Kulayni and Saduq, have used the principles of textual criticism as a safety net, especially against the fabricated narratives of the ghular under the impact created by the absence of a compilation that brings all fabricated narratives together. In addition, it can be said that the waning impact of textual criticism after Al-Shahid al-Thani resulted in the use of narratives containing ghuluww mentioned in fundamental sources such as *al-Kafi*, without any filtration of content.

The period of Systematic Akhbarism, which rallied after the School of Jabal 'Āmil, corresponds to a process of about two centuries in which most of the principles regarding both textual criticism and chains were put aside, and the narratives transmitted by the Four Books were regarded as indisputable sources of information. Therefore, it is clearly seen that we cannot mention any considerable activity of textual criticism in this period. However, it is seen that the ghali ideas, which had not completely disappeared, and the narratives forming a basis for them, revived as a result of the discrediting seen in all the criteria about criticism regarding texts and chains, and some of the scholars who lived in the period of Systematic Akhbarism could not remain unconcerned about this situation and did not completely abstain from using textual criticism with narratives.¹⁶⁷

Conclusion

The findings we obtained throughout this research indicate that Imami Shiah/Twelvers used the criteria of textual criticism for the acceptance or rejection of narratives within the historical period we discussed, except for some short-term interruptions. However, the criteria used by these scholars vary from period to period.

The rising reaction among Shiah against the early period ghulat brought about more careful examination of their narratives infiltrated into the *originals* and a significant quantity of these narratives were eliminated during the compilation process of comprehensive hadith collections. This situation indicates the existence of textual criticism within the given period. However, it is observed that this criticism targeted the most marginal narratives that contain ghuluww, ghali ideas that were presented again after a process of moderation, and most of the narratives containing tafwidz, which had been considered within the scope of ghuluww by

¹⁶⁶ For more information, see: Peyman Ünügür, "Şi'i Âlim Hâşim Ma'rûf el-Hasenî'nin Uydurma Hadis Tespitinde Metin Tenkidi Kullanımı", *A.Ü.İ.F. Dergisi*, 58/2 (2018): 89-120.

¹⁶⁷ Determining the dimensions of this situation requires another independent study. For an example in this regard, see: Al-Hurr al-Amili, *el-İsnâşeriyye fî'r-reddi ala's-sufiyye* (Qom: Dâru'l-Kutubi'l-İlmiyye, 1400), p. 124-125, 138-142.

early period Shiite scholars, were left out. Marginal narratives of entities such as the Mughiriyyah and the Khattabiyyah, which are considered more extremist compared to the mufawwidah in this regard, could not even find a place in *al-Basa'ir*, while the narratives attributed to the mufawwidah were able to survive until Al-Saduq despite the decline in quantity.

Three different approaches are seen in the practices of textual criticism conducted roughly between the fifth/eleventh and the eleventh/sixteenth centuries. The first of these approaches is the one adopted by the founders of the Usuli understanding, such as Al-Mufid, Murtadhā, and Shaykh Tusi. In this approach, textual properties come to the forefront as determinants in the examination, and acceptance or rejection of narratives. The keyword used by the Usuli scholars in this regard is *qarinah*. According to this understanding, *khavar al-wahid* is considered reliable only when it meets at least one or more criteria about compliance with the Qur'an, the sunnah, rational evidence, *ijma*, and famous/common practices. Though only in theory, it is revealed that the narratives that contradict the aforementioned criteria would be rejected. On the other hand, we cannot say that the role of chains was completely put aside by the founders of the Usuli understanding. It is observed that the scholars, particularly Shaykh Tusi, referred to *isnad* (the chain of transmitters) when they needed to choose one of two conflicting narratives. In our opinion, the most significant reason for the prioritization of textual characteristics against chains in the examination of narratives within this period is that the phenomenon of *ghuluww* had spread considerably among the narratives transmitted by Shiite sources, and Usuli scholars, who were aware of this situation, had serious concerns about *isnad* of narratives.

The emphasis on *isnad*, which increased after the school of Hillah rallied within the seventh/thirteenth century, decreased the importance of textual criteria in the examination of *khavar al-wahid*. In our opinion, the most significant determinant of the increase in the emphasis put on *isnad* is that the Shiah have lived under Sunni powers since the dissolution of Buheyvi rule, which corresponds to the second half of the fifth/eleventh century. As a result, Shiah went through a period of stagnation in scientific activities and was indispensably influenced by the Sunni understanding, which was highly productive within the same period and field. Together with the Ilkhanate rule, Shiite scholars regained their autonomy in this regard but their works, especially those in *usul* of the hadiths, were seen to have been considerably influenced by the Sunni understanding. Therefore, the emphasis put on *isnad* as a reference by the school of Hillah can be explained with the *isnad*-oriented Sunni *usul* of the hadiths, which had produced competent works in this field unlike Shiah, which was influenced by the former.

Together with Al-Shahid al-Thani, a scholar of the school of Jabal 'Amil, which was influenced by the *isnad*-oriented Usulism of the school of Hillah, studies were carried to a new level where the role of texts in the examination, acceptance or rejection of narratives was almost completely put aside. In this regard, it is

observed that the scholars of the school of Hillah, which was based on a isnad-oriented system, continued to accept the texts as a determinant in decisions to rely on faith-related and informative narratives, and though at a degressive rate, highlighted the importance of textual criteria in the examination of fiqh-related narratives. After Al-Shahid al-Thani, on the other hand, steps were taken toward discrediting the method of examination which was based on qarinah instead of referring to them, although there are exceptions to this situation.

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