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The Concept of *'Aql* in the Formulation of Matn Hadith Criticism: A Conceptual Study of Muhammad al-Ghazali's Thought in His Work *as-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah baina Ahl al-Fiqh wa Ahl al-Ḥadīš*

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the role of *'aql* in the criticism of the *matn* of hadith by Islamic scholars. In religious studies, hadith is one of the primary sources for understanding Islam and the practice of Muslim life. However, with the progression of time, a need has emerged to reassess this method from a contemporary scientific perspective. This is evident in the application of scholars in assessing hadith using the indicator of *'aql*, which varies among them. More specifically, the background of this research is based on several facts. First, hadith scholars have paid more attention to the development of *sanad* criticism than the *matn*. This points to the statements of contemporary scholars that the discussion and research on hadith have focused more on analyzing and developing the theory of *sanad*. Second, scholars who recognize *'aql* as a criterion for *matn* criticism exhibit varying applications of this concept, with these differences already evident since the time of the Prophet's companions. The research methodology will involve literature studies, hadith text analysis, and exploration of the thoughts of Islamic scholars and intellectuals regarding the use of *'aql* in *matn* criticism.

Keywords: *Reason in Islam, Criticism of Hadith Matn, Islamic Epistemology*

Introduction

The position of 'a*ql* in the formulation of *matn* hadith criticism holds significant importance. This is evident, at least, in the fact that nearly all scholars who have formulated *matn* criticism in their works have considered *'aql* as one of the criteria for

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assessing the quality of the *matn*[1]. Long before the science of hadith was established, historical facts reveal how Aisha (RA) rejected a hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah because it was deemed unreasonable. Ibn Majah recorded a hadith narrated by the Companion Abu Hurairah, in which the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said: "Whoever washes a deceased body should take a mandatory bath"[2] (al-Quzawainī, 1430 AH/2009 CE). This hadith, narrated by Abu Hurairah, was later rejected for being deemed irrational. Aisha expressed this irrationality with a question that indicated her disagreement with the meaning of the hadith: "Is the corpse of a Muslim impure? (If it is impure), why is there no obligation to take a bath after lifting wood?"[3]. Aisha's rejection in this instance was clearly based on logic, as it seemed unreasonable that wood could be considered purer than the body of a Muslim. In other words, the rejection of the narration from Abu Hurairah was based on the *matn*, which was deemed inconsistent with the standard of *'aql*.

The affirmation of *'aql* in the criticism of *matn* hadith subsequently evolved into an epistemological framework for hadith scholars, particularly in examining the validity of a hadith. In his work *Al-Kifāyah fi 'Ilm ar-Riwāyah*, Khatib states that a *khabar āḥād* (single narration) cannot be accepted if it contradicts a ruling based on *'aql* (*wa lā yuqbalu khabar al-wāḥid fī munāfāh ḥukm al-'aql...*)[4]. Similarly, Ibn al-Jauzī in *al-Mauḍū'āt* argues that any hadith contradicting reason (*ma'qūl*) and the principles of Islamic teachings is considered fabricated and does not require further investigation (*fa kullu ḥadīs raaitahu yukhālifu al-ma'qūl aw yunāqiḍu al-uṣūl, fa'lam annahu mauḍū'un falā tukallifu I'tibārahu*).[5] Ibn Salah, in a more implicit manner, emphasizes the importance of *'aql* in assessing the quality of a *matn* by indicating that the expression of the *matn* must be free from *rukākah al-lafẓ*. The term *rukākah al-lafẓ*, as explained by Mahir Yasin al-Faḥl, refers to a *matn* that is weak and disordered, both in terms of sentence structure and the meaning conveyed within the expression. The disorder in meaning within the expression is partly caused by a meaning that

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[1] Wasman and Suwendi Mesraini, "A CRITICAL APPROACH TO PROPHETIC TRADITIONS: Contextual Criticism in Understanding Hadith" 61, no. 1 (2023): 1–30.

[2] al-Quzawaini, *Sunan Ibn Majah*, vol. II (Beirut: DarRisalahal-'Alamiyyah, 2009).

[3] az-Zarkasyi, *Al-Ijabah Li Iradi Ma Istadrakathu 'Aisyah 'Ala as-Sahabah* (Beirut: Mu`assasah ar-Risalah, 2004).

[4] Al-Khatib Al-Bagdadi, "Al-Kifayah Fi 'Ilm al-Riwayah," 1988.

[5] Ibn Al-Jauzi, Al-Muadu'at (Madinah: t.t, 1966), hlm. 75

contradicts the conclusions of sound *'aql*6 (*an yukhālifa aḥkām al-'aql min ghair qabūlin li at-taʾwīl*).[6]

Similarly, Ibn Faraḥ al-Isybilī formulated a method for identifying fabricated hadiths, one of which is when the meaning of the hadith contradicts *'aql* and facts (*iżā kāna mukhālifan li al-'āql wa al-wāqi'*).[7] Nūr ad-Dīn 'Itr also considered a hadith to be fabricated if its content contradicts several fundamental principles, including *'aql*, without the possibility of *ta'wīl* (interpretation).[8] This formulation was built on the rejection of certain hadiths by several scholars, as their meanings were considered inconsistent with sound *'aql*. For instance, az-Zahabi rejected the hadith "*The rose was created from My sweat*"[9], and 'Umar bin Badar al-Mawṣilī rejected hadiths exaggerating the virtues of Abu Bakr, stating that *'aql* could clearly recognize their falsity (*mimmā yu'rafu waḍ'uhu bi badīhah al-'uqūl*).[10] All of these explanations lead to the conclusion that the role of *'aql* is crucial in the process of hadith criticism, particularly in assessing the quality of a *matn*.

However, when scholars apply the criterion of *'aql* in the work of *matn* criticism, they often differ in its application. These differences, to some extent, even lead to conflicts that are difficult to reconcile. For example, when evaluating hadiths related to the prohibition of music, some scholars argue that hadiths which prohibit music can be accepted despite issues with their *sanad*. One such scholar is Aḥmad bin 'Umar al-Anṣārī al-Qurṭubī. He bases his opinion on a hadith narrated by al-Bazzār, from Abū Ḥumaid and Abū Usaid, in which the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُ الْحَدِيثَ تَعْرِفُهُ قُلُوبُكُمْ، وَتَلِينُ لَهُ أَشْعَارُكُمْ وَأَبْشَارُكُمْ، وَتَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُ مِنْكُمْ قَرِيبٌ، فَأَنَا أَوْلَاكُمْ بِهِ، وَإِذَا سَمِعْتُمُ الْحَدِيثَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُكُمْ، وَتَنَعَّيَّرُ لَهُ قُلُوبُكُمْ أَوْ أَشْعَارُكُمْ، وَتَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُ مِنْكُمْ بَعِيدٌ فَأَنَا أَبْعَدُكُمْ مِنْهُ

"If you hear a hadith that your hearts recognize, and your skin and feelings become at ease, and you feel that the hadith is close to you, then know that I certainly feel the same way. However, if you hear a hadith but your hearts do not accept it, causing your skin and feelings to become tense, and you feel distant from the content of the hadith, then know that I am further from this hadith than you are"

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[6] Ibn as-Salah, Ma'rifah Anwa' 'Ilm al-Hadis (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2002), hlm. 35

[7] Al-Isybili, *Al-Garamiyyah Fi Musthalah al-Hadis* (Madinah: Dar al-Ma'ashir, 2003).

[8] Nuruddin al-'Itr, *Manhaj An-Naqd Fi 'Ulum al-Hadis* (Damaskus: Dar al-Fikr, 1981).

[9] Az-Zahabi, *Al-Mughni Fi Ad-Du'afa* (Qatar: Idarah Ihya at-Turas al-Islami, n.d.).

[10] Al-Muslili, *Al-Mughni 'an al-Hifz Wa al-Kitab* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-'Arabi, 1407).

This hadith is understood by some scholars as a guidance from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) indicating that whatever originates from the Prophet will always align with human reason, perception, and innate nature in discerning truth and falsehood.[11] Thus, if the content of a hadith aligns with human reasoning, it serves as an indication that the hadith is authentic and truly from the Prophet (SAW).

For al-Qurṭubī, this hadith serves as a guarantee that hadiths discussing the prohibition of music can be accepted, even though the majority of their *sanad* may be problematic. This is because, in his view, the meaning of the hadith, which indicates the prohibition of music and those who engage in it, is something that resonates with the heart and aligns with the inclinations of human *'aql*.[12]

Interestingly, at the same time, scholars who permit music actually strengthen the weakness of the hadiths on the prohibition of music with the same hadith. One such scholar is Murtaḍā az-Zābidī in his commentary on *Iḥyā' 'Ulūmuddīn*. He argues that while al-Qurṭubī uses the hadith "recognizing the hadith of the Prophet through the inclinations of the heart and human perception" to support the prohibition of music, the opposite occurs; this hadith further strengthens the argument that the *matn* of hadiths asserting the prohibition of music cannot be accepted. This is because, by nature, peace of heart, gentleness of the soul, and the presence of joy and comfort come from things that are pleasurable, one of which is music. Thus, it seems more reasonable to use this hadith to conclude that the hadiths about the prohibition of music cannot be accepted as they do not align with the heart and mind of human beings.[13]

From this, the problem of *'aql* in the work of *matn* criticism by scholars becomes clearly evident, leading to two interconnected issues. First, while scholars affirm the importance of *'aql* as a criterion for *matn* criticism, there has yet to be a universally agreed-upon concept of *'aql* among these scholars. Second, due to the lack of consensus on the concept of *'aql*, the door is left wide open for subjective elements to influence the determination of which *matn* aligns with *'aql* and which does not; which interpretations are

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[11] at-Tahawi, *Syarh Musykil Al-Asar* (Beirut: Mu`assasah ar-Risalah, 1494).

[12] Al-Qurthubi, *Kasyf Al-Qina' "an Hukm al-Wajd Wa as-Sima"* (Mesir: Dar as-Shahabah li at-Turas, 1992).

[13] M Az-Zabidi, *Ittihad As-Sadah al-Muttaqin Bi Syarh Ihya` 'Ulum Ad-Din* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.).

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rational and which are not. These two issues form the relevant argument for the need for an in-depth study titled *Searching for Common Ground in the Use of 'aql in Assessing Hadith Matn from the Formulations of Hadith Matn Criticism by Scholars*.

'Aql in the Islamic intellectual tradition

Akal in Indonesian derives from the Arabic word *'aql*. The linguist Ibn Fāris explains that the word *al-'aql* consists of three letters: *'ayn*, *qāf*, and *lām* (ع-ق-ل), which carry several interconnected meanings. Among these meanings are to restrain (*ḥabasa*) and to bind (*qayyada*). In Arabic, the term for the rope used to tie a camel is *'iqāl al-ba'īr*, derived from *'aql*, which conveys the meaning of binding to prevent the animal from escaping (*yamna'u al-ba'īr min al-infilāt*) [14]. Similarly, in *Tahżīb al-Lugah*, it is stated that *'aql* distinguishes humans from animals, as *'aql* restrains humans from falling into danger, much like the *'iqāl* restrains a camel from butting its head into something.[15]

The meaning of restraint in the word *'aql* is also related to another meaning, namely knowledge (*'ilm*). *'Aql*, which signifies knowledge, illustrates one of the primary functions of knowledge: to prevent its possessor from going astray on the wrong path.[16] An Arabic expression states, *I'lām mā taqūlu wa 'qil mā taqūlu* ("Know what you say, and understand your words"). In the context of knowledge, *'aql* is also defined as the potential and capacity through which humans think, reason, abstract, and justify (*mā yakūnu bihi at-tafkīr wa al-istidlāl wa tarkīb at-taṣawwurāt wa taṣdīqāt*).[17]

Terminologically, the term *'aql* has multiple definitions, depending on the discipline and intellectual horizon used to define it. Abū Ḥāmid al-Gazzālī, a scholar of multiple disciplines, provides a rather extensive discussion on intellect. He states that *'aql* is a word with various meanings. Among them, "al-'aql" is defined as knowledge or understanding of the essence of things. This meaning indicates that "al-'aql" is an attribute of knowledge residing in the heart. "*al-'aql*" can also be interpreted as the

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[14] Muhammad bin Ahmad Faris, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lugah* (Mesir: Maktabah Mustafa al-Bab al-Halab, 1971).

[15] Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Azhari, *Tahzib Al-Lugah* (Beirut: Dar Ihya at-Turas al-'Arabi, 2001).

[16] Faris, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lugah*.

[17] Al-Azhari, *Tahzib Al-Lugah*.

heart ("qalbun") itself, meaning the ability to grasp and be aware of various kinds of knowledge. Thus, in al-Ghazālī's view, the intellect is not merely a space or place for thinking but also a non-material entity possessing an inner power for imagination, memory, estimation, abstraction, and representation. It is also part of the senses, created simultaneously with the creation of humankind.[18]

Sa'īd Ismā'īl 'Alī, in *Buḥūṡ fī at-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyyah*, cites the opinion of Ibn Ḥayyan that *'aql* is a term referring to knowledge acquired through the correct method and knowledge that helps avoid falsehood. In this sense, *'aql* is not possessed by all humans at the same level. There are four levels of *'aql* based on the capacity of individuals to possess it. The first is the *'aql* at the *adīb* phase, where the practitioner is called *muta'allim* (a learner). The second is the *'aql* at the *ārib* phase, whose possessor is called *bāḥiṡ* (an investigator). The third is the *'aql* at the *labīb* phase, and the one who masters it is called *'ālim* (a scholar). Finally, the *'aql* at the *'āqil* phase, where humans who reach this level are called *mufakkir* (a thinker/conceptualizer).[19]

Ar-Rāgib al-Aṣfahānī also explains that, at least, the concept of *'aql* in the Qur'an returns to two main understandings. The first understanding is *'aql* as a potential that is prepared (*al-quwwah al-mutahayyi`ah*) to receive knowledge. This first meaning shows that *'aql* is an innate potential that serves as a tool for humans to capture and recognize the factors and signs present in the universe. This is what is referred to as the potential for abstraction and analysis. The second understanding is *'aql* as knowledge itself, which is later utilized by *'aql* in the second sense.[20]

The discussion on the definitions of *'aql* presented earlier illustrates the reality that the concept of *'aql* is not singular. From this plurality, upon further investigation, two widely recognized definitions emerge, either explicitly or implicitly. The first definition posits that *'aql* is an innate ability. In the discourse of *kalam*, *'aql* is even considered a non-material entity. The capability of this non-material *'aql* lies in absorbing and capturing information, then processing it through abstraction, conception, memory, perception, and other intellectual activities.[21]

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[18] al-Khalil ibn Ahmad Al-Farahidi, *Kitab Al-'Ain* (Dar Maktabah al-Hilal, n.d.).

[19] *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasit* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1972).

[20] Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali, *Ihya 'Ulumiddin* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, n.d.).

[21] Said Ismail Ali, *Buhus Fi At-Tarbiyyah al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Markaz at-Tanmiyyah al-Basyariyyah wa al-Ma'lumat, 1987).

The second definition regards *'aql* as knowledge itself. In the words of al-Aṣfahānī, *'aql* as knowledge refers to information about how the sensory faculties work experimentally to correctly capture and process information, which he terms *al-aql bi al-fi'il*. From this perspective, the knowledge produced by *'aql* is categorized by scholars of *uṣūl* into two types. The first type is knowledge derived from the conclusions of *'aql* that are comprehensive and definitive (*qaṭ'ī*). This type of knowledge results in certainty, conviction, and irrefutability because of the clarity of what is being explained. Examples of this kind of knowledge include natural propositions, such as the principle that two opposing extremes cannot coexist, or that two objects of different weights cannot be balanced on a scale.[22]

Matn Criticism and the Role of *'Aql*

As mentioned in the background, 'aql plays a significant role in the framework of hadith criticism. Hadith criticism itself is divided into two main categories: the criticism of the sanad (chain of transmission) and the criticism of the matan (content of the hadith). The criticism of sanad primarily aims to ensure the authenticity of the hadith as originating from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through its chain of transmission. Scholars have agreed on five criteria that must be examined when evaluating the sanad: 1) the continuity of the chain, 2) the integrity of the narrators, 3) the reliability of the narrators, 4) the absence of shudhūdh (anomalies), and 5) the absence of 'illah (hidden defects). [23]

For example, in a hadith narrated by the Companion 'Aisha, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Treat people according to their status." Abu Dawud considered this hadith weak due to a break in the chain of transmission. Specifically, the sanad indicates that the one who heard this hadith from Aisha was Maimun, whereas according to Abu Dawud, Maimun never met Aisha (Maimūn lam yudrik 'Āisyah) (al-Asy'aṡ). [24]

However, this assessment by Abu Dawud was not agreed upon by some other scholars. Ibn Salah, as quoted by an-Nawawi, argued that the sanad of this hadith was connected and that the claim of a break between Maimun and 'Aisha needed to be

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[22] ar-Ragib Al-Asfahani, *Al-Mufradat Fi Garib al-Qur`an* (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1412).

[23] Jalaluddin As-Suyuti, *Tadrib Ar-Rawi Fi Syarh Taqrib an-Nawawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1989).

[24] Abu Dawud Sulaiman bin Al-Asy'as, *Sunan Abi Dawud* (Beirut: Maktabah al-Ashriyyah, n.d.).

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reconsidered. Ibn Salah believed that the Maimun-'Aisha chain was indeed connected, as Maimun was a narrator from Kufa who had met al-Mugīrah bin Syu'bah, while Syu'bah passed away before 'Aisha. Therefore, there are two arguments for the connection between Maimun and 'Aisha. First, since Maimun had met al-Mugīrah, it is highly likely that he also met 'Aisha. Second, the death of al-Mugīrah before 'Aisha, and Maimun's encounter with al-Mugīrah, suggests that Maimun was contemporaneous with 'Aisha. According to Muslim's methodology, two contemporaneous narrators are sufficient to establish the connection.[25] The difference of opinion between Abu Dawud and Ibn Salah demonstrates the role of reasoning in drawing conclusions from the analysis of the historical data of narrators to confirm the continuity of the sanad.

The role of reason becomes even more crucial and evident in the context of the criticism of the hadith text (matan). Syuhudi Ismail mentions that the fourth criterion, namely being free from *syużuż* (anomalies) and the fifth criterion, being free from *'illah* (hidden defects), are also part of the criticism of the text [26]. Syamsul Anwar points out that the attention of hadith scholars to *syużuż* and *'illah* in the text is more focused on the format and structure of the wording, such as whether there are insertions or additions, whether there is reversal, and errors in the text's format. Meanwhile, the scholars of usul fiqh pay more attention to these two elements in terms of the substance of the meaning of the text. Therefore, scholars of usul have developed the theory of coherence, such as coherence with the Qur'an, with other hadiths, with reason, and with historical facts and events [27]

The role of reason in the context of tracing the occurrence of *syużuż* (anomalies) or its absence can be seen in several aspects: 1) identifying contradictions between hadiths in terms of their meanings. This certainly requires knowledge of the meanings of the hadith, reasoning, and analysis to determine whether a compromise can be made. 2) tracing possible interpretations of certain hadiths to coherently connect their meanings. From this, an important branch of hadith science has emerged, namely the science of *Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīś* (the study of conflicting hadiths). 3)

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[25] Yahya bin Syaraf An-Nawawi, *Al-Minhaj Syarh Sahih Muslim* (Beirut: Dar Ihya at-Turas al-'Arabi, 1392).

[26] Syuhudi Ismail, *Kaedah Kesahihan Sanad Hadis: Telaah Kritis Dan Tinjauan Dengan Pendekatan Ilmu Sejarah* (Jakaeta: Bulan Bintang, 1988).

[27] Syamsul. Anwar, *Interkoneksi Studi Hadis Dan Astronomi* (Yogyakarta: Suara Muhammadiyah, 2011).

analyzing the fulfillment of the criteria of *'adālah* (justice) and *kedabitan* (accuracy) in narrators, and then performing *tarjīḥ* (preference); determining which of the narrators is the most reliable in order to identify which hadith is *syāż* (anomalous) and which is *maḥfūż* (preserved).

Regarding the criterion of being free from *'illah* (hidden defect), in the book *Syarḥ 'Ilal at-Tirmiżī* by Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, it implies a broad space for reason to play a role in analyzing the presence or absence of *'illah* in a hadith, especially in the *matan* (text). This space is present, for example, in the types of *'illah* that can occur: 1) *'illah* that causes a change in the meaning of the hadith, either in its entirety or only partially, 2) *'illah* that causes a change in the wording, whether one word or many, 3) *'illah* in the *matan* that contradicts what the narrator actually intended when narrating the hadith, 4) *'illah* in the form of interpolated words that are not part of the original *matan*, 5) *'illah* that exists in a narration transmitted *bi al-ma'nā* (by meaning), but the wording used does not reflect the manner of expression of the Prophet.[28]

Similarly, in the formulation of the coherence of *matan* (text), most scholars use reason as a benchmark for coherence. Among them, al-Idlibi states that in the critique of substance, the *matan* must be coherent according to four criteria: 1) the Qur'an, 2) more authentic hadiths, 3) reason, and 4) history [29] (al-Idlibi, 1983). Ad-Dumaini also mentions that, according to hadith scholars, a *matan* is considered accepted if it is free from incoherence with: 1) the Qur'an, 2) authentic hadiths, 3) established Sunnah, 4) correct Arabic language, 5) proven historical facts, 6) definitive Shariah principles, and 7) sound reason.[30]

Analysis of *As-Sunnah an-Nabawiyyah Bain Ahl al-Fiqh and Ahl al-Ḥadīś*

Sociological Background of the Emergence of the Book

This book is associated with the development of the Islamic revival movement known as "صحوة الإسلام" or "Islamic Awakening." In the 1980s and 1990s, intellectual

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[28] Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbali, *Syarh 'Ilal at-Tirmizi* (Maktabah ar-Rusyd, 2001).

[29] Shalahuddin bin Ahmad Al-Idlibi, *Manhaj Naqd Al-Matn 'Inda 'Ulama al-Hadis an-Nabawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1983).

[30] Ad-Dumaini, *Maqayis Naqd Mutun As-Sunnah* (Riyad: Jami'ah al-Islamiyyah Imam ibn Sa'ud, n.d.).

questions regarding the establishment of an Islamic state and the challenge of secularism became the main focus for the modern Islamic generation involved in this movement. Additionally, issues related to fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and aqidah (Islamic creed) also emerged as topics of discussion among them.[31]

The sources of influence that shaped this Muslim generation varied, both in terms of knowledge and the schools of fiqh or aqidah they adhered to. However, when we look at history, particularly the connection between al-Ghazzali and the Ikhwan al-Muslimin movement, it becomes clear that this relationship had a significant impact on the movement[32]. Al-Ghazzali's book is directly connected to Ikhwan al-Muslimin in its early development. He attended lectures by the founder of Ikhwan al-Muslimin, Hasan al-Banna, during his youth. By the time a new generation of leaders emerged within the movement in the 1980s, al-Ghazzali was already in his seventies. Feeling a sense of responsibility toward the new generation of Ikhwan al-Muslimin and the Muslim Ummah in general, he sought to address the fiqh and scholarly questions that he believed the younger generation was grappling with.[33]

The Purpose of Book

The book begins with the statement, "My heart is with the young generation involved in the Islamic revival, who have done much for Islam, and we hope that they will do even more."[34] Al-Ghazzali believed that the fiqh and aqidah questions he chose to discuss were of great importance. In his view, this stemmed from certain opinions recognized by some of the youth involved in the Islamic reform movement. Al-Ghazzali considered these views as forms of deviation that could harm the image of Islam, which should be preserved by the Islamic reform movement.

By highlighting these questions, al-Ghazzali sought to answer and clarify them so that the youth involved in this movement could have a better understanding and

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[31] Ali J, "Islamic Revivalist Movements in the Modern World: An Analysis of Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun, Tabligh Jama`at and Hizb Ut-Tahrir," *Journal for The Academic Study of Religion* 31, no. 1 (2018): 2–22.

[32] T. Moustafa, "Conflict and Cooperation Between The State and Religious Institutions in Contemporary Egypt," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32, no. 1 (2000): 3–22.

[33] Mohammed Moussa, *Politics of The Islamic Tradition: The Thought of Muhammad al-Ghazali* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

[34] Muhammad Al-Ghazzali, *As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyyah Baina Ahl Al-Fiqh Wa Al-Hadis* (Kairo: Dar asy-Syuruq, 2000).

avoid being trapped in views that he considered to damage the image of Islam. This reflects al-Ghazzali's desire to maintain the purity and positive image of Islam in the eyes of society, especially amidst the debates and intellectual challenges faced by the Muslim youth of that time.

Al-Ghazzali states, "We desire two things for the contemporary Islamic renewal movement: First, to distance itself from deviations that lead to destruction and provide reasons for its enemies to attack. Second, to offer a practical image of Islam that captivates observers, removes old doubts, and upholds the divine revelation. I regret that some of those associated with this movement have failed to achieve both of these goals fully. In fact, they may have succeeded in making people fear Islam and provided an opportunity for its opponents to spread negative propaganda about it...".[35]

In this statement, al-Ghazzali emphasizes the importance of the Islamic renewal movement (tajdid) to avoid the mistakes of the past and build a positive image of Islam. Additionally, he expresses his concern about some individuals involved in this movement who have failed to achieve these goals, and may have even had a negative impact by scaring people away from Islam (a group he classifies as Modern Salafism). This statement reflects al-Ghazzali's desire to place the movement on the right path and build an image of Islam that aligns with its true values and divine demands.

Al-Ghazzali states that opposing opinions, which he believes damage the image of Islam, often come from the contemporary Salafi group, which had a significant impact on the Islamic environment at that time. In the introduction to his book, al-Ghazzali writes, "In this book, there are doses (statements) that may be bitter for the youth who read the sayings of the Prophet and then believe they have understood Islam after reading it, whether superficially or in-depth. There may also be lessons for the scholars who oppose the madhhab-based jurisprudence in favor of Salafism, who are believed to know Islam only on the surface, forgetting its roots."[36]

Al-Ghazzali sometimes refers to regional considerations related to contemporary Salafis in spreading some views that oppose his own, such as when he

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[35] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 36
[36] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 11

mentions "the spread of Bedouin jurisprudence"[37]. In a conversation with a young man from Mecca, al-Ghazzali states, "Islam is not a regional religion just for you; you have a narrow Bedouin jurisprudence."[38]

Al-Ghazzali also notes his criticism of a statement in a book from one of the Gulf countries [39] and discusses a conversation with someone he refers to as one of the scholars from the Gulf countries about the issue of singing.[40]

Al-Ghazzali notes that opposing views, which he considers damaging to the image of Islam, are often embraced by fiqh groups with historical legacies that remain relevant today, such as the established schools of Islamic jurisprudence. For example, al-Ghazzali states, "Nevertheless, the Shafi'i and Hanbali schools permit a father to force his adult daughter to marry someone she does not like!! We see this view merely as obedience to a tradition that degrades the dignity of women and humiliates their personality."[41]

Al-Ghazzali sometimes refers to the opinions of scholars from the contemporary Salafi group, not only to criticize but also to acknowledge or accept their views, such as when he mentions the statement of Sheikh Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi about wearing turbans: "Sheikh Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi said: There is no authentic hadith that narrates the virtue of wearing a turban."[42] He also mentions that Sheikh Muhammad Hamid al-Fiqi commented on a hadith and its narration by stating that its sanad (chain of transmission) is suspicious, deemed false, and the hadith is rejected.[43]

If we want to summarize the main goal of this book in a brief statement, we can say that al-Ghazzali intends to convey a message to members of the Islamic movement and religious followers in general: "Do not choose fiqh and aqidah views that tarnish the image of Islam."

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[37] *Ibid.*
[38] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 75
[39] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 36
[40] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 60
[41] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 33
[42] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 85
[43] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 158

Response to the Book

The influence of this book was strongly felt by contemporary Salafis at the time, who responded to its content with sharp criticism. The response to the book was made academically. A reply titled *"Al-Mi'yar li 'Ilm Al-Ghazali fi Kitabihi Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyyah"* ("The Criterion of Al-Ghazali's Knowledge in His Book *Al-Sunnah Al-Nabawiyyah*") was written, in which the author listed seven errors attributed to Al-Ghazali and provided evidence from his words in this book.The first error was his belittling and mocking of the Muslim scholars. The second was his scholarly weakness in the principles of Hadith and Sunnah as well as his books on the subject. The third error was his general scholarly weakness. The fourth error involved mockery, ridicule, and insults. The fifth was his contradiction in arguments. The sixth was his mental weakness in the face of the West and the state of his time. Finally, the seventh error was doctrinal mistakes and exaggerations.

Abu Ishaq Al-Huwayni also wrote a response titled "Samṭu Al-Lāī fi al-Radd 'ala al-Ghazali"* ("The Elevated Tone in Replying to Al-Ghazali"). Although it was only published as an introduction, the published sections indicate that Al-Huwayni intended to provide a detailed response to the content of the book. Mustafa Salama wrote a response titled *"Bara'at Ahl al-Fiqh wa Ahl al-Hadith min Awaham Muhammad al-Ghazali"* ("The Exoneration of Ahl al-Fiqh and Ahl al-Hadith from the Delusions of Muhammad al-Ghazali"). Dr. Salman Al-Awdah also wrote his response titled *"Ḥiwār Hādī Ma'a al-Ghazali" ("A Casual Dialogue with Al-Ghazali").*

Several responses to the book have raised doubts about al-Ghazali's depiction of Islam through his work, with some accusing him of disparaging the Hadith. These accusations were addressed by al-Ghazali's student, Dr. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, in his book *"Al-Shaykh al-Ghazali Kama 'Araftuhu"* ("Sheikh Al-Ghazali as I Knew Him"), where he stated:

> "Perhaps Sheikh (al-Ghazali) was overly strict in rejecting some explicit Hadiths, which could be interpreted and understood in a manner that is acceptable, and perhaps he was too harsh on some groups, portraying them with certain harsh and provocative words. He may have also been too quick in passing judgment on certain issues that required more detailed and thorough investigation. However, al-Ghazali's book is not as his opponents imagined it to be, a book that opposes the Hadith, nor is it, as his detractors understand, a denial of the Hadith. Such accusations are a clear injustice towards al-Ghazali,

who has always defended the honorable authority of the Sunnah and has forcefully attacked those who oppose the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). What al-Ghazali did by denying one or two meanings of the Hadith, or even three, even if those Hadiths were proven authentic in terms of their chain of narration, does not mean denying the Sunnah as the second foundational principle and the second source after the Qur'an."

The Use of 'aql in Muhammad Al-Ghazzali's Critique of Hadith Matn

Hadith about Prophet Musa striking the Angel of Death and refusing to have his soul taken

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رَافِعٍ ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ ، حَدَّثَنَا مَعْمَرٌ ، عَنْ هَمَّامِ بْنِ مُنَبِّهٍ قَالَ: هَذَا مَا حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَنَكَرَ أَحَادِيثَ، مِنْهَا: وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: « جَاءَ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ إِلَى مُوسَى عليه السلام فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَجِبْ رَبَّكَ. قَالَ: فَلَطَمَ مُوسَى عليه السلام عَيْنَ مَلَكِ الْمَوْتِ فَفَقَأَهَا، قَالَ: فَرَجَعَ الْمَلَكُ إِلَى اللهِ تَعَالَى فَقَالَ: إِنَّكَ أَرْسَلْتَنِي إِلَى عَبْدٍ لَكَ لَا يُرِيدُ الْمَوْتَ وَقَدْ فَقَأَ عَيْنِي! قَالَ: فَرَدَّ اللهُ إِلَيْهِ عَيْنَهُ وَقَالَ: ارْجِعْ إِلَى عَبْدِي فَقُلْ: الْحَيَاةَ تُرِيدُ؟ فَإِنْ كُنْتَ تُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ فَضَعْ يَدَكَ عَلَى مَتْنِ ثَوْرٍ، فَمَا تَوَارَتْ يَدُكَ مِنْ شَعْرَةٍ، فَإِنَّكَ تَعِيشُ بِهَا سَنَةً. قَالَ: ثُمَّ مَهْ؟ قَالَ: ثُمَّ تَمُوتُ. قَالَ: فَالْآنَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ، رَبِّ أَمِتْنِي مِنَ الْأَرْضِ الْمُقَدَّسَةِ رَمْيَةً بِحَجَرٍ

"It has been narrated to us by Muhammad bin Rafi': He narrated to us by 'Abdur Razzaq: He narrated to us by Ma'mar from Hamam bin Munabbih, who said: "This is what Abu Hurairah narrated to us from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) – and then he mentioned several hadiths, among them – the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:'The Angel of Death came to Musa (peace be upon him) and said to him: 'Fulfill the call of your Lord.' The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Then Musa slapped the eye of the Angel of Death and gouged it out.' The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Then the Angel of Death returned to Allah (Glory and Exaltation be to Him) and said: 'You have sent me to a servant of Yours who does not desire death, and he has gouged my eye out.' The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'Then Allah restored his eye and said: 'Return to My servant and say to him: 'What life do you desire? If you desire life, place your hand on the back of a cow, and for every hair covered by your hand, you will receive an additional year.' Musa said: 'What will happen after that?' The Angel of Death said: 'Death.' Musa said: 'Then hasten it.' Then he prayed: 'O Allah, bring my grave closer to the holy land, as far as a stone's throw."

First, Imam Ghazali highlights the defense of this hadith by some scholars. He quotes the opinion of al-Maziri, who provides several arguments to support the authenticity of this hadith's text. 23 Al-Māzirī, 1991) First, the act of Prophet Musa striking/gouging out the eye of the Angel of Death is possible, as long as it is permitted

or in accordance with the will of Allah (SWT). In Islamic doctrinal principles, nothing is impossible if it is in accordance with Allah's will for His creatures. Second, the phrase "striking the angel" needs to be understood figuratively, meaning that Prophet Musa argued with the Angel of Death with various reasons and succeeded in convincing the angel not to take his soul. Third, Prophet Musa's ignorance that the one who came to him was the Angel of Death in the form of a human being. As a result, a fight occurred between them

Al-Ghazzali comments on this opinion by stating clearly: "Such defense is essentially a weak defense, insignificant, and should not be carried out. Moreover, those who accuse the opponents of the hadith of atheistic acts (al-ilḥād) are actually diminishing the honor of the Muslim community. For me personally, the content of this hadith contains a defective element (illā qādiḥah) which causes this hadith not to reach the level of authenticity. Even if there is a difference between those who accept and those who reject it, it is a matter of intellectual difference (khilāfan fikriyyan), not a difference in belief (khilāfan 'aqā`idiyyan)."

Al-Ghazzali's rejection of the hadith narrated by Muslim is based on two main arguments. First, the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him), which states:

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ بُرَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ: (مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ، وَمَنْ كَرِهَ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ كَرِهَ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ)

"Muhammad ibn al-'Alā' narrated to us, Abu Usama narrated to us from Buraidah, from Abu Burdah, from Abu Musa, who said: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Whoever loves meeting Allah, Allah loves meeting him; and whoever dislikes meeting Allah, Allah dislikes meeting him."

This hadith forms the basis of al-Ghazzali's argument that rejecting death is a trait that cannot be possessed by a righteous person, let alone a prophet. In essence, death is the bridge to meeting Allah.[44] The second argument is more rational. The fact mentioned in the hadith is something that cannot be accepted by a sound intellect. The impossibility lies in Musa's rejection of death. Death itself is a decree that cannot be rejected by any creature. Additionally, the impossibility also extends to the idea that an angel could experience physical defect, as a human might.[45]

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[44] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 143
[45] Ibid.

The Concept of 'Aql in the Formulation of Matn Hadith Criticism... (Nur Kholis, et al.)

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Hadith about the person who was falsely accused of immorality concerning non-genital parts

حَدَّثَنِي زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ ، حَدَّثَنَا عَفَّانُ ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ ، أَخْبَرَنَا ثَابِتٌ ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ: « أَنَّ رَجُلًا كَانَ يُتَّهَمُ بِأُمِّ وَلَدِ رَسُولِ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم لِعَلِيٍّ: اذْهَبْ فَاضْرِبْ عُنُقَهُ. فَأَتَاهُ عَلِيٌّ فَإِذَا هُوَ فِي رَكِيٍّ يَتَبَرَّدُ فِيهَا، فَقَالَ لَهُ عَلِيٌّ: اخْرُجْ، فَنَاوَلَهُ يَدَهُ فَأَخْرَجَهُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ مَجْبُوبٌ لَيْسَ لَهُ ذَكَرٌ، فَكَفَّ عَلِيٌّ، عَنْهُ، ثُمَّ أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، إِنَّهُ لَمَجْبُوبٌ مَا لَهُ ذَكَرٌ

"Zuhair bin Harb narrated to us, Affan narrated to us, Hammad bin Salamah narrated to us, Tsabit narrated to us from Anas that there was a man who was accused of committing adultery with the wife of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to Ali: "Go and strike off his neck (because of his hypocrisy)." Then Ali went to him and found him cooling off in a small well. Ali said to him: "Come out!" When Ali pulled his hand, it turned out that the man was castrated. Therefore, Ali did not kill him. Ali then went to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, he is a man who has been castrated (he does not have genitals).""

Al-Ghazzali then cited Imam an-Nawawi's defense of the text of this hadith, stating, "Perhaps the man was a hypocrite, and thus he deserved to be sentenced to death, not because of his immorality, but because of his hypocrisy." However, al-Ghazzali still rejected the content of this hadith for two reasons. First, the impossibility that the Prophet Muhammad would sentence someone to death without first asking for witnesses. He firmly stated: "It is impossible (illogical) for someone to be sentenced to death without considering the proof of their actions and without questioning the accused, so that the defense of the perpetrator is not known at all. Moreover, it is known that the accusation was false."

As for the defense by Imam an-Nawawi that the man was sentenced to death not because of the accusation of immorality, but because he was a hypocrite, al-Ghazzali also rejected this argument, considering it contradictory to the historical fact that the Prophet (PBUH) had never ordered the execution of a hypocrite. He clearly stated: "When did the Prophet (PBUH) ever command the killing of the hypocrites? (matā amara Rasūlullah bi qatl al-Munafiqīn?)" Moreover, according to al-Ghazzali, even if the man were not physically impaired, he would still not deserve to be sentenced to death, because accusations that are legally carried out without proper

evidence are contrary to Islamic principles. (haẕā amrun ta`abbāhu uṣūl al-Islām wa furūʻuhu kulluhā). [46]

The Virtue of the Land of Syria

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا وَهْبُ بْنُ جَرِيرٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ يَحْيَى بْنَ أَيُّوبَ، يُحَدِّثُ عَنْ يَزِيدَ بْنِ أَبِي حَبِيبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ شِمَاسَةَ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ ثَابِتٍ، قَالَ: كُنَّا عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم نُؤَلِّفُ الْقُرْآنَ مِنَ الرِّقَاعِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم: «طُوبَى لِلشَّامِ»، فَقُلْنَا: لِأَيِّ ذَلِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: «لِأَنَّ مَلَائِكَةَ الرَّحْمَنِ بَاسِطَةٌ أَجْنِحَتَهَا عَلَيْهَا»: «هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ إِنَّمَا نَعْرِفُهُ مِنْ حَدِيثِ يَحْيَى بْنِ أَيُّوبَ»[حكم الألباني] : صحيح

"Muhammad bin Bashar narrated to us: Wahb bin Jarir narrated to us: My father narrated to us: I heard Yahya bin Ayyub narrating from Yazid bin Abi Habib, from Abdul Rahman bin Shimasa, from Zayd bin Thabit, who said: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) compiling the Qur'an from pieces of leather. Then the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'Tuba (good news) for the land of Syria.' We asked, 'Why is that, O Messenger of Allah?' He replied: 'Because the angels of the Most Merciful are spreading their wings over it.'" [This hadith is hasan and strange, we only know it from the narration of Yahya bin Ayyub]. [Declared authentic by al-Albani]."

This hadith, according to al-Ghazzali, cannot be interpreted as an absolute claim that the land of Syria has special virtues and is superior to other regions in Islam. This is because there is a principle mentioned by al-Ghazzali: hadiths that highlight the virtues of a particular region or encourage living in or protecting it are relevant only when Islam is threatened in those regions. Therefore, it requires a group of Muslims to defend that region from the enemy's attack. (And what is narrated regarding the virtue of one land over another, or the encouragement to inhabit it or to guard it, applies when Islam is exposed to danger in that region or when there is a threat to its borders, requiring men to protect it). Thus, this demonstrates how al-Ghazzali, in a rational manner, interpreted this hadith from a historical perspective.

Thus, according to al-Ghazzali, this hadith needs to be interpreted as a call for the ongoing solidarity among Muslims across various regions,

ولما كانت فلسطين جزءا من الشام فنحن نعد الفرار منها عصيانا والثبات فيها جهادا. وللمدافعين عن الإسلام في أفغانستان والفلبين وسائر أرضيه كل الحقوق التي لعرب فلسطين, أو لأرض الشام, كما جاء في الأحاديث الستة عشر

"And because Palestine is part of the region of Sham, we consider anyone who turns away (ignores it) as committing an act of betrayal, while those who remain steadfast

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[46] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 147

in supporting it are engaged in jihad. Similarly, every group that defends Islam in Afghanistan, the Philippines, and other Muslim-majority regions holds the same rights as the people of Palestine and the Sham region, in accordance with the spirit of the sixteen hadiths mentioned earlier."[47]

Hadith on the permissibility of a father forcing his daughter to marry:

حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ فَضَالَةَ: حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامٌ، عَنْ يَحْيَى عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ حَدَّثَهُمْ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ: (لَا تُنْكَحُ الْأَيِّمُ حَتَّى تُسْتَأْمَرَ، وَلَا تُنْكَحُ الْبِكْرُ حَتَّى تُسْتَأْذَنَ). قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَكَيْفَ إِذْنُهَا؟ قَالَ: (أَنْ تَسْكُتَ). (الأيّم) الثيب وهي التي سبق لها أن تزوجت. (تستأمر) يطلب أمرها وتشاور. (البكر) التي لم تتزوج بعد. (أن تسكت) استحياء، مع قرينة تدل على رضاها، أوعدم قرينة تدل على رفضها من بكاء أوضحك ونحو ذلك

"Mu'adh bin Fadalah narrated to us, Hisham narrated to us, from Yahya, from Abu Salamah, that Abu Hurayrah narrated to them: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: *"A widow should not be married until she is consulted, and a virgin should not be married until she is asked for permission."* They asked: *"O Messenger of Allah, how should her permission be given?"* He replied: *"By her silence."*(*Al-Ayyim*) refers to a widow, a woman who has been married before.*(Tusta'mar)* means her opinion should be asked, and she should be consulted. *(Al-Bikr)* refers to a virgin, a woman who has not been married before.*"She remains silent"* is understood to mean she expresses her consent through silence, as long as there are no signs of refusal, such as crying or laughing, etc."

Al-Ghazzali, in this regard, then presents the opinions of the schools of thought concerning this hadith. The Shafi'i and Hanbali schools permit fathers to compel their adult daughters to marry according to the father's choice, without requiring the daughter's personal inclination.

This opinion is rejected by al-Ghazzali with the argument, one of which is the impossibility of Islam allowing coercion against women. He argues that such an act is a form of humiliation and undermines the individual rights of women. (*wa lā narā wijhata an-naẓr hāżihi illā insiyāqan ma'a taqālī ihānah al-Mar`ah, wa taḥqīr syakhṣiyyatihā*).[48]

This rational argument is then used by al-Ghazzali to support the opinion of the Hanafi school, which grants women the full right to accept or reject the man they wish to marry. Al-Ghazzali strengthens this Hanafi view with several hadiths. Among them is:

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[47] Al-Ghazzali, hlm. 150
[48] Ibid.

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جَاءَتْ فَتَاةٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فَقَالَتْ: إِنَّ أَبِي زَوَّجَنِي ابْنَ أَخِيهِ لِيَرْفَعَ بِي خَسِيسَتَهُ؟! قَالَ: فَجَعَلَ الْأَمْرَ إِلَيْهَا، فَقَالَتْ: قَدْ أَجَزْتُ مَا صَنَعَ أَبِي، وَلَكِنْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ تَعْلَمَ النِّسَاءُ أَنْ لَيْسَ إِلَى الْآبَاءِ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ

"A young woman came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, 'My father has married me off to the son of his brother to raise his status! The Prophet (PBUH) gave her the choice in the matter. She replied, 'I accept what my father has done, but I wanted women to know that fathers have no authority in this matter.""

Al-Ghazzali uses this hadith to further support the Hanafi view, emphasizing that the decision to marry ultimately rests with the woman herself, not the father. The woman's statement reinforces her autonomy in the matter, even though she accepted her father's decision, highlighting the absence of paternal coercion in this case. This, for al-Ghazzali, underscores the Islamic principle that a woman's consent is crucial in marriage and cannot be overridden by paternal authority alone.

Conclusion

This article delves deeply into the role of reason in the critique of hadith texts conducted by Muhammad al-Ghazzali, particularly in relation to hadiths concerning women, the region of Sham, and other socio-religious issues. Al-Ghazzali, as a prominent scholar in the Islamic world, applied a rational approach in analyzing and criticizing hadiths that were seen as incompatible with fundamental Islamic principles, such as the respect for women's dignity and social justice.

Through historical understanding and rational logic, al-Ghazzali rejected some interpretations of hadiths that seemed to justify the coercion of women or undermine their basic rights. He emphasized that Islam does not allow for the oppression or humiliation of women in any aspect, including marriage. In this regard, he emphasized that women have full rights to choose their life partners, as reflected in hadiths supporting a woman's right to choose in marriage, such as those found in *Sunan Ibn Majah* and other hadith collections.

Overall, al-Ghazzali called on Muslims to use reason and principles of justice when assessing and understanding hadiths. His critique of hadith texts was not meant to undermine the hadith itself but to ensure that Islamic teachings remain relevant to the broader social and humanitarian context. Al-Ghazzali's critique highlights the importance of upholding human rights, the dignity of women, and social justice within Islam, ensuring that its principles align with contemporary values and challenges.

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