

## ***The Efficiency of the Sunnī Ḥadīth Criticism System as Argued by the Qur'ānists and Traditionists***

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### ***Abstract***

*Along with proving the sufficiency of the Qur'ān for the extraction of the religious knowledge, the Qur'ānists have doubted the authenticity and the authoritativeness of the sunna and Ḥadīth. One of their reasons for the inauthenticity of the sunna is the inefficiency of the Ḥadīth evaluation and criticism system. Using a descriptive-analytical method, the present study first analyzes their main reasons for this inefficiency, including the existence of inauthentic traditions in Ḥadīth collections, the prevalence of forgery and fictions in Ḥadīth, the ignorance of internal criticism by Ḥadīth transmitters, the existence of gaps in the principles of the Rijāl ideas, and the existence of forgery and distortion in the chains of transmission. Then, the responses of the Ḥadīth defenders are discussed, including the possibility of justifying the Ḥadīths that have been deemed inauthentic, the ignorance of the different linguistic levels of the Ḥadīths, the Ḥadīth transmitters' constant efforts to purify the Ḥadīth legacy and identify the fabrications from the time of their issuance, the traditionists' efforts in and attention to the textual examination and strict Rijāl investigations.*

### ***Keywords:***

*Qur'ānists, Ḥadīth authenticity, Inauthenticity, Chain criticism, Textual criticism, Ḥadīth collections.*

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## **1. Introduction**

*The roots of the Qur'ānism goes back to the early centuries of Islam, while it has found new dimensions and versions in the contemporary era in certain parts of the Muslim world, especially in Egypt and Indian Peninsula (q.v. Ilāhībakhsh, 2000: 69-202; Rūshan ḍamīr, 2011: 21-137; Brown, 1996: 6-42; Cook, 1977: 27). The Qur'ānists believe that the Qur'ān is the criterion for understanding and interpreting its own assertions and for the inference of the religious rulings and knowledge, and provide reasons to support this argument. On the one hand, They argue that the Qur'ān is comprehensive and complete (Qur'ān 16:89) and a manifest light (Qur'ān 4:174) and does not need any other resource, and on the other hand, challenge the authoritativeness and authenticity of sunna; a point that has led the traditionists to take stance against them and defend the authenticity and authoritativeness of the sunna. It is out of the scope of this article to address the Qur'ānists' arguments on the comprehensiveness and sufficiency of the Qur'ān for the inference of the religious knowledge (for more information on their principles and criticisms, q.v. Rūshan ḍamīr, 2011:137-220; Brown, 1996: 43-59), but we will address their contentions on the authoritativeness of sunna. Nevertheless, these contentions have also various dimensions that have existed for a long time, including the emphasis on the non-divinity of the sunna, the blasphemous nature of adherence to sunna, the prohibition of Ḥadīth recordation in a historical era and the delays in its development, the transmission of the meaning of Ḥadīths, the restrictedness of the Ḥadīths to the time of the Prophet (s), the uncertainty about the issuance of the existing Ḥadīths from his majesty, the faults with the traditionists' way of selection and evaluation of Ḥadīth, the chain and textual criticism of the Ḥadīths by traditionists themselves, and the unpleasant consequences of the sunna authoritativeness such as bringing about discord among Muslims (for a comprehensive review of these doubts and their criticisms q.v. Ilāhībakhsh, 2000: 209-257; Rūshan ḍamīr, 2011: 226-270; Musa, 2008: 83-99; Brown, 1996: 43-107). Meanwhile, pointing the criticisms at the Sunnī Ḥadīth Ṣiḥāḥ – especially Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim – is*

*a new and important approach, since the belief in the authenticity of the Ḥadīths of these collections has been a definite and doubtless Sunnī conviction for centuries and any doubt in this belief casts serious doubts onto the Sunnī Ḥadīth legacy bases. It is because of this that Sunnī traditionists have intensely contradicted it and have tried to provide an appropriate response for it. It is noteworthy that this issue is part of a bigger discussion – that is, the evaluation system of the Sunnī Ḥadīths and the rate of its efficiency and effectiveness in the identification of the authentic Ḥadīths – as the composition of Ṣiḥāḥ and other Ḥadīths collections have been the result of this system and its principles. Despite its importance, the dimensions of this discussion has not examined yet. It should be noted that some articles have been written on the Qur’ānism movement, its historical background and context, and the Qur’ānists’ view toward sunna (As’adī, 2006: 95-106; Āqāyī, 2010: 91-112; Naṣiḥ, 2014: 153-179; Naṣiḥ, 2013: 193-216), but these articles have typically addressed the general and historical discussions or presented the doubts issued by the Qur’ānists in a broad and brief manner. Nonetheless, the topic of the present article has not been directly investigated in the past and some of the posed doubts have not been addressed independently, and there has not been a serious effort to study and infer the responses of the traditionists. The study at hand has adopted a descriptive-analytical method to answer the following questions:*

- 1. What reasons do the Qur’ānists offer to prove the inefficiency of the Sunnī Ḥadīth criticism system?*
- 2. How do the traditionists challenge the reasons offered for the inefficiency of the Ḥadīth criticism system?*

## ***2. The Qur’ānists’ reasons for the inefficiency of the Sunnī Ḥadīth criticism system and the criticism of them***

*The Qur’ānists have tried to show that the Sunnī Ḥadīth criticism system that has resulted in the development of Ḥadīth collections is inefficient. The most important reasons are as following.*

### **2.1. The existence of inauthentic Ḥadīths in the Ḥadīth collections**

*The Qur'ānists have explored the Ḥadīth books, especially Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, and have introduced some traditions that in their view are against the reason or are morally blameworthy, and so, they have tried to challenge the Ḥadīth criticism system; some of them have even asserted that they had changed their approach to Ḥadīth due to their encounter with suchlike traditions. For instance, Khājah Aḥmad al-Dīn Amrītsārī introduces the accidental finding of the tradition about Prophet Moses' punching on the Death Angel's eye as a turning point in his life, or similarly, Ghulām Jīlānī Barq asserts that finding traditions on the complete details of the conjugal relationships of Prophet Muḥammad eradicated his belief in Ḥadīth (Brown, 1996:95). Traditions about the previous prophets such as descriptions about the height of prophet Ādam, the robbing of Prophet Moses' clothes by a stone and his punching on the Death Angel's eye, the sexual intercourse of Prophet Solomon with 100 women in one night, the disdainful reports on the life practices and deeds of Prophet Muḥammad (s) such as having sexual intercourse with his fasting or menstruating wives or having sexual intercourse with all his wives in one hour or saying prayer without ablution, narrations on Prophet's seeing God in the Ascension Night, the analysis of natural phenomena through metaphysical issues such as depicting thunder as a celestial angel or specifying the nature of Ḥajar al-awsad as a stone from paradise, placing the sunrise and sunset between the two horns of Satan, describing the metaphysical creatures such as Satan, heavenly Cow, Guarded Tablet; narrations on the divine reward for good deeds such as the necessity of Paradise after one says *Lā Ilāha illallāh* or the merit of saying *Bism allāh al-rahmān al-rahīm*, the narrations on virtues such as sunset virtues, al-Aqṣā Mosque virtues, etc.; narrations on the abnormal phenomena such as the Opening of Chest and Ascension events, the recounts of the unseen, traditions related to Imām Maḥdī (May God hasten his reappearance), the Last Days and the pre-Reappearance events, medicinal traditions such as Dhabāb traditions, etc. are among the narrations that the Qur'ānists have intensely rejected and criticized (q.v. Jīlānī Barq, 1969: 210-325; Abū Rayya,*

1999: 149-198 & 234-249; Shahrūr, 2012: 19, 49, 69; Amīn, 2008: 131-133; Parwez, 2016: 179-182).

**2.1.1.** *The traditionists' responses to this doubt can be categorized in several classes (Sabā'ī, 2006: 310-320; Yamānī, 1981: 143-148; Shirbīnī, 2001: 792-813, 836-848, 867-875; Bahansāwī, 1988: 203-216, 279-282, 285-291, 305-307, 312-315; Abū Shuhba, 1988: 181-198; Hāshim, 2000: 105, 107-109, 112-114, 121-122; Hāshim, 1989: 130-181; Ḥakīm, 1981: 135-175; Salafī, 1999: 480-503).*

- A) *Part of these traditions is unsound and some of them cannot be traced back to the Prophet (s); in addition, the Ḥadīth critics have themselves pointed out the inauthenticity of these traditions.*
- B) *Using the assertions of the Ḥadīth transmitters and the interpreters of Ḥadīth books, one can find an appropriate and logical justification for these traditions.*
- C) *The language of some such traditions is allegorical.*
- D) *Using the Qur'ān, one can confirm the theme of these traditions.*
- E) *Exploring the narrative books, one might deem some of these narrations as diffused or consecutive traditions.*
- F) *Experience has shown the accuracy of some of these traditions, while it has not clearly revealed the inaccuracy of some others.*
- G) *Unduly distortions or fragmentations have occurred in reporting some of these traditions.*

## **2.2. *The prevalence of forgery and fabrication and the impossibility of discerning the authentic traditions***

*In the eyes of the critics of sunna, the existence of inauthentic traditions in the Sunnī Ḥadīth collections indicated deeper problems. In their viewpoint, if elite Ḥadīth transmitters such as Bukhārī and Muslim have not been able to discern forged traditions, then the problem is not about their commitment or honesty, but rather, it is in the efficiency of their method of Ḥadīth evaluation. In their search for the factors contributing to this lack of efficiency, the Qur'ānists have first explored*

*the historical path that traditions have passed to come to the Ḥadīth collection writers. The Ḥadīth rejecters believe that the time lapse between the development of Ḥadīth books and the Prophet's (s) era is great and extensive forgery has happened during this time. Despite his warning that "Anyone who deliberately attributes a false speech to me will be seated on fire" (Bukhārī, 2001, Vol.1:114; Kulaynī, 1986, vol. 1:62), forgery started from the lifetime of the Prophet (s) himself and extended during the Umayyad caliphate, as the forgers needed to fabricate traditions for themselves and against the Shī'a to strengthen their sovereignty. The same route was taken by Abbasid caliphate. In addition to these, ethnic, sectarian, and personal conflicts also led to Ḥadīth fabrication. For instance, heretics issued 12 thousand fictitious traditions. Even some virtuous Ḥadīth transmitters such as Nūḥ b. Maryam deemed permissible to forge Ḥadīth with benevolent intentions and motivations. The collective outcome of all these factors was the introduction of a great mass of fictitious and fabricated traditions into the Muslim Ḥadīth legacy. The amount of problems arising from Ḥadīth forgery can be evaluated based on the attestation of the Ḥadīth transmitters themselves. For instance, Bukhārī selected 90 thousand traditions from among 700 thousand ones. Therefore, the forged traditions have been so many that even the most able critics have had hard times discerning the authentic traditions from the fictitious ones, and there is no part of Ḥadīth works and collections in which the authentic and forged traditions are not blended. By mentioning the seemingly justified problem of the identification of few authentic traditions in a great mass of fictitious ones, the Ḥadīth rejecters argued that the method adopted by Ḥadīth transmitters does not have the needed efficiency to do such a huge undertaking. The least is, they say, that the Ḥadīth transmitters have been prone to mistakes and errors and it was not possible at all for them to have a complete knowledge of the aforementioned issues (Jilānī Barq, 1969: 130, 160; Ilāhībakhsh, 2000: 250; Abū Rayya, 1999: 121-202; Şidqī, 1927: 516; Parwez, 2016: 96).*

### 2.2.1 Criticism

*Ḥadīth defenders agree with the existence of forgery and fictitious traditions in Ḥadīth, but disagree with the Qur'ānists on the amount, the possibility of discerning, and the success rate of Ḥadīth scholars in the identification of fictitious traditions. Their responses are generally as follows (Sabā'ī, 2006: 92-121; Abū Zahw, 1983:301-315; Ilāh-ībakhsh, 2000:233,235,251; Shirbīnī, 2001: 394-441; A'zamī, 1976: 597-600; Bahansāwī, 1988: 76-79; Salafī, 1999: 29-93; Hāshim, 2000: 85-96; Hāshim, 1989: 128-134; Muṭ'anī, 2000: 169-174; Ḥakīm, 1981: 98-99; Yamānī, 1981: 44-48; Raslān, 2009: 56-88, 105-148; Brown, 1996: 96).*

- A) *The tradition tallying is done based on the number of the ways and chains of their transmission, and the statistics on the Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī's Ḥadīth selection from among 700 thousand traditions is also based on this standard. Therefore, the Ḥadīth refuters have exaggerated about the number of traditions they consider as fictitious.*
- B) *The traditions that the authors of Ṣiḥāḥ have not included in their books are not necessarily unsound or fictitious. For instance, as the complete name of Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī – that is, Al-Jāmi' al-musnad al-ṣaḥīḥ al-mukhtaṣar min umūr rasūlullāh (s) wa sunanuh wa ayyāmuh – denotes, Bukhārī has narrated a selection of the sound traditions, not all sound Ḥadīths he has had at his disposal.*
- C) *The traditions that exist in Ḥadīth collections other than Ṣiḥāḥ are not necessarily fabricated or fictitious.*
- D) *The efforts to identify the fictitious traditions have not started from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AH at the time of the first inscription of the Ḥadīth collections. Rather, the historical evidences and reports show that all Companions, the successors of the Prophet's Companions, and the successors of the successors of the Prophet's Companions have been careful in Ḥadīth narration and have tried to have a critical view in this regard. As a result, Ḥadīth criticism and standing against fictitious traditions has been a constant reality, the necessary refinements have been*

*applied to the Ḥadīth legacy, and the fictitious traditions have been identified. Therefore, the pause that Ḥadīth critics claim to have existed between the Prophet's (s) era and the initiation of the serious Ḥadīth criticism and analysis is simply nonexistent.*

- E) The traditionists have set and examined the required criteria and regulations for the identification of the fictitious Ḥadīths. This has made the task of the identification of suchlike Ḥadīths easy and straightforward.*
- F) In the light of their closeness to the Ḥadīth issuance era and their access to the resources that are not accessible to us today, the traditionists could better judge the traditions and their narrators.*
- G) In order to prove the existence of Ḥadīth fabrication, the Qur'ānists have relied on some traditions, without doubting the authenticity of the Ḥadīths they have used.*

### ***2.3. The ignorance of Ḥadīth content analysis and endeavor to justify the inauthentic traditions***

*The Sunnī Ḥadīth critics believe that the traditionists have had two responsibilities: the examination of the degree of authenticity of the Ḥadīth transmitters and the evaluation of the authenticity of the traditions. However, they have been so obsessed with the chain discussions, the exploration of the connectedness or disconnectedness of the chains of transmission, as well as the traceability or non-traceability and authoritativeness or non-authoritativeness of the transmitters that have not made any remarkable effort for the textual criticism of the traditions; this is exacerbated by the fact that Ḥadīth forgers formed and smartened the Ḥadīth so greatly that the traditionists could not identify the disagreements of their texts with the Qur'ān, intellect, etc. (Abū Rayya, 1999: 297-305; Amīn, 1975: 217-218; Rashīdriḍā, 1927:40; Parwez, 2016: 96). In the meantime, some of them believe that the traditionists have not been so neglectful of the content criticism, but instead of rejecting suchlike traditions, they have tried to interpret the problematic traditions in a way that enables them*

to remove the clear inconsistencies. This describes the reason for the existence of irrational traditions in the Ḥadīth collections (Brown, 1996: 97).

### **2.3.1. Criticism**

The main answers of the traditionists are as follows: (Sabā'ī, 2006:300-308; Shirbīnī, 2001: 667-672; Salafī, 1999: 316-400; Abū Shuhba, 1988:41-45; Bahansāwī, 1988: 80-83; 'Umarī, 1996: 27-32; A'zamī, 1989: 82-83, 88-90; Hāshim, 1989: 186-188; Muṭ'anī, 2000: 107-112; Raf'at Fawzī, 1979:38-42; Şubhī, 1988: 277-286; 'Uthman Falāta, 1981, vol.2: 65-70; Brown , 1996:99).

- A) *There are fairly numerous cases of Ḥadīth content criticism during the time of the Prophet's (s) Companions, the successors of the Prophet's Companions, and the successors of the successors of the Prophet's Companions. Therefore, historically speaking, the aforementioned method has been a completely known and applied procedure among Muslim scholars.*
- B) *Traditionists have developed clear and precise regulations for Ḥadīth content criticism, especially for the identification of the fictitious traditions. These include criteria such as not opposing the Qur'ān, the definite sunna, consensus, history, senses or observation, and the requirements of religion as well as being free from literal or spiritual vulgarity, etc. In addition, they have applied these regulations in many cases and have criticized the traditions and have consequently discarded some narrations despite the authenticity of their chain of transmission.*
- C) *In addition to the foregoing criteria, the traditionists have taken into account some chain-oriented criteria in the examination of various types of Ḥadīth and their designation as authentic or inauthentic. For instance, they have bound the authenticity or the reliability of the chain of a tradition to its freedom from textual abnormality (i.e. opposition to the content of a well-known tradition or one narrated by a more authoritative transmitter) and hidden textual defects (i.e. a covert fault in content that damages the authenticity of the tradition) or have*

*noted the heterogeneous tradition (one which is narrated in different, opposing forms), inverted tradition (the internal elements of which are displaced), erroneous tradition (the elements of which have changed to a somewhat related yet different elements), interpolated tradition (to which an external element such as the explanations of the transmitters have been imported), and the solutions to deal with them. A significant part of these discussions are related to the textual criticism.*

- D) Even in their discussions on the chains of transmission and the verification of the transmitter's required conditions, the traditionists have paid attention to the Ḥadīth texts, that is to say, they have explored the texts of the traditions to ascertain or reject the truthfulness or goodness of the narrator's traditions. Moreover, they investigated if a transmitter has been a true recorder of Ḥadīth based on the comparison between his transmitted Ḥadīth texts and the Ḥadīth texts of the authoritative transmitters and well-known Ḥadīth recorders (which is terminologically called I'tibār).*
- E) The intellectual practice is to first ascertain the truthfulness of the issuance of a transmission by a narrator and then to examine its theme. Traditionists have followed this practice and have focused more on the issuance and the transmission chains of the traditions.*
- F) Due to the strict criteria the scholars hold for the examination of the narrators' conditions and our confidence in their justness, recordation, preservation, and trusteeship, the existence of lies, mistakes, and forgetfulness in the text of the Ḥadīth is highly unlikely.*
- G) The nature of Ḥadīth is different from human recounts and reports, because firstly, the horizon of the knowledge and talents of the Ḥadīth original articulator – i.e. the Noble Prophet (s) – is higher and more noble than the human thought horizon and so, the use of the human's incipient thoughts and assumptions as the criteria to evaluate it is not always efficient. Secondly, the existence of ambiguities, allegorical language,*

*and figurative speech elements in some traditions and their reports on miracles and extraordinary events suggests the difficulty of the textual evaluation of Ḥadīth and the necessity of being precise in this regard. Consequently, the traditionists have been cautious in their treatment of the traditions and instead of rejection, have vigorously tried to justify and interpret them.*

#### **2.4. Weaknesses in the foundations of Rijāl viewpoints**

*This objection has several versions, with some concentrating on the possibility of the accurate Rijāl judgments and others on the shortcomings of the Sunnī Rijāl legacy (Abū Rayya, 1999: 348-356; Abū Rayya, 1965: 100, 121; Ṣidqī, 1908: 692-693; Parwez, 2016: 77-80; Brown, 1996: 97-99). One of these versions regards the time lapse between the traditionists and the Ḥadīth narrators. In other words, making judgments about our contemporary people is difficult, let alone doing so with regard to people who have passed away long ago and this point undermines the possibility of the traditionists' judgments about the Ḥadīth narrators. On the other hand, the existence or absence of authoritativeness and honesty is an internal trait and its certain disclosure is not possible. As a result, the traditionists cannot provide accurate and flawless judgments about Ḥadīth narrators based on the speculative rules and regulations of the Rijāl science. In addition, the possibility of pretense, hypocrisy, and covert deception of some transmitters and the inability of Rijāl scholars to see their real nature should not be ignored.*

*Another issue that should be noted is that this information is too little to ascertain one that all possible data has been collected about the narrators and true inferences have been made about them. Moreover, the Rijāl views have appeared in a situation replete with doctrinal, theological, and jurisprudential disagreements and the effectiveness of these conditions on the criticism of the transmitters in an isnād is not deniable. Finally, the Rijāl viewpoints are essentially some reports and narrations, and the shortcomings and errors that exist in other types of narration – such as forgery, error, and ignorance – is true for them,*

too, and their authenticity is also doubted.

#### **2.4.1. Criticism**

*The responses of the traditionists to the foregoing objection are as follows (Sabā'ī, 2006:297-298; Shirbīnī, 2001: 680-681; 'Umarī, 1994: 43-59; Ilāhībakhsh, 2000: 275; 'Umarī, 1996: 34-36; Hāshim, 2000: 235; Brown, 1996: 99).*

- A) *Although the formal Rijāl books were developed with some delay after the narrators' era, the Muslim scholars' efforts to examine the Rijāl conditions were undertaken before that time and in fact, the later books have been developed using the former people's words and resources. Therefore, part of the data of these books has been narrated from the people contemporary to the narrators based on the chains of transmission. Moreover, the narrators' critics have been closer to the narrators' era and their judgments are more accurate than those of the later ages. As a result, the time lapse between the traditionists and narrators will not be a problem due to the trust that exists to the constant Rijāl explorations and efforts, and the possibility of their lack of knowledge about the true nature of the narrators is not so solid and significant.*
- B) *The cases where there are disagreements between the views of Rijāl scholars as well as the times when they are affected by their assumptions are not comparable to the cases of agreement. Moreover, these few multiplicities are a sign of the caution and rigidity of the traditionists in dealing with Ḥadīth.*
- C) *The principles and regulations governing the narrators' evaluations have gradually developed and completed during the history through the confrontation with difficulties and problems such as forgery, deceit, and dishonesty in Ḥadīth, in a way that the possibility of error and mistake in the identification of the narrators' conditions has decreases significantly.*

#### **2.5. Forgery and distortion in the chains of transmission**

*The Qur'ānists believe that the chains of transmission have been forged and distorted just like the content of the traditions (Burton ,1977:14-*

19; Muir, 1861, vol. 1: xxvii, xxxvii). The phenomena such as deceit or the fabrication of chains of transmission to hide the forged nature of a tradition confirm this assertion. This is the possibility that the traditionists have not been aware of and this has led them to rely on such a weak foundation in their tradition evaluations (Brown, 1996: 97-99).

### **2.5.1 Criticism**

*Ḥadīth* defenders do not reject phenomena such as deceit or chain fabrication, but based on the traditionists' stipulations, they have paid attention to these phenomena and have addressed these issues in the books on fabricated *Ḥadīth*, the introductions of the *Rijāl* collections, and the *Rijāl* monographs about the deceitful narrators, etc. and have specified the instances of these people in practice. Therefore, the cases of deceit or chain fabrication are precisely clear. Moreover, the traditionists have repeatedly mentioned that the chain authenticity is not necessarily equal to the authenticity and originality of the text (Shirbīnī, 2001: 681-682; 'Umarī, 1996: 43).

### **3. Conclusion**

The Qur'ānists have questioned the authenticity of the Sunnī *Ḥadīth* collections to challenge the authenticity and authoritativeness of the sunna. To this end, they have analyzed *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* – the most authentic Sunnī *Ḥadīth* books – and have put forth cases that they deem are fabricated, and based on these counter examples and inauthentic cases have tried to shatter the belief into the authenticity of the traditions. In the second step, they have explored the historical period between the issuance of the traditions and their inscription in the books and have come to believe that fabrication has been a constant and common reality in this period and has polluted the *Ḥadīth* legacy in a way that the identification of the authentic tradition from the fabricated ones is practically impossible for the authors of *Ṣiḥāh*. The other objection they make against *Ḥadīth* transmission regards the tradition criticism methods that have been common among the traditionists. They believe that the traditionists have mostly criticized the chain of transmission and have neglected the more important

*textual and content criticism of the traditions, and when they have happened to know about the textual faults and problems of some traditions, they have tried to justify and interpret them rather than rejecting such traditions. The Qur'ānists do not even consider the traditionists' chain criticism to be effective, since they believe that the great time lapse between the traditionists and narrators, the impossibility of ascertaining the enjoyment of the internal traits such as justness by some people, the disagreements among Rijāl scholars and the differences between their assumptions and the foundations of their criticisms of Ḥadīth transmitters in an isnād, as well as the high possibility of the introduction of fabrication and error into Rijāl narrations cast serious doubts on the accuracy of this method of criticism. The last reason they put forth is that based on historical evidences, the fabrication and deceit have greatly polluted the chains of transmission and the foundations of chain criticism, and the traditionists have not taken this into account.*

*Ḥadīth defenders have insisted on some points in their responses. First, the nature and quiddity of Ḥadīth is different from narrations and other types of report, because they have been issued from a person whose knowledge is higher than that of the ordinary human beings. Moreover, some phenomena such as analogy or figurative and allegorical language are seen in Ḥadīth. Therefore, a mere observation of initial disagreements among different traditions should not lead one to suggest their fabrication and forgery based on his personal foundations. Accordingly, the counter examples that the Qur'ānists have found or their criticism of the traditionists' efforts to justify the traditions can be answered this way. Second, the Ḥadīth defenders put forth historical evidences to prove the great, precise, rigid, constant, and comprehensive efforts of the traditionists – be it in the realm of fighting against fabrication, criticizing the texts, or criticizing the chain of transmission – to show that there has been no gap between the issuance of the traditions and their inscription in the Ḥadīth collections, and this constant examination also reveals both the possibility of the identification of inauthentic Ḥadīth and the realization of this possibility. Therefore, although there is a historical gap and some text*

or chain fabrication has happened, the traditionists have paid attention to them and have introduced the people and instances of this fabrication to some extent. As a result, the existence of non-detailed knowledge about the existence of fabricated traditions in the *Ṣiḥāḥ* is rejected.

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