

## THE FORMATION OF THE NAJJĀRIYYA AND THEIR THEOLOGY

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### Abstract

The regions of Khorāsān and its environs had witnessed a great intellectual renaissance in various fields, whether in Islamic theology, jurisprudence, or other disciplines. Starting from the era of al-Ma'mūn, the Mu'tazilites emerged as a sect representing the authority. The Ṭāhirid State was established as a pro-Ma'mūn state in Khorāsān and helped to consolidate such a renaissance. The aforementioned regions had witnessed a lot of theological sects and many adherents of Islamic schools of thought. There were many debates and discussions among all these sects, especially during the notorious ordeal of the createdness of the Qur'an, which was spearheaded by the Mu'tazilites who forced people to adhere to their belief. The Najjārī Sect emerged from the womb of the Mu'tazila, the founder of the Sect, Al-Hussein bin Muhammad Al-Najjār, was described by sources as one of the greatest theologians as he was a student of the famous theologian Bishr Al-Marīsī. Afterward Al-Najjār formed a new independent doctrine, in which he combined many opinions from different theological schools of Islamic thought. More than ten sects have emerged from the Najjārī Sect; the most famous of which are the Borghoūthis, the Mustadrikas and the Za'farānis. This paper aims to shed light on the Najjārī Sect by providing a brief on the city of Ray as it was the hub of activity for the main sects of the Najjārīs. In addition, a synopsis of the theological opinions of the Najjārī sects shall be presented based on books of discourses (Maqālāt) and Islamic sects.

**Keywords:** History of Denominations, Ray, Khorāsān, Najjārīs, Za'farānis, Borghoūthis, Theology, Mu'tazilites, Kalam.



### NECCĀRİYE FIRKASININ TEŞEKKÜLÜ VE KELAM GÖRÜŞLERİ

İran'ın başkenti Tahran yakınlarındaki Rey şehri, hicrî V. yüzyıla kadar İslam tarihinin önemli şehirlerinden biri olmuştur. Horasan bölgesi ve çevresi, kelim ve fıkıh başta olmak üzere diğer çeşitli disiplinleri içeren büyük bir entelektüel

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rönesansa tanıklık etmiştir. Bilhassa, Me'mûn döneminden itibaren Mu'tezile'nin otoriteyi temsil eden bir mezhep olarak öne çıktığı görülmektedir. Tâhirî Devletinin ise Horasan'da Me'mûn yanlısı bir devlet olarak kurulduğu ve söz konusu entelektüel faaliyetlerin pekiştirilmesine büyük ölçüde yardımcı olduğu söylenebilir. Aynı zamanda söz konusu bölgeler, birçok kelâm mezhepleri dahil olmak üzere, farklı İslam düşünce ekollerine mensup muhtelif akımların ortaya çıkışına şahid olmuştur. Tüm bu mezhepler arasında özellikle Mu'tezile'nin, insanları inançlarına uymaya zorladığı, Kuran'ın yaratılışı meselesi gibi noktalarda insanları bir mihneye tâbi tuttuğu dikkat çekmektedir.

[Geniş Öz, çalışmanın sonunda yer almaktadır.]



### Introduction

The first three centuries of Islam represent one of the most important periods in the history of Islamic theology and the rise of Muslim doctrines that as opposed to some views, have matured. Many great incidents took place during this period, starting from the death of the Prophet, which resulted in a dispute on the issue of leadership '*İmamah*', which was promptly resolved. The same dispute rose again following the reign of Uthmân bin 'Affân (d.656) and 'Ali bin Abî Tâlib (d.661) resulting in wars among the Companions of the Prophet. In the wake of these wars, many Islamic doctrines were set up; The Khârijites appeared during the insurrection, '*Fitnah*' of Uthmân bin 'Affân, whereas the seeds of Shi'a were present supporting 'Ali bin Abî Tâlib against Mu'âwiya ibn Abî Sufyân (d.680). The Murjite doctrine had spread during the Umayyad period (661–750) as a means of political exploitation by the authority. All the above incidents have massively contributed to the formation of Islamic sects. In addition, the translation movement from foreign languages into Arabic and the introduction of philosophy to the Muslim scholarly environments, which started at the end of Hârûn al-Rashîd's (d.809) era and reached its peak during the reign of Ma'mûn have also contributed to the formation of Muslim sects. (Kaya, 2018)

The period of Ma'mûn (d.833) was a pivotal stage in the formation of Muslim minds as it opened the door for other cultures through an active translation movement into Arabic by Christian and Muslim philosophers (Kaya, 2018). Ma'mûn was surrounded by the Mu'tazilite scholars, and the Caliph was persuaded by Aḥmad b. Abî Du'âd (d. 854) with the issue of the createdness of the Qur'an. A widespread campaign was launched to force people to adhere to this belief, Al-Husein bin Mohammed Al-Najjar, a

disciple of the major theology scholars Bishr Al-Marīsī, was raised within these circles. Al-Najjār was not a traditional Mu'tazilite; however, he managed step by step to launch his own independent doctrine. His doctrine combined many well-known doctrines, including Mu'tazilite, Jabrism (Fatalism), Ahl Al-Sunnah (Sunnis), and other doctrines as will be mentioned in the paper.

I have based my paper on the citations of discourse (*Maqālāt*) writers about the Najjārī Sect while seeking to embrace objectivity in transmitting these views. It is worth noting that the research has encountered a great deal of confusion while transmitting such views as some conveyed certain opinions while others conveyed opposite opinions. The paper has explained that the Najjārī sect itself has been divided into several groups.

If we consider the sources that dealt with the Najjāriyya sect in general; it can be said that the most important of these sources is the book of *Maqālāt al-islāmīyīn* by Abu Al-Hassan Al-Ash'arī's (d.936) (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.). This is due to the fact that the author of the book is one of the greatest theologians, and the book itself contains objective opinions about the sects, as it is the case in the rest of the book. We also found valuable information about the Najjār's life according to Ibn al-Nadīm in his book *Al-Fihrist* (Al-Nadīm, 1997). In addition to this, Ibn Hazm (d.1064) in his book *Al-fiṣal fī l-milal wa-l-ahwā' wa-l-niḥal*, and Al- Baghdādī (d.1037) (Al-Baghdādī, 1988), who is known for his harsh approach against the sects opposing the Ash'arī school. We also found valuable statements from Al-Nasafī (d.1064) in *Tabsirat Al-Adillah* (Al-Nasafī, 2011), especially with regard to the influence of Al-Najjar on Al- Ash'arī in the theory of Acquisition.

As for recent studies, it is based on Al-Najjāriyya sect Muhammad Muhsin Radi "Al-'Ara' Al-Kalamiyah li Firqat Al- Najjāriyya" (Radi, 2017), Hind Bin Ahmad Al-'Usaimi "Al-Najjariyah Fi Kutub Al-Maqalat" (Al-'Usaimi, 2017), as well as İbrahim Hakkı İnal in his article 'Neccariyye Mezhebi Hakkında Bazı Mülâhazalar' (İnal, Neccariyye Mezhebi Hakkında Bazı Mülâhazalar, 2010). Finally, the importance of this article lies in that it will help researchers to find a summary of Najjāriyya and their theological views through what has been researched in the original sources in addition to recent studies. This is evident from the results presented at the end.

#### A. The City of Ray During The Ṭāhirid State

The Ṭāhirid State (821-873) was established by an Arab dynasty of the Khuza'a Tribe that ruled the provinces of Khorāsān (Çetin, 1998) and East Turkistan during the time of the Abbasid Caliphate between 205-259 AH.

Iran and the historical Khorāsān regions represented one of the key areas in Islamic history, especially until the sixth century AH. Khorāsān was brimming with scientific activities and bustling with theological schools in particular. This region includes current northwestern Afghanistan, parts of southern Turkmenistan, and Khorāsān Province in Iran. This period witnessed the rise of independent states that were remote from the center of the Caliphate in Baghdād. The Caliph held a symbolic status under which independent emirates had fallen due to the vastness of Islamic geography (Al-ʿAthīr, 1987). The status of the Caliph had weakened gradually along with the expansion of the Muslim land while as well as shuffling the centers of power within the state. The reason for such weakness was not limited to the spatial dimension of the State but also, for example, due to the ministers' control over the center of the Caliphate in Baghdād during the time of Ma'mūn. Moreover, there are other factors that led to the demise of the Caliph's authority other than the vastness of the Islamic state; these would include doctrinal differences that resulted in the emergence of several caliphates simultaneously, not to mention other independent states as well. Such caliphates include the Fatimid and the Abbasid states where each of them held the title of The Caliphate. The aforementioned factors also include the rise of other non-Arab original races with a mighty past, history, and culture such as the Persian race which had an influence on the reign of Ma'mūn. The Caliph, Ma'mūn, had a good reputation among the Khorāsānites so that they supported him in his war against his brother Al-Amin (Al-Ṭabarī, 1976) (Al-ʿAthīr, 1987). Tāhir bin Al-Hussein, founder of the Ṭāhirid State, had even intended to claim his complete independence from the Abbasid Caliphate in 207 AH/822 AD. The Ṭāhirids helped the Province of Khorāsān to flourish and made the city of Nishapur a center of Arabic literature and sciences (Al-Feki, 1999). As for the city of Ray (Shahr-e Rey), it is now located in the southeastern part of the city of Tehran in Iran. Ray has occupied a remarkable position in the history of Islam, and many prominent figures in various Islamic disciplines have emerged from it (Ansari, 2016). Sources cite that the Najjārī doctrine was widespread towards the end of Ma'mūn's reign (813-833 AD); especially within the city of Ray under the Ṭāhirid State. It is also probable that Al-Najjār and his master Bishr Al-Marīsī have taken part in the wide campaign that the Mu'tazilites had launched for the issue of the createdness of the Qur'an (Öz, 2006). Al- Baghdādī , who died in the fifth century of the Hijra, says that the influence of the Najjārī Sect in his time was highly prevalent in the city of Ray and that the Najjārīs were divided into more than ten sects (Al-Baghdādī, 1988).

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## B. Al-Hussein Bin Muhammad Al-Najjār

Sources do not mention much about Al-Hussein bin Muhammad Al-Najjār, which is the same case for many early theologians like him, because most historical sources were authored by Hadith scholars who are known to view theology and philosophy as unauthentic disciplines that should not be taught, studied, or disseminated. Hadith scholars were against giving way to theologians within the Muslim intellectual circles as they thought that discussions with theologians would bring doubts to Muslim minds regarding the fundamentals of Islam; hence little interest is found in the biographies of theologians and philosophers in the works of Muslim historians. Nothing much has reached us regarding the biographies of Muslim theologians and philosophers, except if the Islamic discourse books, such as Abu Al-Hassan Al-Ash'arī's (d.936) *"Maqālāt al-Islāmīyīn"*. However, some sources of theologians' biographies have reached us through the biographies of Muslim sects such as Ahmed bin Yahia Al-Murtada's *"Ṭabaqāt Al-Mu'tazilah"*. In later times, there has been an interest in the biographies of the Ash'arites as many of them were scholars in Shafi'i jurisprudence. Thus, Ash'arite biographies were abundant in Shafi'i jurisprudence books such as Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī's (d.1370) *"Ṭabaqāt Al-Shafi'iyah Al-Kubrā"*. al-Dhahabī (d.1348) wrote a biography of Al-Hussein bin Muhammad Al-Najjār in a few lines; he did not mention his birth or death dates though he said that Al-Najjār was a top Islamic theologian. It is even worse with regards to Muslim philosopher biographies as there is a scarcity of sources on philosopher biographies except for Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a's (d.1270) *"Uyūn al-Anbā' fi Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā"* (Al-Murtada, 1987) (Al-Subki, 1964) (Al-Dhahabi, 1985).

Al-Najjār's birth date and place is unknown to sources, According to Ibn Al-Nadīm he is of Persian origin from the city of Bam in modern Iran. Al-Hussein Al-Najjār used to be a tailor at *Dār al-Ṭirāz* (A Tailor shop) that belonged to Al-Abbās bin Mohammed Al-Hāshimī. However, some say that he worked in weights and scales. Ibn Al-Nadīm also mentions that Al-Najjār sounded like a bat when he spoke (Al-Nadīm, 1997). Al-Najjār grew up in Mu'tazilite circles, he is well known to have written refutations of the prominent Mu'tazilites Abū Mūsā al-Murdār (d.854) and Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Abdallāh al-Iskāfī (d.854) (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.). Sources also cite that Al-Najjār was a disciple of Bishr Al-Marīsī as it is mentioned in the Hadith scholar al-Dārimī's book on refuting the discourse of the latter prominent Mu'tazilite (Al-Dārimī, 2012). Moreover, Al-Najjār is known for a celebrated debate with the well-known Mu'tazilite Ibrāhīm Al-Nazzām (d.833) on the issue of the creation of the actions of people and attributing them to God, it

has been said that Al-Nazzām had kicked Al-Najjār following their debate and that the latter died immediately after the debate out of grief around 239 AH (Al-Nadīm, 1997). Al-Nadīm also cited many works of Al-Najjār including “*Al-Istiṭā’ah*”, “*Kān Yakun*”, “*Al-ṣifāt wa Al-Asmā’*”, “*Ithbāt Al-Rusul*”, “*Al-Ta’dīl wa al-Tajwīr*” among others; however, none of these works have reached us (Al-Nadīm, 1997).

### C. The Najjārī Sects

The Najjārī sects seem to have been widely spread so that Al-Ash‘arī counted them among the fundamental ten major sects (Al-Ash‘arī, n.d.) and the same for ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d.1166) (Al-Jīlānī, 1997); whereas Al-Āmidī considered the Najjārīs one of the major eight sects (al-Āmidī) and so did Al-Ījī (d.1356) (Al-Ījī, 1997) as well as Al-Shāṭibī (d. 1388). Some discourse books related the Najjārīs to Mu’tazilism including Ibn Ḥazm (d.1064) who referred to them as the closest sect of Mu’tazilites to the Followers of Sunnah (*Ahl Al-Sunnah*) (Ḥazm, Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī l-Milal wa-l-Ahwā’ wa-l-Niḥal). Al-Shahrastānī also said that Ray and its environs’ Mu’tazilites are Najjārīs (Al-Shahrastānī, n.d.) and he classified Al-Hussein bin Muhammad Al-Najjār, Ḥafṣ Al-Fard, and Ḍirār ibn ‘Amr al-Ghaṭafānī as moderate Mu’tazilites. However, Abu Al-Hassan Al-Ash‘arī attributed the Najjārīs to Irjā’ (Deferment) and said that Al-Hussein Al-Najjār believes in Irjā’ and mentioned them as the sixth sect of the Murjites (Al-Ash‘arī, n.d.); whereas Al-Nadīm (d.990) (Al-Nadīm, 1997), Ibn Ṭāhir Al-Maqdisī (Al-Maqdisī, 1991), Ibn Al-Jawzī (d.1201) (Al-Jawzī, 2001), and Al-Razī have attributed them to the sects of Jabris ‘Fatalism’.

The reason behind such confusion in the classification of Najjārīs seems to be due to the fact that they have been influenced by all the mentioned sects, as will be explained in this paper later. In addition, the Najjārīs have multiplied into ten sects that lasted for a short time, and it can be said that the Najjārīs were present till the fifth century AH, according to Al-Baghdādī’s earlier reference. The most prominent of the Najjārī sects are three as follows:

#### 1. The Borghoūthis

This sect is attributed to Mohammed bin ‘Issa who is known as Borghoūth; according to Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328), Borghoūth was among the group which Aḥmad b. Abī Du’ād had conscripted for the createdness of the Qur’an campaign. Ibn Abi-Du’ād is a celebrated Mu’tazilite judge and he was the main reason behind convincing Ma’mūn with the issue of the createdness of the Qur’an as well as forcing people to embrace it. Ibn Taymiyyah cited

that Ibn Abi-Du'ād asked Borghoūth to debate with scholars of Hadith on the question of the createdness of the Qur'an. (Taymiyyah, 1995). Borghoūth agreed with the founder of the Sect Al-Najjār in most of his discourse. However, he disagreed with him on some issues. He did not call a doer of action as a free agent but rather called him an acquirer as Ash'arism is known among theologians for proclaiming that an agent is in fact an acquirer which was later known as the Theory of Acquisition *Al-Kassb* in the question of people's actions (Īnal, *Īslam'da Kesb Doktrininin Kökeni*, 2016). Borghoūth also holds that actions are in fact the actions of God and that human beings have acquired these actions through affirmation of nature; just as a tree's nature is to move according to the movement of the air – a discourse that is close to Jabrism (Al-Baghdādī, 1988). Moreover, Borghoūth claimed that the Words of God are recent and that if they are recited, they are accidental; and if they are written, they are material which is close to the Mu'tazilite discourse of the createdness of the Qur'an (al-Āmidī).

## **2. The Za'farānis**

The founder of this sect is a man called Al-Za'fāranī, he lived in Ray and Al-Baghdādī criticized him severely, saying that he was contradictory in his discourse by claiming that the Words of God are not like Him. Then he says that the Words of God are created. Some historians mentioned that Al-Za'fāranī wanted to become famous so he hired a man to head to Mecca to curse and damn him during pilgrimage seasons. It is also cited that his followers went too far in believing him (Al-Baghdādī, 1988).

## **3. The Mustadrikas**

The sect was called the Mustadrikas (the Realizers) because they realized what has been hidden from their predecessors as they banned proclaiming that the Qur'an is created. At the same time, the Mustadrikas viewed it as created, which means that not all the Najjārīs were Mu'tazilites. Even though, Al-Baghdādī mentioned that the Mustadrikas have been divided among themselves in this regard; a sect said that the arrangement of the letters as recited by the Prophet is created while another sect claimed the other opposite and both sects had condemned whoever argues against their respective discourse on that question. Al-Baghdādī further mentioned that a group of Mustadrikas in Ray claim that the discourses of their opponents are nothing but lies whether these discourses were true or false; even if one of them called the Sun a Sun he is a liar. Al-Baghdādī says that he debated with one from this group and overwhelmed him in argument (Al-Baghdādī, 1988).

#### **D. Theological Opinions Of The Najjārīs**

The Najjārī theological opinions, which shall be mentioned here, are the opinions that have survived to us from the books of discourses and theology. It has been cited above that there has been a disagreement regarding the classification of the Najjārīs as some classified them as Mu'tazilites, others as Jabris. In contrast, some considered them among the Murjites. In my opinion, such difference in classification is due to the discourse or opinions of the sect that was influenced with all the above sects. It is likely, however, that the Mu'tazilite creed was a prominent influence on the thought of Al-Hussein Al-Najjār, the founder of the Sect, as he was taught by the renowned Bishr Al-Marīsī (Kilavuz, 1987). On top of the opinions that illustrate the Mu'tazilite influence on the Najjārīs is their opinion with regards to the divine essence and attributes of God. The Najjārīs tend to negate the excess attributes to the essence of God, based on the Mu'tazilite principle of the differentiation between divine essence and attributes. The Mu'tazilites are famous for viewing monotheism as the disassociation of the essence of God from all the attributes that would present an illusion of similitude or defect. Hence, Al-Qādī Abd Al-Jabbār (d.1025) has pointed out that the Najjārīs ascribed the attribute of the divine will to the essence of God as they have not made a distinction between the attribute of divine will and His essence (Abd al-Jabbār, 1996). Al-Shahrastānī has also mentioned that Al-Najjār said that the Exalted Creator is both willing for Himself and aware of Himself. He had obliged all attachment, and hence it was ordained, and thus He is willing of good and evil as well as benefit and harm (Al-Shahrastānī, n.d.). Al-Najjār's motives here are the same as the Mu'tazilites in fleeing the principle of the multiplicity of the ancients as claiming that the attribute of divine will is an independent ancient and eternal quality from the ancient essence of God would lead to a multiplicity of the ancients.

Al-Ash'arī cited Al-Najjār's opinion that God has always been magnanimous through denying miserliness to Him and He has always been speaking in the sense that He has never been incapable of speaking (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.) – another example of the Mu'tazilite influences of interpreting the essential attributes of the divine through negation. al-Ḥākim al-Djushamī (d.1101) further added that Al-Najjār had followed the same principle in the rest of God's attributes by maintaining that the meaning of 'God is aware' is just that He is not ignorant, and the meaning of 'God is capable' is that He is not incapable, the meaning of 'God is alive' is that He is not dead and that in fact there are no attributes to God (al-Djushamī, 1995) and thus the same principle seemingly applies to the rest of the attributes of God exponentially.

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The negation of imperfections of the divine essence is a recurring issue among different Islamic sects and doctrines. Some have traced it to Greek philosophy where there is evidence that a god cannot be ascribed any attributes whatsoever. The same principle is found in the Ismaili creed clearly and prominently as Ismailism did not approve of ascribing the Creator with any attributes, be they negative or positive (Mahmud, 2020).

The Najjārī concept of will deserves to be well considered i.e., the study of the relationship between the will of God and the will of man and what are the limits of God's will and man's will. This issue has been one of the broad discussions among Muslim theologians from different sects. Jabrism, for instance, claim that man has no will at all and that he is nothing but a feather in wind and hence his actions are the creation of God; whereas the Mu'tazilites stood on other contrary and considered the issue through God's justice, for as long as God is ascribed with the attribute of justice, He does not interfere with the will of man. Hence, the actions of man are created by man and therefore man shall be held accountable at the Day of Judgement. If man was not the creator of his actions, then judging him on such actions would have been some sort of absurdity and injustice that are attributable to God. It is evident that God is above all absurdity and injustice as wisdom and justice are among His prominent attributes and qualities. The Ash'ari thought has yielded what is called the Theory of Acquisition "*Al-Kasb*" which can be summed as God provides man with an action when man does an action (Al-Jalayned, 2010).

The Najjārīs have maintained that God is willing for Himself i.e., His will is His essence as stated above through holding that the divine attributes are the essence of God so as to avoid the principle of the multiplicity of the eternal. They also hold that God is willing in the sense that He is neither forced nor powerless (Abd al-Jabbār, 1996) (Ḥazm, Kitāb al-Fiṣal fī l-Milal wa-l-Ahwā' wa-l-Niḥal) (Al-Shahrastānī, n.d.). This also shows what the Najjārīs have followed in respect of the interpretation of divine attributes and proving them through denying their opposites and negating them. As for the will of man, some authors of Islamic discourse books cite that the Najjārīs disagreed with the Mu'tazilites by claiming that God is the creator of people's actions and that human beings acquire their actions and the same applies to their abilities (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.) (Al-Baghdādī, 1988) (Al-Shahrastānī, n.d.). In spite of this, Al-Bāqillānī mentioned that the Najjārīs maintained that people create their actions by means of their capacity and that God has no power over their actions (Al-Bāqillānī, 1950). Both discourses may indicate that a group of Najjārīs agreed with the Mu'tazilite discourse, whereas the other

group maintained something else. There is evident inconsistency when citing the Najjārī discourses regarding the issue of will as some authors attribute them to acquisition while others to Mu'tazilites. There is an important note, however, that the Māturīdī theologian Abu Al-Mu'īn Al-Nasafī has raised as he mentioned that Abu Al-Hassan Al-Ash'arī has followed Abu 'Issa Mohammed bin 'Issa who is called Borghoūth in claiming Acquisition as he says, *'Then the Ash'arites even if they agree with us in the essence of the doctrine, I have claimed however that what has been destined to man is called Acquisition 'Kassb' not an action of his own nor it is called creation... Al-Ash'arī has followed Abu 'Issa Mohammed bin 'Issa who is known as Borghoūth in this opinion.'* (Al-Nasafī, 2011). Another detail of the Najjārī discourse in the action of man is cited as they have claimed that man does not do actions to others; but rather does it to himself in terms of movement, stillness, will, knowledge, disbelief, and faith. Whereas the actions that are separate from the actions of man such as an animal's pain when hit or the movement of a stone if pushed are the actions of God (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.) (Al-Baghdādī, 1988).

The Najjārīs also claimed that the ability of man cannot precede his action; it is present at the time of man's doing of the action and that God bestows man with the capacity to do an action at the time of doing it. This is close to the Ash'arite Theory of Acquisition and is confirmed by the fact that they maintained that every action a man does has an independent capacity that occurs when the action is carried out. Such capacity occurs when an action is done and is absent in the absence of the action as this capacity is a sort of accident (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.). The issue of the creation of the actions of people also includes the question of commendation and repugnance (*Tahsīn wa-Taḳbīh*) which is acknowledged in theology; it means how an action of man deserves praise or dispraise, and whether it is out of Shar' (Islamic Law and commandments) or out of the action of man. While the Māturīdīs and Ash'arites thought that good and bad actions are judged based on the commandments and prohibitions set forth in holy texts and not dependent on reason; the Mu'tazilites thought that a good or bad action is based on reason; as per their doctrine that focuses on the action of man and his creation of such action which is the requirement of reason (Abd al-Jabbār, 1996). Meanwhile, the Najjārīs maintained a commendable opinion in this regard, they thought that every action is multifaceted; one side is bad and another is good, whereas the Ash'arites and Māturīdīs reproved the Najjārīs for claiming the multifacetedness of actions (Al-Nasafī, 2011).

The question of faith is one of the fundamental issues discussed by theologians, hence the Islamic sects have differed on the definition of faith

and how to become a Muslim. Is it limited to belief only or does belief require proclaiming the two declarations of faith; or whether deeds are part of faith. Based on all the above notions, the departure of man from Islam is henceforth determined. Without going much into the details of the issue because there is no plenty of room for such discussion here, the Najjārī opinion on faith shall be directly presented. The Najjārīs see that faith is a success granted from God and that the capacity of man and the deliverance of faith are nothing but the act of God. In contrast, the unbelievers had no success in receiving such guidance, and therefore, they are failed by God as God has misled them and sealed their hearts. If God wanted to guide them, He would have done so, for if He wanted to be kind to all the unbelievers and make them believers, He would have done so. Such opinion is contrary to the opinion of the Mutazilites, who believe that God's justice would require that this matter is to be left wholly to the action of man as man guides himself by his actions and so does the unbeliever. The Najjārīs, however, stand here next to the Ash'arites, the Māturīdīs, and Hadith scholars (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.) as the Najjārīs believe that whatever happens in the universe is pending to God's will and nothing escapes His will. Therefore, God wills whatever that happens to be it good or evil, disbelief or belief, and obedience or disobedience (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.). The Najjārīs claimed that God can charge people with unbearable things, as He charged the unbelievers with what they cannot do, that is faith. However they maintained that such inability is due to the unbelievers' relinquishment of the act itself, and not due to their incapacity or a deficiency that has befallen them (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.) (Radi, 2017).

The Najjārī concept of faith is the acknowledgement of God and His messengers as well as testifying such belief with the tongue. Hence, whoever is ignorant of any of these notions, the argument is established against him and if he did not acknowledge them, then he is a disbeliever. Moreover, Ibn Taymiyyah has pointed out that the Najjārīs claimed that faith is the acknowledgement of God, His Messengers, His collectively concurred obligations, and mandates as well as man's submission to God in all of that (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1992). According to al-Baghdādī, the Najjārīs claim that "*We have combined submission to God to acknowledgment and knowledge of Him since Satan Iblis knew of God and acknowledged Him; however, he became a disbeliever due to his pride and arrogance*". According to al-Shahrastānī, they argue that faith is belief, which is close to the Murjite discourse, Al-Ash'arī further mentioned that the Najjārīs claimed that if a man abandoned a trait of faith, then he is sinful, and that man does not become a disbeliever by

deserting a single trait of faith as they see that deeds are not part and parcel of the basis of faith. The Najjārīs also thought that people of major sins are believers even if they die insisting on doing such major sins and they are to be judged by God who would chastise or forgive them according to His wish. May be this why some authors of Islamic theological discourse books have classified the Najjārīs as being Murjites as it has been mentioned above. The Najjārīs also believed that faith increases and does not decrease and that Muslims vary in terms of faith, an opinion – negation of the decrease of faith – that has been maintained by some Islamic jurists who follow the Successors (followers) of the Companions of the Prophet according to Ibn Taymiyyah. Moreover, the Najjārīs maintained that the disbelievers are to remain in Hell for eternity and that the believers shall be in Paradise even if they committed major sins and died insisting on them.

The issue of the infallibility of prophets is one of the major issues that have been treated in Islamic theology literature, Ibn Hazm mentioned that the Najjārīs said that the prophets are all infallible to major and minor sins – a view that Ibn Hazm himself concurs as well in a detailed treatment of the issue of the infallibility of the prophets where the Najjārī opinion stating that the prophets should not commit minor sins let alone major sins is mentioned (Ḥazm, Kitāb al-ḥajj al-ḥajj al-ḥajj al-ḥajj al-ḥajj; Ḥazm, Kitāb al-Ḥajj al-Ḥajj al-Ḥajj al-Ḥajj al-Ḥajj). The Najjārīs have also agreed with the Sunnis in the issues of sustenance and man's term of life; they thought that God provides for both lawful and unlawful sustenance, they have divided such sustenance into two sections – one for nourishment and the other for possession and ownership.

Al-Baghdādī mentioned that the Najjārīs have charged prominent figures among the Companions of the Prophet (such as the Kharijites) with infidelity and that they do not approve of any of such figures' sayings in the matters of Shariah, as the Najjārīs did not endorse Prophetic narratives – a citation of Al-Baghdādī that needs to be carefully considered as it contradicts with mentioned discourses above, especially that the Najjārīs have concurred with Sunnis and Mu'tazilites in many discourses and that both sects did not charge the Companions with infidelity.

As for the issues of the Hereafter, the Najjārīs rejected seeing God by means of vision in this world or the afterworld – agreeing with the Mu'tazilites on the issue. Al-Hussein bin Al-Najjār said that God may divert sight to the heart and make the ability of sight within the eyes turns to the heart so that man can see his Lord i.e., man acknowledges without not seeing

Him by means of vision. The Najjārīs have also disproved of punishment in the grave, Al-Najjār conceived that Paradise and Hell may have been created. However, he maintained that they have not been factually created but are rather to be created on the Day of Resurrection (Al-Ash'arī, n.d.).

Furthermore, Al-Baghdādī mentions that the Najjārīs thought that the body is made of combined accidents, and that there are some accidents that are inseparable from the body such as color, taste, and odor, whereas some accidents and their opposites could be absent from the body such as knowledge and ignorance. They also maintained that the Words of God are accidental if they are recited, material if they are written and that if they were written in blood, such laky blood would constitute letters of God's Words, Whereas they have not been so when they were mere blood before being written with (Al-Baghdādī, 1988).

### **Conclusion**

The Najjārī Sect rose by the late second century AH during the period of the Abbasid Caliph Ma'mūn in the city of Ray at the time of the Ṭāhirid State. The Ṭāhirids are famous for supporting Ma'mūn in his war against his brother Al-Amīn. There is reference that Borghoūth – a prominent Najjārī theologian – has contributed to the createdness of the Qur'an Campaign where he was one of the scholars whom Aḥmad ibn 'Abī Du'ād conscripted to debate with Ahamed bin Hanbal to convince him of the createdness of the Qur'an. The founder of the Sect Al-Hussein bin Mohammed Al-Najjār has been accounted for by authors of books on Islamic theological discourse as being a prominent theologian., Al-Nadīm has cited many of his writings that indicate the vastness of his knowledge. However, none of his treatises has survived to reach us, as it is the case of many other theologians of the first three centuries AH. It seems that Al-Najjār was brought up as a Mu'tazilite then he became distinct from the Mu'tazilites by in many respects that express his independent thinking which combines the opinions of the Mu'tazilites, the Murjites, and the Sunnis among others.

The Najjārīs concurred with other Muslim sects who maintain that knowledge should be attained by means of contemplation and reasonable inference before the introduction of religious traditions, such sects are spearheaded by the Mu'tazilites and the Māturīdīs. They, the Najjārī Sect, have agreed with the Mu'tazilite discourse against the separation between divine attributes and essence to escape the issue of the multiplicity of the ancients as claiming an ancient attribute that is independent from the ancient essence of God would involve a discourse of the multiplicity of the ancients

which leads to the claim of the polytheists that God has other counterparts. They have also interpreted many of the divine attributes – according to the few excerpts that have reached us – by means of negating their opposites i.e., the meaning of God being magnanimous and generous is that He is not a miser, and the meaning of God being knowledgeable is that He is not ignorant.

On the issues of fate, predestination, and the creation of the actions of people, the Najjārīs maintained the influence of God’s action on man and that man acquires his actions. Al-Nasafī cited that Al-Ash‘arī had adopted the concept of acquisition from Mohammed Al-Borghoūth the celebrated Najjārī theologian (Al-Nasafī, 2011). The Najjārīs also maintained that guidance is a success that is granted by God and that disbelief and misguidance are a failure inflicted by God upon man. They further claimed that all such success or failure are created by God and that if God wanted to be kind to all mankind and grant it Paradise, He would have done so – an opinion that agrees with the Sunni sects including Ash‘arites, Māturīdīs and Hadith scholars.

Finally, the Najjārīs maintained that faith is nothing but acknowledgement and testimony by the tongue and that deeds are not the essence of faith. However, they claimed that submission to God is mandatory in faith as the predicament of Satan was born from his defiance to God. Hence, submission to God has to be acknowledged and if a man had an argument established against him and he did not submit to God, then he would be accordingly a disbeliever. The Najjārīs also maintained that faith increases but not decreases, a discourse that is further claimed by some Sunni scholars. Moreover, the Najjārīs concurred with Sunnis in the issues of promise and threat as well as the standpoint towards committers of major sins. They also maintained that the disbelievers shall dwell eternally in Hell and the believers shall be indefinitely in Paradise, the Najjārīs further claimed that committers of major sins are considered to be among the believers in Paradise, even if they died insisting on practicing such major sins. In agreement with Sunnis, the Najjārīs maintained that man dies when his term of life is over and that he does not die until he had fulfilled his sustenance.

**Table 1:** Classification Of Najjārīs In Islamic Discourse Books (Al-'Usaimi, 2017)

Book	Classification			
	Jabris	Murjites	Mu'tazilites	Independent Sect
<i>Maqālāt al-islāmīyīn</i> By Al-Ash'arī		√		
<i>Al-Farq bain Al-Firaq</i> By Al-Baghdādī				√
<i>Al-Tabsīr Fī Al-Dīn</i> By Al-Isfrāyīnī				√
<i>Al-milal wa-al-niḥal</i> By Al-Shahrestānī	√			
<i>Al-fiṣal fī l-milal wa-l-ahwā' wa-l-niḥal</i> By Ibn Ḥazm			√	
<i>I'tiqādāt firaq al-muslimīn wa-al-mushrikīn</i> By Al-Rāzī	√			
<i>Al-Burhān</i> By Al-Saksakī		√		
<i>Al-Munyah Wa Al-Amal</i> By Al-Sharīf Al-Murtaḍá	√			
<i>Al-Hur Al-'lyn</i> By Al-Ḥimyarī		√		
<i>'Qā'id Thalāth Wa Sab'in Firqa</i> By Al-Yamanī		√		
<i>Talkhīs Al-Bayān</i> By Al-Fakhrī		√		



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## NECCÂRİYE FIRKASININ TEŞEKKÜLÜ VE KELAM GÖRÜŞLERİ

 Rami İbrahim MAHMUT<sup>a</sup>

### Geniş Öz

İran'ın başkenti Tahran yakınlarındaki Rey şehri, hicrî V. yüzyıla kadar İslam tarihinin önemli şehirlerinden biri olmuştur. Horasan bölgesi ve çevresi, kelam ve fıkıh başta olmak üzere diğer çeşitli disiplinleri içeren büyük bir entelektüel rönesansa tanıklık etmiştir. Bilhassa, Me'mûn döneminden itibaren Mu'tezile'nin otoriteyi temsil eden bir mezhep olarak öne çıktığı görülmektedir. Tâhirî Devletinin ise Horasan'da Me'mûn yanlısı bir devlet olarak kurulduğu ve söz konusu entelektüel faaliyetlerin pekiştirilmesine büyük ölçüde yardımcı olduğu söylenebilir. Aynı zamanda söz konusu bölgeler, birçok kelâm mezhepleri dahil olmak üzere, farklı İslam düşünce ekollerine mensup muhtelif akımların ortaya çıkışına şahid olmuştur. Tüm bu mezhepler arasında özellikle Mu'tezile'nin, insanları inançlarına uymaya zorladığı, Kuran'ın yaratılışı meselesi gibi noktalarda insanları bir mihneye tâbi tuttuğu dikkat çekmektedir. Buna rağmen, Mu'tezile fırkasından pek çok bağımsız görüşün ortaya çıktığı ve daha sonra bu bağımsız görüşlerin İslam coğrafyasının birçok yerinde yeni ekollere zemin hazırladığı öne sürülebilir. Yukarıda sözü edilen durumlara maruz kalanlar arasında Muhammed b. Hüseyin en-Neccâr örnek olarak verilebilir. En-Neccâr hakkında elimizde fazla bir bilgi bulunmamakla birlikte, İran asıllı olduğunu ve terzilik yaptığını biliyoruz. Ayrıca kendisi, Mu'tezili ekolün nüfuz sahibi olduğu bir coğrafyada yetişmiştir. Biliniyor ki en-Neccâr, İbrahim en-Nazzâm gibi meşhur Mu'tezilî kelamcılara bazı kelâmî konularda cevap veren kitaplar yazmıştır. Kendisinin meşhur kelamcı düşünür Bîşr b. Gıyas el-Merîsî'nin öğrencisi olduğu bilinmektedir. Kendi adını taşıyan ve en-Neccâriyye grubu olarak bilinen bağımsız bir fırka kurduğu da bilinmektedir. Zamanla bu fırkanın geniş bir coğrafyaya yayıldığı, hatta önemli bir makâlât yazarı olan Ebû'l

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Hasan el-Eş'arî'nin en-Neccâriyye'yi ana fırkalardan biri olarak saydığı görülmektedir.

Neccâriyye ekolünden yaklaşık on farklı fırkanın ortaya çıktığı, ancak bunlardan sadece üçü hakkında yazılı kaynaklardan bilgi edinilebileceği söylenebilir. Bu fırkalar ise el- Burgûsiyye, el- el-Za'ferâniyye, ve el-Mustadrakiyedir.

el- Burgûsiyye fırkasına gelince, bu fırka Burgut lakaplı Muhammed b. İsa'ya atfedilmiştir. Fırkanın bazı kelâmî meselelerde farklı noktalarda dursa da, en-Neccâr'ın görüşlerinin çoğunda hemfikir olduğu söylenebilir. Örneğin bu fırka, fiilin sahibini fâil olarak isimlendirmek yerine daha ziyade onu müktesip olarak adlandırmıştır. İnsanın fiillerini genel anlamda Allah'ın fiileri olarak görmekle beraber kulun da kendi tabiatının gereği o fiili kesp ettiğini iddia etmiştir. Bu görüşün ise Mürcie mezhebinin görüşleriyle paralellik arz ettiği söylenebilir. Buna ilaveten bu fırka, Allah'ın kelamının ilk başta hâdis olduğunu, okunduğunda âraz olduğunu, yazıldığında ise cisimleştiğini öne sürmüştür.

İkinci fırka olan el-Zafarâniye fırkasının kurucusu, ise Rey şehrinde yaşayan el-Zafarânî adında bir kelamcı olarak bilinmektedir. el-Mustadrakiye fırkası ise kendilerinden önceki kelamcıların görüşlerini düzelttikleri için, bu adla anılmışlardır. Bu görüşlerin başında Kuran'ın yaratıldığı görüşü yer almaktadır. Ancak el-Bağdadi'nin işaret ettiği gibi, el-Mustadraka da bu konuda bölünmüş durumdadır.

Makâlât yazarları, Neccâriyye grupları ve bunların nasıl sınıflandırılacağı konusunda ihtilafa düşmüşlerdir. Bazıları onları, mezhepsel olarak Mu'tezile'ye nispet ederken, diğer bazıları Cebriye mezhebine nispet etmişler; aynı durum Mürcie mezhebine nispet edilip edilemeyecekleri konusunda da söz konusu olmuştur. Bu tasnif karışıklığının temel olarak Neccâriyye fırkasının, merkezî doktrinlerinin hem Mu'tezile ve Mürcie hem de Cebriye'nin görüşlerini içermesinden kaynaklandığı ileri sürülebilir. Ayrıca, bu fırkaların hiçbir eserinin günümüze ulaşmadığı, onların görüşlerinin daha çok tarih kitapları ve makâlât literatüründe geçen bilgilerden derlendiği göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, günümüzde mensubu bulunmayan Neccâriyye mezhebi hakkında detaylı bilgiye ulaşmanın oldukça güç olduğu belirtilmelidir.

Öte yandan, en-Neccâr mezhebinin Mu'tezile'den diğer gruplara nazaran daha fazla etkilendiği söylenebilir. Mu'tezile'nin Neccâriyye üzerinde etkili olduğu kelâmî görüşlerin başında, sıfatlar ve zât meselesine dair görüşleri örnek olarak gösterilebilir. Mu'tezile'nin temellerini, zât ve sıfatlar

arasındaki ayrımın oluşturduğu ve Neccâriyye'nin de Allah'ın zâtına zâid olan sıfatları nefy ettiği göz önüne alınırsa iki mezhep arasında ciddî anlamda bir benzerlik olduğu açığa çıkacaktır.

Sonuç olarak, elimizdeki kaynaklardan bu fırka hakkında bize ulaşan bilgiler doğrultusunda, grubun görüşleri şu şekilde özetlenebilir: Neccâriyye, bilginin işitme yetisinden önce göz ve akıl yoluyla elde edilmesi gerektiğini söyleyen Mu'tezile ve Mâtürîdî başta olmak üzere, bu konuda aynı görüşü öne süren İslam mezheplerinin görüşlerine katılmıştır. Bize ulaşan bilgilere göre Neccâriyye Allah'ın sıfatlarını, bu sıfatların karşıtlarıyla ilişkisi içinde ele alarak açıklamıştır. Örneğin, Allah'ın cömert olması cimri olmaması anlamında olup Allah'ın bilen olması cahil olmaması anlamına gelmektedir. Kader, takdir ve kulların fiillerinin yaratılışı meselesinde ise Neccâriyye, Allah'ın fiilinin kulu etkilediğini, ancak kulun bu fiili kendi ameliyle iktisap ettiğini öne sürmüştür. Nitekim insanın tüm fiillerini yaratan Allah'tır. Eğer Allah, tüm kullarına iyilik edip onları cennete almak isteseydi bunu yapmasında bir beis olmazdı. Neccâriyye, imanın sadece dil ile tasdik olduğuna ve amelin imandan bir cüz olmadığına inanmıştır. Fakat, imanda teslimiyetin gerekli olduğunu ve teslimiyetin bilinmesi gerektiğini söylemişlerdir. Zira şeytanın Allah'a teslim olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca imanın ne arttığını ne de eksildiğini iddia etmişlerdir. Kafirlerin cehennemde, müminlerin ise cennette ebedî kalacaklarını söylemişlerdir. Büyük günah işleyenler meselesinde ise bu kimselerin mümin olduklarını, nihai olarak Allah'ın rahmetiyle cennete gireceklerini iddia ettikleri görülmektedir.

Bu makale Neccâriyye fırkasının kelâmî görüşlerinin teşekkülü açısından ele alınmasını konu edinmektedir. Amaç, bu fırkanın en önemli kelâmcıları hakkında kelâm eserlerinde zikredilen görüşleri araştırıp derleyip ortaya koymaktır. Buna ek olarak, Neccâriyye hakkında son zamanlarda yapılan çalışmaları da ihmal etmeden dikkate almaktır. Bu çalışmalar sayesinde makalenin sonuna fırkanın makâlât kitaplarındaki durumunu gösteren bir tablo yerleştirilmiştir. Yöntem açısından makale; Neccâriye fırkası hakkında makâlât kitaplarında yer alan görüşleri toplayarak bu görüşler arasında bir karşılaştırma yapmış ve çalışmamızda kelam meselelerine ilişkin doğru bir görüş elde edilmeye çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Mezhepler Tarihi, Rey, Horasan, Neccâriyye, Za'faraniler, Burgûsiler, Kelâm.



**Teşekkür:**

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**Beyanname:**

**1. Özgünlük Beyanı:**

Bu çalışma özgündür.

Bu çalışma "" başlıklı doktora/yüksek lisans tezinden üretilmiştir.

**2. Etik Kurul İzni:**

Etik Kurul İzni gerekmemektedir.

Bu çalışma için etik kurul izni, Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulu'nun 21.05.2021 tarihli ve 2021/23 numaralı kararı ile alınmıştır.

**3. Finansman/Destek:**

Bu çalışma herhangi bir finansman ya da destek almamıştır.

**4. Katkı Oranı Beyanı:**

Yazar, makaleye başkasının katkıda bulunmadığını beyan etmektedir.

Yazarlar, makaleye eşit oranda katkı sağlamış olduklarını beyan etmektedirler.

**5. Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı:**

Yazar, herhangi bir çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmektedir.

Yazarlar, herhangi bir çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmektedirler.

