

## The Change Caused by the Transition of Ash'arî to Ahl-i Sunnah in the Religious Paradigm

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Araştırma


Hüseyin Aydın

Professor, Selcuk University, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Department of Kalam  
Prof. Dr., Selçuk Üniversitesi, İslami İlimler Fakültesi, Kalam Anabilim Dalı  
Konya, Türkiye

 huseyin.aydin@selcuk.edu.tr  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8285-5181>

Author  
Yazar

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One of the theologians who had the greatest influence in the history of Islamic thought is Ash'arî. He successfully applied Mu'tazilah's rational method to Salaf's views. The transition of a strong scholar like Ash'arî from Mu'tazilah to Ahl-i Sunnah increased the dialogue between the two schools. This dialogue is based on the kalam method. People of the submissive narration who refused this rational method started to lose the area. Considering the results of Ashari's taking place in the Ahl al-Sunnah side, it has gone down in history as the first and biggest paradigm change in Islamic thought. As well as adopting the views of the Ahl-i Sunnah, he added the intellectual examination to it without abandoning cosmology and theological method, centered on the concept of cawhar-arad. Both his method in "Lüma" and the quotations of Ibn Fûrak from other books reveal his different aspects and method from Mu'tazilah and Salafiyya. In general, he put forward a third way between the understanding of Mu'tazilah and Salafi's usuluddin in the region where he lived.

**Keywords:** Kalam, Religion, Sect, Ash'arî, Change.

Abstract

**Eş'arı'nın Ehl-i Sünnete Geçişinin Dinî Paradigmada Yarattığı Değişim**

İslam düşünce tarihinde en büyük tesire sahip olan kelimcilerden birisi de Eş'arı'dır. Mu'tezile'nin akılcı yöntemini Selef'in görüşlerine başarılı bir şekilde tatbik etmiştir. Eş'arı gibi güçlü bir âlimin Mu'tezile'den Ehl-i Sünnete geçmesi iki ekol arasındaki diyalogu artırmıştır. Bu diyalog kelam yöntemi üzerinden kurulmuştur. Bu akılcı yöntemi reddeden teslimiyetçi, rivayet ehli alan kaybetmeye başlamıştır. Eş'arı'nın Ehl-i Sünnet cenahında yer bulması sonuçları da dikkate alınırca İslâm düşüncesindeki ilk ve en büyük paradigma değişimi olarak tarihe geçmiştir. Eş'arı, Ehl-i Sünnet'in görüşlerini benimsemekle birlikte nassın yanına akli incelemeyi de eklemiş, cevher-araz kavram çiftini merkez alan kozmolojiyi ve kelmâî yöntemi terk etmemiştir. Gerek Lüma'daki yöntemi gerekse de İbn Fûrek'in diğer kitaplarından yaptığı aktarımlar onun Mu'tezile ve Selefiyye'den ayrılan yönlerini ve yöntemini ortaya koymaktadır. Genel itibarla yaşadığı muhitteki Mu'tezilî ve Selefî usûlüddin anlayışı arasında sayılabilecek üçüncü bir yol ortaya koymuştur.

**Özet**

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kelam, Din, Mezhep, Eş'arı, Değişim

**Introduction**

Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) argues that the sciences do not progress linearly and cumulatively, as the logician positivists claim. According to Kuhn, science does not develop linearly; it develops with new models that emerged with revolutionary breaks. When a certain theory in circulation fails to explain the problems encountered, a new model can explain the problems in a more comprehensive and satisfactory way. Epistemological activities continue with breaks and revolutionary changes.

According to Kuhn, a paradigm<sup>1</sup> has four main constituent elements. Kuhn calls the first element, symbolic generalizations. They consist of propositions resembling the laws of nature, but understood by scientists as definitions. He calls the second constituent element the metaphysical element. It consists of some beliefs such as: Heat is the energy of motion; perceivable events are caused by atoms; the molecules of a gas behave like small, flexible billiard balls in random motion, and etc. Kuhn calls the third constituent element values. These can also be called trans-theoretical measures. For example, theories should be simple and consistent. The fourth and last element is "exemplars" the most important element of the paradigm. The examples serve as a guide for scientists to formulate the problems encountered. Thus, before any discipline creates a paradigm, it makes a series of dispersed activities organized and internally consistent thanks to the paradigm. A paradigm will both define the questions to be solved and determine acceptable answers to them. Questions

<sup>1</sup> Paradigm: Common values and beliefs shared by particular community of scientists and the platform formed by the mentality. See: Kuhn, Thomas, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, trans. Nilüfer Kuyaş, İstanbul, 1991, 162, 166, 167, 169, 170.

and efforts to solve them can be compared to solving puzzles. Because all the necessary rules for a solution have been determined in advance. Scientists place the pieces in their places in accordance with the rules without changing the rules of the game.<sup>2</sup>

The main features of the Kuhn tradition can also be summed up in four items:

1-Scientists can maintain their cognitive activities only with paradigms. So the typical scientist is objective, free thinker, and not sceptical. He is an extremely conservative person who applies the knowledge he has previously acquired to the problems he is trying to solve in the direction of his own education.<sup>3</sup>

2-Different paradigms have incomparably different standards.

3-Scientific knowledge is not cumulative but revolutionary.

4. The transition from one paradigm to another requires a sudden perception transformation. So changing paradigms is like changing religion. We witness many converts (someone who change religion), but it is very difficult to find anyone who changes their sect. Sectarian change is a rare phenomenon, probably because religion, the supreme identity, offers a security umbrella. Among the theologians, Ibn Râvandî (d. 301/913) and Ash'arî's change of sects had profound repercussions. Most scientists within the sect are free thinkers and not sceptics who can recognize sectarian ties and prejudices. Scientists operating within the sect generally continue their activities in accordance with the basic principles of the sect. The route and direction to be followed for a solution are clear. Scholars such as Bâkillânî (d.403 / 1013), Juwaynî (d. 478/1085), al-Ghazzâlî (d. 505/1111) and Fahraddin ar-Razî (d. 606/1210) from Ash'arî school changed and raised the standards of their school due to their ability to think beyond the framework of their sect. With Râzî, the Ash'arî paradigm has emerged from its initial rough state and has become a highly accurate model.

Since scientific research has to be critical in its nature, there have been scholars who exceeded the standards of their sects before and after the person, event or discovery considered the milestone in the period. In the history of Islamic thought, there is also a methodological transformation that affects all currents of thought to one degree or another and takes them under their entire influence in the process. The views of the theologians who transformed the Ash'arî tradition, such as Juwayni, al-Ghazzâlî and Fahraddîn ar-Râzî, have deeply influenced the history of Islamic thought, both in other schools of theology, the history of philosophy and the history of disciplines other than kalam. In this context, al-Ghazzâlî; who evaluated the claim of truth and methods of kalam, philosophy, mysticism (tasawwuf), and batinism in his period; led to two major transformations that shaped the next period. The first of them is that al-Ghazzâlî applies Juwayni's criticisms of previous theologians'

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<sup>2</sup> Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Chicago, 1970, 199-200.

<sup>3</sup> Gelder, Lawrence Van, "Devised Science Paradigm", *The New York Times*, June-1996, p. B7.

methods to kalam. Juwaynî criticized the analogy (qiyas) practices used by theologians and pointed out that the methods of simple comparison, inverse comparison, sabr and taq̄sîm (probing and dividig) methods should be used in kalam, and that other methods are not suitable for reaching the correct result. Juwayni completely rejected the methods of istidlâl (deducting) by comparing the ghâib to shâhid (visible to the nonvisible) from the allied to the disputed, and he drew attention to the incomplete applications of sabr and taq̄sîm. The second is that al-Ghazzâlî's criticisms of philosophy changed the addressees of theologians (mutakallimun).<sup>4</sup> While the main addressees of mutaqqaddemun Ash'arîs were Mu'tazilah, the addressees became Islamic philosophers and Batnîs with al-Ghazzâlî.

Al-Ghazzâlî criticizes in detail the philosophers' views on twenty issues, claiming that they fell into blasphemy on three issues and dalalah on seventeen. Since the Ash'arîte and Mu'tazilah paradigm before ar-Razi tried to prove the existence of Allah with the hudûth evidence, the understanding of the eternity of the world, even in terms of time, was met with a strong reaction by al-Ghazzâlî because of the danger of invalidating the hudûth evidence, which is the basis of their understanding of existence.<sup>5</sup> With the understanding that it is not appropriate for these models to blame each other with takfir, Razi paved the way for an increase in the interest in philosophy. Al-Ghazzâlî's criticisms of philosophy had a strange effect on the history of Islamic thought that he probably had not anticipated. Contrary to expectations, philosophy became widespread and theologians became philosophers in the process. For the first time, al-Ghazzâlî directed the focus of kalam to the philosophical tradition of dissident theological sects and other religions. Moreover, the later theologians have continued the critical attitude of al-Ghazzâlî to a considerable extent but moved the frame of discussion away from the level of blasphemy (kufr) and dalalah, and carried it entirely at the level of theoretical preferences. Therefore, it is possible to evaluate the philosophical criticisms we see in al-Ghazzâlî before and after him as the process of Islam's reckoning with ancient traditions in general and Greek tradition in particular, internalizing it and overcoming it by internalizing it. As a matter of fact, philosophers' views began to be included in the works of theology after Ghazzâlî, and finally, a transformation that would affect the course of the theology and philosophy took place in Fahreddin ar-Razi in all subsequent periods. Fahraddin ar-Râzî inherited Ash'arîsm from Ghazzâlî and Juwaynî, Mutazilizm from Abu'l-Husayn al-Basrî (d. 436/1044), and philosophy of masha'î from Avicenna. Therefore, the attachment of a tradition of thought to Fahreddin al-Râzî means that it inherits all the theoretical traditions

<sup>4</sup> Türker, Ömer, "İslâm'da Eleştirel Düşüncenin Yöntemleşmesi: Fahrettin er-Râzî ve Takipçileri" *İslâm Düşüncesinde Eleştiri Kültürü ve Tahammül Ahlâkı Sempozyum Kitabı*, Muş, 2019, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Gazzâlî, Ebû Hâmid, *Tehâfütü'l-Felâsife*, thk. Süleyman Dünya, Kahire, 1972, .84-87; Gazzâlî, Ebû Hâmid, *Tehâfütü'l-felâsife: Filozofların Tutarsızlığı* (trans. Bekir Karlığa), İstanbul 1981, 14-16; See about the ancient-hadith understanding of existence. Gazzâlî, *Mihakkü'n-nazar*, thk. Refik el-Acem, Beyrut, 1994, 83, 102.

mentioned. The biggest paradigm change of the Sunni school in the period of muteahhirûn started with Ghazzâlî and reached its peak with ar-Râzî.<sup>6</sup>

## The Formation of the Ash'arîte Paradigm

Words, concepts, propositions or theories neither reflect nor represent a world outside of them; they are not a picture or a copy of a world like that. A word, concept, proposition or theory makes sense in a 'program' or 'language game' they take role in. In another words, the meaning of an element depends not on the fact that it states, but on the systemic relationships in which it takes a role. The system does not reflect the world, but organizes it.<sup>7</sup> Just like language, the paradigm functions as a conceptual framework for the perception and understanding of a particular reality in shared terms in Khun's system. This is also true about the comprehension of the attributes of Allah (sifat al-Allah). Names and attributes are far from reflecting the truth of God's Essence as it what really is, and the used conceptual network and metaphysical frame offers us a model of envisagement and comprehension. Due to the impossibility of reaching the essence of God, theories of attributes are terminological searches that mediate in bringing the human mind closer to the truth. While the strict salbî approach or understanding of 'muattila' offers a model, the method of proof of the attributes is nothing more than another model. As a matter of fact, the theory of sifat al-Allah (the attributes of Allah) of Ash'arî and Jubbai were different. Likewise, Ash'arî criticizes Jubbâî for being inconsistent within his model. The understanding of Ash'arî that "Allah's attributes are tawqîfî" is an alternative understanding rather than a system that cancels the other. Subkî, expresses Ash'arî's understanding that "the sifat al-Allah are tawqîfî," by narrating a discussion between him and Jubbâî: In a council where Ash'arî was also present, Jubbâî was asked whether Allah could be named as 'âkîl (having intelligence)". Jubbâî abstained from giving this name to Allah by saying that the word "mind" is derived from "ikâl", which means mâni' (obstacle) and that such a meaning is not possible about Allah. Upon this, Ash'arî said to Jubbâî, "According to this analogy, you should not name Allah as 'Hakîm' because this name is derived from a word meaning a bridle used to restrict the animal. The bridle is an iron device that restricts the animal from moving. If the etymology of the word is to be considered and if it is impossible about Allah because it is derived from "forbidding", the same situation should prevent you from naming Allah as "al-Hakîm (most Knowing)". "Jubbâî could not find an answer to that. Then, Ash'arî explained that he adhered to a certain method (tawqîf) and explained his position as follows: "As for the reason why I call Allah as al-Hakîm but not 'âkîl, I do not rely on a lexical analogy but a sem'î, shar'î (religious law) method (tawqîf). Since shar' names Allah as 'al-Hakîm', I name that way as well. If shar' had named Allah as 'akîl, I would have done so."<sup>8</sup> It is possible to obtain different understandings of sifat al-Allah from the Quran. Consequently, it is not

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<sup>6</sup> Türker, *Eleştiri Kültürü*, 40-43.

<sup>7</sup> Sunar, *İ. Düşün ve Toplum*, Ankara, 1986, 121.

<sup>8</sup> Subkî, Tacuddin, *Tabakâtü's-Şâfiyye*, thk. H. Abdülfettâh, M. Mahmud, dop 1992, II/251

correct to accuse a person supporting an idea with going out of religion (takfir) according to another understanding. Ibn Hazm did not support those who accused Ash'arites of going out of religion (takfir) because of their ideas about sifat al-Allah.<sup>9</sup> Some Mu'tezilī scholars accusing Ahl al-Sunnah of ta'adud al-qudema due to their understanding of sifat al-Allah, and some Ahl al-Sunnah scholars accusing Mu'tazila for their understanding of attributes as ta'til and being Zoroastrian, does not mean anything more than the fanaticism of sect.

According to Kuhn, the researcher is a puzzle solver to the extent that he deals with ordinary science, not a paradigm tester. Therefore, paradigm testing is a process conducted only when important puzzles cannot be solved, and a crisis sets in. The testing always takes the form of a competition between two rival paradigms for the commitment of the scientific community.<sup>10</sup> Paradigms sometimes come across instances that are not explained. The questions encountered are first considered either trivial falling within the scope of another science, or meaningless. As these counterexamples accumulate, the paradigm begins to be shaken losing its former credibility. Depressions arise as the counterexamples or irregularities arise that begin to force the paradigm to such an extent that it cannot reproduce itself. If counterexamples or irregularities are not in sufficient number or not powerful enough to shake the paradigm, scientists continue to work in their paradigm. However, increasing irregularities loosen trust and commitment to the paradigm. Over time, the paradigm ceases to be obligatory.<sup>11</sup>

Although Kuhn argued that his views were not applicable to social science<sup>12</sup> it has been widely applied in psychology.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Kuhn's views can be applied to the science of Kalām (Islamic theology) to shed light on intellectual transformations. Ash'arī faced with the crisis that was expressed as the "three brothers" problem in the Mu'tazilī paradigm. The assumption that Allah has to do what is most favourable for human being was at a dead end in this problem, and it overshadowed His freedom. However, according to Ash'arī, Allah's will and power was unlimited, and His actions could not be limited. For this reason, Ash'arī created a new paradigm around the understanding of God does whatever He wishes (arbitrariness in his will = freedom). Watt explains this intellectual transformation of Ash'arī as follows: "Undoubtedly, the position of Ash'arī must have been considered as the result of the logical development of the total movement of the Mu'tazila. They made efforts to explain the complex events of their existence according to a certain system of ideas, but despite their efforts, there are obvious contrasts between events and the system in this

<sup>9</sup> See Karadaş, Cafer, "İbn Hazm ve Eş'arilik Eleştirisi", *Uludağ Uni. Journal of Theology Department*, vol: 18, issue:1, 89-102, Bursa, 2009, 95-101.

<sup>10</sup> Kuhn, *Bilimsel Devrimlerin Yapısı*, 141-142.

<sup>11</sup> Demir, Ömer, *Bilim Felsefesi*, Ankara, 2000, 82.

<sup>12</sup> Kuhn, Thomas, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, 1970, 164-165.

<sup>13</sup> Coleman, S.R. and Salamon R. *Kuhn's Structure of Scientific Revolutions in the Psychological Journal Literature*, 1988, 1969-1983: *A Descriptive Study*, *The Journal of Mind and Behavior*, 9, (415-446).

regard, so it is natural to turn elsewhere to see whether another system can be more satisfactory."<sup>14</sup> Ash'arî renounced the understanding of salah-aslah, which resulted in imposing obligations on Allah, and began to defend Allah's freedom, independence and power in the broadest sense. Thus, his most basic view was the perfection and limitlessness of Allah's attributes. We see that any solution that could convince Ash'arî to this classic problem put forward by him is still not produced. In fact, the essence of the problem of "three brothers" is in the Quran. Although Ash'arî does not refer to the incident related to Khidr (pbuh), in his example, the reason for killing Khidr's *ghoulâm* (young man) was discussed.

The competition or race between paradigms cannot be resolved by proving the truth of one of them because the problem stems from the change in perception. As a matter of fact, Kuhn advises that when the paradigm changes, we should give up thinking that we are getting closer to the truth. Without an inter-paradigmatic value judgment system, no value judgment of paradigms can be compared and criticized in terms of relative advantage or disadvantage. In the Kuhnian tradition, an inter-paradigmatic system of value judgments does not seem possible.<sup>15</sup> Paradigms, like opposing political tendencies, use their own standards. However, there is no neutral standard for the standards of paradigms. The two opposing paradigms cannot compromise.<sup>16</sup> Since each paradigm will defend itself by using the values on which it is built, discussions between paradigms turn into a circular tautology.<sup>17</sup> Since there are no intersect standards, it is difficult to find solutions out of the discussions. The discussions between the Ahl al-Sunnah and Mu'tazila have been interpreted by the supporters of both paradigms for their own victories in various respects. The discussions between the two wings of the Ahl al-Sunnah School are being evaluated in this respect and mostly conveyed without giving its content or by distorting it. Dialogues should be established by abandoning the logic of guiding to each other with paradigms. In this way, conflicts and hatreds between paradigms can be eliminated and rapprochement can be achieved.

A new paradigm candidate may have very few supporters at first, and sometimes even the positions of the supporters can be questionable. Regardless, if they are competent in their job, they will improve the paradigm, and many new fans starting to believe in the efficiency of the new approach will join them.<sup>18</sup> It can be said that the inability of the Mu'tazilî paradigm to find a satisfactory solution to the problem of imposing obligations on Allah and limiting His attributes in the problem of salah-aslah and occasionally their finding themselves in dualism in the issue of husn-qubuh, have led to the birth of a new paradigm (Ash'arîsm and Maturidism) that uses the same method and

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<sup>14</sup> Watt, W. Montgomery, *Hür İrade ve Kader*, trans. Arif Aytekin, İstanbul, 1996, 170.

<sup>15</sup> Barendregt, Marko, *Thomas S. Kuhn's Ideas in the Light of the Structuralist Approach of Science*, Amsterdam, 1999, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Kuhn, Thomas, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 94.

<sup>17</sup> Demir, *Bilim Felsefesi*, 84-85.

<sup>18</sup> Kuhn, *Bilimsel Devrimlerin Yapısı*, 146.

re-evaluates the views of the Salaf (predecessor). Later, theologians such as Bakillānī, Juwaynī, Ghazālī and Nasafī developed this sunni paradigm and increased the number of their supporters. If Mu'tazila had been able to come up with better or more satisfactory solutions in the period when the discussions were taking place with the hypothesis, the principles and approaches they put forward would have been further developed without such a paradigm transformation.

According to Kuhn, changing dependence from one paradigm to another is an experience of transformation that will not be forced. At the source of this resistance lies the belief that the problem which remains unsolved can be moulded provided by the old paradigm. Although this belief can sometimes become refractory, it is this belief that makes the usual problem-solving knowledge activity possible. However, this does not mean that no proof will play a role in paradigm shift. Epistemic communities were repeatedly referred to the new paradigm in the past.

Ash'arī had the courage to solve the problems that he tried to solve when he tried to overcome his intellectual depression by staying in Mu'tazila and without abandoning the kalamī method, without sacrificing the nass (canonical texts) to the principles of the paradigm. Tājaddin as-Subki (d. 771/1370) described the intellectual transformation of Ash'arī, based on his own statements: "After spending fifteen days at his house without going out, he went to the pulpit in the mosque and said: "O people! I was in a deep thought on days when I secluded in my house. The evidences of both sides equalled in my mind. Neither of them was superior to the other. I asked for guidance from God. He conveyed me to the belief that I gathered in this book. Just as I take off my clothes, just like this, I got rid of my previous beliefs." After he had changed the dress he was wearing, he gave a book written on the thought of Ahl al-Sunnah to the public."<sup>19</sup>

Ibn Khallikān (d. 681 / 1282) described this incident as follows: "On a Friday, Ash'arī stood on the pulpit in the Basra Mosque and spoke loudly: "I will introduce myself to those who do not know me. I'm a son of such and that. Previously, I believed that the Quran was created, and Allah cannot be seen. I used to think I do create my own bad deeds. Now I repent and turn gave up those ideas. I am starting to reject Mu'tazila and I will reveal all their mistakes."<sup>20</sup>

Ibn Asākir (d. 620 / 1223) said the following about the intellectual transformation of Ash'arī: "While Ash'arī was contemplating the problems on kalam at a night, he he performed two rak'ahs of salah and begged to Allah in order to overcome the mental crisis he had. He said that he once saw the Prophet (pbuh) in his dream when he slept after the prayer. When he had told

<sup>19</sup> Subkī, Tacuddin, *Tabakātü's-Şâfiyye*, thk. H. Abdülfettâh, M. Mahmud, p.y 1992, II/245.

<sup>20</sup> İbn Hallikân, Ebu'l-Abbâs Şemsüddîn, *Vefeyâtul-ayân*, Kahire, 1310, II/446; İbn Nedîm, Ebu'l-Ferec, *el-Fihrist*, Beyrut, 1978, 257.



the situation to him, the Prophet advised him to hold on to his sunnah, and then he woke up."<sup>21</sup>

Ibn Asâkir narrated that after the dream Ash'arî had in the first ten days of Ramadan, he saw the Prophet for the second time in the second ten days. He (pbuh) asked what he had done about the subject the prophet pointed at, upon which he took possible reports into consideration about various views, and that he complied with the authentic evidences possible about Allah. He said that the Prophet repeated to him, "*Support what was conveyed from me because they are true.*" When he woke up, he felt great sorrow. He decided to abandon the science of kalam and turned to reading hadith and the Quran more and more. On the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Ramadan, after joining in a gathering formed by the qurra, great scholars and virtuous people in Basra to read the whole Quran, he went to his house. When he saw the Prophet once more in the dream, the Prophet (pbuh) asked him what had done about the subject he ordered him. Ash'arî replied that he had done what he was ordered, abandoned the science of kalam to concentrate on tafsir (exegesis) and hadith. Prophet said that he had not ordered him to leave science of kalam but to support the way that was narrated from him. Ash'arî asked how he could leave the school (way) whose problems he had conceived for thirty years and whose evidence he had studied. The Prophet consoled him that Allah would help him. Then, he awoke and decided to support the hadiths on ru'yat (vision), intercession and other issues.<sup>22</sup>

The dream, as the embodiment of Ash'arî's crisis of thought, shows us that he was not a pure dogmatic who saw the ideas he carried when he was a Mu'tazilî as absolute truths. Otherwise, it would have not been possible for him to realize his intellectual transformation. Watt's comments on Ash'arî's dream are notable: "The story of his dreams, which is narrated in various ways, is undoubtedly the basis of his decision in reality and may be completely true, because modern psychology prompts us to look at dreams during the crises of life. During the month of Ramadan, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) spoke and discussed with Ash'arî three times, which apparently indicates the three stages in the change of heart and thought that took place in Ash'arî. In the first stage, he was clearly not satisfied with the rationalistic kalam and decided to return to the Quran and the hadith. However, he did not completely surrender himself to them and, on the contrary, engaged himself more in the hadith and the exegesis of the Qur'an according to the kalam methods. In the Prophet's (pbuh) second appearance a few days later, he asked if Ash'arî had obeyed the command in order to support what was reported from him and repeated the order as it was. All types of narration agree that after the dream, he left science of kalam completely and longed for the interpretation of the Quran and the examination of hadiths. The final stage was reached after the third dream. The Prophet once again asked Ash'arî what he had done about his order, but he was not completely satisfied with what was said in response: "*I did not tell you to leave*

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<sup>21</sup> Ibn Asâkir, Ali b. Hasen, *Tebyînu kezibi'l-mufterî fimâ nusibe ile'l-Îmâmi'l-Eş'arî*, Kahire, 1399, 39.

<sup>22</sup> Ibn Asâkir, *Tebyînu kezibi'l-mufterî*, 41.

*the science of kalam; on the contrary, I told you to support sound hadiths".* With this saying, the mind that was removed from a sultanate is reinstated to its former position with an auspice of the revelation. The inadequacy of rational ideas was probably partly related to the choice of topics studied in the hadith because the Prophet's intercession to sinners was a confirmation of punctual justice. Seeing God with the eyes in the afterlife was a complementary regarding the inadequacy of mental comprehension and concepts related to Him in this world. Thus, the story of dream is entirely related to the outcome of the issue of ikhwa al-salāsah."<sup>23</sup>

Ibn Asākir talked about the doubts caused Ash'arī to change school adding that it is often seen that people who are strong in reasoning and deducing premises have changed schools. He believed that that could be attributed to a dream or a craving to seek the truth.<sup>24</sup> Apart from the reality of the dream, it served an important development in the Sunni approach. Just as the dream that Me'mun saw previously had prepared the ground for the translation of philosophy books,<sup>25</sup> this dream also laid the groundwork for the kalam of Ahl al-Sunnah. It was an ideal of Me'mun to bring in the sources of philosophical and ancient sciences in other languages to the Islamic world. Likewise, it was among the goals of Ash'arī to teach the science of kalam to the Ahl al-Sunnah community. For there was no place for the science of Kalam in the eyes of scholars of fiqh and hadith. For the first time, it was accepted that the science of kalam was a science of religion such as tafsir, hadith and fiqh. The contribution

<sup>23</sup> Watt, *Hür İrade*, 172.

<sup>24</sup> İbn Asākir, *Tebyīnukezibi'l-mufterī*, 380.

<sup>25</sup> In his book named "Fihrist", Ibn Nedīm mentions the dream of Me'mun as one of the reasons why philosophy and similar ancient sciences increased in this region. In his dream, Me'mun saw a beautiful and imposing man and asked him who was he. The man replied that he was Aristotle. Me'mun became pleased and asked if he could ask him a question. He replied he could. "What is the good (husn)?" he asked. He answered it was the thing the mind considered good. Me'mun; said, "Then what?" He said, "What is good in evil". "Then what?" he said. Aristotle replied, "it is the one with the wishes of the people (majority)". "Then what?" he continued the question. He said, "there is no other than that". Ibn Nedim says that after that dream, Me'mun wrote a letter to the Byzantine ruler, and that even though he avoided it at first, the ruler corresponded him as well. Then, Me'mun sent a delegation to provide works belonging to philosophy and ancient sciences and ordered them to be translated. Ibn Nadim, *ibid.* 339. Jabirī makes the following assessment about the dream of Me'mun: "Me'mun mobilized all the means of the state to bring and translate the books containing the old sciences. Perhaps it is not correct to say that the dream he had had prompted him to engage in such a great activity. But if he had had such a dream, this dream may not have been the cause of the activity in question, but the result. "Jabirī believes that that dream justifies the fiery translation and interpretation activity initiated at that time. Jābirī, Muhammed Âbid, *Arap Aklının Oluşumu, Tekvînü'l-akli'l-Arabî*, trans. İbrahim Akbaba, İstanbul, 1997, 310 etc.

of Ash'arî is very important.<sup>26</sup> We can say that it was the bad memory of the mihna incident that made this ideal of Ash'arî difficult. Therefore, it can be said that he followed an ingenious strategy for the acceptance of this science. His main strategy was to put forth the science of kalam in a framework acceptable to hadith and fiqh scholars. Al-Ash'arî, who constantly perceived a conciliatory attitude in his theological approaches, was also compromising in terms of determining methods and issues in terms of a certain method, but he did not hesitate to criticize both the hadith scholars and Mu'tazila when necessary.<sup>27</sup>

Ibn Asâkir narrated from Baghdadî that Abdullah ibn Mohammed ibn Tahîr saw Ash'arî discussing with Mu'tazila scholars in the Basra Mosque, some of the debaters gave credit for his vast knowledge in the science of kalam and asked him the question about fiqh. According to the narration, he was asked about the decree of the prayer performed without reciting Fatiha. He told that according to what Zakariya b Yahya as-Sâjî reported from Abdul jabbar, from Sufyan, from Zuhri, from Mahmud b Rabî, from Ubada b Samit and from the messenger of Allah (pbuh), "*If you do not recite Fatiha in the prayer, the prayer will be invalid.*" And Zakariya, Bindar, Yahya b Sa'id, Jafar b Maimon, Abu Uthman and Abu Hurayra reported that the Prophet ordered him to declare in Medina that "*He who does not recite al-Fatiha in prayers, will not have a valid prayer*". Upon this, those who ask questions to Ash'arî became silent and could not say anything.<sup>28</sup> Not only did Ash'arî state the fiqh judgment to the question asked, but also gave the chain of transmission of this provision. This shows that he knew the legal provisions together with their bases.

Theories determine the mental codes of scientists, and they are constructed in the meaning-value world within a certain metaphysical framework. According to Popper, as all observations occur in a theoretical structure that makes them meaningful, there can be no observation independent from theory. In the example we will give, it will be seen that pre-assumptions can direct and organize the perception itself. One of the best observant astronomers in the nineteenth century was a French man named Lalande, who focused his telescope on a region where it was believed there were no planets (astronomers of the time believed there were only six planets) In 1795. He saw then an unknown planet but now called Neptune, and carefully determined the location of this planet. He saw the planet again and carefully noted its location each time. Later he saw that the planet's location changed depending on the stars in the same region. There was something wrong: Either the astronomers were wrong about the knowledge that there were only six planets in the region, or Lalande's carefully noted observations were wrong. Lalande accepted the second option declaring his observations to be wrong. Neptune was not noticed until Adams and Leverrier, who discovered it without

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<sup>26</sup> Subhî, A. Mahmûd, *İlmu'l-Kelâm*, Beyrût, 1985, II/50.

<sup>27</sup> Aydın, Hüseyin, *Ebu'l-Hasen el-Eş'arî'de Nazar ve İstidlal*, Ankara, 2012, 44.

<sup>28</sup> İbn Asâkir, *Tebyînu kezibi'l-mufterî*, 124.

seeing in 1848.<sup>29</sup> Lalande saw Neptune in 1795 but was unable to explore this planet because he adhered to his previous beliefs about planets. This event is so interesting that it can corrode empiricism because the reason gave Adams and Leverrier what experiment did not to Lalande.

Kant was one of the first to point out that the propositions to which are the subjects of science are by no means written in senses to an empty mind, they are neither reducible nor deductible from such propositions, and, therefore factual propositions are nothing more than a certain kind of theoretical propositions. According to Lakatos, Popper not only sided with Kant about being against the empiricists, but went one step further, saying that the propositions of science are not only theoretical but also conjectural. According to Popper, theory is prioritized to observation; observation alone is useless without theory. The theories that guide observation are our schemes. With theories that mean predictions, assumptions, hypotheses, we build another world outside the real world. They are the networks we use to capture the real world.<sup>30</sup> Extremely ambitious theoretical approaches should be taken with caution. The pain that some paradigms made the ones with opposite theses endure in history should be recorded as a negative in the accounts of theories that claim to solve everything. After Mu'tazila's mihna about Khalq al-Qur'an (whether Qur'an is created or not), Salafiya's revenge match caused long-term unrest among Muslims.

### Construction of the Sunni School of Kalam by Ash'arî

It is known that what was done during the *Mihna* period made Mu'tazila unfair perhaps not in thought but in practice. In this case, it is natural that Ash'arî initially assumed an attitude in favour of traditionalists. However, the criticisms he made to the traditionalists without naming them in *istihsân* were as severe as the criticisms he directed to Mu'tazila. Although his criticisms against Mu'tazila are numerous, they are related to the solutions to the problems and their details. In addition, his views about various subjects overlap with the solutions of some Mu'tazila scholars. However, his criticism of the traditionalists is methodical. Methodological criticism should be considered more severe than the criticism of individual problems. Because if the method is wrong, it means that all results reached are under the possibility of error. Upon closer examination, it will be seen that scientists have no criteria other than the paradigms that shape their conceptual framework in which they look at the world. Therefore, according to the person looking through it, a paradigm is much more correct, good, or convenient than others. That's why a scientist is adhered to that paradigm.

It is interesting that while the Ash'arîs tried to reject scepticism in epistemology, on the other hand, they were called sceptics (*shukkak*) in the point of whether faith is acceptable or not. For example, instead of saying "I am

<sup>29</sup> Musgrave, Alan, *Saçduyu, Bilim ve Kuşkuçuluk "Bilgi Kuramına Tarihsel Bir Giriş"*, trans. Pelin Uzay, İstanbul, 1997, 71.

<sup>30</sup> Popper, Karl, *The Philosophy of Karl Popper*, Ed. P. A. Schilipp, 1974, 1/46.

certainly a believer", they prefer saying "I hope (inshallah) I am a believer." One can sincerely think that he is in complete submission to the creeds he believes in; but still, in his surrender, there may be shortcomings that he was unaware of.<sup>31</sup> Although Ash'arî said that even the knowledge of Allah is not necessary, he admitted that a thinking man must grasp his own existence.<sup>32</sup> With this conviction, he came to a definitive first knowledge, which is not true to be suspected long before Descartes. Ash'arî passes from doubt to knowledge here.<sup>33</sup> He used clear knowledge and knowledge of perception as a step to reach other information. He complied with the order from simple to complex like *usûl-furû'* (theory-practise). Without following this arrangement, he did not accept leaping to higher information in terms of layout before reaching beyond the information below. He regarded the knowledge of the sensory means and the intellectual determination as essential, while he saw the theoretical knowledge as *furu'*(practical) knowledge.

Ash'arî emphasized that the approaches of the paradigm should be critical while accepting the information obtained through perception as compulsory. Ash'arî explained that there are some mental obstacles that should be protected by the person who explains his thought as follows: "There is an understanding that has become widespread in the group to which the person reasoning belongs. He is also tend to that understanding due to the *asabiyya* (paradigm). However, he has to make reasoning in a way that will reveal the correctness of the understanding of the group he belongs to or the wrongness of his opponents. Being subject to someone's own school or another school with an emotional intimacy is harmful. A person can save himself from such a situation only with a lot of research and reflection (deep thought). If the position and view of the sect that is inclined is higher, it is natural that the person will benefit from it. Sometimes problems arise when the Ahl al-Nazar conducts an art and contemplation together."<sup>34</sup> Ash'arî rightly stated that it would not be sufficient for a person on the mind to justify the understanding of the paradigm he belongs to. At the same time, the person who has the opinion should know comparatively that his own paradigm solves the problems that the paradigm he opposes unsolved or could not solve, and that he does not contradict his own method during these analysis. He should be able to justify his opposition to other opposing paradigms as well as to prove his affiliation with the paradigm.

Ash'arî also stated that the fact that the situation of Ahl al-Nazar was only in accordance with the points stated above did not necessitate to leave the way of his ancestors and predecessor and continued his words as follows: "If the Ahl al-Nazar decides that the area in which he grew up is wrong, he has to leave it.

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<sup>31</sup> Watt, W. Montgomery, *İslâm Düşüncesinin Teşekkül Devri*, trans. E. Ruhi Fiğlalı, Ankara, 1981, 173.

<sup>32</sup> İbn Fûrek, *Mucerred*, 248.

<sup>33</sup> Topdemir, Hüseyin Gazi, "Descartes'in Yöntem Çalışması", *Felsefe Dünyası Dergisi*, issue: 19, Ankara, 1996, 47; See: Descartes, *Rules of Mental Guidance*, trans. Can Şahan, İstanbul, t.y. 21-22.

<sup>34</sup> İbn Fûrek, Ebûbekir, *Mucerredü makâlâti'l-Eş'arî*, thk. D. Gimaret, Beyrût, 1987, 322.

It is possible for the views of Ahl al-Nazar both to coincide with and to conflict with the area in which he grew up. It is also possible for him to see that only his predecessor and elders were accurate in his results. It is possible to determine this perfectly through reasoning but not to draw conclusions in a hurry, by avoiding the prejudices that have previously settled in his mind, taken place in his memory, and become a character in him. Because it is better to get right than keep going wrong."<sup>35</sup> Ash'arî pointed out that Ahl al-Nazar must examine his entire mental and actual position with suspicion and try to get rid of his prejudices. Ash'arî pointed out the need to get rid of prejudices in the human mind long before Locke and Bacon. There is an interesting similarity between these words of Ash'arî and what Bacon said about "idols of the mind".

According to Bacon, we obtain our knowledge of nature through our perceptions. However, perceptions do not come to us as they are; on the contrary, they come distorted. This situation stems from prejudices. Trying to get rid of prejudices is the first requirement of the scientific method. According to Bacon, one of the reasons that obscure and obstruct the human mind is "theater idol". *Theater idols* originate from anyone's adoption of a system, a worldview, or a philosophy. He compares them to theater. While watching the drama, one can adopt the idea presented there and feel himself in the drama. He also called these and other idols "idols of theories."<sup>36</sup>

Ghazzâlî also pointed out that the mind must get rid of prejudices. According to him, the news should be viewed with suspicion because most of people's dogmas are news-based. It is impossible to reach the most competent knowledge by removing the sense, experience and mind from being fundamental. According to him, one of the things that mislead those who are in reasoning is to accept the things that are heard and gained from the father, the teachers, the virtuous people, and the environment when a child, completely correct. Ghazzâlî said this about the prejudices that Bacon called "idols of the mind": "There are a number of minds that will rush to accept whatever they hear. Then their mind takes shape according to what they hear, and childhood ideas cannot be separated from them. This is like a soft paper that has been deeply dipped in ink. When you want to remove the ink from the paper, you will probably ruin or tear that paper. As long as the paper exists, the black colour of the ink on it will also exist. Likewise, as long as the children live, there will be dhalalahs that the elders cannot eliminate from their minds."<sup>37</sup> Then all kinds of news must be filtered through knowledge, sense, experience and mind. As there are some prejudices that can only be noticed after getting rid of them, it is not possible to eliminate our prejudices immediately.<sup>38</sup>

The words of Alfonso, who lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, can be given as an example to the misleading of seeing the theories of the paradigm he belongs to

<sup>35</sup> İbn Fûrek, Mucerred, 322.

<sup>36</sup> Topdemir, Hüseyin Gazi, "Francis Bacon'ın Bilim Anlayışı", Journal of the World of Philosophy, issue: 30, Ankara, 1999, 62.

<sup>37</sup> Gazâlî, Mihenkü'n-nazar fi'l-mantık, Kahire, p.y. 75-76.

<sup>38</sup> Popper, Karl, Açık Toplum ve Düşmanları, trans. Harun Rızatepe, İstanbul, 1989, 194.

as absolute truth. Alfonso claimed that if God counselled him in creating the universe, He could receive very useful advice. By the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the number of the best European astronomers who saw that the astronomy paradigm was incapable of solving even its own traditional problems started to increase gradually.<sup>39</sup>

According to Thomas Kuhn, a historian of science, science does not bring an unchanging approach to nature because when scientists deal with data, they work in terms of paradigms, specific belief systems, and models, and rarely come out of these patterns. These paradigms, belief systems, and worldviews, on the other hand, are broad and cannot be obtained solely by looking at facts. They are terminological networks based on the assumptions of interpreted experiences.<sup>40</sup> Observations are not independent of dogmas and theories.

Sunnism is not only a problem of belief and thought, but also a problem of mentality and paradigm. A living belief or a living thought becomes concrete in the form of a distinct identity structure.<sup>41</sup> The criteria obtained from the understanding of the Quran, Sunnah and the companions of the Prophet (pbuh), were first obtained by a systematic understanding of law placing provisions in terms of *amalî* (practical) issues. The fact that Abu Hanifah and the later *fuqaha* developed a successful understanding of law, method, and system made it much easier for theologians in the field of belief. Sunni doctrine and *kalam* led by Abū Ḥanifah (d. 150/767), Ibn Küllâb (d.240 / 854) and Hâris al-Muhâsibî (d. 243/857) has become a strong terminological structure, belief system and method with great imams such as Mâtürîdî (d. 333/944) and Ash'arî.

If one speaks of the right or wrong of the proposition in a matter, this often cannot go beyond being the right or wrong of the theory of knowledge. Here, the truth is defined not as the design in the mind fitting to the object or phenomenon in the external world, but as the harmony with another design in the mind. It means looking not for a harmony between information and an object, but between a design and another design, and between a knowledge and another knowledge. To see mental designs as an absolute truth, an infallible template that explains every event is to fall into a deep theoretical error. In this way, the members of a sect accusing others of *bid'ah* (innovation), *dhalalah* (going astray), and blasphemy originate from the sect's fanaticism. Salafiyya members accusing Islamic philosophers, sufis and theologians of *bid'ah*, *dhalalah*, and blasphemy for their alleged alienation stems from the differences arising between the metaphysical frameworks and terminological networks of the theories. Ash'arî tries to explain and prove the necessity of seeking solutions for new problems as follows: It is said that there is no sound hadith about whether the Quran was created or not. So why do you say that the Quran was not a created? If they claim that some of the companions and *tâbi'un* said this, they are told as follows: If a Companion and a *tâbiî* said a word that the

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<sup>39</sup> Kuhn, *Bilimsel Devrimlerin Yapısı*, 87; See Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Copernican Revolution*, Cambridge, 1957, 135-143.

<sup>40</sup> See Kuhn, Thomas, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago, 1970.

<sup>41</sup> Evkuran, Mehmet, *Sünnî Paradigmayı Anlamak*, Ankara, 2005, 21.

Prophet (pbuh) did not say, he should be in a *bid'ah and dhalalala* according to your opinion. If someone says, "I do not say anything like 'Quran was created or not' I say nothing (tawaqquf) about the Quran's being created or not ", then it is said to him as follows: Since you do not say anything about it, you are in *bid'ah* and wrongdoing, because the Prophet (pbuh) did not say: "If this incident occurs after me, take a non-committal stance (tawaqquf) about it and do not say anything." And He (pbuh) did not say: "Those who think that the Quran was created or who do not accept this view, get accuse of them with going astray or declare someone an unbeliever (takfir)"<sup>42</sup>

Opposing the literalists and submissive paradigm, Ash'arî accepts the principle of comparison (qiyas) and uses it effectively in many verses and applies to the authority of the Quran. The anti-Traditionist views are clearly displayed in his *Risâle Fî İstihsâni'l-Havd Fî İlmi'l-Kelâm* devoted to the systematic discussion of this issue. The fact that kalamic discussions were not carried out in the time of the Prophet (pbuh) is considered by the traditionalists as evidence against the science of kalam. Therefore, using it is considered a deviation (*bid'at*) from what is accepted as tradition and authority. This proof of silence is skilfully turned against the traditionalists by Ash'arî because their claims do not have any basis in the Prophet's (pbuh) messages. The opponent of kalam expresses his view as follows: "We understand from a narration about the issues we have told about kalam that talking about these issues is *bid'ah*, and researching on these issues is *dhalalah* (going astray). If it had been good, Prophet (pbuh) and his companions would definitely have talked about them. The fact they did not talk about it cannot be separated from the following two situations: Either they were silent even though they knew it, or they did not know, so they were ignorant about it. If they had known but had not talked about it, it is our duty to do the same thing. Just as they stop talking about the subjects of kalam, our duty is to abandon them in the same way. If kalam was about religion, they would not have chosen not to speak. If they hadn't made it the subject of knowledge, then we should act like them. If it were from religion, they would make it the subject of knowledge. Then, it is a *bid'ah* to talk about theological issues, and dealing with these issues is going astray (*dhalalah*). These are all the evidences of those who think that expressing the opinion on *Usûli'd-Dîn* should be abandoned."<sup>43</sup> Ash'arî thought that those criticisms could be answered in three ways:

1-To reject the question by reminding that the Prophet (pbuh) did not say to the person who researches and speaks about these issues. According to you, speaking about something that the Prophet (pbuh) did not talk about requires you to be in *bidah* and *dhalala*. Moreover, you see him as going astray that He (pbuh) did not see him as astray.

2- Although the object, *ârâz* (accident, sign), motion, duration, part, and *tafra* (leap, impulsive movement) on which the philosophy of existence is built

<sup>42</sup> Eş'arî, Ebu'l-Hasen, *Risâle fî istihsâni'l-havd fî İlmi'l-keîâm*, thk. Richard, J. McCarthy, Beyrût, 1952, 96.

<sup>43</sup> Eş'arî, *İstihsân*, 88.



in the science of kalam is not spoken one by one; they were not unknown things, for these issues are pointed out in the hadiths and in the Quran in general. So was the case of the fakih Companions and scholars.

3- Motion and tranquillity: What is said about these two is found in the Quran. Those two are the concepts on which tawhid is based. This is the case with gathering and separation. Allah gives the essence of this matter in the story of Abraham khalilullah (pbuh). In the story, there is evidence that movement and tranquility are not related with Allah in the event of the disappearance of the moon, the sun and the stars, and when they are moved from one place to another. A being that can pass from place to place and disappear cannot be accepted as a deity. The bases and core of theological (kalamî) issues are in the Quran and Sunnah. As a matter of fact, Allah says: *"Had there been other Gods besides Allah in the heavens or the earth, both 'realms' would have surely been corrupted. So Glorified is Allah, Lord of the Throne, far above what they claim."*<sup>44</sup> This is the essence of the word stating the proof that Allah is one and has no partner.<sup>45</sup>

Although there are no nass about all problems, Muslims compared such problems to the issues (nass) ruled in the Quran and Sunnah and made ijthad<sup>46</sup>. The minor problems that could not be concluded regarding the details were compared to the ones determined by revelation (wahiy) and sunnah and to get a correct solution. As for the theological problems faced later, the duty of a wise Muslim for them is to transmit their decrees to the foundations agreed upon by mind (reason), feeling (sense), bedihî (clear, distinct, a priori knowledge, occurs first in the mind) and in other ways. The provision of mental and perception problems should be sent to the subject to which it belongs. Mental issues should be separated from narrative (sem'i) issues and narrative (sem'i) issues should be separated from mental issues either. If the views on Khalqu'l-Qur'an, part, and ʿafrâ had emerged in the time of the Prophet (pbuh), He (pbuh) would have talked about them, for He (pbuh) made explanations about the issues in his time.<sup>47</sup>

Ash'arî saw Salaf's refusal to negotiate the issue and not adopting an opinion contrary to their own as a contradiction in even though they had made a certain opinion preference in new problems. However, it is practically not possible to make no choice and to be completely impartial in new issues. If you have made a choice, you cannot say that making any choice is a separation from the way of the Prophet (pbuh) because your own choice is also incomplete in the same situation. Ash'arî tried to explain and prove the necessity of seeking solutions for new problems as follows: It is said that there is no sound hadith

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<sup>44</sup> Enbiyâ, 21/22.

<sup>45</sup> Eş'arî, İstihsân, 88-89.

<sup>46</sup> According to the scholars of fiqh, ijthâd is the effort of the mujtahid with the desire to understand and learn the provisions of shar'i through istinbât. See: Zeydan, Abdülkerim, Fıkh Usûlü, trans. Ruhi Özcan, 1982, y.y. 521; Ebû Zehra, Muhammed, Usûlü'l-fikh, İstanbul, t.y. 379.

<sup>47</sup> Eş'arî, İstihsân, 95.

about whether the Quran was created or not. So why do you say that the Quran was not created? If they claim that some of the companions and tābī'ūn said this, they are told If a Companion and a tābī'ūn said a word that the Prophet (pbuh) did not say, he should be in a bid'ah and dalalah (going astray) according to your opinion. If someone says, "I do not say anything like 'Quran was created or not', I say nothing (tawaqquf) about the Quran's being created or not ", then it is said to him as follows: Since you do not say anything about it, you are in bid'ah and wrongdoing, because the Prophet (pbuh) did not say: "If this incident occurs after me, take a non-committal stance about it and do not say anything." And again, He (pbuh) did not say: "Those who think that the Quran is a creature or who do not accept this view, get accuse of them with wrongdoing or declare someone an unbeliever (takfir )" <sup>48</sup>

Ash'arī explains the distortion of the mentality in question with another example: "If someone says that Allah's knowledge was created, would you remain silent about it or would you answer? If they say no, then they are reminded that neither did the Prophet (pbuh) nor his companions say anything about it. If someone asks if God is characterized by being satiated-waterdrenched, dressing-not-dressing, dry-wet, body-symptom (sign), or if he asks whether he smells and have a nose, heart, lungs, and a spleen, whether go on pilgrimage every year, whether he rides a horse, or whether he will mourn or not, you should not answer them according to your understanding (tawaqquf) because neither the Prophet (pbuh) nor the companions said anything about these matters. If you choose not to remain silent, you will have to explain with evidence that none of the things mentioned are fit for Allah and that He is far from them. If someone says that he will keep silent, not answer in any way, avoid him, not salute those who express such views, not visit them when they get sick, and I will not attend their funeral when they die; they are told that they make themselves misguided in all these matters or they make themselves innovators (bid'ah) because the Prophet (pbuh) did not say anything like "Do not answer those who ask such questions, stop their greetings, stay away from them", and He (pbuh) did not say that if you do these, you will be in a bid'ah." <sup>49</sup>

Asharī expresses his abovementioned views on the "Khalqu'l-Qur'an" argument with a dialectical method as follows: "Why do you not keep silent against those who say that the Quran was created and why do you accuse them of going out of religion (takfir)? They are told that no sound hadith from the prophet (pbuh) has reached them to deny or accept the creation of the Quran or to accuse the one who concluded that it was created." If they say that Ahmed b. Hanbal had the ida that the Quran was not created, and he accused those who said it was created of going out of religion, we ask them the reason why Ahmad bin Hanbal did not keep silent but spoke about it. " If they say: "Abbas al-Anberi, Veki', Abdurrahman ibn Mahdi, and some others had the opinion that the Quran was not created and they think that the one who said that it was

<sup>48</sup> Eş'arî, İstihsân, 96.

<sup>49</sup> Eş'arî, İstihsân, 96.

created went out of religion, then they are asked why did they talk about the issues that the Prophet (pbuh) kept silent?" If they claim that Amr ibn Dinar, Sufyan ibn Uyeyne, Cafer ibn Muhammad, and some others said nothing about Quran's being created or not. Then it is asked why they did not keep silent about what the Messenger of Allah did not talk about.<sup>50</sup> If they attribute it to the companions or a group of them, it would be a great sin, and they are asked why the companions did not keep silent about the issue that the Prophet (pbuh) did not speak, even though He (pbuh) did not say to accuse those who think that the Quran was created of going out of religion (taqfir). If they say that scholars have to speak in order to teach the decrees of events to the illiterate people, we say that "it is what we want you to say. So why do you oppose the science of kalam even though you make kalam when you want to? When you cannot find an answer to give, you say you were banned from kalam. Whenever you wish, you imitate those before you without any evidence or explanation. This is an obedience to an-nafs, and it is a tyranny and unjust domination."<sup>51</sup>

Ash'arî said that those who criticize the *nazar* and *istiqlâl* would be answered as follows: "Prophet (pbuh) did not talk about oblation, testament, slavery, law of inheritance (*munâsihât*). He (pbuh) did not write a book, either, as Imam Malik, Sevri, Shafî, and Abu Hanîfah did. If you do something that the Prophet (pbuh) did not do, say something He (pbuh) did not say, write something He (pbuh) did not write, and accuse those who say that the Quran was created of taqfir even though the Prophet (pbuh) did not say it, it means that you are in a *bid'ah* and you are going astray. What is said is sufficient for anyone who is not stubborn and has a sense of mind."<sup>52</sup> While Ash'arî based the legitimacy of mental examination, he also invited those who used the weapon of takfir against their interlocutors to moderation.

Neither the Maturidî nor the Ash'arî branches of the Ahl al-Sunnah has constructed a coercive paradigm. Although there have been many disagreements with Mu'tazila on the subject of human will, they are generally derivatives of discussions centered around *jawhar* and *arad* cosmology. Mu'tezila consistently linked the issue of obligation with the Umayyad administration. They had the opinion that they used that view as a legitimacy tool for the policies they carried out. According to Mu'tezila, Muaviye ibn Abi Sufyan was the first to give this colour to politics. Because he wanted to awaken the impression that the passing of the caliphate to himself and then to his lineage was only a predestination and destiny of Allah.<sup>53</sup> There was no consistent religious and political justification for Muawiyah's revolt and war against Caliph Ali. His only refuge is destiny. It is interesting that both the cruel and the oppressed take refuge in this concept. On the one hand, it may be the reason for the cruelty of the oppressor, on the other hand, the reason for the

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<sup>50</sup> Eş'arî, *İstihsân*, 96-97.

<sup>51</sup> Eş'arî, *İstihsân*, 97.

<sup>52</sup> Eş'arî, *İstihsân*, 97.

<sup>53</sup> Saïd Murâd, *Medresetu'l-Basrati'l- İ'tizâliyye*, Kahire, 1992, 35.

weakness of the oppressed.<sup>54</sup> According to Mu'tezila, the Umayyads followed a disconnected politics, far from society, with their "oppressive" views. In addition, Mu'tezila accused Mu'âviye Ibn Abi Sufyân of being the first person to spread this idea.<sup>55</sup> Although Ahl al-Sunnah imams try to remain silent about political decisions, the great value given to Caliph Ali has always been above the tolerance shown to Muawiyah. The force policy of some Umayyad sultans did not lead to the construction of an oppressive paradigm.

## Conclusion

Ash'arî's change of paradigm brought a new understanding of religion that can be positioned between Mu'tezila and Salafiyya. This islamic movement led by Ash'arî contributed to the emergence of great theologians such as Juwaynî, Ghazzâlî, Râzî, Curcânî (d. 816/1413), Taftazanî (d. 792/1390), and Amidî (d. 631 / 1233).

Although it reflects a subjective reaction; Asharî's contribution to kalam by removing it from being a dismissive and making it valid science like tafsir, hadith, and fiqh cannot be denied. Ash'arî's conciliatory attitude plays an important role in the transformation of mutual hatred into understanding and tolerance between the scholars of hadith and fiqh, which gained acceleration with the mihna incident, and the theologians. Ash'arî is one of the sources that best conveys Mu'tezilite views. He did not use the distortion that is seen in many scholars in his narrations, and he did accuse of taqfir neither the sect he departed from nor those who attribute himself to Islam.

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<sup>54</sup> Akbulut, Ahmet, "Allah'ın Takdiri-Kulun Tedbiri", (In New Approaches in Religious Education), İstanbul, 2000, 128.

<sup>55</sup> Muhammed Ammâra, el-Mu'tezile ve Müşkiletu'l-Hurriyyeti'l-İnsân, Kahire, 1988, 151.

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