

Rereading the Motivations Behind the Prohibition of Narrating and Recording Traditions and Their Historical Implications

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ABSTRACT: The prohibition of narrating and writing traditions is one of the effective factors contributing to the formation of Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic history. During his reign, 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb used to forbid people from narrating and writing traditions. Various viewpoints have been expressed in the works of Shiite and Sunni intellectuals as well as in the works of orientalists in relation to the occurrence or the lack of occurrence of such a phenomenon and 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb's motivation behind such prohibition. Through studying the relevant documents and records, this research aims to clarify the following: a) The occurrence or the lack of occurrence of the aforementioned prohibition, b) 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb's motivation for imposing such a prohibition, c) The implications of such a measure. The study of the relevant documents and records indicates that such a measure took place in the history of Islam, albeit not in relation to all traditions (*ahādīth*). Some of these documents refer to abstractions (*tajrīd*) and composition of texts on the margins of the copies of the Qur'an (*tawshīh*) by the companions of the Prophet (S), the uprising of 'Ashūrā' and the confrontation between the proponents of 'individual opinion' and the proponents of 'traditions' in the second Hijri century. Having historically proven the occurrence of the prohibition of narrating and writing legal and jurisprudential traditions in the first two centuries of the Islamic calendar, the authenticity and accuracy of Sunni narrations in the third century ought to be established through a new approach.

KEYWORDS: The prohibition of narrating traditions, practical laws of Islam, abstraction of books, individual opinion, and analogy.

Introduction

One of the basic issues in the history of Islamic traditions and narrations is the issue concerning the prohibition of narrating and recording traditions by narrators. There are various viewpoints and opinions expressed on whether this measure was actually adopted or not and if it was, what were the possible reasons behind its occurrence?

Proving this issue and clarifying ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s motivation in relation to this matter is of paramount importance for the following reasons:

The fact that some researchers have fundamentally cast doubt on the implementation of such a measure by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb while at the same time striving to suggest that the lack of writing and recording of traditions in the first Hijri century was simply due to the unfamiliarity of Arabs with the culture of record-keeping and compilation (‘Asqalānī 1408, 4; Yūsuf Mūsā 1995, 19-26).

If the implementation of such a measure is proved and established through historical evidence, the authenticity and accuracy of Sunni jurisprudential traditions should be proved through other means due to the perpetuation of this policy in the first Hijri century.

Historical narrations and evidence demonstrate that the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions was imposed by ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb due to his viewpoint concerning the deduction of juristic laws based on ‘individual opinion’ and the ‘theory of the sufficiency of the Qur’an.’ (Bukhārī 1433, 6:9; ‘Abd al-Razzāq bin Hammām 1403, 5:438; Nisā’ī 1421, 5:366; Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal 1421, 5:134).

Some of the texts in support of the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions are as follows:

‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb said, “Reduce the number of narrations from the Prophet (S) and I shall share the reward of doing so with you.” (Rashed 1403, 11:262)

‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb wrote to all major cities, “Whoever has a thing with him from the prophetic narrations, he should obliterate them” (Ibn ‘Abd al-Birr 1414, 268).

It should be noted that this narration implies only the book of legal traditions and jurisprudential narrations and not all types of narrations. As a result, only such legal and jurisprudential narrations were banned, and this did not affect other types of narrations. The other significant point is that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb was afraid of the Qur’an being mixed with the legal traditions and narrations. This indicates that perhaps

these types of narrations were written on the margins of the copies of the Qur'an due to their importance and their common usage by the people.

When 'Umar was seeing off his statesmen who were dispatched to govern various parts of the Islamic land, he used to command them to only take the Qur'an into consideration and avoid narrating and relating the prophetic traditions (Ibn Kathīr 1988, 2:155).

The implications and impacts of the action taken by 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb – permissibility of *ijtihad* based on individual opinion and banning the narration and writing of traditions – led to the formation of a real fear about the complete abolishment of Islamic law and jurisprudence as well as a confrontation between the proponents of 'individual opinion' and the proponents of 'tradition' in the second century of the Islamic calendar (Abū Yūsuf 1401, 3:386).

Ultimately, the Sunnis managed to control the employment of 'individual opinion' to a great extent under the auspices of the Shiite Imams ('Āmilī 1415, 1:227).

It has been mentioned in the narrations that 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb dissuaded people from writing traditions because he was fearful of the formation of a book amongst Muslims similar to that of the *Mishnah* amongst the Jews.

To understand 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's fear, it is necessary to introduce the book of *Mishnah*. *Mishnah* is the first part of Talmud that consists of a vast collection of Jewish jurisprudential and legal opinions. The word *Mishnah* in the Hebrew language means 'knowledge' or the 'second law' which is basically the main text of the Talmud ('Āmilī 1415, 1:69). *Mishnah* was the first legal bill that the Jews had enacted for themselves second to the Torah.

The second part of the Talmud is Gemara which consists of discussions concerning Zeraim, Nashim, Kodashim, Tuhurot, etc. (Zāzā 1971, 88). This demonstrates that the content of *Mishnah* consisted of jurisprudential narrations. In the view of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, any collection of Islamic legal and jurisprudential narrations could turn into the likes of *Mishnah* had he allowed such a collection of narrations and traditions to take place. As a result, he abandoned the idea of writing and recording jurisprudential traditions (Ibn Barrāj 1411, 5).

The fact that the letter ش (sh) in the word *Mishnah* has been changed to the letter ث (th) in the word *Mithnah* is because the letters س (s), ث (th) and ش (sh) are amongst the sister letters in Semitic languages. It is very common for the letter ش to change to either س or ث when a word enters the Arabic language from the Hebrew language. For instance, the equivalent of Shalom in the Hebrew language converts to Salam in the Arabic language. ('Abd al-Tawwāb 1999, 47)

The historical measure to ban the narration and writing of traditions

One of the important subjects in historical studies is the identification of currents and motivations behind historical measures in order to better understand historical phenomena (Pākatchī 2011, 16). Some are of the opinion that the ban on writing and recording traditions is not a historical matter (Pākatchī 2011, 22). This is while the assessment and evaluation of available documents and evidence indicate that such a measure is deemed as a historical measure as it is closely intertwined with other aspects of Islamic history in the first century of the Islamic calendar. Moreover, this measure has led to the emergence of significant historical currents. Hence, the study of this historical phenomenon is of paramount importance. However, prior to studying this subject, we need to present a precise definition of the available terminologies in this regard to see whether this ban on narrating traditions applied to the writing of such traditions or only their compilation.

Narrating traditions

Following the demise of the Prophet (S), people felt a need for prophetic traditions alongside the Qur'an. Narrating traditions were mostly in the form of verbal narrations in a way that the traditions of the Prophet were spread through word of mouth. In other words, people relied on their memory when narrating such traditions to one another. The most important way of having access to such traditions was through telling and hearing (Shānih-chī 2008, 30-39). In the early days, the transmission of traditions was mostly through educating students (Pākatchī 2010, 30-42).

Writing traditions

The texts pertaining to the historical narrations concerning the compilation of the Noble Qur'an demonstrates that the interpretations of the Qur'an or the jurisprudential traditions used to be written within the pages of the copies of the Qur'an from the outset. In his book *al-Sab'ah*, Ibn Mujāhid refers to this point (Ibn Mujāhid n.d ,56). These traditions were recorded as part of independent books of traditions or as part of the copies of the Qur'an. Such copies of the Qur'an which consisted of narrations – which were mostly jurisprudential ones (Sajestani 1423, 164-166) – used to be called the *Maṣāḥif* (Rāmyār 1990, 12).

It ought to be noted that traditions were of no inherent value on their own. However, they were treated with credibility and authenticity when they were employed to interpret and explain the Qur'an. This is because the Noble Qur'an says, "And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought" (16:44).

Some are of the opinion that narrations and traditions were undoubtedly written at the time of the Prophet (Suyūṭī 'Abd al-Manās 2006, 20). Furthermore, the very ascription of *Harāq al-Maṣāḥif* to 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (Dhahabī n.d, 1:5) and his decision to collect books of traditions demonstrates that the narrations and traditions used to be recorded at the time of Prophet Muhammad's life, albeit in a basic way and few in number. At the very least, during the two-year period from the demise of the Prophet till the caliphate of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, the companions of the Prophet were most probably recording such Prophetic traditions. The narrations connected to the Book of Ali, which consisted of an extensive collection of traditions, further proves this issue (Mudarrisi Ṭabāṭabāī 2007, 30).

Compilation of traditions

Compilation or *tadwīn* means the writing of a *Dīwān* (registry book). The word *tadwīn* is not originally an Arabic word and is the Arabised term for the making of a *Dīwān*. The making of a *Dīwān* involved the collection of scattered pieces of writing in order to prevent their loss and elimination (Biyhaqī, n.d, 2, 605). In terms of its definition, the word *tadwīn* refers to a broader scope than the writing of books (Abū Rīyah 1385 :38-41; Şubḥī Şālih 2004, 38-41).

Many of the characteristics that can be seen in manuscripts of Islamic traditions in the second Hijri century suggest some kind of imitation from the way taxes were recorded and compiled at that time, which was essentially an Arabised form of Persian terms.

Following the employment of Iranian writers during the Abbasid monarchical system in the second Hijri century, the method of writing *Dīwāns* was also added to the domain of Islamic studies (Pākatchī 2010, 59-61). Following the employment of scribes in the Abbasid monarchical systems in the second Hijri century and the lofty status they obtained thereby, Iranian methods of compilation and writing of *Dīwāns* in various sciences were gradually applied to Islamic and Arabic studies. Pre-Islamic poetry, Arabic literature, history of Islam and Islamic and legal traditions were all compiled in this period under the influence of Persian methods and standards (Carl Brockelmann 1119, 3:232).

The principle of stating legal traditions and jurisprudential laws was not related to the issue of compilation but such a principle was realised at this historical juncture through the confrontation between the proponents of 'individual opinion' and the proponents of 'tradition.' Given the expansion and prevalence of the employment of 'opinion' and 'analogy' in legal traditions, Islamic jurisprudence and Islam itself were on the verge of extinction. It was at this time that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz expressed his concern about the issue of *Dhabāb al-'Ilm* or *Dhabāb al-Fiqh* meaning the 'departure of knowledge' or 'the departure of jurisprudence' (Muhammad Hijāb 1961, 367). The issue that had become the main concern and apprehension of the leaders of the proponents of 'tradition' such as Mālik bin Anas and Sufyān al-Sūrī led 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz to lift the ban on narrating traditions. He then issued an official order for the legal traditions to be thoroughly compiled in order to undermine the proponents of 'individual opinion' (Zarzur 2008, 59).

The objective of this research is to examine the reasons behind 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's motivation to ban the narration and writing of Islamic traditions. This is because the compilation of traditions became gradually commonplace in Islamic communities under the influence of Iranian writers employed by the Abbasids and the transfer of the Iranian method of writing *Dīwāns* in Iraqi society. Hence, it cannot be argued that 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb had banned something that did not even exist from a historical viewpoint. It should be noted that the term 'compilation of traditions' is different from that of the 'writing of traditions.'

Therefore, the viewpoint of some researchers as Asghalani, Andolosi, Pakatchi, about the compilation of traditions seems to be valid. The only issue is the difference between the compilation of traditions and the writing and narrating of traditions. Hence, the texts of narrations and historical evidence point to the issue of the prohibition of narrating and writing of traditions. This is while what took place at the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz was the issue of the compilation of traditions. As mentioned earlier, the issue of the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions by 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb in the second Hijri century was a historical measure that bore significant motivations, reasons, objectives and consequences in the history of Islam about which a historical examination is required. Traditions have always been referred to by Muslims as the second source of Islamic deduction and thus the role played by tradition (*hadith*) in the history of Islamic civilisation cannot be overlooked (Qurqūti 2006, 40). Therefore, any research on the motivation behind the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions as a historical subject should be re-examined using a historical approach. One of the missions of historical knowledge is the study and examination of historical phenomena in

order to uncover motivations and incentives as well as the objectives pursued by historical figures.

The mastermind behind this project, was 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, whose decision led to the occurrence of important events in history such as the withdrawal of Imam Ali (A) from the caliphate due to the condition of having to observe the tradition of the first two caliphs (Shahrestānī 2011, 255), the murder of 'Uthmān bin Affān due to the burning of copies of the Qur'an (Balādhurī 1411, 5:552; Ṭāhā Ḥusayn 1119, 131), the Battle of Karbala, etc. According to the view of most historians, the two events of 'Uthmān's murder and the tragedy of Karbala were the most important and influential events in the first Hijri century. Therefore, the issue of the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions is an influential and prominent issue in the history of Islamic civilisation (Muqaddasī, 1411).

The reasons behind the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions in the view of Sunni scholars

Narrations concerning the prohibition of writing Prophet's sayings

Some scholars of Islamic traditions are trying to date back this ban and prohibition to the time of the Prophet himself and legitimise 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's decision by making references to some sayings narrated from the Prophet (Abū Rīya 1385, 48; Bukhārī 1422, 1:34; Azdi 1387, 230,444).

However, there are various flaws in such traditions and narrations including the weakness of the sources and the unreliable nature of the chain of such traditions (Ma'ārif 2008, 56). Moreover, there is a more fundamental problem here as to why 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb – at the time of introducing the ban – failed to base his argument on any of such Prophetic traditions and narrations instead deciding to ascribe such a decision to himself.

There are other similar cases that can be seen in the history of Islamic traditions. For instance, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb ascribed the prohibition of 'fixed-term marriage' (*mut'ab*) to himself. He clearly said, "I prohibited it" (Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal 1421, 22:365; Malek bin Anas 1425, 1:125). However, there are some traditions that suggest the Prophet had also forbidden the practice of *mut'ab*. This is while there are numerous narrations from the companions of the prophet that ascribe the prohibition of 'fixed-term marriage' to 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (al-Khūī). Therefore, since it has been difficult to offer a logical and reasonable justification in relation to the narration and writing of traditions, it seems that Sunni scholars have also decided to ascribe this prohibition to the Prophet.

Even the employment of ‘individual opinion’ as a means of jurisprudential deduction has been ascribed to the Prophet (Bukhari 1422, 5:128).

The issue of references to traditions narrated by the companions of the prophet and their adherents is an extensive and broad subject described by orientalist as ‘backward growth.’ It means the ascription of jurisprudential and legal opinions or the remarks made by the companions and their adherents to the Prophet (S) in order to gain credibility for such legal opinions. There is a trace of this practice being widely used in Sunni Traditions (Schacht, 2009, 156).

Nevertheless, by accepting some of such prohibitive traditions by the Prophet, some Shi‘a and Sunni scholars have justified the prohibition of writing and recording traditions. The existence of such traditions has led some Sunni scholars to conclude that during his life or at least during some point in his life, the Prophet had disagreed with the writing and recording of his sayings and that he had even decreed that any such written traditions should be obliterated (Mohammad Ajjāj 1401, 306,321,340). This view holds that the objective behind this measure by the Prophet was essentially based on the same concerns expressed by ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb. For instance, following regular questions about the practical laws of Islam, the scope of divine commands and prohibitions (religious obligations) were becoming detailed as a result of which people were facing problems and difficulties (Abū Rīya 1385, 51).

On the contrary, there are other scholars who have questioned and doubted the authenticity of such traditions as they consider them to be in contrast with other traditions that permit the writing and recording of prophetic traditions and narrations (Dinvari 1415, 412). There are also others who consider such prohibitions to be amongst those Islamic rules to which the principle of the ‘abrogator and the abrogated’ applied (Naṣīrī 2012, 122-123; Suyūṭī 1360, 2:62). However, there are some who are of the opinion that any mixture of the Qur’an with traditions would be impossible due to the Qur’anic miracle of eloquence (Abū Rīya, 1385, 51).

Companions’ inability to write traditions due to illiteracy

Some scholars have linked the prohibition of compiling traditions to the illiteracy of the companions and Muslims. This is because only a few of the companions were literate (Dinvari 1415, 412). This is a valid justification for the lack of compilation of traditions in the first Hijri century (‘Asqalānī, 1326, 4; Balādhurī 1988, 457). Nevertheless, there were those who used to write the Qur’an and such writers also wrote Prophetic traditions on the margins of the copies of the Qur’an. The lack of writing

traditions and the abstraction of texts on the margins of the copies of the Qur'an cannot be construed due to the lack of culture of writing amongst Arabs.

Fear of the combination of traditions with the Qur'an or the emergence of a new book akin to the Qur'an. At the time of ordering the obliteration and burning of the traditions, the second caliph 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb announced that one of his reasons for the prohibition of writing and recording traditions was to avoid the combination and mixture of the Qur'an with traditions: "I swear by God that I shall never lay anything over the Qur'an" (Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 1949, 48-49; Abū Riya, 1385, 263).

Some Sunni scholars have accepted this reason and thus consider the fear of the combination of the Qur'an with Islamic traditions as being the most significant and common justification behind the prohibition of writing and compiling traditions (Ma'ārif 2008, 56). On this particular note, they are of the opinion that if the traditions were also written in the same way as the Qur'an, it would have been possible for such traditions to be compiled in a single volume similar to that of the Qur'an. Then along with reading the Qur'an, people would have read the written traditions too. They would then gradually think that these traditions were also part of the Qur'an. Such Sunni scholars base their argument on the tradition narrated by Abū Sa'īd Khadrī (Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal 1421, 3:12-13).

This issue is also the reason behind the abstraction of the copies of the Qur'an. However, this reasoning is not acceptable for the abstraction of the copies of the Qur'an either. Given the uninterrupted transmission of the Qur'anic words and their superiority, this could not be presented as an acceptable justification.

'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb feared the emergence of a book alongside the Noble Qur'an that would be of equal standing with that of the Qur'an. There was a fear for the combination and mixture of the Noble Qur'an with the traditions and as mentioned earlier, fear of the emergence of something like the Mishnah amongst the People of the Book. This is because Mishnah is an independent book and has not been mixed with the Torah but it is widely and perhaps even more frequently referred to by the Jews when compared with the Torah itself.

Others share this analysis and justification and have thus argued that the fear of the abandonment of the Qur'an or the people approaching something other than the Qur'an is a valid justification for the prohibition of compilation ('Itr 1997, 43; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 1949, 49).

The separation of the history of Islamic traditions from the history of the Qur'an is one of the significant vulnerabilities facing the historical study of the Qur'an and Hadith. This is because the Qur'an and the

traditions are two inseparable legacies that have been impacting one another from the very outset.

There have been three important measures that were adopted as part of a single project. These are known as the collection of the Qur'an at the time of Abū Bakr, the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions at the time of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb and the unity of the copies of the Qur'an at the time of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān in order to alleviate the variances in the recitation of the Qur'an. That is to say that each of the three measures was, in fact, part of the same long-term project which began from the time of Abū Bakr's caliphate and was concluded at the time of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān's reign and was later established and institutionalised at the time of Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf al-Thaqafī. That project was basically aimed at the elimination and removal of jurisprudential and legal traditions from Islamic legacies or from inside the copies of the Qur'an. It even applied to independent books of tradition. (Roomi Hamavi 1414, 4:1474).

Some are of the opinion that at the time of the writing of the Qur'an, the Holy Book turned into the main source of written traditions and 'Uthman's quadrilateral copies of the Qur'an could not completely eliminate previous copies such as that of Ibn Mas'ūd (Sezgin 1408, 19).

Fear of the spread of incorrect traditions or the emergence of distortion against such traditions

Some have considered the reason behind such prohibition as being *'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's* precautionary measure to prevent the dissemination of incorrect and false traditions (Dīnwari 1415, 413). Perhaps, given 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's reason, this very viewpoint could be deemed as the main motive behind his decision. However, this is a simple and irrational justification - almost as if a person would destroy his own precious jewellery in order to prevent it from being damaged. It is difficult to imagine why someone with a high regard for Islamic traditions would eliminate such traditions by prohibiting their writing and narration due to his fear of them being mixed with other fabricated traditions.

Although none of the aforementioned reasons could justify the decision adopted by 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, it indicates the confusion in Sunni circles in putting forward a rational or lawful justification for such a measure.

The reasons behind the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions in the view of Shiite scholars

Shiite scholars have looked at the issue of the prohibition of narrating and writing traditions from a Shiite perspective. On the one hand, since in the opinion of some of the Shiites, the main problem of the Shiite Imams and Imam Ali (A) in particular with the three preceding caliphs was the issue concerning the right of the caliphate and the succession to the Prophet of Islam, they have looked at many similar issues from this perspective. In spite of the confirmation of a fundamental difference between Imam Ali (A) and the tripartite caliphs as well as the difference between the conduct of Ahl al-Bayt and the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, historical research does not support the issue of the caliphate being the main challenge facing members of Ahl al-Bayt. However, it seems that such a perception emanates from the many traditions and narrations that were disseminated at the time of the Abbasids which presented the caliphate as a right for the Ahl al-Bayt. Such traditions were then abused by the Abbasids in order to consolidate their own power (Tha'libi 1995, 61).

The study of historical texts and narrations presents us with evidence and documents that the problem between Imam Ali (A) and the tripartite caliphs was never over the issue of power. Neither 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (Ibn al-Mubarrad 2000, 2:628) nor Imam Ali (Ma'rūf Ḥasanī 1383, 1:289) were seeking power. In their view, power was a means to implement certain objectives the materialisation of which was deemed necessary by them. That explains why Imam Ali (A) or other Shiite Imams decided not to seize the numerous opportunities for gaining power when such opportunities arose.

According to a number of Shiite scholars, none of the aforementioned reasons lay behind the prohibition of narrating and compiling traditions (Ma'ārif 2008, 85-88) and that this prohibition had a direct relationship with the political developments of that era. Therefore, the important goal of those who introduced this ban was to eliminate some of the Prophetic traditions about the moral excellence and moral depravities of some individuals ('Askarī 1413, 2:44-45). This group of Shiite scholars (Askari, Shahrestani, Jalali...) have singled out the main reason behind the prohibition of narrating and recording traditions as being a political factor. They are of the opinion that the caliphates saw the tradition and words of Prophet Muhammad (A) as a big obstacle in the way of their policies. Hence, to them, the solution was to remove this obstacle from their way as by doing so they could interpret the Qur'an in their own favour by abandoning the traditions of the Prophet of Islam (Ma'ārif 2008, 1387-91).

Therefore, since there have been some traditions in admiration and praise of Imam Ali (A) and also some traditions criticising or disapproving of the tripartite caliphs, ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb introduced a ban on the narration and writing of traditions in order to prevent their dissemination. Some are of the opinion that the traditions of that era were full of points about the moral excellences of Imam Ali (A).

A Critique of the Shi‘i Perspective

Those behind this viewpoint fail to notice that the huge volume of traditions and narrations concerning the moral excellences and defects of individuals were fabricated by extremists in the next centuries. There is no rational and logical possibility behind the issuance of so many traditions in favour of and against individuals during the life of the revered Prophet (S) unless we argue that the Prophet (S) had abandoned all his other important tasks and had engaged fully in praising and rebuking this or that person.

In order to take over the power from the Umayyads in the second Hijri century, the Abbasids began a campaign to discredit the Umayyads through the mass dissemination of narrations and traditions about the moral excellence and noble qualities of Ahl al-Bayt. In doing so, they sought to prove that the Umayyads did not deserve or have the right to rule over Muslims and their campaign proved quite successful (Kharbūṭlī 1959, 169; Uṭwān 1984, 108; Tha‘alibī 1995, 61). During this period, many traditions were fabricated for the interpretation of Qur’anic verses. These were either offering a ‘cause of revelation’ for a particular verse or an interpretation of a verse that would be used as an evidence for the true position of Ahl al-Bayt in Islam (Ma’rifat 1426, 206). They were intending to dissuade people from accepting the rule of the Umayyads by means of such fake traditions and narrations (Sāmīrā’ī 1984, 108). Subsequently, they could take over the power from the Umayyads by fabricating traditions that considered the children of ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Abbās as being members of the Ahl al-Bayt. These were traditions and narrations that in most cases contradicted the text and the context of the Qur’anic verses (Fayḍ al-Kāshānī 1415, 1:458). This was to an extent that even some of the Akhbārīs assumed that these additions were, in fact, part of the Qur’an which was removed from the Qur’an by the third caliph ‘Uthmān (ibn Mujāhid n.d:65). The Shi‘a exegeses have always been criticised due to such traditions and narrations that are not compatible with the context of Qur’anic verses (Dhahabī 1992, 2:11; ‘Umar Ibrāhīm Riḍwān 1992, 2:776).

Therefore, the prohibition of narrating and recording traditions by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb cannot be linked to the concealment of the moral excellences of Ahl al-Bayt.

Some Shi'a scholars have put forward other reasons such as the adoption of a model similar to that of the Jewish readings ('Āmili 1415, 1: 96) which lack reliable and definite arguments. Such perspectives cannot be trusted when it comes to issues pertaining to the history of Islamic society. There must be a reason that could be relied upon and trusted as an unambiguous and categorical reason. In order to reach such a position, one should be free from any presumptions and prejudgements so that there could be a historical examination based on evidence and documents whereby the main reason behind this issue could be uncovered.

'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb and the role of individual opinion

'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb bin Nafīl bin 'Abd al-'Izzī al-Qurayshī al-'Adawī was born in the city of Mecca on the 13th Year of Elephant – 570 C.E. 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb had a bad-tempered personality and even during his reign as the caliph hardly anyone would dare to ask him a question. (Ṭāhā Ḥusayn 1966, 127). 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb was the second Muslim caliph and was the first one to call himself the 'Leader of the Faithful.' He would only appoint such individuals as governors and rules who would obey his commands. He made great efforts to administer and deliver justice. He avoided profligacy and was well-known for his simple lifestyle (Dhahabī nd, 1:181; Ibn Athīr 1972, 2: 184; Ibn Sa'd 1414, 3: 267-9; Muqaddasī, 1411, 5: 88). He was the first person who put forward the idea and theory of the 'Adequateness of the Qur'an' by using the phrase, 'The Book of God is sufficient for us' (Ṣan'ānī 1403, 5:438; Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal 1421, 5:135; Bukhārī 1422, 6:9; Muslim, n.d, 3:1257). This phrase in itself is tantamount to the rejection of the authority of traditions (Kharsanī 1428, 412). Of course, later this became the motto of Khawārij ('Abd al-Mun'am 1399, 38). Amongst the trilateral caliphs, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb was well known for using individual opinion in jurisprudential deduction (Ibn al-Shubbah 1399, 2:662; Niyshābūrī 1990, 4:377). His goal was to deliver legal opinions and fatwas which were required for the expediency of the people or the government.

In some of the traditions and narrations, we can see the Shi'a Imams and Imam Ali (A) in particular having censured and reproached the tripartite caliphs and particularly 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb for their legal deductions based on individual opinion (Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ 2004, 120, 152, 178,... – Sharaf al-Dīn 1368, 241).

Delivering legal and jurisprudential deductions against the command of the Prophet of Islam, eliminating the right of ‘reconciliation and harmony amongst people’ as one of the cases for the payment of religious alms or *zakah*, removing the share of one’s relatives, going to war with those who have not paid their religious alms, prohibiting the minor Hajj and its rituals from the annual Hajj pilgrimage, prohibiting the fixed-term marriage, sanctioning three divorces at once, performance of *tarāwīḥ* prayer, the condition for the inheritance of the siblings of the deceased and lifting the obligation of performing daily prayers in the event of having no access to water are amongst some of the legal deductions ascribed to ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (Sharaf al-Dīn, 1368, 67).

Given the availability of numerous historical documents and evidence, the issue of legal and jurisprudential deductions based on individual opinion is a matter of certainty as far as ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb’s approach towards jurisprudential issues is concerned. For instance, some of the texts refer to some narrations quoting Abu Bakr as saying – at the time of choosing the next caliph after himself – that the employment of individual opinion was a unique characteristic of ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (Ibn al-Shubbah 1399, 2:662, 667; Niyshābūrī 1990, 4: 377; Shiybānī 1403: 373; Abī Dāwūd n.d, 3: 303).

Many of the Sunni scholars have accepted this issue. As for ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb’s view towards the issue of ‘individual opinion’, many viewpoints have been put forward. Some describe it as a matter of expediency; others consider it as having roots in ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb’s consultation with the companions of the Prophet and some have considered it to be rooted in reason (‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Ḥanafī 2014, 334).

Of course, it should be noted that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb’s opinion was not limited to this and a group of religious scholars from the past to the present – even amongst the Shiites – have always been a proponent of the theory of the ‘Sufficiency of the Book of God’ (Ḥubullāh 2011, 226). The applicability of this method of ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb and his followers led to the formation of a group called the ‘Companions of Opinion’ within a year. This term can be seen as a key terminology in the literature of Islamic scholars (Shiybānī 1400, 2: 88). However, the Islamic community realised that nothing would be left of Islam should it fail to seriously confront this current (Abū Yūsuf 1401, 3:386; Muḥammad Banī Ḥijāb 1961, 366). Whether ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb considered ‘individual opinion’ as a reliable and authentic jurisprudential argument that could supersede the Qur’an and the traditions is debatable. Some are of the opinion that he considered ‘individual opinion’ to be superior to certain laws of Islam such as fixed-term marriage. Others are of the opinion that in essence, ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb considered reasoning in relation to the traditions

to be speculative and presumptive, and thus he left such traditions open to debate and rejection. There are also some others who are of the opinion that he had believed in the principle of 'Sufficiency of the Book of God' and that he did not consider the traditions and narrations to be authoritative ('Abd al-Wahid al-Hanafī 2014, 322).

The historical study of documents and evidence

If a researcher adopted the same method as the past researchers in understanding a historical issue such as the measure taken for the prohibition of writing and narrating traditions by merely relying on narrations, they would not reach any conclusion other than what the past researchers have reached. This is because most of such cases are based on the observations and reports of individuals whose account of events and their qualifications to report traditions could be doubted in terms of accuracy (Ḥāfiẓ-Niyā 2006, 56-57). In this case, no other alternative would remain other than referring to other sources.

Amongst other credible sources in historical research are documents and evidence that have something new to offer (Majdfar 1382, 276). Documents and evidence are deemed as being amongst the most important sources for research because they have a vast scope and variety and thus can include writings, codes, signs, symbols, etc. (Heravi 2007, 113).

In order to understand the reason and motivation behind the issue of the prohibition of writing and narrating traditions, it would be necessary to exploit various documents and evidence of different periods of time. In the methodology of evidential studies, documents and evidence are referred to as 'footprints.' The role that historical footprints play here is that a comparison between them and incorrect reports would help us correct such reports. Therefore, the significant role of such footprints cannot be denied when it comes to historical research (Pākatchī 2011, 45-46).

As for the prohibition of writing and narrating the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S) in the first Hijri century, contrary to what the reports indicate, there are documents and evidence in the history of Islamic law and jurisprudence that show what was actually prohibited were the jurisprudential traditions and other narrations such as the traditions concerning the moral excellence, ethics and exegeses were quoted and related without let or hindrance (Goldziher 1959, 72).

Given that Islamic history has been recorded along with distortion and censorship under the influence and domination of the Umayyads (Goldziher, 1959, 90), many of historical events and the reasons and motivations behind them, cannot be fully trusted. In order to better understand the currents and developments of the first century in the

Islamic calendar and given the huge time gap, one must employ the methodology of the evidential study. There are numerous documents and evidence in relation to the ban on narrating and transmitting traditions.

In this research, we endeavour to find the main motivation behind the ban on recording and narrating traditions through the study of a number of documents and evidence which demonstrate some of the reactions to and consequences of this prohibition.

The abstraction of the copies of the Qur'an and its opponents

According to the traditions and narrations concerning the history of the compilation of the Qur'an, when Abū Bakr became the caliph, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb proposed the compilation of the Qur'an under the pretext of the loss of some memorisers of the Qur'an during the Battle of Yamama (Rāmyār, 2005, 304). The mastermind of this project was 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb as the proposal of the compilation of the Qur'an was originally put forward by him and the final compiled version of the Qur'an was eventually inherited by Ḥafṣah (daughter of 'Umar) as 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb's personal property and not as the property of the state. This was later adopted as a model by the third caliph, 'Uthmān (Noldeke 2004, 322 ; Ṭāhā Ḥusayn 1998, 123) and people were compelled to adhere to this copy of the Qur'an.

Amongst the reviewed works on the subject of the compilation of the Qur'an, the Shiites have strived to introduce Imam Ali (A) as the first compiler of the Qur'an. On the other hand, the Sunnis have endeavoured to introduce Abū Bakr or 'Uthmān as the first compilers of the Qur'an (Majlisī 1403, 23, 249; Sayyid Raḍī 1406, 173). Of course, Sunnis have also tried to portray the compilation of the Qur'an as a political movement or a moral excellence for the caliph (Shahristānī 2014, 1:299).

Various documents and evidence point to the fact that the objective behind this measure was to remove the traditions from the copies of the Qur'an, particularly those traditions that were of a legal and jurisprudential nature. This issue is part of an important event that has occurred in the first Hijri century. Perhaps, the abstraction of the Qur'an by Abū Bakr following the proposal of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb could not individually demonstrate which traditions were omitted. However, one can infer from the copy of the Qur'an which was compiled by Imam Ali (A) in a reciprocal move as to what type of traditions may have been removed: Imam Ali's copy contained jurisprudential traditions alongside the Qur'an itself, although the caliphs did not accept or recognise this copy. Furthermore, the description that Ibn Abī Dāwūd gives in his book 'Al-Maṣāḥif' about the Qur'anic copies of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (S) indicates that such copies of the Qur'an mostly included

jurisprudential traditions and narrations particularly in relation to the Hajj pilgrimage, marriage, divorce, prayers, cleanliness, etc. (Ibn Abī Dāwūd 2002, 165-187).

Before touching on the issue of Imam Ali's copy of the Qur'an as an evidence, we need to discuss three points the consideration of which will lead to a better understanding relating to the phenomenon of the ban on jurisprudential traditions.

The issue of expansion in Shiite traditions

Sometimes the index writers of Shiite books have listed one book with multiple titles as several books in order to make Shiite legacies look broad and extensive in comparison with Sunni sources? This issue has been proved and established by Mudarrisī Ṭabāṭabā'ī through ample examples. One of the examples cited is the Qur'an compiled by Imam Ali (A). This book has also been known as 'the Book of Ali', '*Jafr al-Jāmi*', '*Ṣahīfa al-Farā'id*', '*Ṣahīfa al-Ḥalāl wa al-Ḥarām*', etc. About description of all these titles, it has been said that they include laws concerning the prohibited and permissible deeds and even the ruling concerning the indemnity for a scar on one's body (Ṣaffār 1404, 142-146). Imam Ali's copy of the Qur'an is said to have included the recitation of Imam Ali and one must take into consideration that the term 'recitation' in the first Hijri century meant Islamic law and jurisprudence (Wellhausen 1998, 35). The narrations reported about Imam Ali's copy of the Qur'an also demonstrate that the narrations and traditions inscribed on the margins of its pages were of a legal and jurisprudential nature:

“O Ṭalḥah, every verse that God has revealed has been dictated to me by the Messenger of God and has been inscribed with my own handwriting, and all the precepts and ordinances concerning the prohibited and the permissible acts, punishments and every other ruling that people may need until the Day of Resurrection is with me. This even includes the rule concerning the indemnity for a scratch on the body.” (Solaim 1998, 209-211; Ṭabarsī 2002, 222; Majlisī 1403, 31:423, 89:41; Fayḍ Kāshānī 1415, 2:42).

The legal and jurisprudential traditions in Imam Ali's copy of the Qur'an can be seen amongst Shiite sources of tradition as the traditions that are 'in the Book of Ali.' As for the volume of this book, Sunnis have suggested that it was so small that it could fit in the sheath of a sword or that Imam Ali (A) had nothing more than a sheet of paper containing the Prophetic traditions (Ḥākīm Niyshābūrī 1411, 4:153; 'Abd al-Razzāq 1403, 10: 100).

As usual, they did not even bear this description and they say that it was so small that it fitted into the sheath of ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb (Mudarrisī Ṭabāṭabā’ī 2007, 30). Although this description is a fabricated tradition, it indicates the large volume of the book that Imam Ali (A) put together as a means of confronting the issue of the abstraction of the copies of Qur’an by Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb. It also demonstrates the first reciprocal measure taken by the Shiite Imams. Therefore, the production of this book included the legal and jurisprudential laws in the words of Imam Ali (A). As historical evidence, this book can provide clarification about the type of omissions carried out by Abū Bakr in his decision to abstract the copies of the Qur’an.

There will be further examination and study from a different perspective concerning the Book of Ali in the next paper which is about the clarification of the historical origins of Sunni jurisprudential traditions.

The umayyad reign and the ‘Āshūrā’ uprising

Yazid took the throne of caliphate after his father, Mu’āwīyah. He was born in the 25th or 26th year of the Hijri calendar. He grew up in a non-Islamic and Christian environment. He had many moral corruptions such as drinking intoxicating beverages, shedding blood, lustfulness, etc. (Subḥānī 2011, 47) However, Imam Husayn (A) did not swear allegiance to him and a battle broke out between Yazid and Imam Husayn (A) in the 61st Hijri year which led to the martyrdom of Imam Husayn (A). On several occasions, Imam Husayn (A) announced the reason behind his uprising to be the revival of the tradition of his grandfather, Prophet Muhammad (S). One of the most important examples of such revival can be seen in the following narration:

“When Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī realised that Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwīyyah was adamant to have him killed, he lifted the Qur’an and said the book of God and the tradition of my grandfather is between us so why are you in a hurry to shed my blood?” (Qumī 1414, 5:57)

This narration demonstrates that the traditions were recorded alongside the copies of the Qur’an. In the subsequent uprisings within the years, 64 to 73 of the Hijri calendar—a period marked by dissensions within the ruling establishment—the issue of prophetic traditions had become of particular significance (Balādhurī 1411, 6:374). The Umayyad government lacked legal and jurisprudential laws and there is no trace of executing the legal punishments or any references to prophetic jurisprudence and law. There were no official jurisprudential schools of thought until Abū Ḥanīfa (Schacht 1981, 18; Aḥmad Rāsīm 2007, 45).

Ibn 'Abbās used to say, "The Umayyads abandoned the tradition of the Prophet of God due to their enmity to Ali." (Nisā'ī 2011, 5: 279)

This narration demonstrates the particular stance adopted by Imam Ali (A) towards traditions. Therefore, the issue of *'Ashūrā'* and its relevant records indicate that traditions and jurisprudential laws were forgotten at the time of the prohibition of writing and narrating traditions. This was to an extent that in less than fifty years since the demise of the Prophet of Islam, Imam Husayn (A) expressed his dismay over the abandonment of the tradition of his grandfather and thus decided to stage an uprising. At this point, one should ask the question as to what had happened to the tradition of the Prophet whereby the prophetic tradition was forsaken altogether within such a short period of time. Moreover, even the caliph of the Muslims did not have the least knowledge of prophetic traditions and practical laws of Islam. The sermon delivered by Lady Zaynab (A) in the Levant indicates Yazid's lack of awareness of such traditions "How is it that your own women and maids are kept behind a partition and veil while you have debased the daughters of the Prophet of God by removing their veils and revealing their faces before stranger men?" (Ibn 'Āshūr 2000, 2:7).

The confrontation between the proponents of individual opinion and the proponents of tradition

Following the imposition of the prohibition of writing and recording traditions and the prevalence of the use of 'individual opinion' and 'analogy' in practical laws of Islam, led to the formation of two serious and important factions between 150 A.H. to 250 A.H. which is referred to as the 'confrontation between the proponents of individual opinion and the proponents of traditions.'

Those who were the followers of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb method of jurisprudential deduction in their inference of religious and jurisprudential rulings were later known as the 'proponents of individual opinion.'

According to some, the emergence of the proponents of individual opinion in the first Hijri century took place as a result of perpetuating the policies of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb particularly in the environment of Iraq. (Āmilī 1426, 1:186)

Firstly, the presence of Abdullah ibn 'Umar and the activities of his companions in the city of Kufah in line with the tendency to adopt individual opinion were amongst the factors contributing to the continuation and expansion of the employment of individual opinion. (Biyhaqī n.d, 1:338; Ibn Qudāmah n.d, 10:532; 'Aīnī n.d, 15:105)

Secondly, the dominance of the Umayyad ruling dynasty with an Uthmani inclination led to the establishment of this method in the first Hijri century. The Uthmani inclination was a political and intellectual current which had two significant characteristics: firstly, confronting jurisprudence and the jurists and secondly, hostility and enmity towards Imam ‘Ali at the forefront of which was a person called Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī in Iraq. (al-Kūrānī 1427, 4:173)

Thirdly, repeating the keyword ‘individual opinion’ in the words and speeches of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and the continuity of using this keyword in the words of the proponents of individual opinion and using the individual opinions of the Caliph in the first Hijri century as evidence (Ibn al-Shabbah 1490, 2:667).

However, in the second Hijri century, a group emerged amongst the narrators who were later called the proponents of traditions (*hadith*) who claimed that in most jurisprudential and legal issues, traditions and narrations could be used as evidence when deducing legal rulings. This group gradually came to loggerheads with the proponents of individual opinion.

Proponents of individual opinion were a group that used ‘individual judgement’ in such rulings where there were no known rulings obtained through ‘analogy’ or ‘preference.’ They even issued decrees that had not yet materialised in the real world while preferring evident analogical reasoning (*al-qīyās al-jalīy*) to traditions reported by a single transmitter (*al-khabar al-wāḥid*) and they only accepted such traditions that were widely practised Minshāwī 2012, 543-547; Kāshānī 1409, 1:13)

As for the proponents of hadith, they were a group of people that did not use analogy in relation to narrations and traditions but deemed the consensus amongst the people of Medina and their practice as being a credible and authentic source (Zarzūr 2008, 100). Although the above definitions may not offer a comprehensive description of the proponents of individual opinion and the proponents of traditions, it indicates some of the characteristics of these two groups vis-à-vis each other when it comes to the methodology of jurisprudential deduction.

A century after the prohibition of writing and narrating jurisprudential traditions, the use of individual opinion and analogy grew widely, particularly in Iraq. Due to having the possibility of issuing legal and jurisprudential rulings based on individual opinion and analogy, these two groups were supported by the Abbasid rulers (Qāymāz Dhahabī 1405, 8:539). In the early second Hijri century, there was a confrontation between the proponents of individual opinion and the proponents of traditions, which was one of the most significant intellectual developments of that time. In this confrontation, the proponents of traditions eventually

defeated the proponents of individual opinion after which there was a move for the compilation and collection of authentic traditions. This issue indicated the reaction to what had taken place in the previous century; i.e. the prohibition of writing and recording jurisprudential and prophetic traditions while at the same time employing individual opinion and analogy in jurisprudential rulings.

The point that ought to be taken into consideration is the role played by the Shiite Imams during this period. They commanded and encouraged people to write and record traditions (Kulaynī 1407, 1:51). Many of the leaders of the proponents of hadith were amongst their students such as Mālik bin Anas, Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, Sufyān bin 'Ayīnah, Sufyān Sūrī, etc. (Maḥfūz 1426, 27; Ibn Shahrāshūb, 2000, 3:373; 'Asqalānī 1326, 2:104). The Shiite Imams strongly forbade people from using 'individual opinion' and 'analogy' and considered it to be a form of polytheism and disbelief (Barqī 1992, 1:215).

This issue led to the formation of a current and movement in the Islamic society to confront 'individual opinion' and 'analogy.' Perhaps it could even be argued that the command of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz for the compilation of traditions was under the influence of such enlightenment. History shows that there was a good relationship between him and the fifth Shiite Imam, Imam Baqir (Nūr al-Dīn Āl 'Alī 2004, 20-40; Muḥammad 'Alī Dakhīl 1974, 80).

Instead of narrating a story or moral issues, in the first Hijri century (Dhahabī 1993, 4:511; Ibn 'Asākir 1415, 58:511) the proponents of tradition focused on clarifying jurisprudential issues and ancillaries in the second Hijri century. Some have referred to this as the expansionism of the proponents of traditions.

The order of 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb about the prohibition on writing and narrating traditions was not pursued and fully enforced until the leadership of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. This led to a situation that no traditions were specifically compiled until the second half of the second Hijri century. The time when 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz rose to power as caliph, he abolished this ban and ordered the compilation of traditions. He argued that Islamic law and jurisprudence was on the verge of destruction and that the compilation of traditions must be officially pursued in order to preserve this knowledge (Ṣubḥī Ṣāliḥ 2004, 9).

Further to this directive of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, a huge volume of jurisprudential traditions and narrations were gradually collected and compiled in the form of specific books such as collections of jurisprudential traditions, collections of authentic traditions and the chain of authorities narrating the traditions. The point that is of paramount importance is that it was the compilation of jurisprudential

traditions that gained particular significance during this time. This can be seen after the year 100 in the Hijri calendar; a time when there was a growing tendency towards the compilation of jurisprudential books such as collections of jurisprudential traditions and collections of authentic traditions (Mudir Shānih-Chi 2011, 131).

The important issue of the ‘chain of authorities’ who have narrated jurisprudential traditions in three groups – each of which contain a few people – from the cities of Medina, Basra and Kufa (Khaṭīb 2007, 55) have led orientalist to doubt the originality and authenticity of jurisprudential traditions and thus considering them to be the opinions of the companions of the Prophet that have been ascribed to Prophet Muhammad (S) through fabricated evidence (Schacht 2009, 60-63).

Comparative studies in ‘Comparative Jurisprudence’ show that a high percentage of the texts of Shiite and Sunni traditions match each other (Wā’iz-Zādiḥ Khurāsānī 2001, 58-59). Therefore, it is not possible to consider the texts of traditions and narrations to be merely the jurisprudential opinions of the jurists in the second Hijri century. Hence, a new strategy should be employed in order to prove the authenticity of Sunni jurisprudential traditions.

Therefore, ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb’s motivation for prohibiting the narration and writing of jurisprudential traditions was, in fact, limiting the scope of jurisprudential texts in order to facilitate the use of ‘individual opinion’ and ‘analogy’ in the process of jurisprudential deduction and inference. This issue was followed by significant consequences in the history of Islam amongst which the elimination of prophetic and jurisprudential texts, the elimination of religious and legal conduct as well as the emergence of the proponents of individual opinion and their subsequent growth could be mentioned. One of the other repercussions was the stance adopted by Sunnis in relation to this current and their complete u-turn towards jurisprudential traditions from the course that ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb had initiated. This was precisely the reason why they called themselves the ‘People of Tradition’ or *Ahl al-Sunnah*. This was because in their viewpoint, the application of individual opinion would lead to ‘innovation’ in religion and that the theory of the ‘sufficiency of the Qur’an’ would lead to the destruction of half of the religion (Abd al-Wahhāb 1420, 122).

Conclusion

Through the study of historical and traditional sources, it becomes clear that the second caliph had had a particular viewpoint towards prophetic traditions and practical laws of Islam. Hence, he took numerous measures that have had significant impacts on the history of Islam. He believed in

the authority of prophetic traditions or the authority of the proof of texts or the apparent meaning of the Qur'an and traditions as long as it would not be possible to find a reason against it from rationality or mores. Therefore, he used to prefer rational reasoning to the proof of the texts and the apparent meaning of the verses of the Noble Qur'an and prophetic traditions. He founded and established the use of reason, analogy and individual opinion as a methodology in deducing the jurisprudential and practical laws of Islam. The prohibition of narrating and recording the traditions of the Prophet in line with reducing jurisprudential texts was a measure to reach this very end.

The prohibition of narrating and writing traditions by 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb was a personal issue that only applied to jurisprudential matters and not all religious dimensions. This is because ethical matters, moral excellences of individuals, historical facts, beliefs, etc. were related and narrated by popular storytellers and narrators of traditions throughout the first Hijri century. The only issues and subjects that the narrators and popular storytellers did not narrate any traditions about them were legal and jurisprudential traditions.

By initiating the usage of 'individual opinion' and limiting the Islamic texts and jurisprudential traditions, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb gave way to the emergence of significant reactions and implications—evidence that demonstrates the reason behind the prohibition of narrating and writing jurisprudential traditions.

Given the issue concerning the abstraction of the copies of Qur'an by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the reciprocal move by Imam 'Alī (A) in preparing a copy of the Qur'an which included jurisprudential rulings, the *'Ashūrā'* uprising with the intention of reviving the abandoned Prophetic tradition and the confrontation between the proponents of tradition and the proponents of individual opinion in the second Hijri century. This issue and the theory of the 'chain of authorities' which is amongst the most important theories in the history of Sunni traditions indicate the closeness of all narrated traditions within a group of limited individuals amongst the narrators of traditions in the cities of Medina, Basra and Kufa such as Shāfi'ī, Mālik ibn Anas, etc.

These two issues have led some to assume that such narrations and traditions are Sunni jurisprudential opinions that have been attributed to the Prophet of Islam and his companions in the form of hadith. Although this perspective is not correct, these two problems question the authenticity and originality of the Sunni jurisprudential traditions.

A review and criticism of various viewpoints concerning the originality and authenticity of the Sunni jurisprudential narrations requires a separate study and thus shall be looked at in another independent research.

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