

Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi
Journal of Sakarya University Faculty of Theology

ISSN: 2146-9806 | e-ISSN: 1304-6535

Cilt/Volume: 25, Sayı/Issue: 47, Yıl/Year: 2023 (Haziran/June)

On the Manuscripts Underlying the Edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*

Kitābu't-Tahrīş ve Kitābu'l-Makālāt'ın Tahkikinde Esas
Alman El Yazmaları Üzerine

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Makale Bilgisi – Article Information

Makale Türü/Article Type: Araştırma Notu / Case Report

Geliş Tarihi/Date Received: 25/02/2023

Kabul Tarihi/Date Accepted: 25/04/2023

Yayın Tarihi/Date Published: 15/06/2023

Atıf/Citation: Hansu, Hüseyin. "On the Manuscripts Underlying the Edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*". *Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 25/47 (2023), 267-282. <https://doi.org/10.17335/sakaifd.1256520>.

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Abstract

With this study, it is aimed to clarify some ambiguities about the origin of the manuscripts that the edition of *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, which we published recently, rest on. Those editions which we expect to open new horizons in terms of the history of Islamic theology and hadith criticism, have reached today via Yemeni libraries, like other Mu'tazila cultural heritage items. Due to the political instability caused by the long-term civil wars in the country, a detailed inventory of private or official libraries in Yemen, which has rich collections of manuscripts on Islamic culture, has not been made until now. Although some of these manuscripts were collected in the Sanaa Library (*Maktabat al-Awqāf*), most of them are still preserved in mosques' libraries or private collections under inappropriate conditions. Since there are no reliable records or indexes of these manuscripts, it is not possible to give reliable information about the origin of each item especially the status of those found in private collections or family libraries as called *Buyūt al'ilm*. Today, most of the Yemeni manuscripts found in the libraries of Europe, America and Islamic countries have been purchased by manuscript collectors, merchants, foreign researchers, or other illegal ways. The ones that have been published so far are either based on these manuscripts or similarly on copies from Yemen. This ambiguity about the origin of the manuscripts can sometimes lead to unjust accusations that target the editors of them, as if they used illegal copies on purpose. In this article, we tried to clarify the ambiguities and controversial points related to those manuscripts which our edition is based on by giving information about the obtaining manuscripts and edition processes.

Keywords: Hadīth, Mu'tazila, Kitāb al-Maqālāt, Kitāb al-Tahrīsh, Yemeni Manuscripts, Hassan Ansari.

Öz

5./11. asra kadar devam eden Mu'tezile mezhebi, geride zengin bir kültürel miras bırakmıştır. Yemen kütüphaneleri vasıtasıyla gelen eserler istisna edilirse bu mirasın büyük bir kısmı kaybolup gitmiştir. Tabii felaketler dışında mezhep taassubu, Haçlı ve Moğol istilaları bu mirasın yok olmasının önemli nedenleri arasında sayılmaktadır. Yemen Bölgesi ise coğrafi konumu itibarıyla büyük istilalardan uzakta kaldığı için İslam kültürüne dair çok sayıda yazma eseri muhafaza edebilmiştir. Ancak son yüzyılda Yemen'de yaşanan iç karışıklıklar, buradaki yazmaları da yok olma tehlikesiyle karşı karşıya bırakmıştır. Bu yazmaların bir kısmı 1925 yılında San'a Evkâf Kütüphanesi'nde toplanmış ise de büyük bölümü hâlâ camilerde, *buyūtü'l-ilm* denilen aile kütüphanelerinde ve özel koleksiyonlarda uygun olmayan şartlarda muhafaza edilmektedir. Şimdiye kadar bunların bir envanteri çıkarılmadığı gibi güvenilir kayıtları da bulunmamaktadır. 19. asırdan bu yana söz konusu miras talan, hırsızlık, yangın, rutubet gibi tehditlerin yanı sıra yazma koleksiyoncularının da yoğun ilgisiyle karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Bugün Avrupa, Ortadoğu ve Amerikan kütüphanelerindeki binlerce Yemen yazması, koleksiyoncular ve yazma tüccarları vasıtasıyla gelmiştir.

Bu mirasın, asli vatani olan Yemen'den dışarı çıkarılması can sıkıcı bir durum ise de daha güvenli şartlarda muhafaza edilmesi ve araştırmacıların erişimine sunulması açısından olumlu sonuçları da olmuştur. Mesela Osmanlı'nın son döneminde Yemen'e görevli olarak giden Ali Emiri'nin (ö. 1924) beraberinde getirdiği yazmalar, bugün Ali Emiri Kütüphanesi'nde muhafaza edilmektedir. 2000 yılında San'a'da kurulan Zeyd b. Ali Vakfı, Zeydiye ve Mu'tezile yazmalarını toplamayı ve araştırmacıların erişimine açmayı hedeflemiştir. Bu vakfın, son zamanlarda bazı Amerikan üniversitelerinin iş birliğiyle Yemen yazmalarını dijitalize etme çalışmaları da umut verici gelişmeler olarak kaydedilmelidir.

İslam kültürünün her alanıyla ilgili olan bu yazmalar arasında önemli sayıda Mu'tezile eserleri de bulunmuştur. 1960'lı yıllarda Mısır'da neşredilen Mu'tezile eserleri, Yemen'den getirilen yazmalara dayanmaktadır. Yakın zamanda neşrettiğimiz *Kitâbü't-Tahrîş* ile *Kitâbü'l-Makâlât*'in yazmaları da Yemen kütüphanelerinde bulunmuştur. Hadis tenkit tarihi, kelam ve mezhepler tarihi araştırmalarında çığır açıcı nitelikte olan bu eserlerin Türkiye'de yayınlanmış olması, İlahiyat araştırmalarının geldiği seviyeyi göstermesi açısından ayrı bir önemi haizdir.

Kitâbü't-Tahrîş, hicrî ikinci asır kelimacılarından Dirâr b. Amr'ın (ö. 200/815 [?]) hadis tenkit tarihine dair kısa bir risalesidir. Bu risalenin el yazması, 2002 yılında Yemenli araştırmacı Abdüsselam el-Vecih (ö. 2022) tarafından Yemen'in en eski ilim merkezlerinden biri olan Şehâre'deki İmam Kâsım b. Muhammed Camii Kütüphanesi'nde keşfedilmiştir. Vecih, 2002'de yayınladığı

Yemen yazmalarıyla ilgili katalogda risaleyi kısaca tanıtmış ve bir kopyasını da kurucularından olduğu Zeyd b. Ali Vakfı'na teslim ederek araştırmacıların erişimine sunmuştur. 2006 yılında Vakıf merkezinden bir kopyasını aldığı risaleyi, meslektaşım Mehmet Keskin'le birlikte yorucu bir tahkik sürecinin ardından 2014 yılında neşretmeye muvaffak olduk. *Kitābū't-Tahrīş*, hadis istismar ve uydurma faaliyetine dair bilinen en eski risaledir. Sözlükte dalaşmak, boğuşmak, horoz ve köpek dövüştürmek anlamına gelen tahrīş kelimesi, kitapta 'fitne çıkarmak, insanları birbirine düşürmek' şeklinde mecazi bir anlamda kullanılmıştır. Bazı itikadi ve siyasi fırkaların, hadis rivayetlerini istismar ederek ümmet arasında fitne çıkarmaları bu metaforla ifade edilmiştir.

Kitābū'l-Makālāt ise Bağdat Mu'tezilesi kelimcilerinden Ebū'l-Kāsim el-Belhī (ö. 319/931) tarafından kaleme alınmıştır. Eş'arī ve Matürīdī gibi âlimlerle çağdaş olan Belhī bu eserinde, 3./9. asra kadar Müslümanlar arasında ortaya çıkan fırkaların tarihini ve görüşlerini incelemiştir. Kalam ve mezhepler tarihi kaynaklarında sıkça atıfta bulunulan bu eserin varlığı yakın zamana kadar bilinmemekteydi. İlk defa 1952 yılında Mısırlı yazmalar uzmanı Fuad Seyyid (ö. 1967) tarafından Yemen'de özel bir kütüphanede bulundu. Fuat Seyyid'in istinsah edip yayına hazırladığı 11 varaklık kısım 1974 yılında yayınlandı, ancak onun vefatı üzerine kitabın geri kalan kısmının akıbeti belirsiz kaldı. 1999 yılında doktora araştırmaları vesilesiyle bulunduğum Ürdün'de yazmanın tam bir fotokopisini Racīh Kurdī'nin (ö. 2019) özel kütüphanesinde gördüm. Nüsha tamdı ve istinsah kaydına göre hicri 408 gibi çok erken bir tarihte istinsah edilmişti. Daha sonra kendileriyle birlikte yazmayı tahkik ederek 2018'de İstanbul'da Kuramer Yayınları arasında neşrettik. İslam düşünce tarihini Mu'tezilī bir yazarın kaleminden okuma imkanını sağlamanın yanı sıra bu eser Mu'tezile hakkında da ilk elden bir kaynak niteliğindedir. Fırkaların kronolojik sıraya göre ve objektif bir dille tanıtlıldığı *el-Makālāt*, kendisinden sonra yazılmış mezhepler tarihi çalışmalarının büyük çoğunluğuna kaynaklık etmiştir.

Akademik camiada büyük ilgi gören her iki tahkik de kısa sürede gerek yurt içinde gerekse yurt dışında çeşitli seviyelerde bilimsel çalışmalara konu oldular. Eserlerin muhteva analizini ve tarihsel değerini başka çalışmalara havale ederek burada sadece bunların dayandıkları yazmalar hakkında bilgi verilecektir. Esasında giriş kısımlarında, konuyla ilgili gerekli bilgiler mevcut olmakla birlikte Hassan Ansari isimli İranlı bir akademisyen tarafından bu neşirlerin yazmalarıyla ilgili yapılan spekülasyonlar, daha detaylı bir açıklama ihtiyacını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Makalemizde mezkur eserleri tahkik etmede esas aldığımız yazmaların temini ve bir yayına dönüş hikayesi ilk elden anlatılarak, Yemen yazmalarının kısaca tasvir ettiğimiz mevcut durumundan kaynaklanan bazı belirsizliklerin okurlarda oluşturabilecek yersiz kuşkuların giderilmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hadis, Mu'tezile, *Kitābu'l-Makālāt*, *Kitābu't-Tahrīş*, Yemen Yazmaları, Hasan Ansari.

Introduction

I recently edited and published *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* by Dīrār b. 'Amr (d. ca. 200/815) and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt* of Abū al-Kāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/933), works that will open new perspectives in modern Mu'tazilite and theological studies. I will leave the content analysis and discussion of the historical value of these works, which have attracted a great deal of attention in the academic community in a short period of time, to other studies. Here I will discuss how the manuscripts on which these editions are based came to light. Although this information is provided in the introductions of both editions, speculation by Hassan Ansari¹ on this subject necessitates a more detailed explanation.

1 Hassan Ansari is an Iranian scholar known for his research on Islamic manuscripts, especially in the Twelver Shiite, Zaydī Shiite, and Mu'tazilī traditions. He is the author of *L'imamat et l'Occultation selon l'imamisme* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), a major study of the theory of the Occultation of the Twelfth Imam in Twelver Shiism. Ansari is currently working as a visiting researcher at the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton. According to his publications, he has

Rather than reviewing the editions, Ansari has repeatedly voiced unsubstantiated claims on social media. In an article co-authored with Sabine Schmidtke on the Yemeni manuscripts, Ansari reiterated his claims about *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*.² This time he expanded his criticism³ to include the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, which I edited in 2018 with R. Kurdi and A. Kurdi.⁴ Ansari insinuates that it was he who discovered and introduced *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and that I violated his right by publishing an edition of the book before him. Moreover, he claimed that we had not sufficiently acknowledged his work.⁵ Regarding the edition of *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, he claimed that we had not provided accurate information about its manuscript. Without giving any concrete examples, he criticized both editions as unprofessional, of low quality, and untrustworthy.⁶ He also characterized the works of other Turkish scholars on the manuscripts of Zaidiyyah and Mu‘tazilites as problematic and unprofessional.⁷

My aim in this article is to dispel unwarranted skepticism about these important publications by providing a first-hand account of the discovery and editing of the manuscripts on which these books are based.

The *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*

The *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* is a short treatise on the history of hadith criticism by Ḍirār b. ‘Amr, a theologian of the second/eighth century.⁸ *al-Tahrīsh* means to quarrel or struggle, and it may refer to cockfighting or dog fighting. Ḍirār employed this word, which he chose as the title of his work, in the metaphorical sense of “stirring up sedition, pitting people against each other.” He used this metaphor to describe how some theological and political factions exploited hadith narrations to sow discord in the umma. Our knowledge of this work, which is remarkable for both its subject matter and its early date, was until

so far been involved in some manuscript projects run by W. Madelung and S. Schmidtke. Most of his publications are on manuscript introductions or facsimile editions. His familiarity with the manuscripts must be based on his experience in these projects.

- 2 Hassan Ansari and Sabine Schmidtke, “The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts, Late Nineteenth to Early Twenty-First Centuries: An Introduction,” in *Yemeni Manuscript Cultures Cultures in Peril*, ed. Hassan Ansari and Sabine Schmidtke (New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2022), 108-109, n. 115.
- 3 Ansari - Schmidtke, “The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts,” 59, n. 73.
- 4 Abū al-Qāsim al-Ka‘bī al-Balkhī, *Kitāb al-Maqālāt wa-ma‘ahu ‘Uyūn al-masā’il wa-al-Jawābāt*, ed. Ḥusayn Hansu, Rājiḥ Kurdī, and ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Kurdī (Amman: Dār al-Fath/Istanbul: Kuramer, 2018).
- 5 “They fail to mention his role in the text’s discovery and identification” Ansari - Schmidtke, “The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts”, notes 8, 71, 73.
- 6 Ansari - Schmidtke, “The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts”, n. 73, 115 and 145.
- 7 See Ansari - Schmidtke, “The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts”, n. 8, 73, 115, 116, 141, 150, 152.
- 8 Ḍirār b. ‘Amr, *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, edited by Hüseyin Hansu and Mehmet Keskin (Istanbul: Shirkat Dār al-Irshād and Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2014).

recently limited to a short passage in *Kitāb al-Intisār* by al-Khayyāt.⁹ In my doctoral dissertation, I briefly mentioned this treatise of Ḍirār while introducing the Mu‘tazilites’ works on hadith criticism.¹⁰ At the time I was preparing my dissertation, however, this treatise was not known to have survived. *Maṣādir al-turāth fi l-maktabāt al-khāṣṣa fi l-Yaman*, a catalogue of Zaidiyyah manuscripts by the Yemeni researcher ‘Abd al-Salām b. ‘Abbās al-Wajīh (d. 5.7.2022), published in 2002,¹¹ confirmed its survival. The manuscript has been preserved in the library of al-Imām al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad Mosque in the province of Shahāra,¹² one of the oldest centers of religious studies in Yemen. Al-Wajīh discovered this important treatise in an old collection while preparing a list of the manuscripts in the library, and he briefly introduced it in his catalogue.¹³ The publisher, Mu‘assasat Imām Zayd b. ‘Alī al-Thaqāfiyya (Imam Zayd ibn Ali Cultural Foundation), of which al-Wajīh was a founder, also made a digital copy of the manuscript available free of charge to researchers at its headquarters in San‘a as a courtesy. I traveled to Yemen in 2006 to obtain a copy of the manuscript from this Foundation, whose publications I knew from its branch in Jordan. I examined the copy I received from the Foundation’s headquarters¹⁴ and subsequently identified and described its contents in a short article.¹⁵ Later, together with my colleague Mehmet Keskin, an expert on the history of Islamic sects, I began editing the manuscript. Al-Wajīh, the discoverer of this manuscript, was kind enough to review the final version of our work.¹⁶ I had the opportunity to become acquainted with al-Wajīh personally in Yemen, and he was my guest when he came to Istanbul to attend a symposium.¹⁷

Although this was a short treatise of 56 folios, because of physical damage to the manuscript, errors in the text, and other philological difficulties, which

9 Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Khayyāt, *Kitāb al-Intisār wa-l-radd ‘alā Ibn al-Rawandī al-mulḥid*, ed. H.S. Nyberg (Cairo: Maṭba‘at Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣrīyah, 1925).

10 Hüseyin Hansu, *Mutezile ve Hadis* (Ankara: Otto Yayınları, 3rd ed., 2018), 235-236.

11 ‘Abd al-Salām al-Wajīh, *Maṣādir al-turāth fi l-maktabāt al-khāṣṣa fi l-Yaman* (Amman: Mu‘assasat al-Imām Zayd b. ‘Alī al-Thaqāfiyya, 1422/2002), 2/616.

12 For extensive information on the libraries and manuscripts in Shahāra, which served as the capital of the early Qāsimid state (1597-1849) and is considered one of the oldest centers for learning religious sciences in Yemen, see ‘Abd al-Salām al-Wajīh, “Makḥṭūṭāt madīnat Shahāra wa-usaruhā al-‘ilmiyya,” *Brill Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 5 (2014), 357-380.

13 See Al-Wajīh, *Maṣādir al-turāth*, 2/616.

14 Hansu, introduction to the edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, 12, n. 2.

15 Hüseyin Hansu, “Hicri II. Asırda Rivayet Savaşları,” *İslamiyat* 10/2 (2007), 123-146.

16 See Hansu’s introduction to his edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, 23.

17 For al-Wajīh’s study of Yemeni manuscripts in Istanbul, see “Turāth al-Yaman al-Makḥṭūṭ bayn al-Ihmāl wa Muḥāwalat al-Inqādh”, *Dini ve Felsefi Metinler Yirmi Birinci Yüzyılda Yeniden Okuma, Anlama ve Algılama*, ed. Bayram Ali Çetinkaya (İstanbul: Sultanbeyli Belediyesi, 2012), 2/907-946.

have also been pointed out by Josef van Ess¹⁸ and the Lebanese scholar Riḍwān al-Sayyid¹⁹ who examined the copy, the process of editing was prolonged. After an exhausting process, we finally published the book in 2014.

After the Arabic version of the book was published, researchers such as Mehmed S. Hatiboğlu, Josef van Ess, Metin Bozan offered corrections.²⁰ I took these into account in the Turkish translation of the book published in the same year. We believe that there still might be mistakes due to the fact that the edition was based on the only surviving copy of the manuscript, but these mistakes can be resolved over time.

Following the publication of our edition, Hassan Ansari claimed that he was the discoverer of the manuscript, citing his 2004-2005 article published in Iran in Persian,²¹ and criticized us for failing to mention his role in its discovery and identification.²² In fact, when we began editing the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, we were not aware of Ansari's article introducing and identifying the treatise, which was published in a local journal that was not indexed by the international indexing databases of scientific journals and had no abstract or keywords. We later became aware of both Ansari's article and Riḍwān al-Sayyid's²³ article introducing the manuscript, which indicated his intention to edit it. However, we did not see their intention to edit the manuscript as an obstacle to our own work, since we thought that they, like us, had received a copy of the manuscript from the Zaidiyyah Foundation. Because al-Wajīh, who found the manuscript, was one of the founders of this institution and had printed its catalogue there, he himself gave permission for the digital copy of the work to be made available free of charge to researchers by the Foundation. With this explicit permission from the owner of the manuscript, it would have been pointless to seek permission from Ansari or anyone else.

Ansari's article is itself problematic. The article which consists of a brief introduction of the manuscript and its author was published two years after 'Abd al-Salām al-Wajīh's catalogue *Maṣādir al-turāth fi l-maktabāt al-khāṣṣa fi l-Yaman*, without any reference to it. The article fails to mention al-Wajīh, who discovered the manuscript, or the Zaidiyyah Foundation, which published the catalogue describing the manuscript. Ansari claimed to have found the

18 van Ess, *Kleine Schriften*, 1/2463.

19 Riḍwān al-Sayyid, "Dirār b. 'Amr: Bayna-Taharruṣ wa-t-Tahrīsh," *Jarīdat al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 31.08.2010, no. 11599. <http://archive.aawsat.com/print.asp?did=584698&issueno=11599>

20 See Hansu's introduction to the Turkish edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, XXV.

21 Hassan Ansari, "Kitāb-i kalāmī az Dirār b. 'Amr", *Kitāb-i māh-i dīn*, 89-90 (2004-2005), 4-13.

22 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts," 109, n. 115.

23 Riḍwān al-Sayyid, "al-Mu'tazila ve ta'thīratuhum fi al-lāhūtī al-Yahūdiyyi", *al-Ḥayāt*, 23/8/2008.

manuscript himself, writing, “A few years ago, by a great chance, we discovered the manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*”²⁴ and announced that he would begin its edition under the supervision of Josef van Ess.²⁵ In the same article, which he also published in Arabic with minor changes in 2018,²⁶ he again claimed to have been the first to discover the manuscript, but with contradictory statements.²⁷ The first article in which he claimed to have found and introduced the manuscript was published in 2004, but in the Arabic version he says he found the book about five years earlier.²⁸

I personally interviewed al-Wajīh about Ansari’s claims. Al-Wajīh was surprised that Ansari would make such a claim and stated that he had helped Ansari in every way during his visit to Yemen and that his claim was groundless.²⁹

Hassan Ansari’s article correctly claims that he was the first to *introduce* the manuscript. He was not, however, the first to find it. The introduction of the manuscript by Ansari, either from the Zaidiyyah Foundation or directly from al-Wajīh, was a service of scholarly value. But description of a manuscript does not support a claim to priority of access. Manuscripts represent a shared heritage and should be made available to all scholars for any kind of study. Introductory articles can assert no claim to the appropriation of a manuscript, but rather serve as an encouragement to potential editors. Scholars

24 Ansari, “Kitāb-ī kalāmī az Ḍirār b. ‘Amr”, 5.

25 Ansari, “Kitāb-ī kalāmī az Ḍirār b. ‘Amr”, 6.

26 Hassan Ansari, “Kitāb al-Tahrīsh li-Ḍirār b. ‘Amr”, trans. ‘Alī ‘Abbās al-Wardī, *Nuṣūṣ mu ‘āṣara*, 13/50 (2018), 299-318.

27 “The copy I discovered many years ago” 299; “A few years ago, by a stroke of luck, we discovered the manuscript of *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*” 303.

28 Ansari, *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh li-Ḍirār b. ‘Amr*, *Nuṣūṣ mu ‘āṣara*, 299. In the original Persian, he said, “The manuscript of *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* is in an old collection in one of the Yemeni libraries.” But in Arabic he changed it to “The manuscript of *al-Tahrīsh* was found in an old collection in one of the Yemeni libraries”. Although he did not mention the person who found the manuscript, he at least made the verb “to find” anonymous by rephrasing it as “found.” The sentence in the Persian version of his article in which he states that he will “begin to edit the book in 2006 under the supervision of van Ess” is not included in the Arabic version. (See Ansari, *Kitāb-ī kalāmī az Ḍirār b. ‘Amr*, 6; *Nuṣūṣ mu ‘āṣira*, 303).

29 In a WhatsApp communication with al-Wajīh, most recently on June 26, 2019, he wrote the following regarding Ansari’s claims:

المخطوطة الأصل محفوظة لدينا ضمن مكتبة جامع الإمام القاسم بن محمد بشهارة وأول من اكتشفها أنا عندما فهرست مكتبة الجامع، وأي دعوى من حسن أنصاري أو من غيره لا يصالّفها الواقع، وحسن أنصاري يعرف ذلك حق المعرفة ومن المعيب عليه وعلى غيره ادعاء ما ليس له.

“The original manuscript of *al-Tahrīsh* is kept in the library of al-Qassim Mosque. I first discovered this manuscript when I was preparing the library’s catalogue. Any claim to the contrary by Ansari or any other person is far from the truth. Ansari is aware of the fact that I was the first to discover this manuscript. Nevertheless, it is shameful for Ansari or anyone else to claim a right to something that does not belong to him.”

like Carl Brockelmann and Fuat Sezgin introduced thousands of manuscripts, but they did not own these manuscripts, nor did they treat them as their private property. The fact that Ansari or someone else described a manuscript that was in a publicly available source grants him no priority. Although we would have cited Ansari's original article had we been aware of it, his article provided no information that would be new to a historian of Islamic sects, especially to those involved in research on the Mu'tazilites. The failure to refer to such general information cannot be considered a shortcoming.

Ansari suggests that van Ess and Sean Anthony supported his claims in their articles on this topic and that these researchers criticized us for not mentioning Ansari's role in finding the manuscript and identifying it, adding that our edition was of low quality.³⁰ However, in his three articles on *al-Tahrīsh* book³¹ van Ess made no statements in support of Ansari's claim.³² van Ess stated that the manuscript was discovered by al-Wajīh and that Ansari recognized its importance and was the first to write about it. He also said that besides Ansari, Riḍwān al-Sayyid and Hüseyin Hansu were also interested in the manuscript, but that only the third (Hansu) had succeeded in editing it.³³ In his mentions of the book, van Ess made no negative comments but rather expressed appreciation for the importance of the book and the value of the edition. He wrote down his suggestions for alternative readings of some words in his book and conveyed them to me personally when we met. In his book, he shows with examples that such philological errors are normal in an edition based on single copy of manuscript and point out that such mistakes can be corrected, and the edition can be improved in time.³⁴

In his review of the book³⁵ Anthony states that the manuscript was discovered by al-Wajīh and that Ansari was the first to draw attention to its importance. Anthony plays down al-Wajīh's role in discovering the manuscript. He generously acknowledges Ansari's efforts, but is rather stingy in acknowl-

30 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 158–159, n. 115.

31 Josef van Ess, *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Hinrich Biesterfeldt, Islamic History and Civilization Series, vol. 137, (Leiden: Brill, 3rd ed. 2018); Josef van Ess, "Das *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* des Ḍirār b. 'Amr: Einige Bemerkungen zu Ort und Anlaß seiner Abfassung", *Kleine Schriften*, 2461-2500; "Schicksal und selbstbestimmtes Handeln aus der Sicht von Ḍirār b. 'Amr's K. at-Tahrīš," in: *Kleine Schriften*, 2501-2533; Josef van Ess, "Das Bild der Harigitiien im *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* des Ḍirār b. 'Amr", *Kleine Schriften*, 2534–2601.

32 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 108, n. 115. The reference does not indicate that Ansari was the first discoverer of the manuscript. See Josef van Ess, *Der Eine und das Andere: Beobachtungen an islamischen haeresiographischen Texten* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 1/132-133, 158; van Ess, *Kleine Schriften*, 1/2461-2500.

33 Josef van Ess, *Kleine Schriften*, 1/2461.

34 For Van Ess' examples of this kind of analyses, see *Kleine Schriften*, 1/2463, n. 14.

35 Sean Anthony, review of *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, by Ḍirār ibn 'Amr al-Ghaṭafānī, ed. Hüseyin Hansu and Mehmet Keskin, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 76 (2017), 199–203.

edging al-Wajīh, who discovered the work, or the work of its editors in deciphering a complicated and complex text. Anthony made no negative comments about the value of the edition, however, but merely offered alternative readings of some words.

Prior to his 2022 article Ansari never acknowledged al-Wajīh's role in discovering the manuscript.³⁶ Although al-Wajīh's catalogue introduced the manuscript two years before Ansari's first article, Ansari continued to claim to have discovered the manuscript without mentioning al-Wajīh. When he did belatedly acknowledge al-Wajīh's catalogue, he asserted that his discovery of the manuscript predated this publication, and that while al-Wajīh had described the codex, he had failed to recognize its significance.³⁷ Ansari continued to claim that he had discovered the manuscript in the Shahāra library,³⁸ yet he gave no details about the collection in which he claimed the manuscript resided nor about the library of Shahāra Mosque in which the collection was found. Furthermore, he did not explain how he came to know that the manuscript was in a collection in that library, which had no index, nor did he explain how and when he went to the Shahāra, where even the Ottomans could not enter, although they ruled Yemen for four hundred years. If, as he claims, he did indeed discover the manuscript first, why did he not criticize al-Wajīh and the Foundation for not referring to him in the catalogue published two years prior to his article? If he in fact learned of the existence of the manuscript from al-Wajīh, why did he never mention al-Wajīh in his numerous writings over 20 years?³⁹

The fact that the manuscript was first discovered and introduced by al-Wajīh, and that it was first edited by Hüseyin Hansu and Mehmet Keskin in 2014 does not preclude Ansari from working on a new edition of *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* rather than engaging in unfruitful polemics. There are plenty of opportunities for further work. Many academic studies have been conducted on the edition of *al-Tahrīsh*, and its problematic parts have been resolved to a great extent. Recently, a treatise alleging to be from the classical period, which

36 Ansari did not mention al-Wajīh in his first article on *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh*, and he was careful not to mention him in his later articles either. See Ansari, "*Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* li-Ḍirār b. 'Amr," *Nuṣūṣ mu'āṣira* 13/50 (2018), 299-318.

37 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 108, n. 115.

38 "During one of these trips, Hassan Ansari discovered a precious codex in the library of the Shahāra mosque that had been copied around 540/1145..." Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 108.

39 For his writings on that issue see Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 108, n. 115.

we consider to be a corrupt form of *Tahrīsh*, has also been published.⁴⁰ Based on this source, the damaged parts of *Tahrīsh* might be reconstructed, and the production of new edition would further contribute to our growing understanding.

About the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*

The focal point of Ansari's criticism of our edition of the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt* by Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, is his claim that the manuscript we used was illegally obtained from Fu'ād Sayyid's library. According to his claim, the original copy of *al-Maqālāt* was smuggled out of Yemen and, as van Ess notes, is now in Fu'ād Sayyid's library.⁴¹ The new edition of *al-Maqālāt* is therefore based on this copy, which Ansari insinuates somehow came into my possession,⁴² seeming to imply that I obtained it illegally. Therefore, according to Ansari, the assertion by the editors of *al-Maqālāt* that they used a different copy found in Kurdī's private library is not true.⁴³

However, we do not claim that we used different copies. We have already stated that the copy in Kurdī's library and the copy used by Fu'ād Sayyid were produced from the same original codex.⁴⁴ What is unclear is whether the copy allegedly in Fu'ād Sayyid's library is an original or a copy, and if it is a copy, whether it is complete or incomplete. As we stated, based on certain evidence, there is neither the original nor a complete copy of it in the library of Fu'ād Sayyid.⁴⁵ If this had been the case, the manuscript, which was discovered in 1952 and of which only 11 of 126 folios have been published so far, three times, would have been published in its entirety. Ansari, however, paid no attention to our explanation and accused us of not providing accurate information about the copy.⁴⁶

40 'Abd Allāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī (2nd/8th c.), "*Kitāb al-Rudūd*," edited by Abdulrahman al-Salimi and published in his *Early Ibādī Theology* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2021), 25-79. Mu'tazilite scholars did not mention such a work by al-Fazari, whom they considered among the Kharijite authors. See al-Balkhī, *al-Maqālāt*, 172; al-Jushamī, *Uyūn al-masā'il*, 86.

41 "... he brought the original copy back to Cairo. This evident from the comment of his son Ayman Fu'ād ..., that the physical codex is today located in the library of Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid is also mentioned by van Ess", 59, n. 73. It is clear that this claim, which is not based on any evidence, is entirely fictional. Moreover, the referenced page does not contain such a statement by Ess, as claimed.

42 "It evidently came into the hands of Ḥusayn Khānṣū..." Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 59, n. 73.

43 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 60, n. 73.

44 See Hansu's introduction to the edition of the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, 1st ed., 9; 2nd ed., 14.

45 See Hansu's introduction to his edition of *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, 2nd ed., 5-18.

46 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 60, n. 73.

Ansari also characterized *al-Maqālāt* edition as unprofessional,⁴⁷ an unreliable work,⁴⁸ without citing any concrete examples. We will not dwell on these claims, which we see as an extension of his prejudiced attitude towards the *Tahrīsh* edition. Here, we will present a brief summary of the explanation we made in the introduction of *al-Maqālāt* in order to dispel any doubts about the source of the manuscript.

The surviving copy of al-Balkhī's *al-Maqālāt*, which is considered one of the oldest sources in the history of Islamic theology, was first discovered by Fu'ād Sayyid. In 1952, Fu'ād Sayyid was sent to Yemen by the Ministry of Education of Egypt as a member of the delegation to research Mu'tazilite manuscripts,⁴⁹ and he found the manuscript of *al-Maqālāt* in the private library of a Yemeni scholar. However, *al-Maqālāt* is not mentioned in the list of 464 books copied by the committee and delivered to Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, which included al-Qādī 'Abd al-Jabbār's work *al-Mughnī*, for example.⁵⁰ Fu'ād Sayyid also wrote about his trip and the Yemeni manuscripts⁵¹ without any mention of *al-Maqālāt*.⁵² The discovery of *al-Maqālāt* during this visit was claimed by his son Ayman Fu'ād after Fu'ād Sayyid's death. Ayman Fu'ād published 11 folios of al-Balkhī's *al-Maqālāt* in *Faḍl al-ī'tizāl*, which he published in 1974. In his introduction to the manuscript, he stated that *al-Maqālāt* was discovered by his father during his trip to Yemen in 1952 and that he planned to transcribe this section to prepare it for publication, but he died before he could do so. However, Ayman Fu'ād did not provide any further

47 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 59, n. 73.

48 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 59, n. 73.

49 Khalīl Yahyā Nāmī, *al-Ba'tha al-miṣriyya li-taṣwīr al-makhtūṭāt al-'arabiyya fi bilād al-Yaman*, Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Wizāra al-'Umūmiyya, 1952, 1.

50 Fu'ād Sayyid, *Makhtūṭāt al-Yaman: Qā'ima bi-l-makhtūṭāt al-'arabiyya al-muṣawwara bi-l-mikrūfilm min al-Jumhūriyya al-'arabiyya al-yamaniyya* (Cairo: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub, 1967).

51 For these articles see Hansu's introduction to his edition of the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*, 2nd ed., 5-18.

52 His only known mention of the book is a sentence in an information sheet attached to his biography in Ziriklī's *al-A'lām*. In this information sheet, dated 6.10.1962 and serving as an example of Fu'ād Sayyid's handwriting, the section on *al-Maqālāt* reads as follows:

"تؤيد اتصال الزيدية بالمعتزلة أيضاً وظهر أنصار المعتزلة في اليمن وجود نسخة الوحيدة في العالم من كتاب (مقالات الإسلاميين) ومعه (عيون المسائل والجوابات) له أيضاً [وهذه النسخة في حوزتي]..."

"The book *al-Maqālāt*, of which only one copy is known in the world, also confirms the relationship of the Mu'tazilites with Zaidiyyah and shows that the Zaydiyyah emerged as a new supporter of the Mu'tazilites in Yemen. I have this book in my possession." This information, supposedly from Sayyid's son Ayman, is only found in the fourth edition of *al-A'lām*, which was published by the Malāyīn Press since 1979. The editions of *al-A'lām* published during the lifetime of the author Ziriklī do not contain this information. Although it is clear from this note that Sayyid owned a copy of *al-Maqālāt*, it is not clear whether it was an original or a copy, nor is it clear whether it was complete or incomplete. It is also noteworthy that the title of the book is given as *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin*, the title of al-Ash'arī's famous work.

information about *al-Maqālāt*. It is not possible to find the answers to the questions of how many folios *al-Maqālāt* has, whether his father's edition was an original or a copy, whether it was a complete edition or consists of only 11 pages, and if it is complete, whether the rest will be published. Ayman Fu'ād reprinted the same edition in 1986, but did not provide any new information. In 2009 and 2014, he repeated the same information in the article on al-Balkhī in al-Nadīm's *al-Fihrist*. Thus, the fate of the rest of *al-Maqālāt* remains uncertain.⁵³ Our conclusion from this data is that the complete copy is not in Fu'ād Sayyid's library. If it were, Ayman Fu'ād would have published the whole book instead of the part that he has already published in the third edition, or at least he would have given an indication that he would publish it.

When I was undertaking research for my doctoral dissertation in Jordan in 1999, I had the opportunity to see a complete copy of *al-Maqālāt* in the library of Rājih Kurdī (d. 05/05/2019), a professor at the University of Jordan. Both the sample folios in *Faḍl al-i'tizāl* by Fu'ād Sayyid and the information in the published portion showed that this copy was from the same codex. The only difference was that the copy in Kurdī's possession was complete. With Kurdī's permission, I reviewed the manuscript, briefly presented it, and made some quotations from it in my doctoral dissertation.⁵⁴

Until I came across the copy appeared in the possession of Kurdī, in 1999, all I knew about *al-Maqālāt* was limited to partial and inaccurate information presented by Ayman Fu'ād. Based on Kurdī's copy, we first published, in 2014, al-Balkhī's *'Uyūn al-masā'il*, which appeared at the end of the manuscript copy of *al-Maqālāt*.⁵⁵ Kurdī wanted to edit *al-Maqālāt* independently. However, because of his workload and increasing health problems, Kurdī agreed to conduct the editing of *al-Maqālāt* with me.

In the meantime, Ayman Fu'ād published the third edition of *Faḍl al-i'tizāl* in 2017. This edition again included a reprint of the previous edition of 11 folios of *al-Maqālāt*. However, he provided the detailed information about the manuscript for the first time. It is clear that he had taken this information from al-Balkhī's *'Uyūn al-masā'il*, which we published in 2014, though he did not cite our work. He also claimed that our edition of *'Uyūn al-masā'il* was "based on a copy taken from the original copy in his father's library." He added that

53 Calling attention to this uncertainty regarding *al-Maqālāt*, van Ess wrote, "Unfortunately, the fate of the manuscript is unknown. Even the whereabouts of the manuscript remain a mystery. The manuscript is difficult to read, badly damaged by vermin, and there is little hope that it will be published in the near future. I have not been able to confirm the information that Hansu is working on this problem." *Der Eine und das Andere*, 339, n. 103, 104.

54 Hansu, *Mutezile ve Hadis*, 29.

55 Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī al-Ka'bī, *'Uyūn al-masā'il wa-l-jawābāt*. ed. Rājih Kurdī, 'Abd al-Ḥamid Kurdī, and Hüseyin Hansu (Ammān: Dār al-Ḥamid, 2014).

he did not know how this copy came to be in the possession of the editors of *ʿUyūn al-masāʿil* (giving their names), and that the edition was unreliable.⁵⁶

Indeed, like Ayman, I am also, as one of the editors of the book, curious as to how this manuscript came to be in Rājih Kurdī's library. According to what the late Kurdī told me, the person who brought it to him said that he had copied it from the copy in Yemen. Kurdī had no further information on this. Kurdī, who had Salafist leanings, was not sympathetic to Mu'tazilite studies and therefore was not searching for such manuscripts. He expressed this opinion in the preface of *ʿUyūn al-masāʿil* which we published together.⁵⁷ In fact, this hesitation played a major role in the delay of the edition of *al-Maqālāt*. Therefore, he did not really care where the copy came from. In fact, it was from me that he first heard about the part of this copy published by Fu'ād Sayyid.

In my opinion, just as tens of thousands of Yemeni manuscripts found their way to American libraries, *al-Maqālāt* manuscript likely found its way to Kurdī in a similar manner. If the original manuscript is still in Yemen, then this copy came to Kurdī from Yemen. If, as Ayman Fu'ād claims, the original copy was indeed in his father's library, then this copy may have come to Kurdī from Egypt. If Ayman Fu'ād is in possession of the original and complete manuscript as he claims, he can end the debate by revealing it. Although he is not obliged to answer the question of why his late father, who went to Yemen as a member of an official delegate, did not deliver this copy to the public library, we have the right to expect him to answer the following questions: Why did he not give any information about the fate of the work until our edition appeared? It has been 70 years since the discovery of *al-Maqālāt* in 1952. If this copy was in his father's library and he knew about it, why did he keep this information secret for 70 years? Why did he not give any information about its existence, describe it in more detail, or explain the fate of the remainder of the work, even though the first published part was reprinted three times? If not for our publication, how long did he intend to keep this precious work as a secret, or did he abandon it to oblivion?

In any case, whether it was copied from Yemen or, as claimed, from Fu'ād Sayyid's library, there is nothing illegal in Kurdī's acceptance of the copy from the person who brought it to him. If this were to be considered illegal, then all Yemeni manuscripts existing in Italy libraries or other countries libraries, including Fu'ād Sayyid's copy, would have to be considered illegal. If our edition of this copy is illegal, as Ansari and Schmidtke imply, then all research projects and publications based on Yemeni manuscripts, including Ansari and

56 See Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid's introduction to his edition of the *Faql al-i'tizāl* (Beirut: Orient Institute, 2017), 37.

57 See Rājih Kurdī's introduction to *ʿUyūn al-masāʿil*, 11.

Schmidtke's, should be considered illegal. From which authorities did they obtain the permission for all the manuscripts they have published so far? What difference do they see between studying a manuscript in a European library and a manuscript in Kurdî's library? Why is one legal and the other illegal when they are acquired by the same means?

The authors claim that the original *al-Maqālāt* was brought out of Yemen and is now in the library of Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid.⁵⁸ But if it has been preserved there for 70 years, why has it not been published or made available to researchers? The claim that the original manuscript is not in Yemen is a farfetched speculation, and indeed a second manuscript of *al-Maqālāt* was recently discovered in Yemen. We are currently working on a new edition of *al-Maqālāt*, revised in light of this recently discovered manuscript.

Conclusion

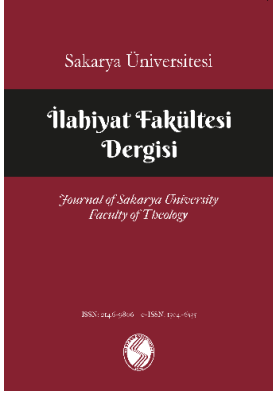
The *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt* are critically important publications not only for the history of Mu'tazilites but also for the history of Islamic thought. Because our editions were based on unique manuscripts, it is not surprising that technical deficiencies have come to light. This is the case for any scientific work. The second editions of these studies considered alternative readings suggested by other scholars, and the new edition of *al-Maqālāt* prepared in light of the newly discovered copy will be a further improvement. We are proud to have made these works, which are excellent records of the legacy of early Islamic thought, available to the academic community, and we consider unjustified speculation about the manuscripts on which these editions are based to be an unfortunate distraction from the important work of scholarship.

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58 Ansari - Schmidtke, "The Fate of Yemeni Manuscripts", 59, n. 73.

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**On the Manuscripts Underlying the Edition of the
Kitāb al-Tahrīsh and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt***

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Çıkar Çatışması Bildirimi

Yazar tarafından potansiyel çıkar çatışması bildirilmemiştir.

Destek/Destekleyen Kuruluşlar

Bu araştırma için herhangi bir kamu kuruluşundan, kâr amacı gütmeyen veya özel sektörlerden hibe alınmamıştır.

Etik Onay ve Katılımcı Rızası

“On the Manuscripts Underlying the Edition of the *Kitāb al-Tahrīsh* and the *Kitāb al-Maqālāt*” başlıklı çalışmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş olup toplanan veriler üzerinde hiçbir tahrifat yapılmamıştır. Herhangi bir etik ihlalle karşılaşılması durumunda *Sakarya Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*'nin yükümlülüğü olmayıp tüm sorumluluk yazara aittir.