


AN INQUIRY ON THE OPPOSITION TO REASON AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE AKHBÂRÎ SCHOOL DURING THE SAFAVID ERA

 Sinan YILMAZ^a

 Ömer Faruk ERDEM^b

Abstract

In Safavid Iran, the Akhbârî school rejected reason, ijma, and qiyas in the interpretation of religious texts and adopted a literalist approach based solely on the narrations in the *al-Kutub al-Arba'a* (الكتب الأربعة). This approach turned into a fierce opposition to philosophy. The Akhbârîs characterized philosophy, and especially the synthesizing approach of philosophers such as Mullâ Sadrâ, as "irreligion" and "heresy" and saw Greek philosophy as a harmful element that corrupted Islam. With the support of the Safavid state, the Akhbârîs' opposition to philosophy led to the marginalization of philosophy and the oppression of philosophers. The fact that Mullâ Sadrâ had to leave Isfahan is an important example of this pressure. The Akhbârîs pursued two main strategies against philosophy: The first is to create a negative perception of philosophy and philosophers by constantly denigrating them, and the second is to develop systematic criticisms of the fundamental issues of philosophy. They criticized the philosophers on issues such as the eternity of the universe, God's will and God's knowledge of particulars, and considered these views to be contrary to God's attributes and blasphemy. The Akhbârî movement of the Safavid period constitutes an important example of systematic opposition to reason and philosophy in the history of Islamic thought.

Keywords: Islamic Philosophy, Shia, Safavids, Akhbârî School, Opposition to Philosophy.



SAFEVİLER DÖNEMİ AHBÂRÎ EKOLÜNDE AKIL VE FELSEFE KARŞITLIĞI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

^a Corresponding Author, Asst. Prof., Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, yilmazsinan44@gmail.com

^b Assoc. Prof., Necmettin Erbakan University, omferdem@hotmail.com

Öz

Bu çalışma, Safevî İran'ında felsefeye yönelik Ahbârî eleştirilerinin kaynağını, yöntemlerini ve sonuçlarını incelemeyi ve akla karşı literalist bir vahiy yorumu ortaya koyan bu yaklaşımın felsefeye karşı eleştirilerini tespit ve tenkit etmeyi amaçlıyor. Safevî Hanedanlığı günümüz İran sınırları içerisinde yer alan bölgede 16. ve 18. yüzyıllar arasında hüküm süren ve İran'ın dini ve entelektüel hayatında önemli bir dönüm noktasını temsil eden bir devlettir. Bu dönemde, Şîî İmamiyye Mezhebi'ne bağlı Ahbârî Ekolü yükselişe geçmiş ve söz konusu coğrafyanın dini anlayışında köklü değişimlere yol açmıştır. Bir fıkıh ekolü olan Ahbârî Ekolü, dini metinlerin anlaşılmasında ve yorumlanmasında akıl, icma ve kıyas gibi yöntemleri, dini tahrif riski taşıdığı gerekçesi ile reddeder. Bu gerekçeye dayanarak Ahbârî Ekolü, "Masum İmamlar" tarafından aktarılan ve *el-Kütübü'l-Erba'a*'da toplanan rivayetler dışındaki bir kaynağı dini yorumlamada bağlayıcı kabul etmemiştir. Dini anlamada akli dışlayan bu ekolün felsefeye karşı tavrı da oldukça menfi olmuştur. Özellikle Molla Sadrâ gibi filozofların felsefe, tasavvuf ve din ilimleri üzerinden sentezci bir yaklaşımı benimsemeleri, daha öncesinde başlayan tasavvuf eleştirilerine felsefenin de dahil edilmesi sonucunu doğurmuştur. Bu sebeple Ahbârîler felsefeye karşı şiddetli bir mücadeleye girişmiş ve felsefeye karşı derin bir şüphe ve düşmanlığın doğmasına zemin hazırlamışlardır. Ahbârîler, felsefeyi ve filozofları "dinsizlik", "sapkınlık" ve hatta "küfür" gibi ağır ithamlarla suçlamışlardır. Onların nazarında Aristo mantığı ve Yunan felsefesi, Müslüman topluma dışarıdan girmiş ve dini yozlaştıran zararlı bir etki olarak görülmüştür. Bu ekole göre gerçek irfan ve hikmet Yunan felsefesinde değil, *el-Kütübü'l-Erba'a*'nın sınırları içerisinde bulunuyordu...

[Geniş Öz, çalışmanın sonunda yer almaktadır.]

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Felsefesi, Şîa, Safevîler, Ahbârî Ekolü, Felsefe Karşıtlığı.



Introduction

It is possible to say that the Shiite Iranian tradition has historically had a continuity in terms of philosophical studies. However, this does not mean that philosophy has not faced any reaction. In the geography in question, philosophy and philosophers have been suppressed at certain periods in history, and philosophers have been declared heretics. The aim of this study is to examine these criticisms, which have remained relatively in the shadows. We say "overshadowed" because studies of the period in question have focused solely on the philosophers and their views, while the critiques and refutations directed against them have either been ignored or only

briefly mentioned. For example, Ata Anzali and S. M. Hadi Gerami's *Opposition to Philosophy in Safavid Iran: Mulla Muḥammad-Ṭāhir Qummī's Hikmat al-ʿĀrifīn*, only provides an introduction to the anti-philosophical attitudes of the period and discusses Qummī's work in question. However, the lack of a systematic and subject-centered study of the philosophical opposition of the period encouraged us to study this issue. For this purpose, it is useful to briefly mention the Safavid state, the dominant power of the period in which the criticisms were made, and the Akhbārīs who made the criticisms.

The Safavid State (1501-1736) is a state that emerged with a transition from "Sheikh" to "Shah" with the politicization and strengthening of the Ardabīlī Order, which has a Sufi structure. The founder of the Ardabīlī Order is Shaykh Safiy al-Dīn Ishaq Ardabīlī (d. 735/1334), whose origins are not certain (Ḥaydārī, 1389, pp. 64-66). The political and religious renaming of this sect as "Kizilbash" coincides with the reign of Sheikh Haydar (d. 893/1488), who succeeded Sheikh Junayd (d. 864/1460) (Kaplan, 2021, pp. 29-30). Sheikh Junayd and his son Sheikh Haydar established good relations with the Akkoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan (1452-1478) (Kaplan, 2008, ss. 184-185). But later, when his relations with this state broke down, Sheikh Haydar's family was exiled to the Iranian region and his son Shah Ismail started his attempts to establish a state when he was 13 years old. Shah Ismail officially founded the Safavid state in Tabriz in 1501 (ʿAbdullāh, 1386, pp. 100-101).

In the region dominated by the Safavids, Shah Ismail's policy of Shiism was largely successful and Shiism spread in the region (Kaplan, 2008, pp. 192-194). However, in the Safavid period, unlike today in terms of the methodology of jurisprudence (today, the Usūlī school is strong), the Akhbārī school became stronger. It is possible that this was due to the influence of Shiite jurists brought by Shah Ismail from Iraq, Bahrain, Bilad al-Sham and Jabal al-Amil to spread Shiism in the region. (Kaplan, 2008, p. 194) This understanding, which began with Muhammad Amīn Astārābādī (d. 1036/1627), who is officially recognized as its founder, ended with Mirzā Muhammad Akhbārī (d. 1233 /1818), who lived during the Qajar period (Savāqib, 1392, p. 44). This school is the "chief architect" of the opposition to reason and philosophy in this geography. Murtaza Mutaharri (d. 1979) referred to this approach of the school as an "important and dangerous" movement and stated that this movement was eliminated through some religious scholars in Iran (Motahhari, 1382, p. 112).

The Usūlī school and the Akhbārī school were politically and theologically competitive to the point of hostility. For example, before Muhammad Baqir al-Bahbahānī (d. 1205/1790), a follower of the Usūlī school, no one in Karbala, which was strictly Akhbārī, dared to openly defend the Usūlī method and openly carry the books of usūl. However, by the end of his life, Bahbahānī succeeded in reducing the influence of Akhbārī thought there with great efforts (Algar, 1989, pp. 98-99).

Similarly, the rivalry between the two schools also manifested itself in the way they interpreted religious issues. The whole point of departure of the Akhbārīs is the “infallibles”. According to them, people are divided into “infallibles” people and ordinary people. Ordinary people should follow “infallibles” people (Saburyan & Parsania, 1397, p. 101). In this regard, the Akhbārīs adhere solely to the Quranic rulings based on the interpretations of the “infallibles” and consider all hadiths in *al-Kutub al-Arba’a* (*al-Kāfī*, *Men lā Yahduruhu’l-fakīh*, *Tahzību’l-ahkām*, *al-Istibsār*) to be authentic (Mokyasa, 1391, p. 147).

One of the most important aspects that distinguishes the Akhbārī school from its rivals, the Usūlī school, is their approach to reason. This issue is the basis of other disagreements between the two schools of thought. Issues such as examining narrations as a source of knowledge, their isnad, their evidence, and inferring judgments from them are considered to be among the main issues of debate regarding the intellect (Saburyan & Parsania, 1397, pp. 101-102).

The Akhbārīs rejected the use of reason in religious sciences and the use of rational deductions such as syllogism and opinion in understanding religion. According to them, no truth can be known through reason without following the Shari’ah (Ja’fariyān, 1379, pp. 121-122). It is possible to see this understanding in the thoughts of Majlisi, an Ahbārī follower. He says that we can understand that God does not leave people alone with their intellect from the fact that God sent prophets for people. According to him, it is a mistake for people to rely on reason in the study of science and to interpret the Qur’an and hadiths according to the “weak doubts” of philosophers (Safā, 1369, p. 282).

The Akhbārīs also offer some reasons to justify this view. One of their grounds is the question of what is meant by “rational evidence”. If what is meant by rational proof is a proof on which all intellects and intelligent people agree, then according to them there is no such proof. If the intended meaning of this proof relies solely on the acceptance of the one drawing the

inference, then the conclusion of this analogy would be subject to certain flaws that render it untenable. This is because each group puts forward a set of rational proofs according to their beliefs and claims. For example, philosophers, disbelievers, Mutazilites or Asharians all claim to have some “sound and useful” evidence for their claims. Therefore, it is not possible to apply such a proof to religious sciences and accept it as a proof (Sharifi, 1383, pp. 43-50).

Another of the justifications of the Akhbārīs is the certainty of demonstrations. In this regard, if the so-called “demonstrations” are indeed demonstrations, then anyone who hears and understands them should accept them and not oppose them. But in reality, what one side calls demonstration is dismissed as weak thinking by the other side. Therefore, in the view of the Akhbārīs, these are not demonstrations. Rather, they are the “weak and flawed” opinions of some people who have come up with their “whims and passions”. Therefore, according to the Akhbārīs based on this argument, rational arguments should not be accepted even in obvious cases. All of these claims are without merit and inherently faulty (Sharifi, 1383, pp. 50-51).

The Akhbārī school's reliance solely on narrations and its rejection of other methods such as reason, ijma, and qiyas in deducing rulings in fiqh necessarily positioned it against any intellectual thought other than narrations. A natural consequence of this school's attitude towards reason in the methodology of fiqh was that any philosophical activity based on rational thought was also viewed negatively by them.

The Iranian geography of the 17th century, when the Safavids ruled, was a region where religious fanaticism centered on narration increased under the influence of the Akhbārīs, and rational sciences such as philosophy suffered a decline accordingly. In this period, some refutations were written against philosophy as well as refutations against Sufism. This is the case, for example, with Qummī's *Hikmat al-Arifn*. This work was written directly to criticize philosophers. The study is important as it is the first monograph to criticize philosophical-sufistic thought based on an Akhbārī understanding. This book is a criticism of philosophy in general. But he specifically targets the thought of Mulla Sadrā synthesized with Ibn 'Arabī's understanding (Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction).

The second example is the work called *Radd-e Madhhab-e Hokamā*, attributed to Muhammad Taqi Majlisī (d. 1070/1659), the father and teacher of Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1110/1698), who is considered to be the first

Akhbārī scholar to compile the narrations from the “imams” during the Safavid period (Üzüm, 2003, p. 255). This work is also a direct refutation of philosophy. However, according to Reza Mukhtārī, who has analyzed the work, this work is not one of the independent works written by Majlisī himself. According to him, this work was compiled from his other works, especially *Lavame’ Sahebkrānī*. Because the name of this work is not mentioned in his other works and there is a time gap between the date of the work and the date of Majlisī’s death (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, p. Introduction).

In addition to these refutations against philosophy, there is also a significant anti-philosophical stance in the refutations against Sufism. Especially in this period, some Shi’ite thinkers such as Mulla Sadrā incorporated philosophy and mysticism into Shi’ite thought in an original way under the name of “transcendent theosophy” (al-ḥikma al-muta’āliya). This led to a change in the nature of the refutations written before the Akhbārīs, which targeted only Sufism, and resulted in the inclusion of philosophers and philosophy in the refutations written by the Akhbārīs. Since, for the Akhbārīs, utilizing any source beyond the *al-Kutub al-Arba’a*, the sole source for understanding religion, constituted a corruption of the faith, both Sufism and philosophy became targets of their critique (Işlak, 2022, pp. 134-135; Ja’fariyān, 1379, pp. 35-36).

One of the main reasons for the relative success of the Akhbārīs against philosophy and mysticism is related to the support they received from the political will. For example, prominent Akhbārī followers such as Qummī and Majlisī were supported by the Safavid ruler Shah Husayn and were appointed to the position of sheikhulislām. However, the Safavids had an anti-sufism and anti-philosophy approach even before Shah Husayn. The most important indicator of this is the reign of the Safavid ruler Shah Abbas I. The first task of Shah Abbas I was to eliminate the Kizilbash who dominated the state (Sümer, 1992, pp. 147-158). However, the new ruler was not content with merely liquidating the Kizilbash in the state. He also closed down the philosophical madrasas in Qazvin, the first capital of the Safavids, established theological inspection courts and put those interested in philosophy on trial. After this purge against philosophy and Sufism, the Akhbārīs dominated the madrasas in this city with the support of the Safavids (Qazvīnī, 1387, p. Introduction).

It is possible to criticize the Akhbārīs’ approach to reason, interpretation, and philosophy from two perspectives: Firstly, this approach ignores the richness and dynamism of Islamic thought. The history of Islamic

thought is a process in which different schools of thought have made significant contributions in the fields of theology, philosophy and mysticism by using reason and interpretation. The thought of the Akhbārīs ignores this rich heritage and presents Islam as a static dogma. Secondly, this approach makes it difficult to understand and live Islam. For example, it is not possible to find clear and precise answers to the new problems we face in daily life by using only a single source such as *the al-Kutub al-Arbaʿa*. At this point, an approach that excludes reason, interpretation, ijma and other jurisprudential methods may lead to both individual and social dead ends.

A. Situation in Madrasas

With the support of the Safavids, madrasas were dominated by scholars adhering to Akhbārī fiqh, which was directly reflected in the educational policies of madrasas. During this period, the science of hadith became widespread and rational sciences, especially philosophy, began to lose their influence. Consequently, in most madrasas, knowledge was limited to hadith and fiqh, and philosophy was replaced by these sciences. The reason why the educational program of madrasas was directly influenced by the Akhbārī understanding is related to the foundations (vaqfs) to which the madrasas were affiliated. In other words, the madrasas in Iran during this period were dependent on the foundations under their administration, and all income and expenses of the madrasas were managed by these foundations. This was instrumental in the foundations' direct intervention in the form and content of education. It was therefore inevitable that both students and teachers were bound by the rules set by the administration of the foundations (Ostad, 1394, pp. 75-76).

In madrasas dominated by the Akhbārī approach, the study and teaching of philosophy was forbidden and philosophy was regarded as “heretical” sciences (Ostad, 1394, pp. 76-77). There are some examples of this reaction against philosophy. One of them is the foundation of the “Sultānī Madrasa”, which is considered one of the most magnificent projects of the Safavid period and was built in the 18th century. This madrasa strictly forbade boarding students from discussing Sufism and philosophy/wisdom. He also required students to take at least one Shi'ite hadith course (Sepantā, 1346, p. 169; Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction).

Similarly, the foundation of the “Meryem Begum Madrasa”, built in the 18th century and now completely demolished, has the same understanding. This foundation also had a very strict attitude towards philosophy. Students in this madrasa are only required to study sciences such as fiqh, hadith and

tafsir. In addition, students should be righteous and pious and should not show laziness, idleness or slackness. The foundation of this madrasa makes no concessions to philosophical sciences. This foundation banned “books of dubious sciences, which are famous and known as rational and philosophical sciences” and stated that the salaries of teachers and students engaged in these sciences would be withheld. Among these books there are works such as *Shifā*, *Ishārāt*, *Hikmat al-Ayn*, *Sharh al-Hidāya* (Sepantā, 1346, pp. 298-300).

The anti-philosophical madrasas of this period are not limited to these madrasas. Similarly, the foundation of the madrasa built by Sheikh Ali Khan Zangeneh in the 17th century in Hemedan adopted an anti-philosophical policy. This foundation stipulated that if teachers and students engaged in this kind of “contrary to Sharia” sciences - other than rejecting and criticizing philosophy - their salaries would be withheld and they would be expelled from the madrasa (Ostad, 1394, pp. 76-77).

However, it would be wrong to say that this understanding dominated all madrasas of the Safavid period. For example, the foundation of the “Muqīmiyya Madrasa” built in the 17th century required students to study fiqh, hadith, tafsir, usul, grammar and literature. In addition to these sciences, the foundation also advises students to engage in sciences that will “sharpen their minds”, referring to mathematics and philosophy. The 17th-century foundation of the “Shi’ite Imamiyya Madrasa” in Shiraz also requires the appointment of a head teacher to manage the madrasa, who is competent in both rational and literal sciences (Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction). Likewise, in the two madrasas built during the reign of Abbas II, “Jadda-i Kūçek” and “Jadda-i Bozorg”, there was no interference in the curriculum of the students. Moreover, among the works donated to the madrasa were many works of theology and logic (Sepantā, 1346, p. 169).

It is possible to criticise the Akhbārīs’ efforts to turn madrasas into a centre of unquestioning obedience from several perspectives:

Restricting Knowledge: The Akhbārīs’ approach, which excluded philosophy and reason in general in madrasas, meant the imposition of a “restriction on knowledge”. However, one of the basic principles of Islamic thought is the importance of “seeking knowledge”. Islamic scholars have enriched Islamic thought by making use of different cultures and disciplines throughout history. To prohibit philosophy by declaring it “heretical” means rejecting this rich tradition and confining Islamic thought to a narrow and limited field.

Preventing Learning and Critical Thinking: Philosophy is based on questioning, critical thinking and looking from different perspectives. The Akhbārīs' exclusion of philosophy from madrasas also prevented students from developing analytical thinking and questioning skills. The spread of the Akhbārī way of understanding and the possibility of its transmission to other Islamic sects may cause Islamic society to become intellectually stagnant and lag behind the times.

Contradiction with Historical Legacy: The prohibition of philosophy in madrasas by the Akhbārīs is completely contrary to the period known as the golden age of Islam, when philosophy, science, mathematics and art flourished. Throughout history, Islamic civilisation has benefited from and assimilated different cultures and thought systems and created a unique synthesis within its own structure. The Akhbārīs' endeavour to confine Islam to a narrow interpretation is in serious contradiction with this historical heritage.

In conclusion, the exclusion of philosophy from the curriculum of madrasas dominated by the Akhbārī approach can be considered as a result of the attitude towards philosophy in this period. However, this opposing attitude was not limited to the curriculum in madrasas. In addition, the followers of the Akhbārī school criticized philosophy and philosophers in various ways. It is possible to evaluate the criticisms made in this period basically in two categories. The first of these is "opposition to philosophy as an attitude" and the second is "criticism of philosophical views and thoughts".

B. Opposition to Philosophy As an Attitude

The main reason for opposition to philosophy as an attitude was that the Akhbārīs identified philosophy with irreligion and said that it was an innovation of the "infidel Greeks". According to them, everything that humanity needs is contained in the books of the Prophet and the "Imams", while this "arrogant understanding" (philosophy) aims to use human reason against religion. That is why they see philosophizing as an ugly thing to do and call it "heretical". This perspective stems from the belief that philosophical doctrines are fundamentally incompatible with the tenets of Islam and the teachings enshrined within the Quran (Arjomand, 1984, p. 168).

The negative attitude of the Akhbārīs towards philosophy and philosophers can be illustrated by the oppression of Mawlānā Muḥammad Sādiq Ardistānī, one of the philosophers of the reign of Shah Sultan Ḥusayn.

He was forced to leave Isfahan after various pressures and tortures. It is rumored that the incident that forced him to leave the city occurred in unfavorable winter conditions, and that his child froze to death on the way (Dabashi, 1996, p. 632)

It is possible to see this negative attitude towards philosophers directly in Mullā Şadrā, one of the most important philosophers of the period. Mullā Şadrā, having been exiled from Isfahan for his unorthodox views, faced accusations of heresy from some Akhbārī jurists of his time (Dabashi, 1996, p. 598). They alleged his “words did not align with the exoteric interpretation of Sharia,” consequently issuing a fatwa against him (Safā, 1369, p. 281). Some of the allegations against him for being accused of blasphemy are as follows: His adoption of the Sunnite Ibn 'Arabī's understanding of wahdat al-wujūd, rejection of eternal torment in hell, rejection of the corporeal resurrection, adoption of the monistic approach that divine love and worldly love are the same and adoption of a hierarchical conception of heaven based on knowledge (Rizvi, 2015, pp. 244-245).

The reaction against philosophical thought in general and against Mullā Şadrā in particular is reflected in Şadrā's statements. He articulates a retreat from public engagement due to this prevailing climate, expressing a loss of faith in human companionship and a detachment from both the enmities and friendships of his time. He asserts an indifference towards both praise and denigration from others. He relates that he was a prisoner of a people who lacked the power of understanding and knowledge and were blinded by the light of wisdom. According to him, they consider contemplating Divine states and sublime verses to be bid'ah (Shirazī, 1384, p. Introduction).

Among the Akhbārīs depicted by Mullā Şadrā, one of the people who most clearly demonstrated his opposition to philosophy was undoubtedly Ali-Qulu Jadīd al-Islām. He came to Iran as a Portuguese Augustinian monk and later adopted the Akhbārī school of Shi'ism. His original name was Antonio, but after adopting the Akhbārī school, he took the name Ali-Qulu Jadīd al-Islām (Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction). Jadīd al-Islām was happy that the number of clerics and hadithists (Akhbārī) had increased in the circles of knowledge and that there was no need for philosophers who were “mulhites” or “irreligious” (Ostad, 1394, pp. 78-79). Nevertheless, he was deeply saddened to see that in some madrasas students were still studying Ibn Sīnā's works of Islamic philosophy, such as the *Kitāb al-Shifā* and *al-Ishārāt wa't-Tanbīhāt*. Moreover he draws attention to the contrast between what the

builders of the madrasas and the founders of the foundations intended and what the students were engaged in. Jadīd al-Islām demanded the expulsion of “these heathens who know no one but Plato and Aristotle” from madrasas. According to him, expelling them from madrasas is better than building new madrasas (Jadīd al-Islām, t.y., pp. 35-36).

According to Jadīd al-Islām, following Aristotle and Plato is of no benefit to anyone. On the contrary, he claims that anyone who follows their “nonsense” will deviate from the path of true religion. Therefore, a life spent trying to acquire their wisdom is seen as “incomplete and frustrating”. He stated that many religions and prophets have come from the Greek philosophers, including Socrates, to the present day, and that through the prophets who came during this time, people continued to reason, knew God, and overcame the unbelievers without following the Greek philosophers. According to him, there were no Greek sciences in the Islamic geography at the time of the Prophet. But one of the “unholy” Abbasid caliphs introduced them into the Islamic world in order to turn people away from the hadiths of Ahl al-Bayt and Islamic sciences (Jadīd al-Islām, t.y., pp. 31-32).

Jadīd al-Islām states that some people who follow the Greek philosophers call themselves righteous by reading *Shifā* and similar works, but in reality they are “giving their faith to the wind and causing the faith of other Muslims to be diseased” (Jadīd al-Islām, t.y., pp. 38-39). According to him, these people present themselves as men of reason and consider hadiths worthless. However, he argues that, given these claims, the religion of the Greeks, who had the philosophy, should have been the strongest religion, but this was not the case. Therefore, in his view, no truth can be understood with the intellect without the Shari'ah (Jadīd al-Islām, t.y., pp. 38-39).

Jadīd al-Islām's above syllogism brings to mind the logic-grammar comparison between Abu Bishr Metta b. Yunus (d. 328/940) and Abu Sa'īd al-Sīrāfī (d. 368/979). In this comparison, Mattā states that logic is universal and language is local, and that logic is superior to language. On the contrary, Sīrāfī, referring to the universality of logic, says that two plus two equals four is a deceptive metaphor, and if it were as claimed, the Greeks, who used it for the first time, should not have made any mistakes and should not have been erased from history (Toktaş, 2013, pp. 23-24).

It is possible to say that Jadīd al-Islām's attitude towards philosophy reflects the general attitude of the Akhbārīs of the period. But there are some names that stand out at this point. For example, apart from Muhammad Taqī Majlisī, who, despite his inclination towards Sufism, was adamantly anti-

philosophical, Qummī, Mollā Khalīl Qazwīnī, Muhammad Bākīr Majlisī, and Hurr Amīlī (d. 1104/1692) can be listed as some of the prominent Akhbārī figures who stood out with their opposition to philosophy in this period.

Among them, Muhammad Taqī Majlisī attributes the philosophers' heresy to their reading of Greek works. According to him, philosophers adopted these works, but did not understand them and were plagued by doubt. He also points to Ibn Sīnā in order to draw attention to the moral decadence of the philosophers and states that "folly", "perversion" and "irreligion" reached an advanced level in Ibn Sīnā, whom the philosophers regarded as a leader, and that he drank wine for about thirty years (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, pp. 50-53, 65).

Similarly Qummī, known for his opposition to philosophy, states that philosophers such as Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā were afflicted with melancholia and had heretical thoughts due to the Greek philosophical works circulated by Caliph Ma'mūn. He also mentions Ibn Sīnā's passion for wine and Fārābī's passion for music, and finds it right that Suhrawardī was killed for his inclination towards philosophy (Arjomand, 1984, p. 168).

It should be noted that the rumor that Ibn Sīnā drank wine was written by his student 'Abd al-Wāḥid al-Juzjānī (d. 11th century), who narrated his life. According to al-Juzjānī, Ibn Sīnā, during his philosophical readings, sometimes could not find the middle term in syllogism, so he went to the mosque to pray and begged God to make what he did not understand comprehensible to him. Ibn Sīnā then returned to his house and engaged in reading and writing, and when sleep overtook him, he drank *sherāb* (a general name of drinks) to refresh himself (Ibn Sīnā, t.y., pp. 4-5).

Nihat Keklik argues that this is a misconception arising from the translation of the word *sharāb* into wine, which is used in our daily language in the sense of drink. In Arabic, the word *sharāb* means to drink and derived from it, such as *sherbet* (that refers to a sweet drink made from fruit juice, sugar, and water.) and *syrup* (a general term for a thick, sweet liquid made with sugar and water, often flavored or used as a base for medications). According to him, Ibn Sīnā would have used this word if he really meant wine in the sense of *hamr* (any drink or substance that causes intoxication like wine). In Arabic, words such as *hamr*, *rahīyk*, and *handerīs* mean wine, and it does not seem possible that Ibn Sīnā did not know this (Keklik, t.y., pp. 14-15).

M. Cüneyt Kaya, on the other hand, states that even if it is possible for Ibn Sīnā to drink *sherāb* (*hamr*) in the sense of intoxicating drink, it does not

seem very consistent with the context of the text. This is because Ibn Sīnā took a special interest in jurisprudence, went to the mosque to pray when he could not solve problems, and then said that he drank to stay awake while working at home. According to him Ibn Sīnā may have been referring to “nabidh”, a beverage commonly made during his era from ingredients such as raisins and barley – excluding substances classified as “hamr.” While requiring a multi-stage production process, nabidh, as understood by the Hanafī school of thought at the time, was deemed permissible due to its non-intoxicating nature (Ibn Sīnā, t.y., p. 5; Baktır, 2000, pp. 458-462). Therefore, the allegation that Ibn Sīnā came home after prayer and drank intoxicating liquor should be treated with caution.

Among the Akhbārī followers, Qummī in particular aimed to transform the existing religious perception by influencing the masses. For this reason, in his criticism of philosophy, as in his criticism of Sufism, he resorts to verse as well as prose. An example of his criticism of this kind is his ode entitled *Mūnis-i Abrār*. In this ode, he states that those who follow philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā and Bahmanyār and imitate the thoughts of Aristotle and Hippocrates are astray people and ignorant of religion. Some of his lines on this subject, quoted from Zabihollah Safa, are as follows:

*A congregation has strayed far from the gates of the City of Knowledge ('Ali),
Garbed in the guise of disciples to Ibn Sīnā and Bahmanyār.
Whilst caught in the orbit of Plato and Aristotle's unknowing,
They strayed far from the path illuminated by the Infallible Imams.
As an imitator of Socrates and a follower of Hippocrates,
They ran away from the word of Bāqir and Sādiq.
In the vain pronouncements of those heedless of true faith,
He who masters Philosophy, attains perfection in all his ways.
In Allah's sight, their spirit's measure is complete,
Whose life adheres to the ways the Ahl al-Bayt.
I benefit from the knowledge at the gate of Medina ('Ali),
I have nothing to do with the philosophy of the Greeks.
The Nabī's hadith book became my sign,
The Qur'ān of the Khālik-u Jabbār has become my healing.
Mustafa's shīfā and ishārā's are sufficient,
I have nothing to do with Abu Ali's statements anymore.
Come and seek the wisdom of the Truth from the gate of Medina ('Ali),*

*Don't ever go to the side of the Miletians, to the side of philosophy.
Most of the words of the people of Miletus are false,
The words of the innocent Imams are true.
Beware of the prayers of Greek philosophers,
It is like magic and sorcery from which the heart becomes sick.
O heart, seek salvation from the lineage of Mustafa,
There is a new salvation in the religion of Ahmad-i Mukhtār (Safā, 1369, pp. 282-283).*

As seen in Qummī's ode, he places Hazrat 'Ali and the "imams" in opposition to the philosophers as the correct form of religious understanding and tries to discredit philosophers in the eyes of the people. This understanding can be accepted as an appropriate method for other Akhbārī thinkers as well. For example, his student Majlisī follows the same path as his teacher on this point. He states that some people have departed from the path of the "imams" and followed the path of Greek philosophy. According to him, they are not only misguided themselves but also misguide others. These people do not accept any prophet or any book. They rely only on their imperfect intellect. They interpret (tawil) the clear narrations of the "imams" to suit their own views. According to him, the views of philosophers are like a spider's web. There are also disagreements among philosophers themselves. For example, the views of the Peripatetics do not resemble those of the Illuminationists. Majlisī is surprised that philosophers rely on the Greeks, "the people of disbelief", and interpret religious knowledge with good reasoning, when there are "clear rulings" from Ahl al-Bayt (Aḥmadī, 1395, p. 70; Beḥeshti, 1391, pp. 325-326; M. B. Majlisī, 1378, pp. 24-25, 1387, pp. 31-32).

Another prominent figure with his opposition to philosophy was Mullā Khalīl Qazwīnī (d. 1089/1678). Qazwīnī, who claims that all the reports in *Usūli al-Kāfī* are authentic (sahīh) and that it is obligatory (wajib) to act upon them, has a very strict position among the Akhbārīs. For this reason, he declared even smoking tobacco to be forbidden (haram) (because it gives pleasure, although its harm was not known at the time) (Beḥeshti, 1391, pp. 129-130). Qazwīnī forbade the scholars of Qazvin from studying logic, philosophy, theology, and jurisprudence (Qazwīnī, 1387, p. Introduction). It is rumored that some of Mullā Sadrā's disciples could not enter Qazvin because of his harsh attitude (Ostad, 1394, p. 51).

Another name we would like to point out is Hurr Āmilī. According to him, whoever follows the hadiths in books such as *Usūl al-Kāfī*, *al-Rawza*, *al-*

Tawḥīd, and *ʿUyūn al-Ahbār* on theological issues will have great power to dispel doubts that are conveyed with detailed evidence. Such a person can give the “mulhites” who oppose the “innocents” the rational and logical answers that are sufficiently available in these books. According to him, those who objected to these books also objected to the Islamic scholars and were often incapable of giving them an answer. They were answered by “imams” for about three and a half centuries. Those who follow these works do not need the works of the dissenters, philosophers and mulhites who “harbor nothing but doubt and delusion” (ʿAmilī, 1423, p. 551).

Apart from these names who stand out with their negative attitude towards philosophy, there are other names who were influenced by the Akhbārī understanding of the period and exhibited an anti-philosophical attitude. For example, Quṭbuddīn Muhammad Nayrīzī (d. 1173/1759) condemned philosophers and wrote several poems denouncing them. According to him, reading philosophical works such as *Shīfā*, *Ishārāt*, and *Sharḥ al-Tajrīd* is “heresy”. He saw philosophical thought as lacking a foundation and considered philosophers to be afflicted with an unsolvable plague. According to him, these people and their thoughts are the basis of error and the cause of deviation (Safā, 1369, p. 282). In addition to Nayrīzī, another example is Muhammad Zamān Tabrīzī (d. 1131/1137?), one of the scholars in Isfahan. Tabrīzī criticized the study of philosophy in madrasas (Ostad, 1394, pp. 73-74).

In addition, Shaykh Bahā al-Dīn Āmilī (d. 1031/1622), a jurist and prominent Sufi, criticized philosophers in various respects. Āmilī believed in the superiority of intuition (*kashf*) over logical knowledge. But at the same time, in his view, human knowledge is incomparably inferior to divine knowledge (Nasr, 2014, pp. 155-157). One of his poems in which he criticizes philosophers is more or less as follows:

*How long, how long with Grecian wisdom must you grapple?
Learn, too, the wisdom the faithful hearts grapple!*
*How long will you persist with this baseless jurisprudence and theology?
Emptying your head with such nonsense, you fool!*
*Your life has been spent in debates of grammar (sarf) and syntax (nahv),
Read a few words about the principles of love.*
Illumine your heart with those radiant lights.
How long will you lap at the bowl of Ibn Sīnā?
Sovereign of all Creation, King of both this World and Faith,

The leavings of the faithful hold healing for the faithful, you poor thing!
Aristotle and Abu Ali's leftovers/sayings,
At what time did the Luminous Prophet proclaim this to be a source of healing?
(Shaykh Bahā'i, 1361, pp. 120-121).

We have tried to point out some of the Akhbārī thinkers who were opposed to philosophers and philosophical thought, which we consider to be in the first category in terms of criticism: "Anti-philosophy as an attitude". It is possible to criticise their attitude towards philosophy from several points of view:

Marginalisation and Enmiseration: The Akhbārīs' accusations against philosophy, such as "irreligion," "heresy," and "blasphemy," aim to marginalise and antagonise this discipline and its representatives. With this approach, the Akhbārīs portrayed philosophy as a dangerous and hostile element outside the Muslim society. However, Islamic thought has historically developed from different traditions and ideas.

Unfounded Generalisation: The Akhbārīs' declaration of philosophy as a whole as "non-religious" is a serious generalisation and incompatible with reality. In the history of Islamic thought, there are many Muslim philosophers, such as Ibn Rushd, who utilised philosophy to ground Islamic principles and to provide solutions to various jurisprudential and theological issues. The generalisations of the Akhbārīs ignore this rich and multifaceted nature of philosophy. Moreover, the Akhbārīs' criticisms of philosophical views often turn into personal attacks and insults. Characterising great philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā and al-Fārābī as 'fools,' 'heretics' and 'irreligious' should be considered morally problematic and an expression of intolerance.

Failure to Offer an Alternative: Despite their opposition to philosophy, the Akhbārīs could not come up with a system of thought that could substitute philosophy and bring a breath of fresh air to Islamic thought. Their only solution was to close themselves to *the al-Kutub al-Arba'a* and to labelling all kinds of intellectual production as "bid'ah". This attitude is incompatible with the dynamic structure of Islam.

As a result, the anti-philosophical attitude adopted by the Akhbārīs amounts to generalisations and unfounded accusations, and these accusations are based on an alienating and antagonising rhetoric. It is possible to conclude that this rhetoric ignores a significant part of the history of Islamic thought, contradicts reason and science, and harms the intellectual development of Islamic society.

C. Criticisms of Philosophical Views and Ideas

Criticism of philosophy and philosophers during the Safavid period was not limited to a single attitude. In this period, philosophical issues were also criticized from various perspectives. In this context, it can be argued that one scholar who comprehensively examines and critiques philosophical topics is the Akhbārī scholar, Qummī. In his work *Hikmat al-Arifīn*, which he wrote for this purpose, he lists the topics to be discussed after making various references to Ghazālī. The subjects he deals with in this work are as follows: The philosophers' attribution of necessity to God and human beings in their actions, ignoring the will of God, claiming that only the First Intellect proceeds from God in accordance with the principle of "only one proceeds from one", that God is not the true creator, claiming that God did not send the prophets and books with His own knowledge, and claiming the unity of reason and the intelligible. Qummī claims that the philosophers have fallen into disbelief by denying the Qur'an and Sunnah because of these issues and he promises to reveal and refute the weakness of their views in this work (Qummī, 2018, pp. 101-102).

The first criticism of philosophical thought by Akhbārī followers other than Qummī is the question of the eternity of the universe. They claim that philosophers fall into disbelief because of this view. For example, Taqī Majlisī characterizes philosophers as "unholy" and states that some of them accept the perpetuity of the universe. At this point, he brings Ibn Sīnā to the point and tries to show his contradiction by basing his view that "God brought the world into existence, but there was no time when there was no world" on Ibn Sīnā, which is a contradictory view between absolute huḍūs and absolute continuity (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, pp. 41-46). In his *Lavame' Sahebkrānī*, after rejecting other sects and religions except Shi'ism, Taqī Majlisī also cites the disbelief of philosophers regarding the eternity of the universe and its likening to God in terms of eternity (M. T. Majlisī, 1376, p. 164).

Apart from Taqī Majlisī, Khalīl Qazwīnī was one of those who criticized the philosophers for the idea of the perpetuity of the universe. He says that philosophers are like "devils" because they deny the creation of the universe out of nothing and adopt the concept of continuity. He argues that philosophers, in denying the creation of the universe ex nihilo and instead positing its eternity, exhibit a demonic tendency. He also likens philosophers to the Senawiyya because of their understanding of the perpetuity of the universe and argues that the philosophers' view that every created being is preceded by a "qadīm" and a "muddat" in the sense of "dehr" is the same as

that of the Senawiyya. However, he considers this view of the philosophers as opposition to the Qur'an. According to him, the Qur'anic verse, "*As We began the first creation, We will repeat it. [That is] a promise binding upon Us.*" (Anbiya, 21:104), is a refutation of the philosophers and Sufis who accept the eternity of the universe in the beginning. This verse emphasizes the distinction between the agent of the action and the action itself. According to Qazwīnī, apart from the verse, various hadiths also refute the philosophers. He states that the phrase "there was nothing before Him" in a long narration he cites is meant to refute the "heretical" philosophers. According to him, the reason for this is that the philosophers called the Active Intellect contingent in itself, necessary with another, and the last of the ten celestial intellects on the supra-moon, depending on the understanding of emanation (Qazwīnī, 1387, pp. 176, 323-324, 415-416, 446).

One of the Akhbārī followers who criticized the philosophers for their understanding of the perpetuity of the universe was Bāqir Majlisī. In *Ayn al-Hayāt*, he asserts that certain Islamic philosophers, while acknowledging the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic law, reject the concept of creation ex nihilo based on their own "limited" reasoning. He argues that philosophers did not directly profess the universe's eternity. Instead, they posited the pre-eternity of certain entities, such as eternal intellects, celestial spheres, and primordial matter and forms. He calls this understanding "disbelief". For this would constitute a denial of the Prophet and the clear verses regarding this matter (M. B. Majlisī, 1382, pp. 105-106). Majlisī repeats the same statements in his *I'tikādāt* and states that the universe is created ex nihilo. According to him, there is no beginning for the universe in the eyes of "mulhid" philosophers like Ibn Sinā and al-Fārābī. However, in spite of this, these philosophers claim that the universe has temporal, not essential, a posteriority. Asserting the universe's eternity necessitates accepting the pre-eternity of both eternal intellects and prime matter. But according to him, these are all philosophical superstitions. These superstitions that philosophers believe in are blasphemy (M. B. Majlisī, 1387, p. 43).

Another issue on which the Akhbārīs criticize the philosophers is the problem of God's will. The main issue with the will is the attribution of powerlessness to God. For example, Taqī Majlisī states that philosophers regard God as incapable. According to him, one of the deviant and baseless views of philosophers is that they attribute to God a necessary power like the burning of fire and the rising of the sun. In conclusion, he says that the philosophers' view of themselves as powerful and strong-willed and of God as incapable is an advanced dimension of heresy (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, pp. 47-

49).

Like Taqī Majlisī, Khalīl Qazwīnī criticises philosophers on the issue of will. According to him, the reason for the unbelief of the philosophers is their statement that “the object has a natural place and that the immobility of the world (It refers to the ancient and medieval understanding that the earth is motionless at the center and the other planets are moving) and the motion of the celestial spheres take place here without the providence of God”. Qazwīnī says that in the view of philosophers, the immobility of the earth is due to its nature, and the motion of the celestial spheres is due to their will. He states that this kind of “nonsense” is very common among philosophers. However, he states that this view of the philosophers was refuted by the Qur’anic verse *“And to Allah alone bows down in submission whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth of living creatures, as do the angels—who are not too proud to do so”* (Nahl, 16:49) (Qazwīnī, 1387, pp. 501-502).

As can be understood from the above statements, philosophers claimed that the celestial spheres have wills. Qazwīnī, on the other hand, states that this claim is refuted by the Qur’ān because the celestial spheres, which are conceived as voluntary, must be alive and the creatures in the heavens obey God.

According to the Akhbārī followers, one of the philosophers’ reasons for disbelief is their claim that God is ignorant of particulars. For example, Bākir Majlisī emphasises that God’s knowledge of beings is not limited to universals as philosophers claim. According to him, God knows all beings as they are at all times and as they are. Because of this idea, he claims that the beliefs of philosophers are blasphemy. According to Majlisī we cannot know with certainty whether God’s knowledge is ḥuḍūrī (presentential) as the Illuminationists posit or ḥuṣūlī (acquired) as the Peripatetics claim; thinking about it leads us to think about His essence, which is forbidden (M. B. Majlisī, 1378, pp. 38-41).

Āmilī, on the other hand, establishes a relationship between the Mutazilites and the philosophers on the subject of God’s knowledge and consequently states that the philosophers’ thoughts on this subject are disbelief. According to him, the Mutazilites attributed deficiency to God with regard to some contingents and said that God’s knowledge of the realisation of some time-dependent particulars was after their realisation. Āmilī states that the Mutazilites approached Aristotle and Ibn Sīnā with these thoughts and fell into disbelief (al-‘Āmilī, 1389, p. 197).

It should be noted that the Akhbārīs’ criticisms of the philosophers are

not limited to these issues. Akhbārī theologians have further asserted that the following philosophical viewpoints constitute unbelief (kufr): The possibility of attaining knowledge about God's names and attributes independent of revelation (Qazvīnī, 1387, pp. 101-102), the denial of bodily resurrection (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, p. 56), the notion of human actions being determined (thus rendering the concepts of heaven and hell meaningless) (Qummī, 1393, p. 188), the rejection of the Prophet's ascension (mi'raj) (M. T. Majlisī, 1398, pp. 47-49), and the belief in the soul's immortality. According to them, the soul is corporeal and has five senses. As philosophers claim, it is heresy to claim that the soul, as an abstract being with five external senses and five internal senses, performs some measures in its own body voluntarily without tools (Qazvīnī, 1387, pp. 48-52).

We can clearly state that despite all kinds of criticism and rejection of philosophy, the Akhbārīs did not completely achieve their goal. Although a hostile attitude towards philosophy intensified under the leadership of the Akhbārīs, philosophers managed to maintain their social position and reputation and continued to be influential both at the court and in some madrasas. The clearest indication of this is the emergence of a great philosophical movement called the "Isfahan School" in the same period (Dabashi, 1996, pp. 621-622). If the Akhbārīs had been able to achieve their goals, we would not be able to talk about philosophers and philosophical texts of that period today.

How was philosophy able to survive despite this negative attitude towards philosophy during the Safavid period? The reason lies in the fact that core philosophical principles have become deeply intertwined with the very fabric of sectarian belief. Significantly, Aristotelian logic and its commentaries became an indispensable part of some Safavid madrasas that were not anti-philosophical. It was difficult for students to understand classical Islamic sciences without understanding Aristotelian logic. (Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction) In this respect, it was impossible for the Akhbārīs to completely expel philosophical sciences from Iranian madrasas. In addition, some teachers, who were representatives of Peripatetic philosophy, established close relations with the politicians despite the pressure of the Akhbārīs and were also recognised as respected personalities. For example, Shah Abbas took the philosopher Mīr Dāmād with him on a military expedition. (Dabashi, 1996, p. 623) In addition Muhammad Baqir Sebzawārī (d. 1090/1679) was the Sheikhuṣṣalām of Isfahan at the time and Āqā Hüseyin Hansārī (d. 1099/1688), a student of Sebzawārī, was recognised as trustworthy by the court and a mausoleum was erected in his name when he

died (Qummī, 2018, p. Introduction).

When we look at the criticisms made against philosophy in terms of its subjects, it is possible to see a clear influence of Ghazālī. In particular, the fact that their criticisms of philosophy centred on issues such as the perpetuity of the universe, God's knowledge of only the universal, the issue of will, and corporeal resurrection is indicative of Ghazālī's influence. These issues are some of the subjects of criticism in Ghazālī's *Tahāfut*. Therefore, the first thing that can be said against their criticisms is that these criticisms are far from original. However, it is possible to criticise their discourse on philosophical issues in other ways:

Decontextualisation and Misunderstanding: In criticising philosophical ideas, the Akhbārīs often detached them from their original contexts or misunderstood them. For example, the philosophers' idea of the eternity of the universe was interpreted as denying the creative power of Allah. However, the debates on this issue in the history of philosophy have a much more complex and nuanced structure. Concepts such as "eternity," "independence from time," "necessity" have different interpretations and functions within philosophical systems. Ignoring these nuances, the Akhbārīs simplified philosophical thoughts and criticised these issues by interpreting them according to their own narrow perspectives. This seems to be an unfair and superficial approach.

The Inconsistency of Denying Reason: Ironically, the arguments used by the Akhbārīs to criticise philosophy are often based on reason. For example, their criticisms of philosophers over issues such as "God's will" or "God's knowledge of particulars" show that they themselves need to reason and make logical deductions. This reveals the internal inconsistency of the Akhbārī approach, which completely rejects reason in the form of religious understanding.

Lack of Dialogue and Comprehension: Instead of making a serious effort to understand and interpret philosophy, the Akhbārīs contented themselves with generalisations and labels such as "blasphemy" and "heresy". However, the prerequisite for real criticism is a good understanding of the subject you are criticising. Instead of establishing a healthy dialogue with philosophy, trying to understand different views, and developing their own thoughts on this basis, the Akhbārīs preferred only to oppose and discredit it, which reflects an intellectually unproductive approach.

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the Akhbārīs' criticisms of

philosophy, far from an objective and academic approach, were often superficial and based on prejudices, dogmatic beliefs, and a deep ignorance of philosophy. Criticising an important field such as philosophy in such a superficial and aggressive manner has not contributed to philosophy and Islamic thought, but rather has harmed them.

Conclusion

It is seen that the Akhbārī school, which displayed a strict attitude towards reason and philosophy during the Safavid period, tried to realize its criticism and opposition through more than one channel. The first is their efforts to exclude rational and philosophical sciences by interfering in the curriculum of madrasas. The Akhbārīs used the fees they paid to teachers and students as an element of pressure and tried to keep them away from philosophical sciences. However, this attitude of the Akhbārīs means turning madrasas into centers of unquestioning obedience. The Akhbārīs restricted knowledge by banning rational sciences in madrasas. On the other hand, Islamic scholars have enriched Islamic thought by drawing on different cultures and disciplines throughout history. Therefore, this understanding of the Akhbārīs is in contradiction with the historical heritage. Moreover, by removing philosophy from madrasas, the Akhbārīs prevented students from developing analytical thinking and questioning skills. The spread of the Akhbārī way of understanding and the possibility of its transmission to other Islamic sects may cause Islamic society to become intellectually stagnant and lag behind the times.

Another way in which the Akhbārīs criticize reason and philosophy is in terms of their negative attitude towards these fields. This form of criticism is mostly based on various accusations. They marginalized philosophy by labeling it with accusations such as “irreligion”, “heresy” and “blasphemy”, and excluded and antagonized those who engaged in philosophy. However, this attitude ignores the richness of the history of Islamic thought and the nature of its development through different disciplines. Moreover, declaring the whole of philosophy “non-religious” is an unfounded generalization that ignores Muslim philosophers like Ibn Rushd who have contributed to Islamic thought.

Although the Akhbārīs opposed philosophy, they could not offer an alternative system that would breathe new life into Islamic thought. Their solution is to stick to *the al-Kutub al-Arbaʿa* and label any other intellectual activity as “bidʿah”. Moreover, the Akhbārīs’ anti-philosophical discourse includes personal attacks and insults, targeting great thinkers such as Ibn

Sīnā and Fārābī. This seems to be a morally problematic and intolerant approach.

Another way in which the Akhbārīs criticize reason and philosophy is through philosophical issues. In their criticisms for this purpose, they mostly pointed to some issues that are not unfamiliar to the Islamic world. In these matters, it is possible to see the clear influence of Ghazālī. Kummī's direct references to Ghāzālī in his work *Hikmat al-ārifīn* should be considered as one of the clear indicators of this. Therefore, the Akhbārīs could not present a criticism that could be considered original in terms of their subject matter. Their criticisms are often superficial and based on decontextualized interpretations of philosophical ideas. For example, the issue of the eternity of the universe is presented with a reductionist approach such as denying God's creative power. However, in the history of philosophy, this issue has a much deeper and nuanced structure.

The arguments used by the Akhbārīs in their criticisms ironically resulted in their own resort to reasoning and logical deductions. This reveals that the Akhbārī approach, which rejects reason in religious understanding, is internally inconsistent. Moreover, instead of establishing a real dialogue with philosophy, understanding different perspectives, and developing their own ideas on this basis, the Akhbārīs chose to oppose and discredit it. This reflects an intellectually inefficient and dogmatic understanding.

In conclusion, we can state that the Akhbārīs' attitude towards philosophy is contrary to the essence and historical heritage of Islamic thought. This attitude, based on prejudice, bigotry and profound ignorance, suggests an approach that will harm both philosophy and Islamic thought. It is possible to say that their criticisms are far from being objective and academic, with a rhetoric based on generalizations, unfounded accusations and personal attacks. However, it can be clearly stated that the Akhbārīs historically failed to achieve their goals, and despite the oppression, the philosophy and intellectual approach managed to preserve its existence.



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SAFEVİLER DÖNEMİ AHBÂRÎ EKOLÜNDE AKIL VE FELSEFE KARŞITLIĞI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME

 Sinan YILMAZ^a

 Ömer Faruk ERDEM^b

Extended Abstract

Bu çalışma, Safevî İran'ında felsefeye yönelik Ahbârî eleştirilerinin kaynağını, yöntemlerini ve sonuçlarını incelemeyi ve akla karşı literalist bir vahiy yorumu ortaya koyan bu yaklaşımın felsefeye karşı eleştirilerini tespit ve tenkit etmeyi amaçlıyor. Safevî Hanedanlığı günümüz İran sınırları içerisinde yer alan bölgede 16. ve 18. yüzyıllar arasında hüküm süren ve İran'ın dini ve entelektüel hayatında önemli bir dönüm noktasını temsil eden bir devlettir. Bu dönemde, Şîî İmamiyye Mezhebi'ne bağlı Ahbârî Ekolü yükselişe geçmiş ve söz konusu coğrafyanın dini anlayışında köklü değişimlere yol açmıştır. Bir fıkıh ekolü olan Ahbârî Ekolü, dini metinlerin anlaşılmasında ve yorumlanmasında akıl, icma ve kıyas gibi yöntemleri, dini tahrif riski taşıdığı gerekçesi ile reddeder. Bu gerekçeye dayanarak Ahbârî Ekolü, "Masum İmamlar" tarafından aktarılan ve *el-Kütübü'l-Erba'a*'da toplanan rivayetler dışındaki bir kaynağı dini yorumlamada bağlayıcı kabul etmemiştir. Dini anlamada akli dışlayan bu ekolün felsefeye karşı tavrı da oldukça menfi olmuştur. Özellikle Molla Sadrâ gibi filozofların felsefe, tasavvuf ve din ilimleri üzerinden sentezci bir yaklaşımı benimsemeleri, daha öncesinde başlayan tasavvuf eleştirilerine felsefenin de dahil edilmesi sonucunu doğurmuştur. Bu sebeple Ahbârîler felsefeye karşı şiddetli bir mücadeleye girişmiş ve felsefeye karşı derin bir şüphe ve düşmanlığın doğmasına zemin hazırlamışlardır. Ahbârîler, felsefeyi ve filozofları "dinsizlik", "sapkınlık" ve hatta "küfür" gibi ağır ithamlarla suçlamışlardır. Onların nazarında Aristo mantığı ve Yunan felsefesi, Müslüman topluma dışarıdan girmiş ve dini

^a Sorumlu Yazar, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Hatay Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi, yilmazsinan44@gmail.com

^b Doç. Dr., Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, omferdem@hotmail.com

yozaştıran zararlı bir etki olarak görülmüştür. Bu ekole göre gerçek irfan ve hikmet Yunan felsefesinde değil, *el-Kütübü'l-Erba'a*'nın sınırları içerisinde bulunuyordu. Ahbârîlerin felsefe karşıtlığının Safevî devletinin siyasî ve malî desteğiyle birleşmesi, İran'da felsefe ve filozoflar için sıkıntılı bir dönemin başlamasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Birçok medresede felsefeye ayrılan yer ve verilen önem azalmış ve felsefi düşünce giderek marjinalleştirilmiştir. Ahbârîlerin felsefeye karşı mücadelesinin, iki temel strateji etrafında şekillendiğini söylemek mümkündür. Bunlardan birincisi felsefeye karşı gösterdikleri olumsuz tavır üzerinden takip edilebilir. Kummî, Ali-Kulu Cedîdül-İslâm gibi önde gelen Ahbârî düşünürleri, eserlerinde ve vaazlarında sürekli olarak felsefeye saldırdılar ve onu aşağıladılar. Bu kişiler Aristo ve Eflatun'u takip etmenin Müslümanları hakiki dinden uzaklaştıracığı konusunda ısrarcıydı. Onlara göre medreselerde felsefe öğreten kişilerin, "dinsiz" olarak kabul edilmesi ve bu kurumlardan atılmaları gerekmektedir. Ahbârî müntesipleri felsefe karşıtı tutumlarında yalnızca sözlü kınamalarla sınırlı kalmamışlardır. Aynı zamanda, felsefî düşünceye sahip bireylere yönelik baskı ve sindirme politikalarına da başvurmuşlardır. Onların bu tutumundan olumsuz etkilenenlerden biri olan Molla Sadrâ çeşitli baskılara maruz kalmış ve İsfahan'ı terk etmek zorunda kalmıştır. Ahbârîlerin felsefeye karşı ikinci stratejisini, felsefî görüşlerin sistematik eleştirisi üzerinden takip etmek mümkündür. Bir başka deyişle bu ekol felsefenin temel meselelerine yönelik çeşitli eleştiriler geliştirmiştir. Onların yaptıkları eleştiriler arasında öne çıkanlardan biri âlemin ezeliyeti meselesidir. Filozofların âlemin ezeliyeti konusundaki görüşü, hem Allah'ın yanında başka ezeli varlıkların da bulunması endişesinden dolayı hem de Allah'ın yaratıcı kudretine aykırı bulunduğu için Ahbârîlerin şiddetli tepkisiyle karşılandı. Onlara göre bu düşünce, Allah'ın yoktan var edici sıfatını inkâr ettiği için açıkça küfürdü. Ahbârîlerin filozofları eleştirdiği konulardan biri de Allah'ın iradesi meselesidir. Filozofların Allah'ın iradesine ilişkin görüşleri de Ahbârîlere göre kabul edilemezdi. Onlar, filozofların Allah'ın iradesini sınırlandıran ve hatta Allah'a acizlik atfeden bir yaklaşım sergilediğini iddia etmiş ve bu anlayış üzerinden filozofları eleştirmişlerdir. Ahbârîlerin filozoflara yönelik eleştirilerinden öne çıkan bir diğeri ise Allah'ın tikeller konusundaki bilgisi hakkındadır. Ahbârîlere göre filozoflar, Allah'ın yalnızca "tümel" kavramları bilebileceğini ve "tikel" olaylar hakkında önceden bir bilgiye sahip olamayacağını savunarak, Allah'ın mutlak ilmini sınırlandırmaya çalışıyordu. Bu da onlara göre ciddi bir sapkınlıktı. Ahbârîler eleştirilerini bu tür meseleler üzerinden yapmış ve filozofları hedef almışlardır. Ancak Ahbârîlerin tüm çabalarına rağmen felsefe İran'da

varlığını sürdürmeye devam etmiştir. Özellikle “İsfahan Okulu” olarak adlandırılan felsefi hareket, Ahbârî baskısına rağmen faaliyetlerini sürdürmüş ve söz konusu coğrafyada etkili olmuştur. Ayrıca felsefenin Şiî-İslam entelektüel geleneği içinde derin köklere sahip olmasının yanı sıra mantık gibi disiplinlerin dinî ilimleri anlamadaki öneminin de payı bu noktada yadsınamaz. Sonuç olarak, Safevî dönemi Ahbârî hareketi, İslam düşünce tarihinde felsefeye karşı bireysel bir tutumdan ziyade, ekol bazlı olarak akıl ve felsefeye karşı çıkmanın önemli bir örneğini teşkil etmiştir. Bu çalışmada nitel verilerin incelendiği tematik analiz yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bunun yanında Şiî ulemânın felsefe eleştirileriyle ilgili görüşlerinin tespit edildiği kaynak taraması ve felsefe eleştirilerinde kullanılan delillerin geçerliliği analiz edilmeye çalışılmış, böylece Safevîler döneminden itibaren Şiî-İran dinî geleneği içinde felsefenin nasıl ve niçin eleştirildiğine dair kapsamlı bir tasvir sunulmaya çalışılmıştır. Çalışma, bulguların özetlenmesi ve bu tartışmaların Şiî-İran düşüncesinin daha geniş bağlamı içindeki etkisinin ve öneminin değerlendirilmesi ile sona ermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Felsefesi, Şîa, Safevîler, Ahbârî Ekolü, Felsefe Karşıtlığı.



Hakem: Dış, Bağımsız.

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