

## Dating hadith, methods and strategies

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## **Introduction**

Dating is a new title that has entered the field of Quran and Islamic Hadith by orientalists. Since the followers of the Sunni comprise a larger part of the geography of Islam, Orientalists are often faced with Sunni sources, therefore, the methods of dating in hadith are based on Sunni traditions. Orientalists look at hadith as a historical source and try to find historical points about it by determining the date of issuance of the tradition. Due to the existence of multiple texts and Isnad for each of the Sunni traditions, which is the dominant feature of their traditions, Orientalists have developed methods for dating, that these methods in some cases leads to criticism or a better understanding of the traditions. Therefore, it seems that one should also think about dating in Shia traditions.

## **Materials and Methods**

Some orientalists have tried to compare the features of existing texts for a tradition to obtain the course of text changes and obtain the original text of the tradition. Some have also considered the characteristics of the sanad and by determining the “common link” that can be determined according to the many ways of the tradition sanad, they have tried to estimate the date of the tradition, which is often attributed to the common link or its sheikhs. According to the first source that contains the text of the tradition, a group has started to determine the date of issuance. Finally, some people have considered a new way to determine the date of issuance of a tradition by paying attention to the multiple texts and Isnad of a tradition. Among the

dating methods, dating based on the Isnad as well as dating based on the analysis of the text and the Isnad together have received more attention due to being more methodical, which is based on the phenomenon of the common link in the sanad as well as the multiplicity of texts of traditions. This feature does not exist in Shia traditions because the process of issuing and compiling Shia traditions is different due to historical reasons and often lacks multiple sanads or multiple texts for one tradition. Therefore, dating methods are not applicable in Shia traditions.

On the other hand, one should not simply ignore the dating of hadith in Shia traditions because its benefits are undeniable in some works done in Sunni traditions. Therefore, a way to achieve these benefits and results must be found in Shia traditions.

### **Results and Discussion**

Orientalists in the field of the Qur'an have also begun dating, the purpose of which is to determine the date of revelation of each paragraph of the Qur'anic verses, and due to its connection with the events of the Prophet's time, this determination of the date leads to a more accurate and clear interpretation of the verses. Two common features between Shia traditions and Quranic verses led this research to a method for dating Shia hadith that can bring us closer to the motivations and benefits of the Orientalist dating method. One of these two characteristics is the gradualness of the issuance of Shia traditions during the period of the presence of the Imams (as), similar to the revelation of the verses that continued throughout the life of the Prophet (pbuh), and the other is the continuity and coordination of the issuance of the traditions with the events of the period of the presence of the Imams, such as the revelation of the verses of the Qur'an were in harmony with the events of the life of the Prophet (pbuh). Therefore, it seems that the way to be followed in the dating of Shia traditions should be similar to the dating method of the Orientalists in the Qur'an. Therefore, this research suggests the method of rereading Shia traditions based on the date of issuance. Although the Shiite scholars have been paying attention to the date of issuance of traditions for a long time, in practice, they have considered it only in special cases, and in most cases, this point has been neglected. While it should be kept in mind that the tradition of each imam (as) was not issued spontaneously but was based on the traditions from his fathers. Therefore, it is necessary to re-read and pay attention to the Shia traditions in the order of their issuance date.

In the method of rereading Shia traditions based on the date of issuance, several steps must be taken in Shia traditions. First of all, since the transmitter have been committed to identify the infallible imam (as) from whom the tradition is heard or transmitted, his traditions on a subject should be arranged in the order of the date of issue. In the second stage, one should

try to arrange the traditions of each imam (as) in terms of the date of issuance, which is very difficult. Because the transmitters have not been committed to mention the date and other details related, and perhaps ignoring it will not create a problem. Finally, according to the historical order of issuance, the traditions of a subject should be examined and with this precision, we may look for new points and a new understanding of the traditions.

### **Conclusion**

Since the Shia traditions were issued gradually and during the lifetime of Fourteen Infallibles (as) and it is similar to the gradual revelation of the Quran, it seems that the benefits of the Qur'an dating method can also be followed in the Shia traditions. Because the dating of the Qur'an seeks to give a clearer interpretation of the verses by considering the connection between the revelation of the verses and the events of the era of revelation. According to the long period of the presence of the infallible Imams (as), the Shia traditions were issued gradually and during the ups and downs of their contemporary societies. Therefore, it is expected that the study of the texts and content of these traditions according to the historical order of issuing hadiths will lead us to a better understanding of them. This method faces some difficulties. The phenomenon of taqiyyah in Shia hadiths, as well as the possibility of errors by the transmitters of Shia hadiths and the existence of fabricated traditions may cause difficulties in the process of rereading.

**Keywords:** Dating the Qur'an, Dating the Hadith, the Date of Issuance, Rereading the Hadiths.