

A Critical Examination of the Hadiths on "Taghallub" with Emphasis on Ṣaḥīḥayn

Reihaneh Mojtabaei Renani

PhD Student, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Imam Sadiq University (AS),
Tehran, Iran, (Corresponding Author). Email: reihanehmojtabaei91@gmail.com

Mahdi Izadi

Professor, Department of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Imam Sadiq University (AS), Tehran,
Iran. Email: dr.mahdi.izadi@gmail.com

Received: 01/08/2023

Accepted: 25/11/2023

Introduction

The history of Islamic political thought after the third century AH and the emergence of the dual issue of Caliph and Sultan indicates the theorization of the "Theory of Taghallub" (usurpation of power) as one of the sources of political power for Islamic rulers. This theory, founded on the phrase "al-Haqqu li-man ghalaba" (Right belongs to the one who prevails), gradually became so rooted in Muslim thought that most Islamic scholars accepted it. Numerous hadiths were even narrated in supportive texts to affirm this view. However, these traditions and the very foundation of this view contradict the explicit texts of the Holy Quran and even some hadiths found within the same books. This research, which aims to examine the Sunni perspective, first extracts and categorizes hadiths that support the Theory of Taghallub, focusing on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Then, with a critical approach, it investigates the conflict and contradiction of these traditions with the verses of the Holy Quran and, indeed, with other hadiths from the same books.

Materials and Methods

This study focuses on hadiths extracted from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari and Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim. After extraction and categorization, supporting evidence from other Sunni books will also be mentioned. The extracted hadiths from the chapters of the Ṣaḥīḥayn are categorized and analyzed into six main themes. The first group of hadiths considers accompanying the ruler and the community obligatory for al-Muslims in all circumstances and absolutely, while disobedience and separation from them is forbidden and a cause of sin. The second group of hadiths equates distancing oneself from the ruler and the community with dying a death of ignorance (Jahiliyya). The third group of hadiths indicates that those who rebel against the ruler will have no evidence on the Day of Judgment. Whoever disobeys the order of an Islamic ruler will have no proof for his actions on the Day of Judgment, and he will have no excuse that will benefit him. The fourth group of hadiths points to the absolute, comprehensive, and unconditional obligation of obeying rulers. In these traditions, despite limiting the meaning of the phrases to obedience in matters other than sin, the

ultimate conclusion is that to prevent corruption in society, obedience must be absolute and in all matters. The fifth category emphasizes patience in the face of the ruler's command. The sixth category states that it is not permissible to fight the ruler as long as they establish prayer and fasting. According to this group of hadiths, as long as oppressive rulers among Muslims pray and fast, even if they sin, Muslims should never stop obeying them or fighting or revolting against them. Examination of these traditions reveals that, from the perspective of the hadiths in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, obedience to the ruler of the Islamic society is obligatory under all circumstances, even if the ruler commits oppression, injustice, sin, or immorality.

Results and Findings

After reviewing and taking a brief look at the hadiths of Taghlib, a critique of these hadiths will be given from the verses of the Holy Quran and the hadiths of *Ṣaḥīḥayn*. First, by comparing the Taghallub traditions with the verses of the Holy Quran, the Sunni claim of obeying the unjust ruler is criticized. Verses such as Q11:112-113 indicate the impermissibility of oppressive rulers holding the position of caliphate or leadership; warn Muslims against relying on or trusting them, and forbid alliance with them. Based on the prohibition in the verse, Muslims are obliged to remove unjust rulers from the position of caliphate and governance and strive to establish a worthy and just government. Furthermore, verse Q2:124 indicates that Imamate and successorship are from God, and oppressors and tyrants are not worthy of this position. Therefore, if an oppressor assumes leadership, they must be removed, and the political leadership of the Islamic community belongs to the righteous.

Subsequently, to critique these hadiths, references are made to traditions from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*, which contradicts the Sunni claim of absolute obedience to unjust rulers, indicating that one must not submit to them but should rather stand against them. One group of traditions mentions the virtue of the just Imam and the punishment for the unjust one, encourages kindness towards the people, and forbids being harsh with them. Another group of hadiths from the *Ṣaḥīḥayn* indicates that the ruler of the Islamic community should only be obeyed in matters that do not involve sin. Therefore, an unjust ruler who commands sin is not obligatory to obey, and indeed, obeying them in that sin might be forbidden. After examining the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, other hadiths from Sunni tradition texts condemning obedience to the unjust ruler are briefly mentioned. Based on these traditions, God's wrath and the severest punishments on the Day of Judgment are for the unjust ruler, and backbiting about them is also permissible. According to the mentioned Quranic verses and traditions, the hadiths on Taghallub are not only in contradiction with the explicit text of the Holy Quran but also conflict with the traditions present in the most famous Sunni books, namely the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*.

Conclusion

The "Theory of Taghallub" presents the sword and force as manifestations of power and as a source of legitimacy, equating power with righteousness. With the acceptance of this view by Islamic thinkers, many hadiths were narrated in tradition texts, particularly in Sunni hadith books. This research, after extracting the hadiths on Taghallub from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim* and categorizing them,

critiqued and examined them based on the perspective of the Holy Quran and other traditions within the same books. The investigation showed that these traditions not only contradict the explicit text of the Holy Quran but are also in conflict with the traditions reported within these books. It seems that this lack of harmony between the tradition texts and the actions of the caliphs indicates that the Theory of Taghallub and the necessity of obeying the unjust ruler were formed gradually within the context of history and stem from the political practice of the Sunni caliphs; meaning that the political performance of the Islamic caliphs and sultans was influenced by the behavior of the early caliphs.

Keywords: Taghallub Traditions, Unjust Ruler, Theory of Taghallub.