Tahqîq
Ahl ul Hadîth

by
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A Novel Definition of Hadith

At the beginning of his lecture, the speaker stated that the word “Hadith” means “the word of Allâh and the word of his Rasûl.”

Comment on this:

Mawlânâ Habîb ur Rahmân points out that this is an entirely novel definition of Hadith. Up to this time, the accepted definition among the scholars of Islâm, both muqallid and ghair muqallid, has always been: “The word, action, or taqrîr, of the Messenger of Allâh salallâhu alaihi wa sallam.” (Here the word taqrîr means selection, confirmation, or approval of some action.”) He quotes a well-known ghair muqallid writer Nawâb Hasan Khân:

“Hadîth dar istilâh mash’hûr qawl o fi’l o taqrîr e rasûl ast - alaihis salât o salâm.”

“The accepted meaning of hadîth is the word action or taqrîr of the Messenger - alaihis salât o salâm.” Then, after referring to a less common definition which includes the word of a sahâbî or tâbi‘î, he says, “O sawab awwal ast.”
“And the correct one is the first.” (Mask ul Khitām p. 21)

A very well-known ghair muqallid writer of that time, Maulānā Thanā’ullah Amritisrā, after distinguishing between Hadīth and Qur’ān, has also written:

“In accordance with accepted principles, the Ahl ul Hadīth understand Hadīth to be secondary to Qur’ān, and, to resolve any question, after looking in the Holy Qur’ān, look first in the Hadīth.” (Ahl ul Hadīth ka Madhhab p. 79)

2 Citing a Counterfeit Hadīth as Evidence

The speaker then put forward a claim that the name Ahl ul Hadīth derives from the time of the Messenger of Allāh salallāhu alaihi wa sallam himself, and that this name was accepted by the Sahābah kirām. In support of the first statement he quotes this hadīth:

On the Day of Qiyāmah the Ahl ul Hadīth will come with their inkwells. Allāh Almighty will say to them, “You are the Ahl ul Hadīth. Now enter Paradise.”

Comment:

In point of fact this hadīth is counterfeit. Certainly the speaker would not be knowingly quoting a counterfeit hadīth, so clearly he is not aware of its status. At the same time, this raises a question. If those ulamā of today who do not accept the principle of taqlīd are not in fact able to distinguish between genuine and
counterfeit hadîth, then how much right can they have to derive masâ’il directly from hadîth?

It is not only muqallid Ulamâa (Dhahabî, Khaṭîb, and Suyûtî) who classify this hadîth as counterfeit. Ghair muqallid ulamâa have also included it under this heading. (See Al Fawâ’id ul Majmû’ah by Allâmah Shawkânî, p. 30)

The verdict of muqallid ulamâa on this hadîth is to be found in ..........Mawzû’ah on p. 112

قال الخطيب موضوع (الي) قال في الميزان وضع هذا الحديث على الطبراني. Khaṭîb has said that this hadîth is counterfeit.......in Al Mizân (Raqqî) has said that this hadîth was falsely attributed to Tibrânî.”

3. **The Actual Meaning of “Ahl ul Hadîth”**

Even if for the sake of argument, this hadîth was not counterfeit, still it would not support the speaker’s claim. The term as’hâb ul hadîth that is used here does not refer to people who abandon taqîlîd and claim to be practising direct on Hadîth. What it refers to, is those scholars who specialise in the writing down and teaching of Hadîth. This is clearly proved by the words (بايديهم المحابر)

“bi ayyîhim ul mahâbir.” Coming forward with inkwells in their hands can only refer to people whose occupation is writing. This is also proved by the fact that this counterfeit hadîth is also found with these words:
"Allāh Almighty will gather together the people of hadīth and ‘ilm." (La‘ālī Masnū‘ah p.13)

When the “as’hāb ul hadīth” are here referred to together with the ahl ul ‘ilm, then clearly “as’hāb ul hadīth refers to the scholars of hadīth and to those who record them and teach them.

The third proof is in the remaining words of this hadīth which for some reason the speaker leaves out in his quotation.

(طّالما كنتم تصلون على نبي في الدنيا)

That is to say, Allāh Almighty will send the as’hāb ul hadīth to Paradise saying to them, “you read an great amount of durūd on my Messenger.”

This again points clearly to those who write and read hadīth because every time they read the name of the Messenger of Allāh they will write or say “sallallāhu alaihi wa sallam.” From this it is clear that the reason for their being given a place in Paradise is not abandoning taqlīḍ, but reciting a great amount of durūd. The speaker would also be aware of whether reciting durūd in great amounts was a practice of muqallidīn or ghair muqallidīn.

The sense in which M. Habīb ur Rahman takes the term as’hāb ul hadīth is also evident from what Imām Dhahhabī says, because he has classified this hadīth under the heading
4 The Meaning of the Sahâbah Being Ahl ul Hadîth

To support his contention that the Sahâbah raziyallâhu ‘anhum regarded themselves as “ahl ul hadîth”, the speaker presents several quotations. However, in all these quotations the term as’hâb ul hadîth in fact means those people who reported hadîth, or memorised them or taught them, or wrote them down. In none of them can it be understood to mean those people who do not follow any imâm, or claim to act directly on the basis of hadîth.

In one place he quotes Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu as saying that he was “ahl ul hadîth.” Unfortunately, he does not quote the full background to this, otherwise it would be quite clear that Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu meant by this. The reference that the speaker quotes is from Târîkh Khatîb and Tadhkirah. Here a dream seen by Abû Bakr bin Abî Dâwûd is described:

During the time when Abû Bakr bin Abî Dâwûd was engaged in writing down the hadîth of Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu, he saw Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu in a dream. He had a thick beard, a wheaten complexion, and was wearing coarse cloth. Abû Bakr says, “When I saw him, I
said to him, I like you very much.” He replied, “I am the first sâhib ul hadîth in the world.”

If the definition of Sâhib ul Hadîth that the speaker puts forward is valid, then we would have to accept that there was no Sahâbî before Abu Hurairah who practised on Hadîth. Clearly the speaker would not be so bold as to say this, so it must mean something other than what he has taken it to mean. Here it clearly means a person who is engaged in reporting and memorising hadîth. There can be no doubt that among the Sahâbah, Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu was foremost both in his dedication to memorising hadîth, and in the number of hadîth that he transmitted. This point is also clearly confirmed by the fact that this dream is reported at a time when the person who saw it was engaged in writing down hadîth, and not in relation to some person turning rejecting taqlîd, or trying to practise directly on a Hadîth.

5 Citing First a Counterfeit Hadîth and then a Dream

Then the point remains that this quotation from Abû Hurairah raziyallâhu ‘anhu was not something that he said during his lifetime. It was something that was said in a dream seen by someone several hundred years after he died. Now if a scholar has to resort to a counterfeit hadîth, and then to words said in a dream, to make his case, then clearly the evidence at his disposal cannot be very strong.

6 Further Citations
The speaker then refers to a number of Tābi‘īn and quotes the phrase:

شُرَفُ أُصْحَابِ الْحَدِيثِ

applied to them.

Comment:

Here again he is claiming that they were “Ahl ul Hadîth” in the sense that he uses. Again this is not valid. The phrase

شُرَفُ أُصْحَابِ الْحَدِيثِ

de refers to their having an honoured and leading position as muhaddithīn and as transmitters of hadîth, and the term “as’hâb ul hadîth” or “ahl ul hadîth” means simply muhaddithīn or transmitters of hadîth. The speaker of the book from which he is quoting himself writes:

(قد ذكرنا في كتبنا هذا من فضل الحديث وله المختصين بحفظه ونقله)

“In this book we have spoken of the fazl of the hadîth, and of the ahl ul hadîth, who have specialised in memorising and recording them.” (p 134)

In this book there are also hundreds of other instances that prove this point. Among them is a section on “the as’hâb ul hadîth as the khalîfahs of the Messenger of Allâh sallallâhu ‘alaihi wa sallam.” Under this heading the speaker quotes this hadîth:

Huzûr sallallâhu ‘alaihi wa sallam was asked, “Who are your successors?” He said, “Those
people who will come after me and will report my hadîth and my sunnah, and teach it to the people.” (p. 31)

Here it is perfectly clear that as’hâb ul hadîth refers to the people who report and teach hadîth. Another section is called “Huzûr sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam leaving instructions that the as’hâb ul hadîth are to be received with honour.” Under this heading, this hadîth is quoted:

Some young people will come from different parts of the world to learn hadîth. Treat them well. (p. 21)

From this it is clear that students of hadîth are “as’hâb ul hadîth.” Here also Abu Sa’îd Khudrî raziyallâhu ‘anhu is quoted, and The speaker uses that quotation on p. 3 of his lecture. However, he has not presented the full quotation.

“When he saw them he said, “Welcome!” and said, “Huzûr sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam told us to make a place for you in our gatherings, and to teach and explain his hadîth to you. You are his successors and the ahl ul hadîth (i.e. muhaddithîn) after us”

Another section is entitled, “Dreams of the Sâlihîn about the as’hâb ul hadîth. Under this heading one dream is as follows:

A certain person was studying hadîth, and died
while still studying. Abu B*k-rash bin B*k-rashi saw him in a dream. He asked him, “What happened?” He said, “I was forgiven.” He asked, “What was the reason?” He said, “Because I was studying hadith.” (p. 111)

Here again the person studying hadith is categorised under the heading “as’hâb ul hadîth.” Other similar dreams are recounted. These examples are only a handful out of a sack.

On top of this, M. Muhammad Sâhib Jûnâgad’hî, who is ghair muqallid, in translating this book himself translates “as’hâb ul hadîth” as “students of hadîth” or as “people with a knowledge of hadîth”. In one place he translates

(رجل من أصحاب الحديث)

as “a student of hadîth”, and in another place “as’hâb ul hadîth” is translated as “scholars of hadîth” (p. 33) or as “muhaddithîn”. On p. 38 “ahl ul hadîth” is translated as “muhaddithîn”, and on p. 24 as’hâb ul hadîth is also translated as “muhaddithîn.”

This is part of a general tendency in Ahl-e-hadîth writers. When the phrase “as’hâb ul hadîth” is used as a term of honour, they translate it as “the Ahl ul Hadîth,” but, whenever some evil is referred to, they translate it as “students of hadîth”, or else use some roundabout expression like “such people.”

Thus M. Muhammad Jûnâgad’hî translates

(ما قوم خير من أصحاب الحديث)
as "There are no people better than the Ahl-e-Hadith." However, on p. 33 he translates

اختلف أهل الحديث كيف تغيروا كيف أفسدوا

as "see how these students of hadith have become corrupted."

In the same way, in Sharfu As’hâbi’l Hadîth, whenever the īmān of the “ashâb ul hadîth, or their being abdâls

is mentioned, he translates it as "the Ahl-e-Hadîth" or
the Jamâ’ah of the Ahl-e-Hadîth." (see p 18, 32, 34,
e tc) However, the statement of Imâm A’mash

قول ما في الدنيا قوم شر من أصحاب الحديث

is translated as, "there are no people in the world

worse than these people." According to his rule he

should translate it as, "there are no people in the

world worse than the Ahl-e-Hadîth."

Similarly, another statement of Imâm A’mash:

قول لو كانت لي اكلب كنت ارسلتها على أصحاب الحديث

is translated as "If I had dogs, I would set them on

these people." (p. 104) By his rule it should read, "If I

had dogs I would set them on the Ahl ul Hadîth."

Similarly,

نظر عبيد الله بن عمر الى أصحاب الحديث وزحامهم فقال شتم العلم

وذهبتم بنوره لو أدركتنا واياكم عمر بن الخطاب لا وعنا ضرباً

is translated as, "Ubaidullâh bin Umar, on seeing the

pushing and jostling of people like these, said, “You

have torn learning to pieces ......................”” (p. 94).

By his rule it should read, “Ubaidullâh bin ‘Umar, on
seeing the pushing and jostling of the Ahl-e-Hadîth, said, “You have torn learning to pieces(1) and destroyed the light of knowledge. If Sayyidinâ ‘Umar was here he would have punished us severely (2).”

(Note: Here only the translation of As’hâb ul Hadîth has been corrected. Apart from this, to translate “shanittum” (1) as “you have torn to pieces,” and “awja’nâ zarban” (2) as “he would have punished us severely” is a somewhat original translation. A correct translation would be “you have disfigured,” and “he would have hit us hard.”

Similarly

(سمعت الليث بن سعد يقول وقد اشرف على أصحاب الحديث فرأي
منهم شيئا فقال ما هذا انتهى الى يسير من الادب احوج منكم الى كبير من العلم)
is translated as “I heard Laith bin Sa’d, on seeing the behaviour of people like this, say “You are more in need of a little bit of manners and actual practice than of a great amount of knowledge.”” (p. 94), whereas he should have translated it as “I heard Laith bin Sa’d, on seeing the behaviour of the Ahl-e-hadîth, say “You are more in need of a little bit of manners and actual practice than of a great amount of knowledge.””

Abû Bak-r bin Uthmân says

(صحاب الحديث هم شر الخلق هم المجان
M. Muhammad Sb. translates this as, “The As’hâb ul Hadîth are very bad people, indeed they are insane.” (p.110) whereas he should have said, “The Ahl-e-
Hadith are the worst of people, .......

In the same way

(كان له كلب يوذى أصحاب الحديث)

is translated as “his dog used to attack us”, (p. 107) but should have been translated, “Imâm A'mash’s dog used to attack the Ahl-e-Hadîth”,

On p. 55 M. Muhammad translates wa ahluhu as “the Ahl-e-Hadîth,” but then translates

(يريد شعیبه ان یک هله یمضون العمل بما يسمعون منه)

as “Shu’bah is referring to those people who hear a hadith but do not practise on it.” (p. 84) This is a completely wrong translation. He should have written, “What Shu’bah means is that the ahl ul hadîth do put into practice what they hear.”

(In these passages where the “ahl ul hadîth” are severely criticised presumably refer to the people of that time who used to come regularly to attend public lessons on hadîth without actually bringing religion into their lives. This needs to be checked.)

In trying to establish that the Sahâbah were Ahl-e-hadîth, the speaker also refers to Târikh Baghdâd and writes that here Abdullah bin Abbâs raziya’llahu ‘anhu was described as being Ahl-e-hadîth. (p. 5) Unfortunately, he has not quoted the actual passage, otherwise it would be quite clear in what sense Abdullah bin Abbâs is described as being ahl ul hadîth. This is the passage in question:

(صحاب الحديث ثلة عبد الله بن عباس في زمانه والشعبي في زمانه والثوري في زمانه)
There are three as'hab ul hadîth: Abdullâh bin Abbas in his time, Sha'bî in his time and Thawrî in his time.” If we were to take the term ahl ul hadîth to mean what the speaker says it means, then this means that from the time of Abdullâh bin Abbâs right up to the time of Sufyân Thawrî, there were only three Ahl-e-Hadîth. In this case his statement on page 5 that all the Sahâbah and Tâbi‘în were Ahl-e-Hadîth has to be wrong.

In this connection he also says that “Imâm Sha'bî says that all the Sahâbah were Ahl-e-Hadîth. (p.5) Here he gives Tadhkîrat ul Huffâdh v.1 p. 72 as a reference. However, there is no such passage either on this page, or in the next 20 pages.

He also says that all the lands that the Sahâbah raziyallâhu 'anhum conquered, the people there, after coming into Islam, followed the madhhab of the Ahl-e-Hadîth. (p. 5) One question that immediately arises is how does this prove that the Sahâbah were Ahl-e-Hadîth? Why then has this been put under the heading of “Sahâbah Kirâm”? Are the new Muslims of the places conquered by the Sahâbah also to be regarded as Sahâbah?

Secondly, this statement is nowhere to be found in the book that has been quoted in support of this contention. A passage has been quoted, but it has been distorted, and he has also not had the courage to translate it. If he did, it would become clear that, even after careful tailoring, the most that can be derived from this passage is that, at the time the book
was written, all the Muslims of Rûm, Jazîrah, Syria, and the borders of Azerbaijan were Ahl ul Hadîth. Nowhere is there any mention of what time is referred to, whether it was from the time of accepting Islâm and the conquests of the Sahâbah, or whether it was at some later period. (1)

(1) There is no mention whatever in In Usûl ud Dîn of either the word Sahâbah or of their conquering any country. However regardless of this, quoting the name of this book, he repeatedly states that from the time the sahâbah conquered these countries, their people have been Ahl-e-Hadîth. Thus on page 10 he says, “On the authority of Usûl ud Dîn you have already been informed that right from the time the Khilâfat of Uthmân, when Ifriqîyah was conquered by Sahâbah and Tâbi‘în, the people of that region have been following the madhab of the Ahl-e-Hadîth.” In fact in Usûl ud Dîn there is no mention of the Khilâfat of Uthmân, nor of the conquest of Ifriqîyah, nor of the people there being Ahl e- Hadîth from that time.

"Bring your proofs if what you say is true."

Secondly, the passage in Usûl ud Dîn is not as he quotes. He has made amendments to it. The original passage is as follows:

the text as quoted is:
In quoting these words the speaker has added the word “kanû” after “kulluhum” and the phrase “min ahlis sunnah” after “alâ madhhabi ahl ul hadîth” has disappeared. If these adjustments had not been made to the text, then it would simply establish that the people of these places at the time of writing were “ahl ul hadîth”, but not that they had been “ahl ul hadîth” prior to that. The original passage was written in the 5th century Hijri. So what is established from this is that in the 5th century, the people of these frontier areas were “ahl ul hadîth”. Secondly, it becomes clear that by “ahl ul hadîth” what is meant is that they were ahl us sunnah, not that they were ghair muqallid.

Also, if before quoting this passage the speaker had looked more carefully to see under what heading this passage occurs, he would have seen that the point at issue was to establish that the people of Thawr were Sunnî, not Râfizî, Khârijî, Mu’tazilah, and so on. The chapter heading is:

“Establishing that the people of Thawr are from the Ahl us Sunnah”

7  The Ṭābi‘în and Atibbâ’ut Tabî‘în

In maintaining that the Ṭābi‘în and Atibbâ’ut Tabî‘în were Ahl ul Hadîth, he has written: “Sufyân bin Aymînâh has legally been counted among
the Ahl ul Hadîth.” (p. 6), and in support of this quotes Târikh Baghdâdî v.9 p 79. Unfortunately, on this page this passage is not to be found. However, on his page there is a story of the “ahl ul hadîth” stealing shoes. The passage is as follows:

سنرق أصحاب الحديث نعل أبي زيد فكأن أذاءة أصحاب الشعراء والعربية والأخبار رمي بينيابة ولم يتفقدها
والذاءة أصحاب الحديث جمعها وجعلها بين يديه)

The ahl ul hadîth stole the shoes of Abu Zaid, so after that, whenever the as’hâb us shu’arâa or the as’hâb ul arabîyah or the as’hâb ul akhbâr came, he would throw his clothes down without checking on them, and when the as’hâb ul hadîth came, he would gather them and keep them in front of him. (Târikh Baghdâd v.9 p.79)

What is actually referred to here are the students of different classes - Arab poets, Arabic language, akhbâr, and hadîth.

The point then is that when Ibn ‘Aymînah, or anyone else is referred to as ahl ul hadîth, it means that he was a person who had studied Hadîth and was working in that field, as I have explained earlier.

7 The Four Imâms

After this the speaker tries to maintain that the four Imâms were “ahl-e-hadîth” like himself. First of all he refers to Imâm Abû Hanîfah rahimahullâh, and quotes the following passage from Usûl ud Dîn:
The passage quoted is correct, but the translation he has made is shows a considerable lack of integrity. The translation he presents is "The principles of Abû Hanîfah in respect of Aqâ'id and the prohibition of taqlîd (following another scholar) are the same as those of the Ahl ul Hadîth." (Usûl ud Dîn p.6)

Scholars may take note how in translating "kalâm" he has simply added "and the prohibition of taqlîd." He does not seem to have understood that the subject of the book "Usûl ud Dîn" is Aqâ'id Kalâmîyah. At the beginning of the book the author has counted and listed 15 principles of Aqâ'id Kalâmîyah, and in this list there is no mention whatsoever of "prohibiting taqlîd." Therefore in adding "and the prohibition of taqlîd." what is the speaker doing other than ascribing his own views to the author he is quoting? At the beginning of the book he author has set out the principles of the as'hâb ul hadîth on Aqâ'id in outline, and then in detail in the rest of the book. If the speaker here was asked to search the book and find something to say that prohibition of taqlîd was one of these principles, he would not be able to do so. Indeed why should there be any mention of this here? The thing that he is talking about is taqlîd in questions relating to particulars of religion, and the subject of the book is basic tenets.

As well as this it should be understood that when the author of Usûl ud Dîn refers to as'hâb ul hadîth or ahl ul hadîth, he is not referring to people who do not
accept taqlid. In several places he quotes the followers (muqallidin) of Imam Shafi’i as examples of as’hâb ul hadîth or ahl ul hadîth. For example on page 204 he refers to Abdullah bin Sa’id and Karabisi as mutakallim in of the ahl ul hadîth, and they are both muqallidin of Imam Shafi’i. (see Tabaqat ush Shafi’iyah.) In Lisân ul Mizân, Hafiz Ibn Hajr has referred to both as being “Shafi’i fuqahâa.”

In this context the speaker has also quoted this statement of Ibn Ayminah, “In the first place it was Abu Hanîfah himself who made me Ahl ul Hadîth.” This again means “The first person who made me a muhaddith was Abu Hanîfah himself.”

The quotation is taken from Târîkh Khalqân (v. 1 p. 211) The actual Arabic text uses the word “muhaddith”, and the speaker has translated it into Urdu as “Ahl-e-Hadîth.” So, instead of rewriting this statement and giving it his own meaning, he should have explained that it mean that Abu Hanîfah was a muhaddith, and used to train other people (even people like Sufyân bin Ayminah) to become muhaddithin.

After this, in a similar manner, passages are presented relating to the remaining Imâms. There is then no need to go into discussing each one separately. However, there is one question that needs to be asked. When all the four Imâms were muhaddithin, and based all their judgements and decisions on Hadîth, - in other words were doing what the speaker says should be done - then what is the need for establishing another group to come along and do the same thing? Are those
people who came after them, and accepted and followed their system, not Ahl-e-Hadîth already? So, if they are, and most certainly they are, then what does establishing another group achieve other than tafriq bayna’l muslimîn (creating division between the Mulims)?

Another question that needs to be asked is this. When the term ahl ul hadîth is used about the four imâmîs, the speaker quotes it and puts great stress on it. However when the same term is used about the fuqahâa, ahl-e-fiqh, or imams of fiq’ih, no mention is made of it. For example in Usûl ud Din on p.312, a few lines before the passage he has quoted is this statement:

(ومن بعدهم أئمة الأمة في الفقه مثل الاوزاعي ومالك والثوري والشافعي وابن ثورو أحمد بن حنبيل، الخ) "and after them the imâmîs of the Ummah, such as Awzâ’î and Malik and Thawrî and Shâfi’î, and ibn Thawr and Ahmad bin Hanbal .......

He also refers to the hadîth:

(لاتزال طائفة من امتي منصورين) "One section from my followers will always have the help of Allâh with them." When Imâm Ahmad bin Hanbal being asked who this group was, he said, "The Ahl-ul-Hadîth." (p.7) Here the speaker has failed to take note of what is written in the most sahîh Kitâb after the Kitâbullâh, (that is to say Bukhârî Sharîf) otherwise he would have seen that the heading under
which this hadith is placed is

(لا تزال طائفة من امتى ظاهرين على الحق . وهم أهل العلم)

"One section of my Ummah will always stand up on the truth, and those are the ahl ul 'ilm" (See Bukhârî v. 2 p. 108)

7 Muhammad bin Abd ul Wahhâb

After this the speaker quotes the words of Shaikh Muhammad bin Abd ul Wahhâb Najdí “The sign of the Ahl ul Bid'ah is that they speak ill of the Ahl ul Hadîth.” The point that needs to be noted here is that at the same time as saying this, he was himself a Hanbalî. As noted by the ghair muqallid writer and leader, Nawâb Siddîq Hasan Sâhib, in “Misk ul Makhûm.” (p. 14) “mash’hûr or muqarar ân ast keh īshân hanbalî madh’hab and o dhik-r dar hanâbilah wâqi’ast.” “It is well known and clearly established that he followed the Hanbalî madh’hab, and he is also referred to as such by the Hanbalîs.”

Furthermore, by Ahl ul Hadîth he means all the Ahl us Sunnah. Thus Maulâmâ Yûsuf Jaipûrî “(in Haqîqat ul Fiqh p. 11) quotes a passage from the same book that is quoted here (i.e. Ghunyat ut Tâlibîn)

(أهل السنة ولا اسم لهم الا اسم واحد وهو أصحاب الحديث) (أهل السنة)

“…the ahl us sunnah, and they have only one name, that is ahl ul hadîth.”

From this it is clear that the speaker’s own mentor uses the term ahl ul hadîth to mean ahl us sunnah. The speaker has even quoted this statement. However, he has left out the words “ahl us sunnah” from the
beginning of the sentence.

7 Afghānistān

The speaker then takes great pleasure in quoting a passage from “Farishtah” to the effect that one of the scholars in the circle of Imām Ghazzālī, Abu Tayyib Suhail (this should actually be Sahl) bin Muhammad Sulaimān Sa’lūkī, was Ahl ul Hadīth. However if we look at Sa’mānī’s “Insāb” or Sabkī’s “Tabaqāt” (v.3 p. 169) we will see that Abû Tayyib was a muqallid of the Shafi’i school. He is referred to here as Ahl ul Hadīth in the sense that the Mālikīs and Shāfīs are referred to as Ahl ul Hadīth. (See the Muqaddamah of Ibn Khaldūn p. 374, 375) In the region of Khurasān, when people use the term Ahl ul Hadīth, they mean specifically the Shafi’i school, and nothing else, as ibn Islāh and Sabkī have pointed out:

(ذَلِكَ اسْتَلَامُ أَهْلَ خُرَاَسَانِ إِذَا أَطْلَقُوا أُصْحَابَ الحَدِيثِ يَعْتُونَ الشَّافِعِيَّةَ)

“This is in the terminology of the people of Khurasān. When they refer to the Ahl ul Hadīth they mean the Shafi’is.” (Tabaqāt of Sabkī v. 3 p. 258)

(إِذَا أَطْلَقُ أَهْلَ الحَدِيثِ لَا يُرَادُ غِيرَ الشَّافِعِيَّةُ)

“When they refer to the Ahl ul Hadīth they do not mean anything other than Shafi’is.” (Tabaqāt of Sabkī v. 3 p. 259)

After this, the following assertion is put forward:

“The appointment of an Ahl ul Hadīth ‘ālim as ambassador may date from the time when Sultān Mahmoud Ghaznawi, as a result of the company of
the famous Ahl ul Hadîth scholar, Qaffâl Ma‘ûnî, had abandoned the Hanâfî madhhab.” (p. 8)

There are a number of points to be noted here.

1. Qaffâl Ma‘ûnî has been described as Ahl ul Hadîth. In point of fact he was a very strict Shafi‘î. (see tabaqāt Shafi‘iyah v.3 p.198.)

2. This relates to a story about Qaffâl Marûnî, which is known to be fictitious. He repeats it even though both in terms of reason and documentary evidence, it is clearly false. For detail on this is to be found in booklets by Mullâ Alî Qârî and Mullâ Abd un Nabî Gangoî. Mawlânâ Habîb ur Rahmân also refers to his own booklet on the subject, “Makhâ’il ul ifti‘ál ‘alâ salawât il qaffâl”.

3. He says that Sultân Mahmûd Ghaznawî became disaffected with Hanafî fiqh. This is contradicted by the fact that Mas’ûd bin Shaibah and Abd ul Qâdir Quraishî have included Sultân Mahmûd among the Hanafî Fuqahâa, and also for a long time a book by the Sultân entitled “Tafrîd” was well known and widely circulated. As well as this, right to the end of the Sultân’s rule, his Qâzî ul Qazâ (Chief Justice) Abû Muhammad Nâsihî was Hanafî. This is reported in “Jawâhir Mazîyah.”

4. If appointing an “Ahl ul Hadîth” as ambassador is an indication of dissatisfaction with Hanafî
fīqh, then what about the fact that 23 years after this, in 412 A.H. he appointed Abū Muhammad Nāsiḥī, who was his Qāzī ul Qazā, as Amīr of Hajj, and that it was through the agency of this Hanafī elder, that he re-established the Hajj? (Because of the violence and deprivations of the Qarāmah - a sect of the Shiʿah - the Hajj had been stopped for many years.) Is this then not a public announcement of the superiority of the Hanafī madhhab? The surprising thing is that this is reported in the very same history (Farishtah, v.1, p.46) from which the speaker has quoted.

7 Hindustan

The same thing also applies to the speaker’s contention that at the time of Bashārī, the majority of the population of Mansūrah in Sindh was Ahl ul Hadīth. What Ibn Khaldūn says makes it clear that the Shāfiʿī were referred to as Ahl ul Hadīth. So he still has to produce evidence to show that they were ghair muqallid, and not Shāfiʿī.

7 The Distribution of the Schools

The natural spread of the four schools of Fiqh into different parts of the world is dismissed contemptuously by the speaker as “mulki batwārah” (sharing out countries). One answer to that would be to quote the āyat

مرتوا بغيظكم

“Go die of your own rage.”
A point to note here is that Qaffāl, Kabīr Shāshī, Ābdān Marūnī, and Abū ‘Awānah Isfrā’inī are people he quotes as leading figures of the Ahl ul Hadīth. So how can we explain the efforts that they made to establish taqlīd of the Shāfī‘ī madhhab?

7 Government Force

The speaker follows certain of his predecessors in alleging that taqlīd was established at sword-point. However, simply repeating what a person’s teachers have said is not proof of anything. Neither the speaker nor his predecessors have yet put forward any evidence that any government anywhere forced anyone or even told anyone that they had to become Hanafī or Mālikī.

The only madhhab that has been spread at sword-point is the speaker’s own madhhab of the Ahl ul Hadīth. He himself states.

“Yūsuf bin ‘Abd ul Mu’mīn, then after him, his son Ya’qūb, …fully supported the Ahl ul Hadīth madhhab. …The Khalīfah (Ya’qūb) gave orders to abandon fiqh … and not follow any imām.” (p. 11)

According to the speaker, Yūsuf and his son Ya’qūb were “Ahl ul Hadīth.”

So these North African kings used their royal power to ban taqlīd. Indeed, on page 11 he also states that Yūsuf placed his sword in front of people and said
that everything other than the Holy Qurā'n and the Sunan of Abū Dâwûd was invalid. In other words, he threatened people with a sword to get them to accept this. On this same page he also refers to giving presents, in other words using financial inducements, to spread the Ahl ul Hadîth madhhab. He then states that this is the reason for the Ulamā of that region being strict Ahl ul Hadîth, and as an example quotes the name of Imâm Ibn Jazm.

In this matter M. Habīb ur Rahmān fully agrees with the speaker. Similarly, every person in India who has seen the way in which people changed their madhab as a result of the inducements and intimidation of Nawāb Siddīq Hasan Khân, and then seen the repetition of those events in Meo and Banaras, will also have to agree.

7 “Madhhabî ‘Asabīyat”

Under this heading the speaker says,

“If a follower of one madhhab leaves his madhhab and joins another, then he became liable to punishment.”

Then, under the heading of “Persecution of the Ahl ul Hadîth”, he says that one person left the Hanafî madhhab and started to do rafa’ yadaîn and qirâ’at khalfa’î imâm. He was then lashed publicly.

Here the speaker claims that this is the Hanafî ruling
on this matter. At the same time, one of his own party, Mawlânâ Muhammad Jûnâgad'hî in “Aqîdah Muhammadi”, quoting the Sharh of Durr-e-Mukhtâr which is generally known as Shâmî, says that the Hanafi ruling is as follows:

“If a person today makes his salât in accordance with one madhhab (say Hanafi – that is without saying âmîn audibly, or raising his hands before rukû’, or reciting Sûrah Fâtihah behind the imâm) and then, the following day, makes it in accordance with another madhhab (say Shâfi‘î – saying âmîn audibly, raising his hands before rukû’, and reciting Sûrah Fâtihah behind the imâm), it is not prohibited for him to do so.”

So, the question then arises which one of the two is correct, himself or Mawlânâ Muhammad.

In point of fact, here the speaker is misquoting and misrepresenting his source. In the first place, the passage on

(ارتحل الى مذهب الشافعي)

which he quotes is from the commentary on the sharh of Shâmî. What Allâmâ Shâmî himself wrote, he has simply ignored. If for the benefit of the reader, what Shâmî himself says is that a person who leaves, say, the Hanafi madhhab and takes up the Shâfi‘î madhhab, will not be punished for doing so if he is not doing it for some reason that is prohibited or not acceptable in Shari‘ah, such as carnal appetite or
some worldly motive, but is doing it because he has the capacity for *ijtihād*, and as a result of his *ijtihād* he has come to the conclusion that a certain view is correct, and has therefore adopted it. Such a person is in no way punishable.

The conclusion of this is that the Hanafi fuqahāa have not defined leaving one madhhāb for another as a punishable offence out of *asabīyat*. This applies only to a person who is doing this out of carnal desire or for some corrupt motive, and is therefore making a mockery of the madhhābs. All this is made quite clear in the place from which he is quoting. The same will apply to a person who changes from Shāfi’ī to Hanafi for these motives, and this is also made clear in the same place.

It would be interesting to know from which āyat of the Holy Qurā’n or which hadīth the speaker derives permission for misrepresentation like this.

15 “Persecution of the Ahl ul Hadīth”

Under this heading the speaker says:

“Abū Hafs Hanafī prohibited the compiler of the Hadīth of the Messenger, Imām Bukhārī, from giving fatwā in Bukhārā, and then had him expelled him from the city.” (p.12)

In the incident in question, accusing Abū Hafs of having him expelled from the city is blatant false
accusation, and to quote Jawâhir Mazîyah in support of this is blatant false attribution. All it says in this book is that Abu Hafs said to Imam Bukhârî that he should not give fatwâ because that was not his field. (This was said by way of advice, and he had the right to say this because in terms of age Imam Bukhârî was like his son, and in terms of learning, they were companions in the same class.) Further on what is stated in Jawâhir Mazîyah is that Imam Bukhârî did not accept this advice, and continued giving fatwâs, until someone asked a fatwâ and the answer he gave was wrong. The error was extremely clear. As a result the people there forced him to leave. It had nothing to do with Abû Hafs.

Further (p. 15) on the same accusation is repeated. Together with this he says that the fatwâ that Imam Bukhârî gave was not wrong, and that Abû Hafs Kabîr has falsely ascribed it to him. In support of this he quotes Fawâ'id Buhayiyah. However, this book does not say what he says. On the contrary it says exactly what is said in Jawâhir Mazîyah. This is what each of these books say, together with translation:

(قَدَمَ مُحَمَّدُ بنُ إِسْمَآ‘ِلِ الْبَخَارِيُّ فِي زَمَنِ ابْنِ حَفْصِ الكِبَير
وَجَعَلَ يَفْتَى فِنْهَاهُ ابْنُ حَفْصٍ وَقَالَ لُسْتِ الْبَاهِلُ لِفِلَمْ يَنْتَهِ
حَتَّى سَئِلَ عَنْ صَبِيبِي شَرِبَا مِنْ لِبْنِ شَأْةٍ أَوْ بِقَرَةٍ فَافْتَى بِبَوْزِ الحَرَامَة
فَاجْمَعَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهِ وَأَخْرَجَ جَوَّهَ مِنْ بَخَارِي)

Muhammad bin Ismâ‘îl Bukhârî came to
Bukhārā during the time of Abū Hafs Kabīr, and began to give fatwās. Abū Hafs then told him not to do so, saying to him that he was not his field. He did not stop doing so, until he was asked about two children who had drunk the milk of the same sheep or cow, and he gave a fatwā of hurmat between them. (i.e. he said that they cannot marry each other.) The result of this was that the people united against him and expelled him from Bukhārā. (Jawāhir v.1 p.7, quoted in Fawā'īd p.18)

There is also more to this issue. In Nishapūr there was an ḥallim named Muhammad bin Yahyā Dhahlī, who was what the speaker would term a great and famous scholar of the Ahl ul Hadith. A dispute arose between him and Imām Bukhārī over some question. As a result he became extremely hostile to Imām Bukhārī, and even started calling him a bid'atī, and announced that whoever went to him should not come into his company, and that as long as he was there, Imām Bukhārī could not stay in Nishapūr. Imām Bukhārī became afraid of what might happen, so he left there and went to Bukhārā. (The full details of this are to be found in the Preface to Fat'h ul Bārī - the very famous commentary on Sahīh Bukhārī by ibn Ḥajr, who is regarded by the ghair muqallidīn as completely reliable - see Muqaddamah to Fat'h ul Bārī p.579) However, even there Muhammad bin Yahyā did not leave him in peace. The details of this are recorded by historians like Shams ud Dīn Dhahhabī, who was also a hāfiz of hadīth. In Siyar A'lam un Nubalāa he writes that Dhahlī wrote complaints
against Imām Bukhārī to the governor and to the scholars of Bukhārā. The governor became enraged and made up his mind to take very harsh action against Imām Bukhārī. However, the son of Abū Hafs Kabīr Hanafi, Muhammad bin Hafs was told about this, and he secretly took Imām Bukhārī to a hospice in Bukhara. (See Fawā'id Yahīyah p.19.)

The person who asked Imām Bukhārī the fatwā and then stirred up the people against him was himself one of the Ahl ul Hadîth of Nishapūr (Mugaddamah p.579). On the other hand, it was the son of Abū Hafs Kabīr (whom the speaker accuses of forcing Imām Bukhārī to leave Bukhārā) who risked his own life to save Imām Bukhārī and bring him to the safety of a hospice in Bukhārā. It would seem fairly clear that the motive behind misrepresenting this whole incident is to shift the blame for it from someone who is taken by the Ahl ul Hadîth as one of their predecessors and onto a Hanafi.

7 A Contradiction

On page 9 the speaker says: “It was in the 4th century that taqlîd was born.” However, on page 12 he refers to a person who attacked Imām Shâfi‘i as being a follower of the Malikî school, and he also refers to the person he accuses of expelling Imām Bukhārī from the city as a Hahafî. Then on p.13 he says, “This is a small example of the treatment of the As‘hâb ul Hadîth by the propagators of Taqlîd.”

Since Imām Shâfi‘i died in 204 A.H. this would mean
that taqlīd was already present in the second century. Clearly one or other of his statements is not quite right.

7 Ibn Taymīyah

Under the heading of “Persecution of the Ahl ul Hadīth”, Ibn Taymīyah is described as “Imām of the Ahl ul Hadīth,” whereas Nawāb Siddīq Hasan Khān has referred to him as a follower (muqallīd) of Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal. (See Misk ul Makhtūm p.4.)

Similarly he has described Imām M...... (?) as a leader of the Ahl ul Hadīth, whereas he was in fact Shāfi‘ī. This is made clear by Imām Dhahabī in Tadhkīrat ul Huffādh on p. 280 of vol.1. He refers to Hāfidh Abd ul Ghanī Muqaddasī as “openly Ahl ul Hadīth” when in fact Imām Dhahabī has clearly stated on p.160 of v. 4 of Tadhkīrah that he was Hanbali. Similarly he counts Sultān ul Awliyā, Shaykh Nizām ud Dīn Dehlawī as belonging to the Ash‘hāb ul Hadīth (in his sense), whereas in the very place in Tārīkh Farishtah that he has quoted as a reference, it is stated that an opponent of the Shaykh said to him that he was a “muqallīd”, and the Shaykh did not deny this. Also in Tārīkh Farishtah on p.597 of v. 2 it says that he “had full recall and full expertise in the Fiqh of Abū Hanīfah, Tafsīr, Hadīth, Usūl, and Kalām.”

Similarly it is not right for him to quote the name of Mawlānā Ismā‘īl Shahīd, because he did not approve of leaving taqlīd. In Sirāt ul Mustaqīm he writes, “amma ittibā‘ madhāhib ‘arba‘ah kih rā‘īj dar tamām ahl e islām ast bihtar o khūb ast - anyway, following the four..."
madhhab, as is the universal practice of the people of Islam, is right and proper."

Neither is it right to quote Mirzâ Madhhar Jân e Janân as being Ahl ul Hadîth. He was a strict Hanafi. With regard to the one or two points where his practice was contrary to that of Hanafi Fiqh, his Khalîfah Shâh Ghulâm 'Alî said, "az intiqāl dar mas'alah juzî khilāf madhhab lâzîm namî âyad - disagreement in a particular mas'alah does not amount to opposition to the madhhab." Mirzâ Sâhib has himself written the same thing (see Maktûb 12 p. 102). Mirzâ Sâhib was of the view that it was good (but not in any way obligatory) for the muqtadî in silent salât (dhuhur, asr) to read Sûrah Fâtihah behind the Imâm. However, he was so concerned about the necessity for following the Hanafi madhhab that he would himself act as imâm, thus avoiding where possible any occasion for acting contrary to the Hanafi madhhab." (Maqâmât p. 119)

7 "Sectarian Conflict"

Then, under the heading of "sectarian conflict," the speaker talks about fights between the followers of the four different madhhabs.

In this matter the speaker is not paying the same attention to the state of affairs in his own house. It should not be forgotten how many sects and sectarian disputes have arisen out of the Ahl-e-Hadîth movement in century and a half during which it has been in existence.
During the time this speech was made, the Ahl-e-Hadith in India were divided into two parties, one under the leadership of Maulwî Abd ul Wahâb Sadry Dehlawî, and the other under Maulwî Thanâ ullâh, to which the speaker belonged. The first party announced publicly that anyone following the other party would die the death of jahiliyah. Referring to this first party the speaker, on p.28 says:

“After making a claim to khilâfat, and thus making himself a stateless monarch, he has given a fatwâ that whoever does not declare his allegiance to him and send his zakât to him in full will die the death of jahiliyah.”

The first party also regards the second party as mal’ûn (under a curse). The speaker himself say that if anyone claims imâmat, but is not in a position to establish the Sharî‘ah or to maintain it, then he is cursed. (p.28)

7 False Accusations

In this matter the speaker has also resorted to taking the mistakes of writers and presenting them as accusations. For example the writer of Hidâyah mistakenly says that Imâm Mâlik regarded mutâ’ as permissible. He has presented this as the writer making a false accusation against Imâm Mâlik. Al iyâdhu billâh. If this kind of error is inexcusable, then why is it that in his translation of Ibn Shaybâh’s book Kitâb ur Radd âlā Abî Hanîfah, in those places where
the writer has misrepresented the view of Imam Abû Hanîfah, he has not written that in this place Ibn Abî Shaybah has falsely accused Imam Abû Hanîfah.

For example, Ibn Abî Shaybah says that according to Imam Abû Hanîfah the time for Ishâ’ extends only up to midnight. (Kitâb ur Radd p.30 and in his translation, p.29.) In the speaker’s terminology, this is a “patently false accusation.” The actual view of the Imam is that the time for Ishâ’ extends up to subh us sâdiq (see Sharah ul Ma’anî ul Āthâr v.1 p.94,95.) Similarly, he says that according to IAH it is permissible for the mawâli of the Banû Hâshim to eat from sadaqah (Kitâb ur Radd p.38 and in his translation, p.35.) This is in fact not so. (see Tahâwî v.1, p.301.) There are many other examples, but for the sake of keeping things short, they can be passed over.

The speaker has also presented many valid statements as false accusations. For example the writer of Hidâyah says that according to Imam Shâfi’î, playing chess is not prohibited. This is quite true. However, the speaker does not seem to know the Shâfi’î view, and presents this as a false accusation. Allàmà Ibn Hajr Makkî Shâfi’î in zawâjîr writes:

فمتى كان المعتمد على الفكر والحساب فلا وجه الاحل كالشطرنج

“So, as long as the objective is to develop the ability to think and calculate, then there is no reason for not permitting them, as for example chess.” (v.2, p.168)

In the same way, he makes a great display of indignation at a footnote to Sunan Nisâ’î when there
is no cause for this. According to his translation, the footnote in question describes those Wahhābīs “who consider it permissible to kill our men and take our women prisoner” as Khārijīs. Now, if the party he himself follows are not like this, then why should he take offence at this comment?

Also, if there are no ghair muqallids today who take this attitude, this does not in itself prove that at the time this footnote was written there were no Wahhābīs who did take this attitude. So, until it is proved that there were no such people, this footnote cannot be called a false accusation. Is the speaker not aware of Muhammad bin Abd ul Wahhāb Najdī going to war against Muslims, and creating widespread bloodshed and misery? Is it then not possible that at that time there may also have been some Wahhābīs like this in Hindustān?

7 The Ahl-e-Hadīth Maslak

After all these anecdotes, the speaker starts to explain the maslak of the Ahl ul Hadīth. He starts from the hadīth

عليكم بسنتم وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين

Which he translates as “Follow my practice and that of the Khulafā-e-Rāshidīn.” (p.16) Further on he explains that the meaning of “the practice of the Khulafā-e-Rāshidīn” is that when they disagreed on some point, they acted according to the Hadīth of the Messenger salallāhu alaihi wa sallam. What he means to say is that the term Sunnnah applies only to the Messenger of Allāh salallāhu alaihi wa sallam, and
only his *sunnah* can be followed, and that the *sunnah* of the Khulafā-e-Râshidîn is not *sunnah*, and that this hadîth does not contain an instruction to follow their *sunnah*. All it contains is an instruction to act on hadîth, as was the practice of the Khulafā-e-Râshidîn.

This gives rise to a question. Are we to understand that of the thousands and thousands of Sahâbah of the Messenger of Allâh *salallâhu alaihi wa sallam*, only four used act on the basis of Hadîth, and that none of the rest used to do so? Are we also to understand, *al iyâdhu billâh*, that the Messenger of Allâh *salallâhu alaihi wa sallam*, saw them in this light, and for this reason selected these four as people to be followed? If this is not what he means, then what does he consider to be the reason for selecting particularly these four Sahâbîs?

Then another question arises. On what basis does the speaker select “acting on hadîth” as being the meaning of “the practice of the Khulafâ-e-Râshidîn”? If he says that this is established from their lives, then the point still remains that there were a great many more things to be found in their lives. For example Sayyidinâ Abû Bak-r Siddîq *raziyallâhu ‘anhu* said in relation to *kalâlah* (مَاخِلَةُ الْوَالِدِ وَالْوَلِيدِ)

“In my opinion it means the person who has neither father or son living.” This he said simply on the basis of his opinion, not any hadîth. Sayyidinâ ‘Umar *raziyallâhu ‘anhu* instructed Sharîh: “where you do not find an âyat of the Qur’ân or a hadîth about a question,
then see what decision the pious make, and give your decision on that basis.” He said that to resolve a question, analogy (qiyaṣ) with some other similar question could be used. (see Hāfiz Ibn ul Qayyim - A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, p. 29,30.) Again, Hazrurat Umar Fārūq did not take it on himself to contradict anything that Sayyidinā Abū Bakr Siddīq decided. Thus in the question of kalālah he simply followed Sayyidinā Abū Bakr Siddīq. (A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, p. 73.) Indeed it was his practice that if he did not find a mas’alih in the Kitāb and Sunnah, and Sayyidinā Abū Bakr had made a decision about it, then he considered that decision as binding on himself. (A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, p. 22.) Similarly Sayyidinā Uthmān Ghanî ruled simply on the basis of his own opinion that a woman who is divorced by her husband when he is on his deathbed remains his heir. (A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, p. 76.) Sayyidinā Alî ruled, simply on the basis of his own opinion that a woman slave who was umm ul walad could not be sold. (A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, p. 73.)

These examples demonstrate that it was the practice of the Khulafā ur Rāshidīn in masā’il for which they did not find any āyāt or hadīth, to give fatwās and judgements on the basis of their own opinion. It was also their practice to decide on one issue on the basis of analogy with another issue. For further detail on this, see A’lām ul Mūqi‘īn - v.1, pp. 21-80.

Then it was also the practice of the Khulafā ur Rāshidīn that together with following the practice of the Messenger of Allāh, they also regarded the practice of their predecessors as something to be
accepted and followed even where it was not the same as the practice of the Messenger sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam. Thus Sayyidinâ 'Umar raziallâhu anhu said,

ان استخلف فقد استخلف من هو خير مدني يعني ابابكر وان اثر ككم
فقد ترك ككم من هو خير مدني رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

“If I appoint someone as my successor, I am doing what someone better than myself did, that is to say Abû Bak-r, and if I leave you to decide for yourselves, then I am doing what someone better than myself did, that is to say the Messenger of Allâh sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam.” Imâm Nawwawî say the outcome of this is that to appoint a khalîfah (in the manner of Abû Bak-r) and to not appoint a khalîfah (in the manner of the Messenger of Allâh sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam.) are both legitimate. (Nawwawî - Sharh Muslim v.1, p.129)

Now, according to the speaker the practice of the Ahl ul Hadîth is:

“Compared to the hadîth of the Messenger, we do not regard the word of even the greatest of the great as having the weight of even the wing of a gnat.” (Khutbah-e-sadârat p. 20)

However Sayyidinâ Umar who despite being one of the Khulafâ ur Râshidîn and following in the footsteps of the Messenger of Allâh, still regarded the decisions of Sayyidinâ Abû Bak-r Siddîq as something that was to be followed. Therefore, by leaving this practice of Sayyidinâ Umar, the Ahl e Hadîth are leaving the hadîth:
"My sunnah and the sunnah of the khulafā' ur rāshidīn are binding on you."

Furthermore according to the speaker's own statements, the Khulafā' ur Rāshidīn regarded the practice of their predecessors as sunnah. Thus in one place he writes that Sayyidinā Alī razi'yallāhu anhu described the penalty for drinking wine that was set by Sayyidinā Umar razi'yallāhu anhu (i.e. 80 strokes) as sunnah, even though this was different to the practice during the time of the Messenger of Allâh. Similarly, by remaining silent on the matter, the third Khalīfah, Sayyidinā Uthmān razi'yallāhu anhu indicated his own approval of this. (see Khutbah e Sadārat p.18) However it appears that the Ahl e Hadith, far from regarding this as sunnah, do not consider it to be worth as much as the wing of a gnat. Al iyādhu billāh.

After this, a point we need to consider is that when the practice of the Khulafā' e Rāsidīn was that in every matter they gave precedence to the words and actions of the Messenger of Allâh sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, then it necessarily follows that there was no contradiction between their practice and the sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh. In this case, on the issue of istikhlāf (appointing a successor), what reason is there to regard the sunnah of the Messenger and the sunnah of the Khulafā' e Rāsidīn as being incompatible or contradictory? (See Khutbah e Sadārat p.18)
Also, in the question of three *talaqs*, and the question of *tamattu* in *hajj*, the Ahl e Hadith do not say that in the *fatwa* that Sayyidinâ‘ Umar *raziyallahu anhu* gave, he gave priority to the word and action of the Messenger of Allah *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*. If they are to say that this was not always their practice, then this amounts to saying that in some matters they gave preference to their own statements and actions over the statements and actions of the Messenger *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*. Now to say such a thing about the Khulafâ‘a e Rashidin is a very serious attack on them.

Furthermore, by saying this, it necessarily follows that the Messenger of Allah has given two contradictory orders. Together making with his own Sunnah obligatory, he has made the Sunnah of the Khulafâ‘a e Rashidin obligatory and, according to them, the latter in certain places contradicts the former. Whatever anyone may wish to say, we regard the person of the Messenger of Allah as being above any such thing.

Then another point arises. In the statement

(عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين)

“My Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Khulafâ‘a ur Râshidin are binding on you”, there are no provisos. We then do not have the right to place our own provisos and limitations on it. To do this would amount to giving priority to one’s own word over the word of the Messenger of Allah.

However, on page 19 of his Khutbah e Sadârat the
speaker says: “Wherever the Khulafâa ur Râshidîn did something for political reasons, or because of some temporary need, it is not binding on us to follow that.” So, on the one hand the Messenger of Allâh has given an unqualified instruction that we should follow his sunnah and the sunnah of the Khulafâa ur Râshidîn. Then on the other hand, the speaker is adding a proviso that if what they did was for some political reason or some temporary necessity, then we do not have to follow it. At the same time he is maintaining that we should act only on the basis of what is clearly stated in the Qur’ân and the Hadîth.

Another question arises. If the Khulafâa ur Rashidîn did something for some “political reason or temporary necessity”, then why should that mean that we not have to follow it? Was it then contrary to the word or action of the Messenger sallallâhu alaihi wa sallam? If it was, then this would mean that it was not their practice to act on the basis of Hadîth, and that to give priority to the word and action of the Messenger was not their way. Alternatively, if it as not contrary to this, then it necessarily follows that we are bound to follow them.

The person most frequently cited by the Jamâ’at Ahl e Hadîth as an authority, and as representing their viewpoint, is Hafiz Ibn Qayyim. It is instructive to see what he has said about this hadîth. In A’lâm ul Mûqi’in on p. 226, he writes:
The Messenger of Allâh has referred to the sunnah of the Khulafâ‘ ur Râshidîn along with his own sunnah, and has instructed that it should be followed in the same way as his own sunnah, and in this has even gone so far as to use the expression of holding on to it with the back teeth. This sunnah of the Khulafâ‘ includes their fatwâs and those practices which they established for the Ummah, even where there is no prior instruction from the Messenger of Allâh concerning them; otherwise whatever they did simply comes under the sunnah of the Messenger sallallâhu alsihi wa sallam himself.”

7 Qiyâs and Ijmâ’

Under this heading the speaker says, “We do not reject qiyâs and ijmâ’……What we say is that the hadîth of the Messenger should be the basis of analogy……this rule is something that people have completely abandoned.” (p.21)

This is another piece of boldly presented misinformation. Since when has any hanafi or muqallid abandoned this principle? Where has anyone said that the hadîth of the Messenger should not be made the basis of analogy? In the Hanâfi books of Usûl (principles) it is clearly stated that the only qiyâs that
is acceptable is that which is based on the Qurān and Sunnah.

(Al-Wādī li Manhaj al-Shāfi‘i p.4)

After this there remains the issue of *haml un nadhīr ‘alan nadhīr* ( ). This does not contradict the principle of making the hadith the basis of analogy, nor is it something whose validity can be denied. Imām (Mzny), the pupil of Imām Shāfi‘i, has stated:

الفقهاء من عصر رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) الى يومنا وهم جرأ استعملوا المقاران في الفقه في جميع الاحكام في أمر دينهم (قال) واجمعوا ان نظر الحق حق ونظر الباطل باطل

“From the time of the Messenger of Allâh right up to today the fuqahâa have made use of qiyyās in all the ahkām of religion........and they agree unanimously that the nadhīr (equivalent) of haqq is haqq and the nadhīr of bâtil is bâtil.” (Al-lâm ul Mūqînîn v.1 p.74)

Consider this point. In the light of the hadith, in an exchange of barley for barley, no difference in amount is permitted. Now if someone applies the same thing to millet, will this not be *haml un nadhīr ‘alan nadhīr*? If it is, and it most certainly is, then where is the contradiction between *haml un nadhīr ‘alan nadhīr* and making the hadīth the basis of analogy?

On this topic the speaker has quoted Shâh Waliyullâh Dehlawî. However it is clear from the way that they
are quoted that the speaker had not in fact taken the trouble to understand what Shâh Waliyullâh was actually saying.

Shortly before quoting the examples of haml un nadhîr ‘alan nadhîr that the speaker quotes, Shâh Waliyullâh explains that Hanafi Fiqh is not based on the academic proofs that are presented in Hidâyah and other similar books. These arguments are given simply for the purpose of intellectual stimulation. (Hujjatullâh il Bâlighah p.128)

Thus, without taking any account of the context, the speaker has treated these arguments as being their basis in Fiqh of the masâ’il in question, and then set about raising objections to them. Even then, carried away by the heat of his arguments he does not even take care to stick to the truth. On the contrary, he constructs a mas’alah of his own and then attributes it to the Hanafiyah.

A) On page 12 he says:

“A person hires a woman for the purpose of fornication. After this the woman takes the sum agreed. In effect, this is an invalid hire agreement, and the basis of the hire agreement is a prohibited action. However a rule has been made: “A fair wage is fair.”….therefore it is legitimate for that woman to take the wage.”
Readers should know that this is blatant false accusation and false attribution. All of our fuqahāa have written that if a woman is hired for fornication, then the wage she takes for this is harām. Allāmah Ainī Hanafi writes in Sharh Bukhārī:

لا تحل لأنه ثمن عن محرم وقد حرم الله الزنا وهذا مجمع
على تحريمه لا خلاف بين المسلمين

"Any wages for fornication is not legitimate, because it is given in return for an action that is prohibited. Allāh Almighty has prohibited fornication. There is ijmā’ on this, and no one at all among Muslims has disputed this." (v.5 p.611)

Similarly Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmirī writes in his commentary on Tirmidhī concerning the wage of a harlot that it is

حرام عند الكل

"harām according to all." (p.402)

In short, for the speaker to say:

“The Hanafīs, on the basis of “ajr ul mithl tayyib” have said that the wages of a harlot are halāl, even though it is clear from the hadīth

مهر البغي خبيث

‘the mahr of a harlot is harām’ that it is harām.”

is a plain lie. The Hanafīs have also said that it is harām, and have said so on the basis of that same
hadîth. In both of the books referred to above, under the heading of this hadîth, the wage of a harlot has been declared harâm. Then, in Badâ’î we find

ولا تجوز اجارة الإمام للزناء لأنها إجارة على المعصية (إلى قوله)
روى عن رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) أنه نهى عن مهر البغى وهو
أجر الزانية على الزنا

“The hiring of slave girls for fornication is not permissible, because it is payment for sin.............it is reported that the Messenger of Allâh has prohibited the mahr of a harlot, and the mahr of a harlot is a term for the wages of fornication.”

This should be enough to make clear that what the speaker has said is less than honest. Even Maulâî Abd ur Rahmân Mubârâkpurî (of the Ahl e Hadîth) has also had to admit that:

هو مجمع على تحريمه

“on this question there is ijmâ’ of the whole ummah. There has not been any disagreement.” (Sharh Tirmidhî)

On this issue the speaker has also given Allâmah Shâmî as a reference. Again, this is patent false attribution. In Shâmî there is no mention whatsoever of “Paying a woman a wage for fornication”.

Looking to Their Own House

It is however interesting to note that Hâfiz Abdullah Sâhib Ghâzî, ahl e hadîth, has written:
“A prostitute has earned money through fornication, and then repented of it. In this case her money becomes legitimate and pure, both for herself and for all Muslims.” (Fatâwâ Hâfiz Abdullah Sâhib Gâzipûrî, 23 Rabî’ ul Âkhir 1329, quoted in Qata’ul Watîn)

B) The speaker quotes this mas’âlah:

“If an imâm who is musâfîr (on journey) does not make qâsr, but performs the whole salât, then the salât of Muqtadîs who are muqîm (not on journey) is not invalid, because for the last two rak’ats the salât of the imâm was nafał.”

Up to this point what he writes is correct. However the reasoning on which he claims this is based - “the strong cannot be based on the weak”, seems to be something he has made up for himself. He has not quoted any book of Hanafî Fiqh as a reference.

Even if he did quote some reference, it would not make any difference, because, as Shâh Waliyullâh has stated, Hanafî Fiqh is not founded on academic proofs of the kind quoted in Hidâyah and so on.

In actual fact the basis the reason for the mu'taqadîs salât in the above instance being invalid is that the salât of a person performing his faraz salât is not valid behind an imâm who is making nafał salât. This is established from precisely the hadîth that the speaker quotes. However, he has also quoted part of this hadîth.
The full incident is as follows. Ma'âz raziyallahu anhu used to join in 'Ishâ salât behind the Messenger of Allâh sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, and then go to his own quarter and lead the 'Ishâ salât there. He used to read very long rak'âts. When complaints about this were made in the court of the Messenger sallallahu alaihi wa sallam, he said to him:

"You should either make your salât with me, or, if you make it with your people, then shorten your rak'âts." Hâfiz Ibn Taymîyah, who the speaker has called the "imâm of the Ahl e Hadîth", writes that this hadîth proves that it is not valid for a person to make his farz salât behind an imâm who is making nafl,

"because it (the hadîth) shows that if he (Ma'âz raziyallahu anhu) made his salât behind him (the Messenger of Allâh sallallahu alaihi wa sallam), then he would not be able to act as imâm." (See Shâmî v. 1 p. 407)

So it established from this that a person performing farz salât cannot follow an imâm who is making nafl. Then, in the previous mas'âlah, for a musâfir the last two rak'âts are nafl, and for the person following him they are farz. Therefore, in the light of this hadîth of Ma'âz, the salât of the muqtadî (the person following) will not be valid.

In quoting this hadîth the speaker has not quoted it in full, and then then also made some additions to it. He
then presents it, saying that the Hanafî scholars, contrary to this hadîth, have derived their ruling from a principle of their own making. In point of fact, the situation is exactly the opposite. In precisely the way that the accepted imâm of the Ahl e Hadîth has explained, the Hanafî scholars have based their ruling on this very hadîth.

In quoting this hadîth, the speaker has said that Maâz raziylallahu anhu “used to make his farz ‘Ishâ with the Messenger of Allâh sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam.” The word farz he has himself added. Hâfîdh ibn Taymîyah has explained at this point,

"Know that the salât that he was making with the Messenger of Allâh sallallahu alaihi wa sallam was nafl"  

Imâm Qutrûbî, whom the speaker also counts as being of the “Ahl ul Hadîth,” has also said the same thing. (see Shâmî v.1 p. 407)

(A person can join a jamât and pray with the niyâh of nafl, either after he has already made his farz, or before making his farz elsewhere. The latter is what Harat Maâz raziylallahu anhu was in fact doing. The Messenger of Allâh told him to either make his farz with him i.e. not act as imâm in his local masjid, or, if he did act as imâm, to shorten his rak’ats. In short, in accordance with his own priciple of referring directly to hadîth, the speaker quoted this hadîth, but at the same time completely misunderstood its meaning.)
B) The third example the speaker gives is this:

“A person reads his fajr salāt so late that after the first rak‘at the sun rises, and he then reads the second rak‘at. His salāt becomes invalid.” (p. 22)

This mas‘alāh is also in itself correct. However, the reasoning he gives is wrong. The Hanafi jurists have most certainly not arrived at this verdict on the basis of a principle that “the deficient cannot be added to the complete.” They have said that something whose completion is obligatory cannot be fulfilled by something that is deficient. Furthermore, this point, as Shāh Waliyullāh has made clear, is simply intellectualisation. It is not the actual basis of the mas‘alāh. On the contrary, this mas‘alāh is also based on a hadīth.

From the hadīth that the speaker has quoted it would appear that salāt performed like this at the time of the rising of the sun is still valid. However there are a large number of other hadīth in which making the salāt at the time of sunrise has been prohibited. Now only two alternatives remain - either to give priority to the first hadīth or to give priority to the others. So, Imām Shāfi‘ī, on the basis of his own understanding and ijtihād, has given priority to the first. Imām Abu Hanīfah, on the basis of his understanding and ijtihād, has given priority to the second. He has therefore concluded that salāt made in this way is not valid. Anyway, both Imām Shāfi‘ī and Imām Abu Haifah have based their decisions only on hadīth. For further detail see Sharh Ma‘ānî ul Āthâr v.1, p.232-234).
"No Ijmâ’ Other Than the Ijmâ’ of the Sahâbah"

After the subject of Qiyâs, what the speaker has said about ijmâ’ is as follows:

“Essentially the ijmâ’ that is authoritative is the ijmâ’ of the sahâbah kirâm.” (p.24)

Readers should note this point. What he has said is that the ijmâ’ of the tâbi’în, the taba’ tâbi’în, or other mujtahidîn has no authority. Only the ijmâ’ of the sahâbah kirâm is authoritative. In short, he does not accept any ijmâ’ other than that of the sahâbah.

7 An Answer to Objections

Finally it has occurred to the speaker that the passages which he has quoted to establish the existence of “Ahl ul Hadîth,” for the most part refer to compilers of hadîth. To strengthen his own interpretation of the term, he makes the following statement:

“In the same way, in the passages in the text of Usûl ud Dîn, and those referring to Imâm Shâfi’î and Imâm Ahmad, the term ‘madhhab of the Ahl ul Hadîth’ is clearly used.” What he means to say is that the term Ahl ul Hadîth does not only mean a compiler of Hadîth, but also refers to a madhhab called Ahl ul Hadîth. So clearly he does not deny that the term Ahl ul Hadîth is used to refer to those who compile hadîth. What then remains is the question of whether there was any madhhab called Ahl ul Hadîth, and then the validity of
his reference to Usûl ud Dîn.

As far as this reference is concerned, the earlier discussion of these passages will have made it quite clear that they in no way support his interpretation.

Then come the passages referring to Imâm Shâfî‘î and Imâm Ahmad. On this point a question arises. If both these Imâms were Ahl ul Hadîth, then the people who follow their madhab and accept their madhhab are also Ahl ul Hadîth. In this case why does the speaker exclude them from the Ahl ul Hadîth? Furthermore, if their madhhab is already Ahl ul Hadîth, then what need is there to establish another madhhab? Establishing a madhhab distinct from the madhhab of these two personages can only mean one of two things. Either they were not Ahl ul Hadîth, or else the madhhab of the speaker is not Ahl ul Hadîth.

After this he quotes a passage from Qâzî Ayyâz. However, rather than strengthening his case it damages it. He states that what Imâm Ahmad has said referring to the firqah nâjiyyah means that the firqah nâjiyyah is the ahl us sunnah wal jamâ‘ah - that is to say, by the phrase “ahl us hadîth” Imâm Ahmad means the ahl us sunnah wal jamâ‘ah. Therefore what the speaker represents on p.7&8 - that the passages he quotes here refer specifically to what he regards as the “Ahl ul Hadîth” - is simply not correct. They refer to the whole ahl us sunnah wal jamâ‘ah.

Someone may object that after the phrase “the ahl us sunnah wal jamâ‘ah”, Qâzî Ayyâz has written
“and those follow the way of the ahl ul hadîth”. Now the answer to this is that if the word “and” here is to be read as ‘atf mughâ’ir ‘alal mughâ’ar, (i.e. joining two things that are different to each other) then the speaker should announce publicly that the ahl ul hadîth and those who follow them are not part of the ahl us sunnah wal jamâ’ah. However, if he is not willing to make this announcement, then he will have to accept that here the “and” is ‘atf tafsîrî, (i.e. adding more information about the previous thing) and that the ma’tûf and the ma’tûf ilaihi (the thing that is added and the thing to which it is added) both refer to the same group of people, and that is the group of the ahl us sunnah wa’l jamâ’ah.

After this he says that

“Hâfiz Nawwawî Shâfi‘î”......in his Sharh Muslim in several places refers to five different madhhabs, saying that ‘in our Shâfi‘î madhhab this is like this’, ‘in the Mâlikî madhhab like this’, ‘in the Hanafî madhhab like this’, ‘in the Hanbalî madhhab like this,’ and then separately states the madhhab of the Ahl ul Hadîth. - see v.1, p73, and v.2 p.32.”

Then, right next to what he has said here, he says:

“Those people who practice qirâ’at behind the imâm and refa’ yadain before rukû’ have always been called ahl ul hadîth.” (p.24,25)

It is clear that Imâm Shâfi‘î and his followers, and (in
the opinion of those who refer to themselves Ahl e Hadîth*), Imâm Ahmad and his followers, all practiced on qirâ'at khalfal imâm and rafa’ yadain ‘indal ruk’û. Therefore they were all Ahl ul Hadîth.

[*See Molwî Muhammad Ali Sâhib Mi’awi’s booklet Al Qawlu Muhallan bi Kulli Zain and Mawlânâ Abd ur Rahmân Mubârakpurî’s booklet Tahqîq ul Kalâm part1]

The speaker then needs to explain why it is that Hâfîdh Nawwawî has spoken of “the ahl ul hadîth” as something distinct from both of them.

Indeed in the pages of Sharah Muslim referred to above Hâfîdh Nawwawî has himself referred to the “ahl ul hadîth” as distinct from Imâm Ahmad, Imâm Shâfi’î, Imâm Thawrî, and Imâm Mâlik. From this it is clear that these personages were not ahl ul hadîth. It therefore follows inescapably that when the speaker refers to them on p.6 and 7 as being ahl ul hadîth, he is mistaken.

7 An Answer to Objections turns into a Confirmation of Objections

If the speaker things carefully he will see that instead of answering objections he has in fact confirmed them because

firstly, he cannot deny that the term Ahl ul Hadîth is used to refer to those who transmit Hadîth.

secondly, in quoting the passage from Qâdî Ayyâz he
has established that the term Ahl ul Hadîth is also used in the sense of Ahl us Sunnah wal Jama'ah.

thirdly, having said that “the term ahl ul hadîth has always been used to refer to all those who practice on qirâ'at khalfal imâm and rafa' yadain 'indal ruk'û”, he has established, at the very least, that every Shâfi‘î can be called ahl ul hadîth.

Therefore, to establish the existence of what he calls the Ahl ul Hadîth, he still has to produce valid evidence to show that in each of the passages he has quoted, the term ahl ul hadîth does not have one of these three meanings.

7 Who is Meant By “Ahl e Hadîth”?

Basically these days the term Ahl ul Hadîth is used to refer to those people who, in spite of simply being ordinary individuals (i.e. do not have the qualifications to be a mujtahid), do not accept the need to follow one of the Imâmâs. What Maulânâ Habîb ur Rahmân is saying is that this use of the term is entirely novel, and that such Ahl ul Hadîth have never existed until very recent times.

The persons of earlier times whom that the speaker has presented as being Ahl ul Hadîth were either ahl ul hadîth in the sense of transmitting hadîth or specialising in the study and teaching of hadîth, or ahl ul hadîth in the sense of following the Shâfi‘î or Mâlikî madhhâb, or ahl ul hadîth in the sense of being ahl us sunnah wal jamâ’ah. The term ahl ul hadîth is
used in these three senses. This we have established above. Indeed it is also established from the speaker's own explanations. Thus his efforts to establish his point have so far produced no result.

It still remains for him to produce from the books of the *mutaqaeddîmin* (the scholars of the early period) any passage in which an ‘âmmî ghair muqallîd (an unqualified person who does not follow any imâm) is referred to as *ahl ul hadîth*.

And that concludes what we had to say, and all praise is for Allâh. Lord of All the Worlds, and his mercy and peace remain always on His Messenger, the Trusted, the Teller of Truth, and on his Household, and his Companions, and his followers until the Day of Reckoning.

(Original booklet written Dhi’l Hijjah 1362 A.H. - Dec 1943 G.C.)
Summary of a lecture given by Maulâna Muhammad Abd us Shukûr

The day before Maulâna Habîb ur Rahmân’s talk, Maulâna Muhammad Abd us Shukûr had given a talk on the same issue. Because of his ill-health this talk was very short, but at the same time very illuminating. What he said was afterwards misrepresented by his opponents, so M. Habîb ur Rahmân included a brief summary of what he actually said as a conclusion to the written text of his own talk.

1) The speaker started by quoting this âyât of the Holy Qur’ân:

\[
\text{الذين ان مكثوا في الأرض اقاموا الصلاة واتوا الزكاة وامروا بالمعروف ونهوا عن المنكر وذكروا الله عاقبة الأموار}
\]

those who, if We establish their position in the land, will establish the Salât, and give the Zakât, and order what is good, and prohibit what is wrong, and Allâh Almighty knows the outcome of all affairs.

or alternatively

the outcome of all affairs rests with Allâh.

2) After reciting this âyât he said that the subject of his talk would be the status of the Sahâbâh and the
importance of the Salât, even though the purpose of the gathering was to answer the objections raised by ghair muqallidin against the leading scholars of the Hanafi School. Unfortunately, as the organisers of this Hanafi Conference had not given him any information about them, he did not know what these objections were. Indeed, he had not received even the text of the Khutbah Sadârat of the Ahl e Hadîth Conference. Therefore he was not in a position to give any kind of detailed talk on that subject.

2) In this âyât, the listener can hear for himself how well and how fittingly the merits of the sahâbah kirâm, and particularly of the muhâjirîn have been described. In particular he shed light on a rather fine point: Why is it that the merits and the achievements of the sahâbah, and particularly of the muhâjirîn and ansâr have been spoken of with such attention that, from looking at the pages of the Holy Qur’ân it almost seems as if one major objective of the revelation of the Holy Qur’ân was to establish in the hearts of muslims a firmly grounded conviction of the saintliness, purity, and elevated standing of the muhâjirîn and ansâr?

He then explained this point so well in the light of several âyât of the Holy Qur’ân, that people’s hearts spontaneously began to exclaim

{lîllâhi darrakum wa ‘alaihi ajrakum. “Allâh is the one who enabled you to do this, and he is the one who will reward you for it.”}

After that, the way in which he explained the benefits and the importance of the Salât was again an unexpected delight for all muslims.

2) Explaining the faḍîlat (merits) of the muhâjirîn
ridwānullāhi alaihim from this āyat, he said that had ʿismat (sinlessness) not been a exclusive characteristic of nabiyywat (prophethood), then this āyat would certainly have provided good grounds for asserting that the muhājirin were maṣūm (sinless) - especially with regard to those who succeeded to the office of khilāfat, during the time of that khilāfat. After this, by way of confirmation, he read a few passages of the peerless book of Shāh Waliyullāh muhaddith Dehlawī, “Izālat ul Khafā”, among them being the following passage:

Ba az mafhūm “aqāmū, ātū, wa amarū wa nahāw” ānast kih har cheh az mumakkinin dar ayyām-i-tamkin-e-iyshān aziyn abwāb dhāhir shawad hamah mu’tadd bihi khwāhad būd shar’ān.

Included in the meaning of “aqāmū, ātū, wa amarū wa nahāw” is that, during the period of their tamkīn, whatever actions the mumakkinin will do that come under these headings, will all be dependable in terms of sharī’ah.

As well as this, he read out the passage in which Shaikh Waliyullāh muhaddith Dehlawī describes the faḍilat of the muhājirin that is being defined by this Qurānic āyat about the muhājirin as being “the shade of ʿismat...” (i.e. the shade of the ismat of the Messenger sallallāhu alaihi wa sallam, rather than ismat itself)

In the connection with of this he referred to the twenty rak′ats of tarāwīh. He said that the clear logical consequence of abandoning taqlīd is that those who do so will have to deny the faḍilat of the muhājirin which is established from this Qurānic āyat. The ghair muqallidin say that the twenty rak′at of tarāwīh is a bid′ah (innovation), even though during the time of the khilāfat of ʿUmar raḍīallāhu ‘anhu the twenty rak′ats of tarāwīh was organised on a regular basis, and this was done was by his order, or at the very least, took place with his full knowledge. The ghair muqallidin also accept that he knowing about it. So, if this
thing was a bid'ah and was undesirable. Then it is not possible that Umar raḍiyyallāhu ‘anhu, who in the time of his tamkīn, was the best of this very jamā‘ah of muhajirīn, should not stop this undesirable practice, and instead, let it continue.

Then, in the course of this, he spoke of taqlīd as being a sunnah mutawātirah, pointing out its immense benefits, and shed some light on the damage that comes from abandoning taqlīd. He also said that nearly twenty years previously, in Darbhanga, he gave a talk on this same āyat, and in the course of it, the topic of tarāwīh also came up, although here, from beginning to end, the actual talk was in reply to the rawāfiḍ (rawāfiḍ means Shi‘ah). However, some ghair muqallidīn were present at the talk. They then attributed some completely false and unfounded statements to me, which they printed in the ahl e hadith newspapers, and I had to answer in “ān Najm”. It is quite possible that on this occasion also, they will resort to the same kind of misrepresentation.

What he said about tarāwīh was in itself a magnificent lecture. That the twenty rak‘ats of tarāwīh was sunnah, and that the people who say that twenty rak‘ats is a bid‘ah do not actually understand what is sunnah, was all made clear as daylight. In reference to this, he also gave a quotation from “Minhāj us Sunnah” by Shaykh ul Islam Allāmah ibn Taymiyyah, where he sets out accurately researched answers to the objection of the leading Imām by the Shi‘ah Shaikh H-l-y that tarāwīh is a bid‘ah and that ‘Umar raḍiyyallāhu ‘anhu was the originator of this bid‘ah.

That is a summary of Maulānā’s talk. Throughout the whole talk, not a single harsh word was used. There was nothing that any person could take as grounds for complaint. This particular characteristic of both his speaking and his writing is something that is acknowledged today all over India.
Tahqîq
Ahl ul Hadîth

Investigating the Credentials of the
" Ahl ul Hadîth "

by
Maulâna Habîb ur Rahmân Āzâmî

" This learning is your religion
Take care from whom you
learn it "

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Urdu Bazar, Karachi, Pakistan. Post Code: 74200
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Tahqiq Ahl ul Hadith
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LE5 3QA
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Fax: 00-44-0116 262 8655
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ZAM ZAM PUBLISHER
KARACHI-Pakistan
0092 - 21 - 7725673
The Author

Maulānā Habīb ur Rahmān ‘Azamī was a very well known and reputable scholar of the Indian subcontinent, whose reputation extended well beyond its boundaries into the Arab world. He was born in 1319 A.H. and passed away in 1413 A.H. (1992). He was an acknowledged authority on Tafsīr, Fiqh, and Hadīth.

Maulānā Habīb ur Rahmān was born in the town of Mau Nath Bhanjan in the district of Azamgarh (U.P.) India. His whole life was spent in study and teaching. Like the great scholars of the past, he led a very simple and unpretentious life, spending most of his life in his home town, and teaching Hadīth literature to students from all over the world. There he founded a number of institutions, among them Madrasah Mirqāṭ ul ‘Ulûm, Jāmi‘ah Miftāh ul ‘Ulûm, and the Islāmic Institute for Higher Studies.

He studied under a number of prominent Ulamā of the last century, including Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī, Muftī ‘Azīz ur Rahmān Deobandī, and Maulānā ‘Abd ul Ghaffār, the disciple of Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī. Many students have benefited from his learning, one of whom was Maulānā Manzūr Nu‘mānī. Several prominent scholars of the Arab world have also been given ‘ijāzah by him. They include Shaikh Abdul Fattāh Abu Ghuddah, Shaikh Ismā‘īl al Ansārī (Dar ul Iftā Riyād) Shaikh Hammād al Ansārī (Islāmic University Madīnah) Shaikh Subhī Sāmarrā‘ī (Baghdād), Dr ‘Abd us Sattār Abu Ghuddah (Kuwait), and Dr Bashshār ‘Awad Ma‘rūf (Baghdād).
This book explains the meaning of the term “Ahl ul Hadîth.” This term is used in many books dating from different periods. At present there are certain parties who claim that it refers to people who do not follow any of the four schools of fiqh, and derive legal judgements directly from Hadîth. Basically the purpose behind this claim is to establish that this view was to be found among scholars of Islam since the earliest times.

The author, who has spent his whole life teaching Hadîth, and is very familiar with the literature referring to it, shows that this is a complete misrepresentation of the facts. This term has only been used in this sense within the last two centuries, since the start of the movement which at present uses this name. Prior to that, the term was used in several different senses, but never in this sense.

This is an important issue. The Muslim world is not going to easily accept the views of any group unless they have at least some claim to be able to trace their origins to the early days of Islam. If it is not able to do so, then this means that their teachings are an innovation, and “every innovation is error and every error….” (al Hadîth). In these times, when people are greatly inclined to take their religion from rumour among their fellows, rather than lessons by teachers, and when fellowship has taken the place of study, it is very easy to circulate confused ideas and misrepresentations. This translation of a booklet by a very reputable teacher should be useful for dispelling one misrepresentation that has now become quite widespread.
He has written several works on Hadith. One of them is a critique of the works of Shaikh Ahmad Muhammad Shâkir, a well-known recent scholar of Hadith. He has also edited and brought out several manuscripts of Hadith from private collections. Among them are Al Musannaf of Imâm Abd ur Razzâq (11 vols); Musnad al Humaidî (2 vols); the Sunan of Sa’îd ibn Mansîr; Intiqâ’ at Tarhib by ibn Hajar; Al Matâlib al ‘Aliyah bi Zawâ’id al Masânid ath Thamâniyyah by Ibn Hajar (4 vols); the Kashf al Astâr ‘an Zawâ’id Musnad al Bazzâr of Haithami; Al Musannaf by ibn Abî Shaibah; Kitâb ath Thiqât by ibn Shâhîn, and Fat’h al Mughîth by Imâm Sakhâwî.

His own writings include:

- Al Hâwî li Rijâl al Tahâwî which traces the rijâl (personalities) mentioned in Imâm Tahâwî’s Ma’ânî al ‘Athâr and Mushkil al ‘Athâr.
- Al Ithâfah as Saîyah bi Dhikri Muhaddithî al Hanafiyyah

These two works have still to be published.

Published works include:

- Nusrat al Hadîth on the indispensability of the Hadîth, and refuting the arguments of those who try to reject the Hadîth
- A’yân al Hujjâj listing the famous Ulamâa who have performed Hajj and Ziyârah
- Rak’at at Tarâwîh
- Shârî’ Haqiqî
- Dastkâr Ahl e Sharf establishing that the real criteria for nobility is lawful earning in accordance with the Sharî’ah, and not the standards of nobility prescribed by the colonial powers or the traditional Muslim aristocracy.