

An Indian Hadith Scholar's Defense of Hanafi Mazhab

Dr. Fatma Aydın

Assistant Professor, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey

Abstract

Ebu'l-Mecd Abdulhaq b. Seyfiddin b. Sa'dillah al-Dihlawi (d. 1052/1642) one of the renowned hadith scholars of the Babur's period (1526-1858) was a prolific author in many fields of Islamic sciences. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi whose work focused mainly on the fields of hadith and Sufism defended the Hanafi school of thought to which he belonged by writing a work entitled *Fethu'l-mennan fi isbati mezhebi'n-Nu'man* within the framework of the hadith-fiqh centered debates of the period. This work is one of the few works on fiqh by Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi who was a prolific writer. Within the tradition of fiqh schools an independent literature has been written to defend that particular school. As far as can be ascertained in the Indian subcontinent, the first example of this literature is the work of Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi. No research on this work has been found in Turkey. This study aims to examine the work in question by discussing the probable reasons that led to its emergence and by discussing its content and systematics. This is because writing the history of a work requires multidisciplinary research that takes into account not only the reasons that prompted the author to write it, as clearly stated by the author, but also developments in the literature in the field in which the work was prepared, its relationship with other texts in this field, and many factors such as the scientific environment surrounding the author and the political and economic situation of the period, all of which must be evaluated as a whole. During the Babur's period the Hanafi school of jurisprudence was dominant and the official school. One of the main objectives of this study is to discuss who Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi sought to defend this school against in the field of hadith science during this period. Texts on this literature, written by Hanafi fiqh scholars, discuss Abu Hanifa's narrations, his status in the science of jarh and ta'dil, his narrations from the Companions, and the conformity of his jurisprudential opinions with the Sunnah have been debated, and responding to the criticisms directed at him by hadith scholars has been an important aspect of such works. Abdulhak ed-Dihlevi's work within the scope of the aforementioned criticisms will be the subject of this research.

Keywords: Education, India, Hadith Studies and History, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi.

1. Introduction

This study focuses on the work "*Fethu'l-mennan fi isbati mezhebi'n-Nu'man*" by Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi (d. 1052/1642) who is known for his works in the field of hadith science during the Mughal period in the Indian subcontinent and whose biographical sources[1] also point to his jurisprudential aspect. This work is probably the first example of literature developed within fiqh literature to defend the Hanafi school of thought during the Mughal period. This work,

which is probably the first example of the literature that developed within fiqh literature to defend the Hanafi school of thought during the Babur's period is of particular importance as it was written by a hadith scholar [2]. This work likely the first of its kind during the Babur's period holds particular significance as it was written by a scholar of hadith. During the formation of sects, works written by the imam of one sect to prove his superiority over the leaders of other sects evolved, alongside the process of sectarianism, into works written primarily by the imams of the Hanafi and Shafi'i sects, but now centered on the sect itself and aimed at defending that sect as a whole. Focusing on controversial issues between schools of thought, these works seek to prove the superiority of their own school by criticizing other schools through various arguments.

This literature, written with the aim of defending a particular sect or directly defending the sect's imam, can be said to have emerged from the genre of *menāqib* literature and to have gained an independent existence after the formation of the sects. Indeed, the genre of hagiography, which encompasses a wide range of works about prominent figures in various fields of knowledge or those known for their political identities, has also been a domain in which jurists have produced works. While primarily biographical works, the *menāqib* of the *fuqahā* also serve as refutations of criticisms directed at the *madhhab* or attempt to prove the superiority of the *madhhab* over other *madhhabs* [3]. Below we will attempt to provide information about the scholarly environment and conditions surrounding Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi, who wrote a work defending the Hanafi *mazhab* in the center of hadith science in India.

2. Methodology

This research will primarily utilize a literature review method to identify the problem. Clearly defining the research problem will facilitate the research process and its conclusion. The problem's place within the overall subject matter will be determined, then the problem area will be delimited, and variables thought to influence the problem will be identified. The relationship between the data obtained from the literature review and the study's main hypothesis will be discussed. This article will employ document analysis as one of the data collection techniques. The content of the documents will be analyzed and the information obtained will be analyzed using inductive and deductive methods. Explaining the reasons for writing a work is quite difficult, sometimes even very complex in social sciences. Establishing a cause-and-effect relationship is not always possible in social sciences. This study aims to reveal the writing history and process of a work by discussing it from different perspectives.

3. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's Scientific Activity and Fields of Work

The primary source regarding the life and lineage of Abdulhaq al-Dihlewi is the information he provides about himself in his work in the field of biography, titled *Ahbâru'l-ahyâr fî ahvâlî'l-ebrâr*. Born in Delhi in 958/1551. Abu'l-Majd Abdulhaq Seyfeddin b. Sa'dillah al-Buhârî et-Turkî al-Dihlawi's lineage dates back to a family that was forced to migrate to Delhi during the Mongol invasions during the reign of Alâeddin Halacî (d. 715/1316) in the Delhi Turkish Sultanate [4]. He clearly states that he is originally a Turk from Bukhara in the introduction to *Fethu'l-mennan* [5]. Abdulhak ed-Dihlevî who received his early education in Delhi joined the Qadiri order in 967/1559 under the guidance of his father Seyfeddin el-Buhârî (d. 990/1582). Considering the lessons he took and the texts he read throughout his educational life [6], it can

be said that his activities in the field of hadith science were weak. After graduating, he taught at madrasas for a while and as part of the scientific life of the period went to the Hijaz to take lessons and perform the hajj, as many young students of science did during this period. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi who reached the Hijaz in 996/1588, studied under the most renowned hadith scholars of the period in Mecca and Medina. Among these names are Abdulwahhab b. Waliullah al-Muttaki (d. 1001/1592), Ali b. Carullah el-Kureşi el-Mahzumi and Hamiduddin b. Abdillah es-Sindi. He studied Bukhari's Sahih from Ali b. Jarrullah and Sayyid Ja'far al-Samarqandi and Hatib al-Tabrizi's Mishkat al-Masabih from Abdulwahhab b. Waliullah. His scholarly work in the Hejaz focused on the science of Hadith. It can be confidently said that, like many Indian scholars of the time he completed his Hadith education in the Hejaz which he could not finish in Delhi. Considering Delhi as the central point, it can be argued that the closest, relatively easily accessible, and central centers of learning for a student to receive a good hadith education were Mecca and Medina. As he himself mentions in his work, Mecca and Medina hosted a large number of Hadith scholars during this period [7]. Research examining his biography and scholarly activities tends to view his journey to the Hejaz as a turning point [8].

The transfer of control over the Hejaz region from the Babur's Empire to the Ottomans by Yavuz Sultan Selim in 1517, followed by reconstruction efforts and aid to the population, significantly contributed to both the increase in the number of Muslims arriving in the region and the expansion of their scholarly activities. Agreements made with the Portuguese during the Mughal period facilitated the pilgrimage of Indian Muslims to Mecca, greatly enriching relations between the two civilizations [9]. In the 17th century, maritime trade which developed significantly in parallel with the acceleration of colonial activities, facilitated the travel of Indian students to the Hejaz, primarily to study hadith, thus indirectly contributing to scholarly work. Scholarly contact between the two regions via sea routes was considerably more developed than that established via land routes [10].

A significant portion of the pilgrims who settled in Mecca or stayed there for a period of time during this period were Indians and some neighborhoods were inhabited exclusively by Indians. The increasing needs of the Indians led to an increase in the number of ribats. The largest and most renowned of these ribats was the one built by Ali al-Muttaki, mentioned above [11]. Abdulhak ed-Dihlevî mentions the extensive support and assistance provided to pilgrims by his teacher, Abdulwahhab al-Muttaki, who was the sheikh of this tekke in Mecca and his disciples [12]. It can be said that this connection between the Hijaz and the Indian region prompted Abdulhaq al-Dihlewi to come to Mecca and led to his long stay there.

After continuing his scholarly studies in Hijaz for four years [13] Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi returned to Delhi in 1000/1591 and began teaching by establishing a madrasa that provided hadith education in the city. He continued to teach hadith for approximately fifty years until his death in 1052/1642 [14]. He trained many students. One of his contributions to this field was translating hadith sources into Persian, another scholarly language of the region [15]. Although there are many observations about him being a leading hadith scholar of his time [16], some have exaggerated his contributions to the science of hadith in the Indian subcontinent, claiming that it was Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi who spread this science in India through his writings and

teachings [17] or that “he laid the foundations of the science of hadith here for the first time” [18].

The first available information on this subject is found in an inscription placed on the wall of his tomb after his death, as per his will. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi, influenced by his interest in biography, bequeathed to his son that an inscription be placed on his tomb after his death, summarizing his scholarly life, travels, Sufi inclinations and scholarly contributions, along with his birth and death dates. His son, Nurulhaq al-Dihlewi noted in this inscription that no scholar in the Persian-speaking scholarly world, including the Indian subcontinent, had served the science of hadith and contributed to its dissemination as much as his father [19].

Abdulhay al-Haseni states that studies on hadith science in the Indian subcontinent were insufficient until Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi. This observation is significant in terms of comparing scientific activity during the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal period and it also points to the development of studies related to hadith science during the Babur period [20]. Looking at the works on hadith written by Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi in Delhi, it can be easily said that there was no scholar who produced works of this caliber during the Babur period until his time. It is stated that Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi who is said to have written nearly a hundred works devoted the vast majority of his studies to the field of hadith [21].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's Muhammed b. Abdullah al-Tabrizi's (d. 741/1340) commentary on *Mishkat al-Masabih*, entitled *Leme'at al-Tanqih*; his commentary on *Mishkat al-Masabih* in Persian, entitled *Eshi'at al-Leme'at*; his work *Asma' al-Rijal wa'r-Ruwat al-Madhkurin fi Kitab al-Mishkat*, in which he introduces the narrators of *Mishkat al-Masabih*; his work *Ma Sabatabi's-Sunna fi Ayyami's-Sana*, in which he discusses the authenticity of days and nights considered blessed in the Indian subcontinent within the framework of hadiths; and his work compiling the companions who were promised paradise, excluding the Ten Promised Paradise. Considering works such as *Tahkîku'l-işâre ilâ ta'mîmi'l-beşâre bi'l-cenne*, it is evident that his primary field of study was the science of hadith. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi also authored works on grammar, exegesis, biography of the Prophet, Sufism, the history of Medina, and biographies of Indian scholars [22].

Considering the scholarly fields in which he prepared his works, it is noteworthy that he did not prepare an independent book on the branches of jurisprudence (*furû-i fiqh*) specific to the Hanafi mazhab to which he belonged, nor did he undertake a work that commented on a text representing that school. Among the few works on jurisprudence that can be identified, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's most notable works include *Hidâyetü'n-nâsik ilâ tarîki'l-menâsik* which deals with the subject of Hajj; *Tahsîlü't-ta'arruf fi ma'rifeti'l-fîkhi ve't-tasavvuf* which attempts to respond to the criticisms of jurists towards Sufis [23], particularly regarding the issue of *sama'* in the context of the relationship between jurisprudence and Sufism; and *Fethü'l-mennân* which is the subject of this study.

4. Possible Reasons for Writing This Work

The development of Islamic sciences particularly the science of Hadith, in the Indian subcontinent was greatly contributed to by the relations established with the Hijaz region in the

sixteenth century. The scholarly connection between the Hijaz and India during this century is of such importance that it could be the subject of independent studies. One of the primary sources regarding the identity, teachings and influence of scholars from the Hijaz region is Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi whose views are discussed in this article. *Zâdü'l-müttakîn fî sülûki tarîkı'l-yakîn* which he began writing in the Hijaz and successfully completed in Delhi in 1000/1592. He introduces the leading teachers, scholars, and Sufis of this region [24].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi was born in Delhi in 958/1551, a city under the rule of the Suri dynasty which had established its dominance in North India following the founding of the Babur's Empire in 1526, leading Mughal Emperor Humayun to abandon these lands and seek refuge with the Safavids. Humayun recaptured Delhi in 962/1555, ending their rule, during Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's childhood. Beginning his education during a period of crisis as the Mughals attempted to regain power in India, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi received his initial education in Delhi before moving to Lahore and then to Fatehpur Sikri (1574-1586) which had been made the capital by Akbar Shah (1556-1605). During the controversies surrounding Din-i Ilahi, the eclectic religion that Akbar Shah was attempting to establish, Abdulhak ed-Dihlevi who was present in Akbar Shah's palace and apparently wished to stay away from the temple built by Akbar Shah which was at the center of these debates. He left the city after a while and returned to Delhi. After teaching there for some time, he decided to go to the Hejaz with the aim of both performing his pilgrimage and taking lessons from different teachers [25]. He explains the reason for his journey by stating that Zad al-Muttaqin had begun to feel a strange loneliness in his heart which had made him even more withdrawn. He realized that the only way to escape this state was to embark on a journey and he quickly decided to go on pilgrimage. Upon arriving in Mecca, he explained to his teacher Abdulwahhab al-Muttaqî, that the main reason for his visit was his desire to leave India after meeting the Sultan (Akbar Shah) and prominent statesmen of the time and realizing that they wanted to use him to gather more followers and become one of the leading representatives of the divine religion. It can be easily said that one of the main reasons for Abdulhaq al-Dihlewi's departure to the Hejaz was that the court circles, apparently wanting to utilize his knowledge and talent to spread the concept of Din-i Ilahi more widely within the Indo-Islamic community, decided to stay there. It can also be said that Akbar Shah's influence was decisive in Abdulhaq al-Dihlewi's decision to remain in the Hejaz. Abdulwahhab al-Muttaki persuaded him to return and teach in the Indian subcontinent [26].

Many modern studies have identified the debate surrounding the Divine Religion as the most important factor shaping his scholarly work and defining his fields of study. Simultaneously, combating elements of ancient Indian religions that had mixed with Islam, as well as movements like the Noktawiyya and Hurufiyya that had migrated from Persia to this region were among the issues that occupied his scholarly agenda. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi who built a madrasa called Darul-ulum in Delhi, distinguished himself in India by implementing an educational system centered on hadith studies. He attracted numerous students from different regions who wished to study hadith and from this period onwards during the Mughal era. He was known as "Muhaddis Dihlevî" (Hadith scholar Dihlevî) [27].

Considering the scholarly fields that Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi focused on the circles and issues he criticized in India and his scholarly journey to the Hejaz, it can be argued that he

followed in the footsteps of his contemporary Muhammad b. Tahir b. Ali al-Fattani (d. 986/1578). Fattani, known as "Muhaddis" during the Babur era, went on pilgrimage in 944/1538 and studied under renowned scholars of the time most notably Ibn Hajar al-Haytami and became a disciple of Ali b. Husamuddin al-Muttaki (d. 975/1567). He was particularly known in India for his lectures on hadith and fought against the Mahdist movement which emerged in India during this period as one of the Mahdi-related movements in Islamic history and was killed by them. His efforts in the field of hadith studies and his scholarly activities criticizing heresies were continued by Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi based in Delhi. When examining the common emphases in the scholarly activities of both Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi and Fattani and their work focused on hadith studies, it is clear that their education in the Hijaz and the aforementioned Ali al-Muttaki's dervish lodge had a significant influence on the shaping of their views and the development of their scholarly inclinations [28].

One of the prominent aspects of the scholarly and Sufi circles in Mecca to which Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi belonged was that the teachers known as Sufis in this region were also renowned hadith scholars. Ali al-Muttaki who died approximately ten years before his arrival in the Hijaz, the aforementioned Ibn Hajar al-Haytami and Abu Ali Shamsuddin Muhammad b. Ali b. Abd al-Rahman b. Arraq al-Dimashqi al-Hijazi (d. 933/1526) who founded a branch of the Shadhiliyya order. They are among the best examples of this. Although Abdülwahhab did not meet them personally. He had the opportunity to benefit from their students and disciples. His teacher, Ali b. Arraq was a Shafi'i jurist. Abdulhak ed-Dihlevî, praising Cârullah's knowledge in this field and his ability to issue fatwas also points out that he was one of Mecca's renowned hadith scholars. Considering the scholarly careers of this individual who was a disciple of Ali al-Muttaki, as well as those of the aforementioned scholars, it is easily discernible that a strong teacher-student and sheikh-disciple relationship existed among them [29].

One of the main reasons for Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi writing *Fath al-Mannan* in Arabic at a time when many works including those on Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), the prevailing scholarly language in the Indian subcontinent were written in Persian was his desire to respond to the scholars of Hijaz. While he wrote numerous works on various branches of Islamic sciences in Persian—for example, his work introducing the city of Medina to the Indian subcontinent or his treatises and books criticizing practices he considered heresy within the Indo-Islamic community. It can be said that he specifically chose to write this treatise in Arabic. The target audience of this treatise was not the opponents of the Hanafi mazhab in the Indian subcontinent but rather the Shafi'i scholarly circles in Hijaz whose scholarly gatherings he was aware of. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi while describing Mecca of that era draws attention to the struggle between the followers of the Hanafi and Shafi'i mazhabs and explains that due to the disputes regarding praying behind an imam from another school, each school formed its own congregation and prayed accordingly and that this situation caused confusion, especially during the evening prayers [30].

While in Hijaz, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi began praying his five daily prayers for a while in the congregation of the Shafi'i mazhab. When his teacher, Abdülwahhab al-Muttaki saw that he was inclined towards this mazhab. He told him that it was correct for a person to follow the

congregation of the school of thought to which he belonged in prayer. When Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi in a manner that revealed his inclination towards the Shafi'i school, expressed to his teacher that the Shafi'i mazhab held more views consistent with authentic hadiths than the Hanafi mazhab in matters of jurisprudence, Abdulwahhab al-Muttaki reminded him that although many narrations in al-Mishkat al-Masabih, which he spent much of his time studying, supported the views of the Shafi'i mazhab, there were also many authentic narrations that should be preferred over the evidence of the Shafi'i mazhab that the Hanafi mazhab accepted as evidence [31].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi explicitly states that he belonged to the Hanafi mazhab in the introduction to *Fethu'l-mennan*. Referring to the aforementioned conversation, he explains that during a period when he was reading al-Mishkâtü'l-mesâbih, he leaned towards the Shafi'i mazhab. His teacher attributed this to his hasty reading of the work and his lack of sufficient knowledge about the narrations preferred by the Hanafi mazhab. After his teacher spoke to him about the virtues of Abu Hanifa and his superior qualities, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi abandoned his intention to join the Shafi'i mazhab. From that point on, he began to comparatively study the mazhab, particularly the Hanafi and Shafi'i. One of the main reasons for his study of al-Mishkat al-Masabih, a text widely used in hadith studies during this period, could be considered to be that Ibn Hajar al-Haytami had worked on and commented on this work [32].

It is understood that the need to defend the narrations accepted as authentic by the school of thought was a result of this scholarly bridge established between India and the Hejaz. Approximately a century later, this debate would reach a different dimension and its peak with Shah Waliullah's objections to the conception of the school of thought and his criticisms of the Hanafi mazhab [33].

It can be said that Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi was not alone in this process, and that many Indian scholars wishing to perform the Hajj pilgrimage joined these circles. The depth of the connection established between these two intellectual centers by these individuals who took courses in various fields, joined Sufi orders and copied many works and took them with them, has not yet been sufficiently understood and studied. In modern studies, comprehensive theses have been put forward regarding the influence of an intellectual circle that developed in the Hejaz in the 16th and 17th centuries on different civilizational centers, including reformist movements in the Islamic world [34]. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's work, which is the subject of this research, shows that the intellectual influence of the scholarly circle in the Hejaz was not one-sided; on the contrary, there were refutations written in the Indian subcontinent, a region quite distant from their geographical location.

5. Content and Systematics

The full title of Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's work defending the Hanafi mazhab is *Fethu'l-mennân fî isbâti mezhebi'n-Nu'mân*. This work was recently edited and published [35]. The only known study on *Fethu'l-mennân* is an article written in Urdu by Muhammed Nevâz and Muhammed Feridüddîn [36]. While this study provides information about the work's systematic approach, extensive hadith sources, and Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's method and style in defending Abu Hanifa,

it does not adequately address the questions of why the work was written and against whom it was written.

Fethu'l-mennân examines the disagreements between the two mazhabs within the context of the narrations in al-Mishkat al-Masabih. Therefore, its structure is based on the systematic approach of al-Mishkat al-Masabih [37]. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi states that he divided his work into chapters and sections, similar to this book and that he added narrations not mentioned in al-Mishkat al-Masabih, selecting and discussing controversial issues from books of jurisprudence concerning purity and prayer. It is possible to speak of Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's particular interest in this work. As indicated above, he wrote a comprehensive commentary on al-Mishkat al-Masabih. One of the fundamental methods of activity in his Lama'at al-Tanqih is to try to show that the view of the school of thought is consistent with authentic narrations [38]. This study also utilizes as a source Majd al-Din Ibn al-Athir's (d. 606/1210) work, Jami' al-usul li-ahadith al-Rasul which compiles narrations from the Six Books of Hadith and al-Muwatta, arranging them alphabetically according to their topics. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi states that when he could not find a narration in Ibn al-Athir's book, he used Ali al-Muttaqi's Kanz al-'umm al fi sunan al-aqwal wa al-af'al, Imam Muhammad's narration from al-Muwatta and al-Darimi's (d. 255/869) al-Sunan. In discussing the topics, he did not limit himself to the Hanafi and Shafi'i mazhabs, but included the rulings and, to some extent. The evidence from all four schools for each issue he debated. Where he deemed it necessary, he also cited the answers he received from Maliki scholars he met in Hijaz, using them as evidence [39].

Fethu'l-mennân is a work limited to the topics of purity and prayer in terms of its jurisprudential content and scope. It does not claim to cover all the well-known issues debated throughout the history of jurisprudence between the Hanafi and Shafi'i mazhabs in all sub-disciplines of furû-i fiqh. As can be seen in the aforementioned texts defending the schools of thought, this type of work focuses on the rulings reached by the founder of the school in different areas of furû-i fiqh, attempting to demonstrate the superiority of his fatwas and opinions. No issue in which he contradicts the school of thought has been identified within the context of the matters he examines. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi defends the preferred and correct view of the mazhab in his own words [40].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi begins his study by examining the history of when and how disagreements arose within the Islamic community and notes that disagreements increased significantly during the Tabi'un era, when Islamic jurisprudence (ijtihād) and analogy (qiyas) were widely used across different regions of the Islamic world. The increasing number of events and issues led to a corresponding increase and diversification of ijtihads. The aspects of Abu Hanifa that distinguish him from other imams of the schools of thought and the quotations that praise him are included in the introduction of this study, in accordance with the style of compilation of hagiographical literature. Firstly, by responding to an ancient debate in the history of the schools of jurisprudence, he counters the criticism that while Imam Shafi'i acted upon authentic hadiths, Abu Hanifa did not, instead resorting to personal opinion and ijtihād. He states that Abu Hanifa did not resort to analogy in matters where an authentic narration existed, that he acted upon weak hadiths as well, as in many examples related to subsidiary jurisprudence, that he used mursals hadiths as evidence and that he permitted the abrogation of

the Quran with well-known hadiths, thus responding to criticisms directed at the school's understanding of Sunnah [41].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlewi arguing that Imam Shafi'i unlike Abu Hanifa did not accept the opinions of the companions as evidence, as also defended by Shafi'i scholars, states that Abu Hanifa resorted to *ijtihad* and *ra'y* (independent reasoning) when there was no narration regulating the relevant issue. This assessment of Shafi'i cannot be considered entirely accurate. For there are many examples where Imam Shafi'i accepted the opinions of the companions, which were established by consensus and on which there was no disagreement as evidence [42]. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi emphasizes in the context of many issues that Abu Hanifa's not acting upon a narration stems not from the narration not reaching him/being unaware of it, as claimed by Shafi'i scholars, but from his not accepting that narration as authentic. The fact that the narrations Abu Hanifa relied upon have high chains of transmission reaching the Prophet with at least one narrator is also a reason for preferring to follow the views he advocated. In this context, citing Ibn Humam's work as a source to demonstrate that the school of thought has numerous *marfu'* chains of transmission is a frequently employed method in the work [43].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi, citing Ferrâ el-Begavî's (d. 516/1122) *Mesâbîhu's-sünne* and Hatîb et-Tebrîzî's (d. 741/1340) *Miškâtü'l-Mesâbîh*, considered the most famous work on this subject, argues that scholars belonging to the Shafi'i mazhab make hasty decisions without sufficient research. He criticizes the narrations used as evidence by the Hanafi mazhab due to the extremist approaches of Shafi'i jurists. According to him, most of the later Shafi'i jurists continued this approach, which he describes as "fanaticism," against Abu Hanifa. Although he doesn't explicitly state it, it seems he includes the Shafi'i scholarly circle in the Hijaz in this view. It can be said that the underlying reason for his deeming it necessary to undertake a commentary on *Mishkat al-Masabih* was the intention to critique this understanding. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi identified Ibn al-Humam's (d. 861/1457) *Fath al-Qadir* and Burhan al-Din Ibrahim b. Musa b. Abi Bakr b. Ali al-Trabulusi al-Dimashqi's (d. 922/1516) *Mawâhib al-Rahman fi Madhab al-Nu'man* as the strongest texts in response to the criticisms leveled by Shafi'i jurists against the Hanafi school regarding acting upon authentic hadith. The fact that Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi does not mention any previous work written in this field in the Indian subcontinent, as stated above, an implicit indication that his work is the first in this area [44].

As mentioned above this study, limited to the topic of cleanliness and prayer, devotes considerable space to numerous controversial issues, as well as symbolic debates among the schools of thought. For example, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi attempts to demonstrate that the Hanafi mazhab possesses a great deal of evidence based on narrations regarding the raising of the hands (*refu'l-yedeyn*) in prayer, the binding of the hands during prayer, and the recitation of the person following the imam. He provides information on the authenticity of these narrations and attempts to prove that the narrations accepted as evidence by those who defend *ref'ul-yedeyn* are abrogated. For the different chains of transmission of the narrations accepted as authentic by the school of thought on the aforementioned issues, he often quotes from Ibn al-Humam. It can be said that a large part of the work consists of quotations from this work [45].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi recounts a debate he had in Hijaz regarding the issue of binding the hands during prayer. He argued against the rational arguments put forward by Maliki scholars who advocated for leaving the hands hanging at the sides (*irsal*) instead of letting them hang freely. He maintained that binding the hands symbolized respect and being in the presence of God, leaving them speechless [46]. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi argues that in cases of extreme heat, the Hanafi mazhab acts upon a narration that directly regulates the matter of prostrating on the edge of a turban or a part of a garment (for example, the end of a sleeve) during prayer. Shafi'i jurists, on the other hand, arrived at this ruling through reasoning based on a narration from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that commands placing the forehead on the ground. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi defends the Hanafi school's view by stating that the narrator of the narration accepted by Abu Hanifa was more knowledgeable and had a higher chain of narration. It has been pointed out many times that the view of the Hanafi mazhab is the most cautious [47].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi did not only focus on the views of the Shafi'i mazhab in his work, but also addressed the issues within the framework of all four schools. The views of the Shafi'is are central to his work. He also occasionally refers to the practices consistently followed by the Shafi'is regarding prayer in the Haramayn. It is noteworthy that while discussing these issues, he does not extensively examine the chain of narrators (*sened*) of the hadiths that form the basis of Abu Hanifa's views, despite being a hadith scholar. It seems that the issue of the authenticity of the books containing the hadiths is of greater importance to him in this matter. Instead of presenting rational arguments through analogy, as in the case of laughing during prayer invalidating ablution, he emphasized that Abu Hanifa defended opinions consistent with the ruling in the hadith by acting upon weak narrations. It is also seen that in cases where Abu Hanifa is accused of acting upon weak hadiths, he attempted to resolve contradictions between hadiths by presenting rational arguments and in these cases, he tried to prove that the hadith was of the "hasen" level by bringing together other chains of narration, thus correcting its weakness [48].

Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi cites numerous different narrations that serve as evidence for his mazhab in well-known issues debated throughout the history of Islamic jurisprudence. He also points to the practices of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and defends these views by citing the practices of prominent companions. The abundance of narrations supporting Abu Hanifa's view is also presented as supporting evidence in this regard [49]. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi states that for a ruling to be considered obligatory, there must be conclusive evidence in accordance with the school of thought's view. He acknowledges that one cannot reach a definitive conclusion by using a hadith that conflicts with narrations giving a different ruling on the same issue and states that the Hanafis, as a precaution, consider a matter obligatory when other schools of thought deem it obligatory. He occasionally includes the wisdom and Sufi interpretations of acts of worship in his work. He also occasionally offers criticisms of the systematic approach of *Miškâtü'l-mesâbih* [50].

Conclusion

The works that can be classified as texts defending the schools of Islamic jurisprudence, which developed after the formation of the schools of thought, constitute a literature that continues to

this day. As far as can be determined, the first example of these works, written in different regions of the Islamic world, belongs to Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi, one of the hadith scholars and Hanafi jurists of the Babur's era, in the Indian subcontinent. In a region where the Hanafi school of thought was the official school and had an ancient history, it is an important question to whom this work, *Fath al-Mannan*, was prepared against and whether its audience was the Shafi'i jurist circles living in the Indian subcontinent. Considering Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's scholarly journey, it is clear from his own statements that the strong Shafi'i tradition he encountered in the Hijaz region, where he resided for a long time and developed himself considerably in the field of hadith, initially inclined him to convert to the Shafi'i school of thought. After Ibn Hajar al-Haytami settled in Mecca, it can be seen that the followers of the Shafi'i school in this region gradually grew stronger and began to form a scholarly circle that attracted students. Western studies investigating the origins of the 18th-century revival movements point to a Shafi'i tradition that traces its roots back to Ibn Hajar al-Haytami and whose influence grew over time. Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi's inclination towards the Shafi'i mazhab changed shortly afterward and contrary to the claims of jurists affiliated with that school, he developed the view that the Hanafi school was one that acted upon authentic narrations. After returning to India, as a response to the Shafi'i scholars, Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi wrote *Fath al-Mannan* to demonstrate that the Hanafi school's views were based on authentic narrations and that it was the Shafi'i school itself that resorted to rational arguments and analogy in matters where even a weak narration existed to regulate the issue. This work is a prime example of the increasingly rapid interaction and scholarly exchange between India and the Hejaz basin during the Babur's era. Following Abdulhaq al-Dihlawi, criticisms of the Hanafi school of thought for not adhering to authentic narrations continued in the Hejaz and Indian regions through Sindhi scholars who also belonged to that school and these criticisms reached their peak with Shah Waliullah.

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