A Study on the Role of Different Types of Reason in Validation of Commentary Tradition

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ABSTRACT: *Reason is one of the criteria for examining the validation of tradition – so much that disagreement with it can discredit it and agreement with it can be considered as a validation. The goal of this study is to show the role of different reasoning faculties in validating the interpretational traditions. This study was conducted using a library-based study and the method of conceptual analysis. It showed that reason is a governing criterion in all aspects of assessment and analysis. However, in most cases the role of reason is discussed as a criterion in evaluating the intelligible traditions. Reason is a source in the form of theoretical and practical reason in the form of privative in assessing the interpretational traditions used as a criterion for validation.*

KEY WORDS:*Reason, traditions, Reasoning basis, opposition, validation*

I. INTRODUCTION

Koran and tradition are the two main sources for understanding the religion and Islamic learning and deducing the religious laws. Eliminating any of these elements will lead to a defective understanding of the religion. The holy Koran, as the first backing and source for Islamic learning and everlasting divine miracle, was kept immune from distortion. It was scribed at its inception by the efforts of the prophet Mohammad and other experts. However, the tradition was exposed to grave attacks and was prevented from publishing for almost one century, and then it was falsified by a group of forgers of tradition. The prophet Mohammad and his innocent Imams had predicted this and through their valuable speeches warned the followers of the forgery and falsification of the tradition. The tradition scientists, realizing the tradition forgery phenomenon, have always been after finding criteria for validating tradition and identifying right from wrong. One of these criteria, accepted by most researchers and academic people of Shiite and Sunni Muslims, is "opposition with reason". They have made mention of this method in their works (for example, R.K: Sobhi Sallih 1959 P. 265; Adlebi P. 304 – 312; Sobhani P. 61 – 65; Khatib Baghdadi P. 473; Ibn Hajar Asgholani Vol. 1, P. 404, Section one, P. 108, 124, 125 and Section two, P. 92; Mohammed Abu Zahu P. 483 – 484; Gharavi Naeini P. 183, Etr P. 314; Khalf P. 32, Haj Hassan Vol. 2 P. 35, Loghman Salafi, P. 398). What is the exact meaning of "reason" in this criterion? Is the effectiveness of its various types the same? What are its limitations? In which area of interpretive tradition does it have an application? Answering these questions and other similar questions can help us avoid using this criterion by going to extremes. In this script, we have studied the role of reason in evaluating tradition. At first, we consider the literal meaning of reason and its types, then the validity of this criterion from the perspective of Koran, tradition and reason. The precise meaning of reason in this criterion includes the various applications of the reason such as functional reason, resource reason, theoretical and practical reason and identifying its limitations.

II. SEMANTICS

First, we consider the literal and then the idiomatic meaning of reason.

III. LITERAL MEANING

There is no clear definition for reason in lexical sources. Arabs considered any criteria for human recognition and its associated faculties as "reason". There is also a moral and religious approach to the meaning of reason. Ibn Faaress calls it the preventive force of doing immoral and telling bad words. Raghib considers the main meaning as abstinence and inhibition, and it can be found in all of its derivatives (Raghib Isfahani, P. 342). For expressing the action done by the reasoning power, the word "reason" is used, and the infinitive for reason was known as "understanding" and "devise".

Idiomatic Meaning

At first, we mention the meaning of "reason" in different sciences and then the meaning in Koran.

Meaning of Reason in other Fields of Science

In various sciences, reason has been used with different meanings. Molla Sadra has referred to it in multiple places in his works (Molla Sadra 1981, Vol. 3, P. 418-427 and P. 513-514; Hamu 1981 P. 199 – 208). The great scholar Majlessi has at least made mentions of reason in three places (Majlessi 1403, Vol. 1, P. 99 – 105; Majlessi 1399, P. 11 – 17; Majlessi 1404, Vol. 1, P. 25). Others have also given definitions for reason and its variety (Jorjani P. 65, Farabi P. 3, Ibn Sina P. 88, Toossi P. 161 – 170, Mofid P. 22, Helli P. 239) which all of them refer to at least one of the following meanings:

[1] The power of distinguishing between the good and the bad
[2] A condition in the soul that persuades one to prefer the good over the bad
[3] The force that humans utilize to arrange for their life and life earnings
[4] The four various stages of the self that consist of: Bel-malekat reason, Hayoolani reason, Bel-Fe^l reason and Mostafad reason
[5] The faculty of speech that distinguishes the man from animals
[6] The ancient abstract essence that has no entitlement to the material world

Meaning of Reason in Koran and Tradition

We encounter a variety of definitions for reason in Koran and tradition that have been the focus of many Islamic thinkers' focus. Hariss Ibn Asad Mehrabi concludes that reason in language, Koran verses and tradition has three meanings:

Instinctive reason: an instinctive power to gather knowledge and wisdom, common to all people. 2. Power of understanding the religious and worldly matters 3. Discernment and insight (Hariss Ibn Asad Mehrabi, P. 201-218)

Following the six different interpretations of the reason, Mr. Majlessi has concluded that reason has been used in three different meanings in tradition: 1. The power of distinguishing between good and bad, assignment criteria. 2. An internal angel that invites humans in choosing the good and leaving the bad. 3. Knowledge and science are beneficial for human success and prosperity. (Majlessi, 1403, Vol. 1, P. 99 – 101) Therefore, reason in its religious context is nothing but the intrinsic tendencies. Religious reason will always lead into faith and then it calls for action; otherwise, it will depart. Hence, there is a significant difference between reason and science. (Sobhi Saleh, 1398, P. 478; for more details: Molla Saleh Mazandarani Vol. 2, P. 136, 141-142)

IV.   DIFFERENT TYPES OF REASON

Reason is of different types that we will refer to two of them here: 1. Theoretical and practical reason 2. Resourceful and Functional reason

Theoretical and Practical Reason

Considering the range of definitions suggested for theoretical and practical reason, we can present two perspectives on the subject:

A Faculty with Two Applications

Some believe that the practical and theoretical reason are actually the same. That is, we have a power (or faculty) that has a special application which depending on the application sometimes we call it theoretical reason and sometimes it has other application and then we refer to it as a practical reason. Mozafar (Mozafar, 1998, P. 295-296), Haaj Molla Haadi Sabzevari (Sabzevari, P. 31) Mohaghegh Isfahani (Company Vol. 3, P. 195)

Two Faculties with Two Applications

The second perspective is prone to multiplicity of the faculties in practical and theoretical reason. That is, the two practical and theoretical reasons are considered as two distinct faculties with their own special applications. The theoretical reason can only understand the generalities whether they are related to human's voluntary actions like "good justice" and "bad cruelty" or generalities related to ideas and external truths like God and divine essential attributes. But the practical reason works around insignificant matters for taking practical advantage of them. For example, whether you should help this poor person is the result of this ideology that humans have two faculties: one especially for understanding the generalities (theoretical reason) and the

other is the faculty for practical details (practical reason). (Mesbah Yazdi, P. 96) Some other experts consider the main responsibility of theoretical reason is to comprehend. Each type of comprehension takes place with a faculty called theoretical reason, whether it is general or partial, action based or non-action based. The theoretical reason function is to understand. But the practical reason is the active faculty, and its sole function is to act. In general, these are two completely independent faculties for the self, without any common aspects. Great academicians like Ghotb-ul-din Razi in Al-Mohakemaat (Sabzevari, P. 310) have suggested the following definitions regarding the practical and theoretical reason. Among the more recent scholars, Mr. Javadi Amoli has also accepted the idea (Javadi Amoli 1999, Footnote P. 188).

Mokhtar's Perspective

Human has two main faculties. Theoretical reason, which is related to comprehension activities, consists of two theoretical and practical wisdoms. The theoretical wisdom discusses matters of existence and non-existence, being and not being of the world facts and the practical wisdom is about musts and must nots. On the other hand, the practical reason monitors what the human does. In validating this perspective, we can refer to the following two quotes, in one of which reason is considered as a faculty for comprehension and in the other as a factor in directing others. Raghib Isfahani has presented two quotes from the prophet Mohammad regarding "reason". In one, the prophet Mohammad has called reason as the transcendent of all creatures: God has never created a more valuable creature than the reason. This quote is about the aspect of the reason that philosophers have called "the sensual faculty" and has considered it as the faculty of understanding. In the second quote from the prophet Mohammad, we have: "no one can find better than reason for salvation and it keeps him away from indecency." (Mofradat Raghib, P. 354, on reason) In this quote, reason is used as a directing factor.

Resourceful and Functional Reason

Sometimes, by reason we mean the medium for understanding and awareness, and sometimes we mean the source of awareness.

Resourceful Reason

By resourceful reason we mean the reason that independently is used to recognize the truth and the religious teachings. This is one of the four kinds of reason that is mentioned as a jurisprudence source in Shiite Islam. In the field of oral discussions, reason is the main support in monotheism, prophecy and the other world. In ethics, the main principles rely on it that includes self-evident knowledge in theoretical and practical wisdom.

Functional Reason

By functional reason we mean the reason used for reasoning in various situations. The origin of this reasoning may be from the religious laws, reason, or history. Reason helps you by putting these basics together. It must be mentioned that most of those who have looked down on reason and have degraded it, they are looking at reason as a source not as a tool for recognition faculty. Because, among the Islamic thinkers there is no one who does not believe in the importance of reason in comprehending the holy book and tradition.

The Reason for Validity of Reason

To check for the validation of this criterion, you can refer to the holy book, tradition and reason.

V. KORAN

Reason has a very high station in Koran, so much that in Yousef sura God has mentioned that the reason for sending Koran for mankind was to make people think: "we sent Koran in Arabic so that you think" (Yousef, 2) Further, in Anbia Sura God says: "We sent you a book that includes the way for awakening you, don't you understand?" (Anbia, 10). In addition, Koran has announced the advantage of scientists and men of knowledge in their reason. (Ankaboot, 43). There are multiple verses in Koran that make one think, contrive, and contemplate in the universe, and there are quotes from the prophet Mohammad and verses of Koran to justify the correctness and incorrectness of them and to discover the truth about the validity of the quotes by the prophet and Koran verses. These verses are definitely refer to the validity and high station of reason and its necessities; a power for documenting and reasoning that blocks the way to any kind of deviation and wrong doing, and helps man to find the truth. Not only reason and pondering in divine verses and in the world of creation, the coming and going of day and night and capturing of stars and contemplating in the religion and the world has been mentioned in 49 different verses of Koran, but also other terms like "thinking" and "human awareness" that have become the focus of holy Koran. More than 1700 times, terms rooted in "science", "mind", "contemplation", "comprehension", "Reason", "recital", "hearing", "heart", "religious jurisprudence", "recognition" and "insight" have been used in Koran.

The Religious Tradition

In quotes narrated from the prophet Mohammad and his Imams (the saints in Islam), reason has a very high station and is considered pivotal point in recognizing the correctness and incorrectness of religious and non-religious matters. Monotheism, prophecy and the validity of the religious leaders have been proved by it. Some quotes and traditions have gone so far as to the importance of the reason to put it equal to the station for the prophets and Imams. (Barghi, Vol. 1, P. 198; Sadough, P. 591, Koleini, Vol. 1, P. 17). In Mr. Kaffi's book and in just one section of it, reason has been praised in 36 different quotes, references to reason as the criterion for right or wrong, accompanying religion and modesty, the most director for the faithful, the biggest investment and other interpretations, all proving the high value of this divine gift.

Reasoning Reasoning

Without a doubt, all human actions and thoughts have some reasoning backing behind them (theoretical and practical reason) and those actions and ideas are either accepted or rejected by reasoning predicates. In religious matters also, the correctness and incorrectness of all principles and theoretical and practical rulings refer back to the brief or detailed judgment of the reason. Even though, the correctness or incorrectness of some religious laws and matters such as the reason for the number of units for daily prayers, the time for fasting, and etc. is left for the religious law and the holy book and the religious tradition to be handled by, but obeying the reasoning reasoning is also accepted as a criterion for validating the prophecies and correctness of prophets' statements, and acceptance of these rules to be wise and identifying what must be referred back to the religious laws are among the responsibilities of the reason.

The Boundaries for Reason Performance

From a point of view, the interpretative quotes are divided into six categories: religious tenets, religious laws, ethical, scientific, revealed status, tales and expression of simple substances. The level of performance for assessing the quotes by reason is not the same in all of these areas. The theoretical and practical reason have the highest application in quotes about religious beliefs, ethical and revealed status. In other words, a quote (or tradition), if it does not include any special religious affairs, is measureable by reason. And if it includes some teachings and religious laws (such as the proof for some details about the conditions of the other world, purgatory, or the wisdom for the form of prayers), it will be inaccessible for the reason and reasoning judgment. Of course, this not interfering with some religious affairs by using reason by itself will eventually lead to some reasoning reasoning. Therefore, the functional reason in most religious affairs such as in quotes and tradition is valid. However, regarding the resourceful reason, we can say that the relation between the matters and the reason is of one of the following three forms:

A. The self-evident matters that do not need any reasoning and all people understand them. This is also of two types: essential matters that the theoretical reason understands them and in logic, it is divided to six types (Mozafar 1998, P. 282-289) and essential matters that the practical reason understands them (for those who accept the good and bad reason like Shiites and Some groups of Sunni Moslems) such as good justice, bad cruelty.
B. Theoretical matters that have been obtained by reasoning, but eventually lead to self-evident matters.
C. Matters that reason have no way of understanding them, like unimportant matters.

According to the argument given, the relation between the religious sources and the reason can be of the following three formats: 1. intelligently acceptable matters like the ones in most Koran verses and quotes in religious beliefs and ethical matters. 2. reason-truancy matters like the most of the verses and quotes that have focused on religious laws or the reward or punishment in the time of judgment. 3. Reason-fighting matters like quotes that denote to God as being in material form or matters that are different from the innocence by the prophets, or associate an indecent matters to the religious laws or its carriers.

VI. TYPES OF OPPOSITION TO REASON

In a glimpse, we can claim that in all oppositions, the functional reason can discover this opposition and therefore from this perspective, all the assessment criteria are put under the opposition with reason category and there is no limitation for reason. However, when we talk about the opposition with reason, we are not talking about this kind of opposition; by that we mean when the functional reason compares the quote (tradition) with that of resource reason and adjudicate to opposition with practical or theoretical wisdom.
On this basis, we can report two types of oppositions: 1. Opposition with theoretical reason that adjudicates to infeasibility or incorrectness. 2. Opposition with practical reason that adjudicates to being obscene.

Critic of some traditions based on this criterion in the faith domain
In this part, two examples of reason opposition in interpretational traditions are considered and to avoid lengthening of the discussion we won't give examples for intelligible and reason evader cases. One of them lies in the area of critiquing by theoretical reason and the other is about critiquing by practical reason. These are examples of traditions that there is controversy over their opposition with the reason.

The feasibility of the Effect of dawn on the Prophet's Reason (Opposition with Theoretical Reason)
In the name of God, the compassionate the merciful. Say: I take refuge with the lord of the day break (1) from the evil of what he has created (2). And from the evil of darkness when it gathers (3) and from the evil of witches who blow on knots (4) and from the evil of an envier when he envies (and to plot against me) (5). (Falagh Sura, 1 to 5)Siyouti narrates in his book titled "Dor-aldor from Abd Ibn Hamid, from Zeid Ibn Aslam that: A Jewish man set some curse on Prophet Mohammad and as a result he became sick, then Gabriel came down to him and gave him the two Maoozatain Surras and said: the Jewish man has cast a spell on you and the spell is in that well. The Prophet sent Ali to bring the spell back from the well and to untie the knots and read a verse for each knot. So, Ali read a verse while opening each knot and as soon as these two Surra's were finished, the knots were all open and then Prophet Mohammad got up, as if he was released from a bound. (Siyouti Vol. 6, P. 417)And it is narrated from the Teb-ul-Aemeh from Mohammad Ibn Sanan of Mafzal from Imam Sadiq (Hoveizi, Vol. 5, P. 718). And there has been many similar quotes from the Sunni Muslims with minor differences and in some it was mentioned that Zobair and Ammar were also sent out with Ali. (Aloosi, Vol. 30, P. 283)Some other quotes have been reported with the same meaning from the inmate Imams. In some of those quotes, it was mentioned that the spell was so powerful that he could not even identify the way to his house and collided with the door each time. (Hoveizi, Vol. 5, P. 718 from Teb-ul-Aemeh)

Critic & Analysis
These traditions are distorted in some aspects: 1. Documentation Forms: low validity for Teb-ul Aemeh Book 2. Historical Forms: This is a Surra from Mecca, but the narrated story is from the last periods in Medina 3. In opposition with reason: the possibility to investigate such happening will be in contradiction to the reason for sending messengers of God to the Earth. The whole purpose of the divine messengers is to guide people to agree and act upon what they are invited to do. And this requires people to trust God's prophets. So, God's prophets must be free from anything that would distort their immunity. Doing magic will definitely cause some mistrust and one cannot be confident in the words of a prophet who is so much affected by the breaking of the day. Therefore, this quote is in direct contradiction with our reason and the need for God's messengers to be sacred. As you see, in this case, the functional reason adjudicates to invalidity of the narrative quote based on the theoretical reason.

Blinding of Ibn Abbass by Gabriel
Verily! We have sent it (this Qur'an) down in the night of Al-Qadr. And what will make you know what the night of Al-Qadr. The night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months). Therein descend the angels and the Ruh [Jibrael (Gabriel)] by Allah's Permission with all Decrees, Peace! (All that night, there is Peace and Goodness from Allah to His believing slaves) until the appearance of dawn.Beneath this Surah many traditions from the Imams are narrated, discussing various topics surrounding this Surah – many of which have the document and script validity. However, some of these traditions are quoted from a book titled "Fazl Enna Anzalnaho fi Laylat-ul Ghadr" from Hassan Ibn Abbas Ben Harrish –he and his book are both invalid. (Al-najashi P. 61, Ibn Alghazaeri,Vol. 1, P. 52, Alheli, P. 214, Khoie, Vol. 10, P. 239). Below, we will quote one of these traditions and then evaluate its validity by reason criterion. Imam Sadiq said: My father was sitting and some people were around him, suddenly he started laughing to the extent that his eyes were welled up with tears, then he said: Do you know why I laughed? They said: No. Then he said: I remembered a story from Ibn Abbass. He believes that he is among those who said our God is our Lord and then persevered (Faslat, 30) while the God will send him to the hell. As he was blinded by an angel after denying Ali. I told him about this once, then laughed at him and let him go for his foolishness. (Koleini Vol. 1, P. 247)

Critic & Analysis
To analyze this quote, it is essential to pay attention to some points: 1. The quote indicates that Imam Bagher was talking with Ibn Abbass in the presence of his disciples during his leadership time, while Ibn Abbass passed away in the year 67 (Hijri Calendar) (Keshi, Vol. 1, P. 272; Ibn Hajar, Vol. 3, P. 159) while Imam Bagher's leadership starts in the year 95, after the martyrdom of Imam Sajjad. 2. Considering the birth year of Imam Bagher in 57, at the time of passing of Ibn Abbass, he only was 10 years old. 3. Considering the year Ibn Abbass was born (3 years before the Prophet Mohammad migration) (Ibn Hajar Asgholani, Vol. 3, P.

193) Ibn Abbass was 70 year old at that time. 4. Ibn Abbass's blindness happened some time towards the end of his life and Saied ibn Jobayr was his guide in walking (Shooshtari, 1410, Vol. 6, P. 470; Ibn Abi Alhadid, Vol. 20, P. 130 and 134; Zahabi, Vol. 3, P. 354; Abu Ali Haeri, Vol. 4, P. 201. Keshi, Vol. 1, P. 272; Mamaghani, Vol. 2, P. 191). 5. The narrative shows that apparently Imam Sadiq has also been present during the meeting of Imam Bagher with Ibn Abbass, while he was born in the year 83. Considering the above information, this narrative is distorted in some ways: 1. Contradiction with history: it was impossible for Imam Sadiq to be present during the life time of Ibn Abbass, and lack of any disciples for Imam Bagher at that time. 2. Contradiction with reason: this story is seemingly about the conversation between a 10 year old boy with a 70 year old man. Or is it alright to associate this style of thinking to a 70 year old man and to an Imam in his childhood? The practical reason rules to the evilness of this behavior, so this narrative is in opposition to practical reason. Of course, the idea that Ibn Abbass is in denial of Imam Ali's guardianship is in contradiction to historical facts (Allameh Helli, P. 103; Sheik Ali Namazi, Vol. 5, P. 43; Ibn Abi Alhadid, Vol. 1, P. 19; Shahid Sani, P. 312; Arbali Vol. 2, P. 109; Abu Alfaraj Isfahani, P. 33). He has seventy two debates, seventy of which are about defending the Imam Ali's guardianship (Allameh Amini, Vol. 2, P. 81, 206, 439 & Vol. 10, P. 342-344). Even there has been some accounts for his blindness in the end of his life due to his too much crying for Imam Ali. (Ghomi, Vol. 6, P. 128)As it was seen here, practical reason has concluded the invalidity of this narrative.

VII. CONCLUSION

[1] Reason is the focus of attention by Koran and tradition as an assessment tool for narratives' validity and its validity has been signed by them and it has been declared as divine proof along with the prophets.

[2] Reason is of various types, and therefore, its role in validating the narratives is not the same. The functional reason is often used in most types of documented narratives and other criteria for assessing narratives rely upon it, and nobody has any doubt about its validity. But in most situations, when there is a mention of the role of reason, we mean the resourceful reason.

[3] The resourceful reason is of two types of theoretical and practical. Studying the narratives show that these two types of reason are of different functions in humans. Theoretical reason is related to the domain of understandings and is of two types of theoretical and practical; theoretical wisdom argues regarding existence and non-existence of genesis and the practical wisdom argues about musts and must-nots. The interpreter of both branches of theoretical and practical wisdoms is the theoretical reason, but the functional reason observes what the human does.

[4] In using the reasoning criteria, we must pay attention to the difference in performance of theoretical and practical reason. The theoretical reason tries to prove the impossibility of the narrative and the practical reason tires to prove the unethical nature of narrative to reject it. The role of resourceful reason in validating narratives is mostly of dispossessive type.

[5] Considering the limitations of resourceful reason is important in how we use it. Therefore, in narratives regarding the religious laws and the other world's details which there is no way in understanding them, there is no role for judgment imagined.

[6] In using the reason criteria, we must pay attention not to replace the certainty with doubtfulness.

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