

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF *QADARIYYA* AND  
*JABARIYYA* SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AND THE  
ISSUE OF HERESY AND HERETICS DURING  
THE Umayyad PERIOD (661-750 CE)**

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**Abstract**

This study primarily focuses on why and how the political and religious dissenters were branded as heretics and were persecuted during the later Umayyad period. It argues that in addition to religious and theological causes of heresy, political, social and economic factors were also involved. This study also briefly delineates the emergence of Qadariyya and Jabariyya schools of thoughts and it helps us understand the grievances of the different schools of thoughts, particularly the Qadariyya against the political authorities and religious orthodoxy, which was upheld by the political and religious authorities. In many cases of the Qadariyya heresy, the socio-political and economic causes were far more important than the religious factors. The most important thing about the Qadariyya heresy was that only those people were declared heretics who were active in preaching the doctrine of free will, and they posed a threat to the social and political institutions of the state. The present study contests the practice of dealing with heresy merely on theological and religious grounds, and tries to explore political, social and economic factors in addition to religious and theological causes of heresy.

**Key Words:** *Qadariyya*, *Jabariyya*, '*ulamā*', Heresy, Umayyad

## Introduction

After the death of Prophet Muhammad (The Last Prophet upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace) (d. 632 CE), conflicts arose in the Muslim community over the issues of faith, nature of God, Imamate, human free will and predestination, and the physical as well as metaphysical world. Islam encourages difference of opinion, as Prophet Muhammad (The Last Prophet upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace) said, “The differences of opinion (*ikhtilāf*) among the learned men of my community are [an outcome of] divine grace (*rahmah*)<sup>1</sup>”, but these differences of opinion, with the passage of time hardened the attitude of different religious groups and sects who were not ready to tolerate others. Those who made an alliance with the state helped to form an ‘official religion’. The state with the help of some religious groups, enjoying juristic authority, declared religious and political dissenters as heretics and persecuted them. During the Umayyad Caliphate (r. 661-750 CE), differences of opinion gave rise to the *Jabariyya* and *Qadariyya* schools of thought. The *Qadariyya*, who believed in human free will and human responsibility of evil actions, were persecuted as heretics, as this was against the divine authority of the Caliphate.<sup>2</sup> They were imprisoned, punished and sometimes crucified by the political authorities apparently on theological grounds, but in most of the cases, other factors were also involved.

Owing to the conflict in Muslim society during the early period and politicizing of the institution of the Caliphate, a relationship of power emerged between the dominant religious groups and the ruling elite. The ruling elite and dominant religious group considered every dissenting voice a threat to religious orthodoxy and to the political authority of the caliphs. The attitude of political and religious authorities helped in the formation of orthodoxy and heresy or heterodoxy in Islam. As Talal Asad argues, orthodoxy is not just a particular set of beliefs and opinions but it is a “relationship of power.”<sup>3</sup> There is no fixed form of orthodoxy in Islam. It is the specific social, cultural and historical contexts that help in understanding, defining the formation of Muslim tradition, orthodoxy and heresy.

In Muslim history, heresy has generally been treated as a religious or theological phenomenon by the historians. This approach to heresy seems to be reductive, as it over-simplifies a complex phenomenon. The present study contests this view of dealing with heresy merely on theological and religious grounds, and tries to explore that in addition to religious and theological causes of heresy, political, social and economic factors were

also involved. This study primarily focuses on why and how the political and religious dissenters were branded as heretics and were persecuted during the later Umayyad period? It studies why the people having innovative thoughts were declared heretics? This study also briefly delineates the emergence of *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* schools of thoughts and it helps understand the grievances of the different schools of thoughts, particularly the *Qadariyya* against the political authorities and religious orthodoxy, which was upheld by force.

### **Heresy in Islam: A historical background**

The roots of heresy in Islam can be traced back to the pre-Islamic social, cultural, religious and intellectual history. Pre-Islamic impacts of Greek philosophy, Hellenistic rationalism, and the nomadic Arab attitude toward predestination played an important role in the emergence of heresy in Islam.

There were two major reasons of the emergence of heterodoxy in Islam. First was the cultural interaction of the Arabs with other nations. Many rituals and practices common in the Arabian society were the result of the influence of Jews, Christians, as well as Greek and Indian cultures. The followers of these religions contributed to Muslim education, and also in the formation of rationalistic attitude of the Muslim intellectuals.<sup>4</sup> In particular, Greek thought helped in the growth of Muslim intellect in respect of logic and philosophy.<sup>5</sup> This mingling of ideas from different backgrounds in the Arab mind resulted in the rise of different schools of thought in Islam. The second reason was internal and was related to the socio-economic changes in Muslim society. When wealth was pouring in from the conquered lands during the times of the pious Caliphs (r. 632-661 CE), Muslim approach towards politics was changed, particularly during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān (R.A.) (r. 644-656 CE).<sup>6</sup> These two factors relating with intellectualism and materialism played important role in the formation of difference of opinion among the Muslims, and consequently, the emergence of heterodoxy and heresy in the Muslim community.

### **Emergence of Religio-political differences during the Pious Caliphate (632-661 CE)**

In the lives of the early Muslims, Islam played a vital role. For them, Islam was great source of dispensation of their worldly grievances and a system of "propriety and justice."<sup>7</sup> Islam brought a shift in the social and

economic life of the common people, “a change from nomadism to commerce.”<sup>8</sup> This change in social and economic life also affected their approach to Islamic beliefs and practices. And those, who were effected, sought justice prescribed by Islam. When not fulfilled by the ruling elite, the marginalized people became resentful and thus were declared to be out of the mainstream religion. Thus an attitude was adopted which can be characterized as orthodox.<sup>9</sup> The early protest movements, such as that of Shi’ism and Sufism were suppressed by the ruling elite as they criticized the practices of unbounded power and authority and wealthy lifestyle.<sup>10</sup> At the end of the *Rāshidūn* Caliphate because of chaos and bloodshed in the society, and due to the question of the righteousness and eligibility of a Caliph, the Muslim community was divided into different schools of thought and groups. The schools of thought and religious factions that greatly affected the later Muslim history were *Qadariyya*, *Jabariyya*, *Khārijī*,<sup>11</sup> *Murji’a*,<sup>12</sup> and *Shī’a*.<sup>13</sup> The underlying causes of their differences were their social and political grievances, often expressed in the form of theological differences.

The Muslims of the early era also cast their mundane grievances in the form of a threat to their religion.<sup>14</sup> Their demand for social justice and equality was based on religious grounds, as they took Islam as a just religion. The aspirations of the unprivileged groups of *Khārijīs* and *Shī’a* forced them to resist the privileged members of the Umayyad state. *Mawālī* were at the forefront in this respect. The realization that the practice of Islam as a polity based on injustice led to resistance by the *Mawālī* :

who were a new element in Muslim society, may be their realization that their religious experience and cultural tradition were not compatible with those of the Arabs, and their social and economic position was certainly not comparable with them, have strengthened the undercurrent of dissatisfaction ...<sup>15</sup>

*Mawālī* brought their old ideas into Shi’ism like those of Babylonian, Judaeo-Christian and Zoroastrian traditions. They also brought ideas unknown to Islam, such as the Old Persian religious heresies, Manichaeism<sup>16</sup> and Mazdakism.<sup>17</sup>

Muslims got influence from the pre-Islamic civilizations and cultures which played a critical role in creating difference of opinion among Muslim scholars. After the period of the Pious caliphs, theological debate over the issue of whether human being is free in his actions and practices, or his actions are predetermined by God, contributed very much in

widening of the differences as these doctrines were very much related to politics and governance. These debates gave impetus to *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* schools of thought during the Umayyad Caliphate.

### **Emergence of *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* schools of thought under the Umayyads**

The Umayyads established their dynasty in the nascent Muslim Empire in 661. At that time, different Muslim factions fought against each other over the issue of the right person to lead the Muslims. This chaotic situation forced people to think about the role of the Caliph in Islam in respect of morality, politics and theology. During the Umayyad Caliphate, theological debate focused mainly on the question that to what extent man is free in action and to what extent is the role of God in the predetermination of the human acts. This debate over the role of Caliph in Muslim theology indirectly led to the emergence of two main schools of thought under the Umayyads: *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya*.

The central theme of the debate was that good deeds are decreed by God while the wrongdoings are the result of man's own free will. A plethora of theological questions arose relating to free will and predestination, God's attributes, and unity of God.<sup>18</sup> To address these questions Muslims were divided into different groups of the learned.

The group that tried to find answers through the literal interpretation of the Holy Quran, reality of God's attributes and God's unity were called *Jabariyya*, or the orthodox Muslims. The term *Jabariyya* is derived from *jabr*, i.e. to enforce, that human being is unable to interfere or go against the will of God, all Powerful. *Jabariyya* were of the opinion that all human acts are decreed by God. According to their belief, all good and bad done by the human beings is with the will of God.<sup>19</sup> They did not believe in the natural causes of different events in the universe. They believe that the major cause of the events was God. *Jabariyya* argue that God is responsible for all human actions. God forces people to do good deeds and then rewards them for their goodness. God also forces people to do wrong actions and punishes them.<sup>20</sup> They denied the use of rationalism and logic to interpret theological issues.

*Qadariyya* emerged during the era of late Umayyads, i.e. early Marwanid Caliphate.<sup>21</sup> The word *Qadariyya* was used for a group of theologians having the principle of *liberum arbitrium* or free will.<sup>22</sup> It was generally used for those people who rejected the notion of *jabr*, i.e. pre-determinism of human action by God. Contrary to this, *Qadariyya* believed in human free will. According to al-Ash'arī, the word *qadar*

implies freedom of the man to act (*qudrah*), and that there is no pre-determination of the acts of human beings.<sup>23</sup> According to the *Qadariyya* school of thought, God had given full powers to human beings over their actions. It would be wrong to believe that God would interfere in human actions after giving them freedom of action and choice.<sup>24</sup> The most important doctrines of *Qadariyya* are as under:

1. Uniqueness of God has no firm attributes. The Holy Quran is something created (*makhlūq*) by God, and it is not eternal.

2. Human beings have free will in their actions and responsibility. God does not have will so God does not do evil.

3. A Muslim who acts wrongly or sins, loses his faith (*īmān*), but he cannot be declared infidel, nor is he a true Muslim. It is repentance that makes him a true Muslim and regains his faith.

4. God always does Good for his creations. The aim of the laws in the universe, created by God, is always goodness of humanity.

5. Human beings can discover, know, and separate good from evil through reason without the help of revelation, but Islamic religious practices like prayer and fasting can be known only through revelation.

6. God would punish those who would do evil and would give reward to those who do good. The justice of God is a *quid pro quo* (a favour or advantage given in return for something), for every act.<sup>25</sup>

*Qadariyya* which reflects “loose theological trends” incorporated people having different legal and factional backgrounds. They included the *Sunnīs*, *Shī‘a* and *Khārijīs*. They had same approach towards the question of free will and predestination; they also had a shared approach toward the question of Divine essence and Divine attributes.<sup>26</sup>

*Qadariyya* was founded by Ma‘bad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Ukaym al-Duḥanī (d. 699 CE). According to some sources, he was taught by a Christian by the name of Sanhoya or Sansoya al-Uswari (d. n.d.).<sup>27</sup> He belonged to the Juhayna tribe and lived during the Umayyad period. He argued that man is free, at least in some of his bad and wrong actions.<sup>28</sup> Another person by the name of Abū Marwān al-Dimashqī al-Kibtī (d. 723 CE), one of the earlier believers and preachers of free will, also believed that people, who thought that the evil deeds in this world are done because of God’s Will, are not right in their understanding of the matter. According to al-Dimashqī, man was solely responsible for his acts in this world. He also argued that it was not necessary for the head of the Muslim community to be from the *Quraysh* tribe, he could belong to any other tribe, and must have the knowledge of the Book and *Sunna* (the exemplary practices, sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad (The Last Prophet upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace)).<sup>29</sup> The

*Qadariyya* preached human free will and on the ground of the freedom of free will gave reason that human beings was responsible for all his or her actions whether evil or good.

The term *Qadar* first time appeared during the Caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 685-705) who opposed the view of *Qadariyya*. The term was used by the ruling authorities against their political opponents.<sup>30</sup> In his deliberate effort against the *Qadariyya*, ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān obtained support from the important religious figures of *Murji‘a* against the *Qadariyya*. Professor Van Ess maintains that there were many prominent followers of *Qadariyya* School in Syria and Iraq but only those were persecuted, who posed a threat to the Umayyad dynasty.<sup>31</sup> Umayyad Caliphate perceived threat from the *Qadariyya*, because the latter’s views about the questioning of the evil actions of human beings were harmful for the authority of the Caliphate.

During the later period of the Umayyads, the *Qadariyya* played a significant role in questioning the notion of justifying bad acts of the rulers on theological ground. They were of the opinion that a ruler was answerable for his bad actions, and could be removed from the office.<sup>32</sup> They criticised the Umayyad rulers “who had pretended that their governmental power was a divine gift, a *rizq* like a soldier’s pay, and thus predetermined and well deserved.”<sup>33</sup> The Umayyad Caliphs got support from theological arguments and stated that their government was determined by God as human beings were not free and all their actions were predetermined by God. Therefore, it was duty of the people to accept the Caliphate of Umayyads.<sup>34</sup> However, the *Qadariyya* argued that only those deserved to become rulers, who were capable according to their knowledge, ability and honesty. Thus they posed a threat to the Umayyad Caliphate. The Umayyad, who considered it a rebellion against the “divine ordinance,” took support from the religious elite having predestinarian attitude, and declared those who preached free will as heretics.<sup>35</sup> Though Umayyad Caliphs themselves did not believe in pre-determinism, they supported theologians, scholars, *muhaddith* (an expert of *hadīth*) and jurists who preached the views of *Jabariyya* because it was in the political interests of the regime.<sup>36</sup> For the Umayyad Caliphs, the people of *Jabariyya* School were not harmful as they favoured the divine rule, while *Qadariyya* were persecuted because they opposed the divine authority of the Umayyads.

This question of *Qadar* and *Jabr* also helped in the formation of a religious elite having orthodox views. Although *Qadar* was a question of intellectual nature, it was also concerned with the political justification of the Umayyad government.<sup>37</sup> Chaos and unrest raised questions in the

minds of the people regarding the justification of bloodshed and its responsibility on the ruling elite. So the questions of pre-destination and free will emerged. The rulers found justification from the *'ulamā'* (sing. *'ālim*, a religious scholar), having the doctrine of *Jabariyya*, of their wrong doings, while the *Qadariyya* insisted on holding the rulers responsible for their misdeeds. Therefore, those who believed and preached the notion of free will were declared heretics and were persecuted.

During the Umayyad Caliphate, in the multi-cultural environment of Damascus, different theological and philosophical schools of thought existed, which included the advocates of "Greek dialectics, Christian Trinitarianism, Manichaean dualism, pagan materialism and even anthropomorphic conceptions."<sup>38</sup> The intellectual debate which gave birth to theological dissension over the questions of human free will and pre-determinism were result of the presence of pre-Islamic social and cultural traditions, and the new intellectual groups having interaction with the people of the newly conquered areas.

At the later stage of the Umayyad Caliphate, the question of *Qadariyya* became threatening and even the well-reputed, honest and dedicated Muslims were brought under inquisition. Abū Sa'īd b. Abi'l-Hasan Yasār al-Basrī (d. 728 CE), the great Muslim theologian and Sufi, was one of them. According to Ibn Khallikān, Hasan al-Basrī was a man who "possessed all the branches of science and was noted for self-mortification, fear of God, and devotion."<sup>39</sup> He was interrogated by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik (r. 685-705 CE) for allegedly having *Qadariyya* views. It shows the importance of *Qadariyya* views for the Caliph as the most respected and well-reputed scholar was not spared.<sup>40</sup> Hasan al-Basrī accepted the Marwanid Caliphate but criticized their wrong actions, particularly when Caliph 'Abd al-Malik punished those who discussed human free will, as they were viewed as dangerous for the Caliphate.<sup>41</sup> So those men belonging to *Qadariyya* were prosecuted and punished as they were a challenge to the caliphal authority.

The debate between *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* during the Umayyad Caliphate over the issue of human volition and predestination played an important role in politicizing the philosophico-theological debate. Initially, the questions of *Qadar* and *Jabr* did not bother the Caliphs but later *Qadariyya* were prosecuted and persecuted as the Marwanid branch of the Umayyad Caliphate tried to impose state-sponsored orthodoxy. Those who formed alliance with the ruling elite established hegemony over the implementation of their interpretation of the religious doctrines



and thus declared the others, i.e. the *Qadariyya*, as heretics with the help of the political authorities.

### **Heresy and Heretics during the Umayyad Caliphate (661-750 CE)**

The late Umayyad period is most important in respect of the emergence of heresy and persecution of heretics. As the Umayyad Caliphs considered their rule a divine right, they propounded their own form of orthodoxy with the help of the religious authority.<sup>42</sup> In this struggle, Caliphs had the support of the religious authority whose doctrinal views were more suited to the caliphs.<sup>43</sup> The theological debate over the questions of man's freedom of choice and action, predestination and the eligibility of the Caliph of the Muslim *umma* (the community of believers) culminated in the form of dispensation of intolerance and demand of justice by the religious factions. People revolted against the state, and the state in response declared these dissenters and rebellious elements as heretics having the support of religious elite.

Under the Umayyad Caliphate, the state lost its integrity as having and practicing Islam as a moral force. The 'state-community solidarity' lost strength because of the aims and objectives of the Umayyad Caliphate. They suppressed dissenters in the name of suppressing heresies but there were more political reasons than religious ones.<sup>44</sup> They did not practice Islam as a moral system. The Umayyad Caliphs had more personal, political, social, and economic interests than the ethical and moral aims of Islam.

'Abd al-Malik was the first Umayyad Caliph who started the persecution of heretics. He was the successor of Marwān I (r. 684-685 CE). Al-Hārith ibn Saïd al-Kadhhdhāb was the first person who was executed on the charges of heresy. Al-Hārith was a pious man and transmitter of *hadīth* as well. He was executed on the so-called charges of claiming prophecy as he proclaimed himself as prophet.<sup>45</sup> According to Ibn 'Asākir, he was given opportunity of redeeming his heretical views but he was executed around the year 699, after refusing to change his views.<sup>46</sup> The detailed account of his transformation from a pious believer man to a claimant of prophecy is not available. At the same time another person by the name of Ma'bad b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Ukaym al-Juhanī (d. 703 CE) was executed on the charges of heresy. He was a well reputed scholar and *Muhaddith*, he was also forerunner of *Qadaryyia* school of thought.<sup>47</sup> He was an important juridical and religious figure of his age. He was ambassador to the Byzantine Empire during the Caliphate of 'Abd al-Malik. He was executed by the same Caliph owing to his support to the

revolt of Ibn al-Ash‘ath. There is confusion whether he was killed as a heretic or as a rebel. According to some reports, he was executed on the charges of preaching *Qadariyya* doctrine,<sup>48</sup> but it must have been used as a pretext for his execution, as political motives behind his execution are obvious.

During the Caliphate of Hishām Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 723-743 CE), a ‘systematic’ persecution of heretics was started with the help of his religious assistant ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Awzā‘ī (d. 774 CE) when the Caliph tried to enforce “state sponsored orthodoxy”.<sup>49</sup> The most important figure who was executed on the charges of heresy during the Caliphate of Hishām was Abū Marwān Ghaylān al-Dimashqī al-Kibtī. He was a scholar, as Ibn al-Nadīm has recorded a thousand leaves from his epistles.<sup>50</sup> He was accused of preaching the doctrine of free will, which was an anathema to the Umayyad Caliphate as his preaching was encouraging rebellious sentiments. He was scolded by Caliph ‘Umar bin ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (r. 717-723 CE) and told to stop preaching the doctrine of free will but he continued, and was crucified mercilessly during the reign of Caliph Hishām.<sup>51</sup> Caliph Hishām chose al-Awzā‘ī for prosecution of Ghaylān al-Dimashqī as the later had enmity with the *Qadariyya*, and also had personal religious differences with al-Dimashqī.<sup>52</sup> Ghaylān al-Dimashqī had previously enjoyed an important position in the Umayyad administration. He accompanied Caliph Hishām to his pilgrimage. However, he was of the opinion that “the rulers should not regard their power as a ‘gift of God’ with which they could do what they liked.”<sup>53</sup> These views of Ghaylān al-Dimashqī were perceived as threat to the political authority of the Caliph, and also dangerous to the religious and political authority of the dominant religious group.

Al-Ja‘d Ibn Dirham was also executed during the Caliphate of Hishām. He was also an “established scholar” of Damascus or al-Jazira. He was executed around the year 125/743.<sup>54</sup> According to Ibn al-Nadīm, he was declared a heretic and executed by Khalid b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kasrī on the day of Eid al-Azha instead of the ritual sheep. He was accused of having Manichaean ideas and preaching them to Marwān II (r.744-750).<sup>55</sup> He had anti-Marwanid political sentiments and *Qadariyya* preaching which became the reasons of his persecution.<sup>56</sup> Jahm Ibn Safwān (d. 746 CE) was a theologian of the late Umayyad period. He was secretary to al-Hārith Ibn Surayj (d. 746 CE). He was executed owing to his support and involvement in a revolt by al-Hārith Ibn Surayj against the Umayyads from 734 to 746 in eastern Khurasan. Jahm Ibn Safwān was a leading figure of this revolt, as the rebels demanded that the government should be in accordance with “the Book of God and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet

(The Final Prophet Upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace).<sup>57</sup> According to Tabarī (d. 923 CE), Jahm Ibn Safwān was killed because he supported Yemeni Arabs against the Marwanid regime.<sup>58</sup> Among the other advocates of *Qadariyya* who were exiled to an island named Dahlak, in the Red Sea, as a punishment for having the views of free will, were Abu 'l-Mughīra Amr Ibn Shurahbīl al-'Ansī, executed in 743, and Ibn Is'hāq who was flogged during the Abbasid Caliphate because of having *Qadariyya* inclination.<sup>59</sup> The above mentioned persons were persecuted on the grounds of believing and preaching *Qadariyya* doctrines which were not acceptable to the Umayyad Caliphs, and the political activism of these men against the Umayyad Caliphate.

The Umayyads started persecution of heretics when in the opinion of Judd, the “religious dissenters were becoming better organized, gaining adherents and engaging in political activities which the regime perceived as threatening.”<sup>60</sup> When the Umayyads faced danger from the advocates of free will, the former labelled the latter as heretics with the help of the religious groups having the same view.<sup>61</sup> The three leading figures of Umayyad era, Hasan al-Basrī, Ghaylān al-Dimashqī and Ma'bad al-Juhanī believed in free will but Hasan al-Basrī was saved from the persecution of the Umayyad Caliph because of his soft criticism of unjust regime of the Umayyads.<sup>62</sup> When people aligned with the *Qadariyya*, challenged the political and religious authority of the Caliphs and the dominant religious group at the later period of the Umayyad Caliphate, they were declared heretics and were persecuted.

The heretics who were executed during the Umayyad rule were reputed scholars and *muhaddithin*. Some of them, such as Ma'bad al-Juhanī and Ghaylān al-Dimashqī, belonged to influential groups, and most importantly, they preached the concept of human free will when during the later days of the Umayyad Caliphate, orthodoxy was gaining ground and the state was sponsoring orthodoxy. When the Umayyads established their dynastic rule, it was the monarchy that was more important in all matters pertaining to peace, politics and property.<sup>63</sup> The Umayyad Caliphs gave preference to the security and safety for their rule, and in this respect they anathemized anyone against their rule, as a heretic, with the support of the religious scholars aligned with political authorities.

It is clear from the preceding discussion that the pre-Islamic culture, beliefs and practices influenced the Arab mind, and especially their philosophy and rationalism. At the end of the Caliphate of the *Rāshidūn*, the Muslims were disunited on political issues, but there was no dominant religious group to define heresy. During the Umayyad Caliphate, debate

over the question of free will and determinism between the *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* schools of thought helped in forming the attitude of the hardliner ‘*ulamā*’ toward the believers of free will and rationalism. The *Qadariyya* was a school of thought that put forward the idea that God has given rational ability to human being to do good things, so a bad ruler could be removed if he was unjust to the people. This approach of the *Qadariyya* was not in favour of the ruling elite and also not in favour of the religious elite. So the prominent figures of the *Qadariyya*, involved in somewhat political and revolutionary activities, were declared heretics by the state with the help of the religious elite.

### **Conclusion**

This study has focused on the religious outlook of *Qadariyya* and *Jabariyya* schools of thought. In many cases of *Qadariyya* heresy, the socio-political and economic causes were far more important than the religious factors. The most important thing about the *Qadariyya* heresy was that only those people were declared heretics who were active in preaching in the doctrine of free will, and they posed threat to the social and political institutions of the state. Those who had ideas of *Qadariyya* but did not disturb the Caliphate were not persecuted as such. Although the Umayyads were not concerned with the idea of state patronage and regulation of the religious doctrines at the early stage of their rule but when heresy became a political threat, it was pursued vehemently. There were questions of religious and political authority. The basic point to note was the question of the responsibility of the evil actions of the ruling class which became main reason of declaring dissenters, religious as well as political, as heretics and their persecution. They used the concept of heresy to curb or suppress political and social dissenters, as during the late Umayyad Caliphate most cases of the heretics were those who were political and social threat to the state as well. Freedom of thought and freedom of action were also suppressed in the garb of contesting heterodoxical ideas.

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### Notes & References

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<sup>1</sup> As quoted in *The Message of Quran*, tr. and commentary Muhammad Asad (Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1984), foreword by the commentator, viii.

<sup>2</sup> Josef Van Ess, “Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 2 (2001): 158.

<sup>3</sup> Talal Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” *Center for Contemporary Arab Studies*, Occasional Paper Series, (Georgetown University March 1986): 15. According to Asad, It is the power of regulating the correct practices and condemning the incorrect practices. At the same time, the Muslim tradition has continuously been changed.

So there is no fixed form of orthodoxy in Islam. It is the specific social, cultural and historical contexts that help in understanding, defining and formation of Muslim tradition and orthodoxy.

<sup>4</sup> Ira M. Lapidus., *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 43.

<sup>5</sup> Mohammad Kamal, *Heterodoxy in Islam: A Philosophical Study* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1993), 1-3; W. Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oxford: OneWorld, 1998), 183.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Religious Perceptions in Early Islam," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, (1988): 265.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 276.

<sup>9</sup> Kamal, *Heterodoxy in Islam*, 14.

<sup>10</sup> Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *The Crisis of Muslim History: Religion and Politics in Early Islam* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2006), 149-50.

<sup>11</sup> *Khawarij* separated themselves from the mainstream Muslim community declaring the Holy Quran as the only criterion of judgment, not human being, after the battle of *Siffin* between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya in 657, and thus were called *Khāriji*. See G. Levi Della Vida, "Kharidjites," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 4: 1074-77.

<sup>12</sup> The name of a religio-political movement emerged during the early period of Islam, after the revolt of Mukhtār Thaqafī in 686 against the Umayyad Caliphate. *Murji'a* believed that faith was a belief, not actions. *Murji'a*'s faith was based on belief not actions. They argued that judgment about the true Muslim and false Muslim was not the prerogative of human being but God would decide on the Day of Judgment. Therefore one should not declare other out of the Muslim community. They believed that just confession of belief would be enough for the Muslim to be called a true Muslim. They stressed more on beliefs than practices. See W. Madelung, "Murji'a," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 7: 605-7.

<sup>13</sup> After the demise of Prophet Muhammad (The Last Prophet upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace), a minority group in Madinah, which supported 'Alī as a Caliph instead of Abū Bakr on the ground of his relationship with the Prophet (The Last Prophet, Upon whom, his Progeny and Companions be Peace), was composed of the friends and supporters of 'Alī. With the passage of time, they came to be known as *shī'at 'Alī*, the group of 'Alī, and simply *Shī'a'*

<sup>14</sup> As cited in Zaman, "The Relevance of Religion and the Response to it," 265.

<sup>15</sup> Zaman, "The Relevance of Religion and the Response to it," 277; and Bernard Lewis, "Some Observations on the Significance of Heresy in the History of Islam," *Studia Islamica*, 1(1953), 47-48.



<sup>16</sup> Manichaeism was the religion founded by Mani. He was born in 216-17 A. D. in Babylonia. He declared himself a prophet and travelled to India, China and Khurasan. According to Ibn al-Nadīm, he derived his doctrines from Magians and Christians. He preached during the reign of Shahbur I in 240. He was put into prison by Wahram, successor of Shahbur I where he died. He preached that human beings were mixture of two 'eternal' and 'infinite' elements of light (Spirit) and darkness (Matter) and they are mixed with each other. Manichaeism has great importance in Muslim history as during the early Abbasid Caliphate many people were put to death as believing in Manichaeism Dualism. See Abu 'l-Faradj Muḥammad Ibn Is'hāk al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* (The Fihrist of al-Nadim) tr. and ed. Bayard Dodge (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 773; F. C. de Blois, "Zindīk," *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, 9; 510-513; Daniel Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 29; Ghulam Haider Aasi, *Muslim Understanding of Other Religions: An Analytical Study of Ibn Hazm's al-Fasl Fi al-Milal wa-al-Ahwa wa al-Nihal*, Unpublished Thesis, Temple University, 1986, 364.

<sup>17</sup> Kamal, *Heterodoxy in Islam*, 57; Mazdak was leader of a revolutionary movement in Iran during the Sassanid Empire. He lived under Kubadh, son of Firuz, 488/9, 498/99 to 531. His revolutionary movement was based on equality of everything and against the privileges of the rich class. See M. Guidi – [M. Morony], "Mazdak," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 6; 949-952.

<sup>18</sup> Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 105.

<sup>19</sup> Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri, *Decree and Destiny: The Freedom of No Choice* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1991), Foreword by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Introduction, xviii.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, xviii.

<sup>21</sup> Marwanids was a sub-branch of Umayyads who ruled from 684 to 750.

<sup>22</sup> J. Van Ess, "Kadariyya," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 4: 368-72.

<sup>23</sup> L. Gardet, "al-Ḳadā' Wa 'l-Ḳadar," *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 4: 365-67.

<sup>24</sup> Haeri, *Decree and Destiny*, Foreword by Nasr, xix.

<sup>25</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Revival and Reform in Islam: A Study of Islamic Fundamentalism*, ed. and intro. Ebrahim Moosa (Oxford: One World, 2000), 41-42.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander Knysh, "'Orthodoxy' and 'Heresy' in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment," *The Muslim World*, 1 (January, 1993): 55.

<sup>27</sup> Ess, "Kadariyya," 368-72.

<sup>28</sup> Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 85.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>30</sup> Rahman, *Revival and Reform in Islam*, 33.

- <sup>31</sup> As cited in *Ibid.*, 44-45.
- <sup>32</sup> Ess, "Kadariyya," 368-72.
- <sup>33</sup> Ess, "Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought," 158.
- <sup>34</sup> Haeri, *Decree and Destiny*, Foreword by Nasr, xxi.
- <sup>35</sup> Ess, "Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought," 158.
- <sup>36</sup> Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 35.
- <sup>37</sup> Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, 88-89, 82.
- <sup>38</sup> Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 106.
- <sup>39</sup> Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm Abu 'l-'Abbās Shams al-Dīn Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān* (*A Biographical Dictionary*) trans. M. de Slane, Edited by S. Moinul Haq, vol. 2 (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1996), 162.
- <sup>40</sup> Steven Judd, "Muslim Persecution of Heretics during the Marwanid Period (64-132/684-750)," *Al-Masaq*, 1 (2011): 6-7.
- <sup>41</sup> Marshal G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience of History in a World Civilization, The Classical Age of Islam*, vol.1 (Lahore: Vanguard, 2004), 248.
- <sup>42</sup> Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience of History in a World Civilization, The Classical Age of Islam*, vol.1, 226.
- <sup>43</sup> Judd, "Muslim Persecution of Heretics during the Marwanid Period," 2.
- <sup>44</sup> Rahman, *Revival and Reform in Islam*, 31.
- <sup>45</sup> Judd, "Muslim Persecution of Heretics during the Marwanid Period," 3.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.
- <sup>48</sup> J. Van Ess, "Mabad b. Abd Allah b. Ukaym al-Djuhani" *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 5: 935-936.
- <sup>49</sup> Steven C. Judd, "Ghaylan al-Dimashqi: The Isolation of a Heretic in Islamic Historiography," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 31 (May 1999): 162.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, 257.
- <sup>51</sup> Charles Pellat, "Ghaylan b. Muslim, Abu Marwan al-Dimashki al-Kibtī", *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 2: 1026.
- <sup>52</sup> Judd, "Ghaylan al-Dimashqi," 162.
- <sup>53</sup> Hans Kung, *Islam: Past, Present and Future*, tr. in English from German John Bowden (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 225.
- <sup>54</sup> Judd, "Muslim Persecution of Heretics during the Marwanid Period," 8.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of al-Nadim*, vol. 2, 803.
- <sup>56</sup> G. Vajda, "Ibn Dirham, Djad" *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 3: 747-48.

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<sup>57</sup> W. Montgomery Watt, "Djahm b. Safwan, Abu Muhriz" *The Encyclopedia of Islam* 2: 388.

<sup>58</sup> Abū Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarīr b. al-Tabarī, *Tarikh-i-Tabari from Umar b. Abd al-Aziz to Marwan II* tr.. Syed Muhammad Ibrahim, vol. 6 (Karachi: Nafis Academy, 1971), 445.

<sup>59</sup> Ess, "Kadariyya," 368-72.

<sup>60</sup> Judd, "Ghaylan al-Dimashqi," 162.

<sup>61</sup> Judd, "Muslim Persecution of Heretics during the Marwanid Period," 2.

<sup>62</sup> Judd, "Ghaylan al-Dimashqi," 169.

<sup>63</sup> Mohammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1985), 61-62.