Between Conflict and Harmony:
Understanding Contestation *of Iftirāq Al-Ummah Hadiths*
in the Contemporary Era

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Abstract

Iftirāq al-ummah hadith in the contemporary era is considered a problematic hadith both at the level of understanding and practice. The meaning of the hadith is considered to be contrary to the Qur'an and other hadiths which uphold the spirit of unity and brotherhood. At the practical level, this hadith is considered to be a trigger for division and conflict among Muslims. This study aims to map contemporary scholars' understanding models of iftirāq al-ummah hadith. To track this understanding model, the main questions are: 1) what is the model for the tendency of contemporary scholars to understand the hadith, 2) what is the impact of each model of understanding on the scientific world of hadith and also the praxis of people's lives, and 3) how to construct arguments built. This research is a narrative-historical approach, as well as content analysis that combines descriptive, critical and hermeneutical analysis, this study shows that the understanding of contemporary scholars of the iftirāq al-ummah hadith can be grouped into three models, namely 1) exclusive understanding model; 2) rejective understanding model; 3) inclusive understanding model; 4) introspective understanding model. The first understanding tends to cause conflict among Muslims, while the other three are criticisms of the first model. Each understanding put forward coherent arguments and pragmatic arguments to strengthen his opinion.

Keywords: *Iftirāq al-Ummah Hadith; Contemporary Scholars; Hadith Understanding; Reading Models*

INTRODUCTION

Information about the life of the Prophet –both verbal *(qawlîy* and *hammîy)* and visual *(fi'lîy, taqrîry* and *halîy*)- contained in hadith books is not only limited to legal-formal legal aspects, *al-Jāmi's* term which is widely used by the authors of primary hadith books -which etymologically means the collector - means that the book records hadiths related to ten themes, namely [1] creed; [2] Law; [3] Softness of heart *(al-raqā`iq);* [4] Chaos *(al-fitan);* [5] Prophet's characteristics *(al-shamā'il)*; [6] Morals and manners in various aspects of life *(al-adab)*; [7] Biography *(al-manāqib wa al-mat sālib)*; [8] Interpretation; [9] History in general *(al-*

tārīkh); and [10] Wars during the time of the Prophet *(al-maghāzī wa al-siyar)* ('Abd al-Mawjūd, tt: 161).

Among the hadith themes that are considered problematic in the books of hadith collections is the futuristic theme: the Prophet discussed events or phenomena that would occur long after his lifetime. Hadiths like this in classic hadith books are usually collected in discussions of *al-fitan, al-malāḥim, asyrāṭ al-sā'ah* and *dalā`il al-nubuwwah.* Meanwhile, in contemporary hadith studies, these traditions are usually called *al-a ḥādīš al-mustaqbaliyyah.* The problem that arises from this futuristic hadith concerns three domains at once, namely its ontological, methodological and axiological aspects.

One of the futuristic hadiths that continues to be debated is the hadith *of iftiraq al-ummah,* namely the words of the Prophet informing that his people will be divided into seventy-three groups. This hadith is being debated by academics both on its ontological-authenticity side, its method of understanding and also its axiological impact which has the potential to trigger the emergence of exclusive religious attitudes as well as the occurrence of divisions and conflicts among fellow Muslims.

Many studies discussing this hadith have been carried out, including Miski's article *Iftirāq Hadith in Authoritative Literature: Portraits of Networks and Interests* (2022)*;* and *False Hadith, Identity and Contestation of Thought: The Analysis of Hadith on the Division of Muhammad's Ummah in the Historical Dimension* (2021). These two articles take a good picture of the spread of the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* in the main hadith books among Sunnis and their editorial variants, then carry out a critical-historical analysis of the aspects of their sources and motives for their appearance. Meanwhile, in an article entitled *The Firaq Ḥadīth amongst the Shī'is and Their Treatment of It,* Mohamad Nasrin (2012) traces historically the existence of *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* in Shi'a literature. While Kāyid Yūsuf Qar'ūsy (2005) in an article entitled *Ḥadīš Iftirāq al-Ummah wa al-Ṭā`ifah al-Nājiyah: Dirāsah Manhajiyyah Naqdiyyah* after criticizing the editorial *kulluhum fi al-nār illa wāḥidah* (everything in hell except one) and considers its emergence due to political factors, it offers a proportional meaning so that the hadith is in harmony with the spirit of unity and brotherhood emphasized by Islam. In addition to historical aspects, authenticity and meaning, this hadith is also examined in terms of the response of Muslims towards it. Hasan Su'aidi (2010) for example examines the views of two major mass organizations in Indonesia on this hadith in his article entitled *Pandangan NU-Muhammadiyah tentang Hadits Iftiraq al-Ummah.*

Unlike the previous writings, this paper discusses the latest developments in attitude towards the *iftiraq al-umma* hadith. Debates about differences in creed, fiqh opinion, da'wah methods, religious understanding and political attitudes are phenomena that surface in the Islamic world. Debates at the level of this discourse sometimes escalate to become hostility, hatred and even conflict. In this context, *the iftirāq al-ummah* hadith is often used as a basis to strengthen group exclusivity and at the same time reinforce the dividing line between true and false teachings. The two terms in the hadith, namely *ahl al-sunnah* and *ahl al-bid'ah,* serve as ammunition for determining who is the survivor group (*al-firah al-nājiyah*) and who is the survivor. heretical group (*ahl al- ḍalāl*).

In the midst of a conflicting constellation of contemporary Islamic thoughts and movements like this, Muslim scholars try to re-read the *iftirāq al-ummah* hadith, to seek a proportional understanding that does not cause problems at the practical level. The attitude towards this hadith was not singular, figures representing several groups of Islamic sects - which among one another often experienced polemics and even conflicts- had different attitudes towards this hadith. This article seeks to map these developing understanding models, then analyze approaches, methods, arguments and their impact on the lives of Muslims.

The figures studied are contemporary figures whose opinions have had a major influence on the formation of contemporary thoughts and movements in the Islamic world. By using qualitative methods and content analysis, it is hoped that there will be a tendency to categorize attitudes towards *the iftirāq al-ummah* hadith in the contemporary era, it can clarify the characteristics of each developing understanding model, and which model needs to be mainstreamed to strengthen the harmony of Muslim life.

DISCUSSION

1. *Iftirāq al-ummah* Hadith: Sources and Attitudes of Classical Scholars

Searching for the existence of *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* in the books of hadith has been done by many experts. *Iftiraq al-ummah* hadith not only found in hadith books among Sunnis, this hadith is also found in the main Shi'ah Ibā ḍiyyah literature, namely in *al-Musnad* by al-Rabī' ibn Ḥabīb (80-175 H) through his friend 'Abd 'Allāh ibn 'Abbās (68 AH). The editorial contained in the book is:

سَتَفْتَرِقُ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً، كُلُّهُنَّ إِلَى النَّارِ مَا خَلا وَا حِدَةً نَاجِيَةً، وَكُلُّهُمْ يَدَّعِي تِلْكَ الْوَاحِدَةَ

This is the oldest data found so far. Among the Sunnis this hadith is found in many books written in the third century Hijri. Looking at the domicile of the authors of the book, it shows that this hadith at that time spread to various regions of the Islamic world as shown in the following table:

No	Sunni Book of Hadith	Author of the Book of Hadith	domicile
1	al-Mu ṣ annaf	'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan'ānī (211 AH)	Yemen
2	al-Mu ṣ annaf	Ibn Abi Syaibah (235 AH)	Kufa
3	al-Tafsir	Yaḥyā ibn Salām (240 AH)	Born in Kufa, died in Egypt
4	al-Musnad	Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (241 AH)	Baghdad
5	al-Sunan	'Abd Allāh al-Dārimī (255 AH)	born in Samarqand, died in Mecca

6	al-Sunan	Abū Dāwud al-Sijistānī (275 AH)	born in Sijistan, died in Basrah
7	al-Sunan	Ibn Mājah (275 H)	Qazwain
8	al-Ma'rifah wa al-Tārīkh	Ya'qub ibn Sufyān al-Fasawi (277 AH)	born in Fasa, died in Basrah
9	al-Tārikh	Abī Zur'ah al-Dimasyqī (281 H)	Damascus
10	al-Sunnah	Ibn Abī 'Āṣim (287 AH)	Born in Basrah, died in Esfahan
11	al-Musnad	Abū Bakr al-Bazzār (292 AH)	born in Basrah, died in Ramallah
12	Tārīkh Wāsiṭ	Aslam ibn Sahl (292 AH)	Wasith-Iraq
13	Al-Sunnah	Muḥammad ibn Naṣr al-Marūzī (294 AH)	born in Baghdad, died in Samarqand

In the fourth century, this hadith was also widely narrated by Sunni hadith scholars in their books, such as Abū Ya'lā al-Mū ṣ ilīy (307 H), Ibn Jarīr al- Ṭ abarī (310 H), Ibn Abī Ḥ atim al-Rāzī (327 H), al-Ṭabrānī (360 H), and Ibn Baṭṭah (387 H). In this century also the hadith *of al-iftiraāq* -with the same editorial as those circulating among Sunnis- began to be found in primary hadith literature among the Shi'ai ṡnā 'Asyariyyah, including in the book *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu al-Faqīh* by al-Shaykh al- Ṣadūq (329 H) (Mohamad Nasrin, 212: 362). The recording of this hadith and its chain of transmission among Sunnis continued until the fifth century. Among those recorded as narrating this hadith in the fifth century include al- Ḥākim al-Naisābūrī (405 H), Abū Nu'aim al-A ṣ fihānī (430 H), al-Bihāqī (458 H), and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (463 H). In these books, the editor of the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* is included with different paths of sanad. One of the important data found in the collection of various sanad paths is the number of narrators of generations of companions who narrated this hadith. Muhammad ibn Ja'far al-Kattānī identified as many as 8 companions (al-Kattānī, tt: 45), Salmān al-'Audah 14 companions (al-'Audah, 1990: 19-50), and Mu ḥ ammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Abd al-Bā'i ṡ al-Kattānī made an inventory of 16 companions (al-Kattānī, 1997: 21-27). This data is the argumentation of most scholars to categorize the hadith *al-iftiraq* as mutawatir hadith.

Another interesting data related to this *al-iftiraq hadith* is the variety of editorials in the text. This hadith has been narrated in different ways. In general, the form of *declarative-informative information* informs three things, namely [1] Information that the people will be divided into several *schools of thought*; [2] information that only one *firqah survived,* while the others went to hell; [3] information about the criteria for surviving *firqah*. The first component that informs the occurrence of divisions among the ummah is found in all the editorials of the matan in the Sunni hadith books. The difference that sometimes appears is only in the number of groups that will appear between 70, 71, 72 and 73. The second or third component does not always appear in the editorial matan. The third component

which explains the criteria for surviving groups is also stated differently. Some mention *al-jamā'ah, al-sawād al-a'ẓam,* and *mā anā 'alaihi wa aṣḥābī.*

Hadith with a complete component of which was narrated by Abū Dāwud in al-Sunan

أَلَا إِنَّ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ افْتَرَقُوا عَلَى ثِنْتَيْنِ وَسَبْعِينَ مِلَّ ةً، وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ الْمِلَّةَ سَتَفْتَرِقُ عَلَى ثَلَاثٍ وَسَبْعِينَ: ثِنْتَانِ وَسَبْعُونَ فِي ال نَّارِ، وَوَاحِدَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَهِيَ الْجَمَاعَةُ

"Know, indeed the People of the Book before you were divided into seventy-two groups, and indeed this millah (this religion) will be divided into seventy-three groups. Seventy-two of them will be in hell, and one group will be in heaven, namely al-jamā'ah."

The complexity of the sanad paths and also the various variations of this matan are one of the factors why the authenticity of this hadith is widely debated by scholars. In the classical and medieval periods, the scholars differed on the validity of this hadith. Among the scholars who declared valid or at least hasan were al-Tirmiżī (d. 279 H) in *al-Sunan*, Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 H) in *al-Ṣaḥiḥ,* al-Ḥākim (d. 405 H) in *al-Mustadrak*, Ibn Kaŝīr (d. 774 H) in *al-Tafsīr,* al-Syāṭibī (d. 790 H) in *al-I'tiṣām*, and Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852 H.) in *Takhrīj Aḥādīŝ al-Kasysyāf* (al-Hilālī, 2005: 9-10). In fact –after seeing the large number of companions who narrated- Muhammad ibn Ja'far al-Kattānī in *Nuẓm al-Mutanā ŝir states* that the hadith of *al-iftirāq* is a mutawātir hadith (al-Kattānī, tt: 45). As for the judge, *ḍa'īf* and even *maūḍū'* was Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456 H) (Ibn Ḥazm, 2016: 138). Meanwhile Ibn al-Wazir (d. 840 H) in *al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim* and al-Ṣaukānī (d. 1255 H) in *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* (al-Ṣaukānī, 2010: j. 3, 110; al-Syaḥūd, tt: 26-31) rejects the additional editorial *Kulluhā fī al-Nār illā wāḥidah* (al-Ṣaukānī, 2010: j. 3, 110; al-Syaḥūd, tt: 26-31).

2. Four Models of Contemporary Understanding of *Iftirāq al-ummah Hadith*

Iftiraq al-ummah hadith continues to be the talk of Muslim scholars in the contemporary era today. The initial debate about this hadith is of course about its authenticity, whether the hadith which explains the futuristic event of the division of the ummah after the Prophet Muhammad was true the words of the Prophet or not. For those who acknowledge its authenticity, the discussion continues on the problem of interpretation. There are at least five points that are debated in the realm of this interpretation, namely 1) Differences *(al-iftirāq)* as to what is meant in the hadith, whether differences in matters of faith, fiqh, manhaj da'wah, or even political attitudes; 2) Who is meant by *ummah* in the word *ummatī* in the hadith; 3) The number of seventy-three mentioned in the hadith is whether it is an exact count or is it just an expression of the maza which shows the number of divisions; 4) Of the several groups, which ones survived and what were the criteria; 5) From a number of groups, which of them belong to the heretical group, and will they go to hell forever or be considered as perpetrators of disobedience? *('uṣāh)* who has the potential to enter heaven.

The discussion that is no less interesting regarding this hadith is also the discussion at the level of reality-praxis. Which groups or sects in the contemporary era are included in *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (true groups) and which are included in *al-firqah al-ḍāllah* (misguided groups). It is in this realm that often triggers hostility and conflict among Muslim groups, because each group by adhering to the hadith claims to be the most correct while the other group is a misguided group.

It is on these themes that the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* is discussed and debated by contemporary Muslim academics, whose tendencies can be categorized into four models of understanding, namely 1) Exclusive understanding; 2) Rejective understanding; 3) Inclusive Understanding; 4) Introspective Understanding. In the following, the four reading models will be described which include the characters, the characteristics of understanding the hadith, as well as their practical implications in the interaction of religious communities.

a. Exclusive Understanding

Reading This exclusivity stems from the notion that the decline of Muslims is because they move away from the pure teachings of the Koran and Hadith. In the view of this group, the salvation and progress of Muslims is by returning to the pure teachings of Islam which were understood and practiced by the early generations of Muslims, commonly called *al-salaf al- ṣāliḥ*. Therefore, the agenda of purifying Islamic creed and law from various kinds of polytheism and bid'ah is the top priority for this preaching model of reading. In this context, hadis *al-iftir'aq is* then used as a jargon to reinforce group identity and internal loyalty, and at the same time reinforce hostility towards other groups. The internal group is the survivor group (*al-firqah al-nājiyah),* while the other group is the heretical group who is misguided (*al-firqah al- ḍāllah*).

This kind of reading model can be seen in the understanding of two contemporary salafi figures from Saudi Arabia, namely Shaykh Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh al-Sa'd ānd ān Shaykh al-Rabīb. Hādī al-Madkhalī (1932). Of course, these two figures disagree with the group that criticizes the authenticity of the hadith *al-iftirāq*. They confirmed that Hadith *al-iftirāq* is authentic and has been narrated by many Companions. To strengthen his view, al-Sa'dān himself mentions the names of 14 companions who narrated this hadith (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 20-21). So, there is no reason to reject this hadith which is in the *mutawatir category*.

This group's exclusive view appears when they begin to interpret one of the key words in the hadith, namely the word *ummatī* (my ummat). They are of the view that *the ummat* is meant in the hadith is *ummat al-ijabah,* people who fulfill the call of Islamic teachings, so the divisions alluded to by the hadith are divisions that occur within the internal Muslim community. They do not interpret it as *ummat al-da'wah,* all human beings who were the target of the Prophet's da'wah whether they accepted and converted to Islam or not. Al-Sa'd ān strengthens his argument by giving the reason that the word *ummat* in most of the hadiths refers to *ummat al-ijābah,* not *ummat al-da'wah,* so this hadith must be interpreted in the same way (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 56).

For al-Sa'dān what is meant by *iftirāq* -which is the second key word in the hadith- is not just a difference of opinion *(al-ikhtilāf fī al-'ārā')* but a difference that causes division

and hostility. Specifically, what is meant by *iftirāq* is differences and divisions in the main issues of religion *(uṣūl al-dīn)* which can lead to departure from the understanding of *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah* . The difference in the field of fiqh *(furu')* is not what this hadith means (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 16, 17, 21).

In al-Sa'dān's view, the internal disunity of Muslims is a historical certainty, so what Muslims need to do is to cultivate an attitude of vigilance *(tahdzir).* against streams that deviate, by criticizing and hostile to it. Muslims must also realize that this condition is a test *(al-ibtila')* faith so that one must be patient in preaching against these heretical sects (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 20). Al-Sa'dān emphasized that there is only one group that survived hell. The concept of *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (group of survivors) this is the third concept in a very important hadith. Al -Sa'd ān understands the concept of *al-firqah al-nājiyah* in a limited and exclusive manner. The sentence in the hadith that reads *illā wāhidah* (except for one group that will enter heaven) emphasizes that only one group survived. Another argument put forward by al-Sa'd ān is the alignment of this single concept of salvation with the verses of the Qur'an

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ [الأنعام:153]

"And verily, this is My straight path. Then follow! Do not follow (other) paths that will separate you from His path". (al-An' ām [06]: 153)

In this case al -Sa'd ān does not agree with al-Ṣan'ānī (1099-1182) who argues that *al-firqah al-nājiyah* are all people who follow the teachings of *the* Prophet from the anywhere. He emphasized that *al-firqah al- nājiyah mentioned* in the hadith is clearly only one whose criteria have been clearly stated by the Prophet, namely *al -jam ā'ah (* joining the right group)*, mākāna 'alaihi wa aṣhābih* (following the teachings of the Prophet and his companions)*,* and *al-sawād al-a'ẓham* (the majority group). According to al-Sa'd ān the groups that meet these criteria are the *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah* whose real form in history is among the companions, tabi'in, *al-salaf al-sāliḥ* , and hadith experts (*Ahl al-Ḥadīš*) who collect, memorize and teach hadiths to the people (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 93).

The fourth concept contained in the hadith is the concept of heretical groups (*al-firqah al-ḍāllah*). In the hadith it is stated that Muhammad's people will be divided into several groups *(firaq).* The number mentioned in this hadith cannot be interpreted literally, the purpose of mentioning this number is to show the number of divisions that have occurred. The group that did not survive was called by the Prophet with the phrase, "*kulluhā fi al-nār*" (all go to hell). Al-Sa'd ān emphasized that heretical groups will go to hell but not forever, they are still considered Muslims and should not be punished as infidels (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 23). Their entry into hell is the same as the entry of the perpetrators of disobedience among Muslims.

Conceptually the view of al-Sa'd ān towards other groups like this in general it might be considered not to cause much of a problem, but at the practical level al-Sa'd ān explicitly mentions several groups which he considers heretical. Among them are the Sufi schools of *ḥulūliyyah* and *manṣūriyah* founded by Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 858) which is considered by al-

Sa'dān as an extreme ahl al-bid'ah, not including group of Muslims and not *ahl al-qiblah*. Al-Sa'dān also argues that the schools of al-Asy'āriyyah and Mu'tazilah are not included in *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (al-Sa'dān, 1415 H: 24, 91).

The tendency to specify which groups are survivors and which are misguided, too clearly visible in the view of Shaykh al-Rabīb. Hādī al-Madkhalī when explaining the hadith *of al-iftirāq*. In relations and interactions with other groups, al-Madkhalī is known as a figure *in the madrasa al-tajrīḥ*. One school of thought in the salafi group who used to judge negatively and even denounced other groups or scholars who were considered deviated from Ahl al-Sunnah (Futūḥ, 2019: 5; Muḥammad, 2018: 11). Al-Madkhalī explicitly explains that what is meant by the term is *al-firqāh al-nājiyah, al-ṭā'ifah al-manṣūrah, ahl al-ḥadīs, al-ghurabā'* and *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah* are terms that refer to one true group, namely the group that follows the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. and have faith and practice *salaf salih.* The existence of *al-firqah al-nājiyah is* not only gathering in one place. Al-Madkhal ī asserts that the followers of Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab and the Saudi scholars who followed him, *ahl al-ḥadīš* in India, *anṣār al-sunnah* in Sudan, Egypt, East Asia and in various other places are groups that belong to *al-firqah al-nājiyah,* as long as they obey the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Prophet and *the manhaj* of the salaf salih good in faith, shari'ah and worship (Al-Madkhalī, 2009: 6, 7, 9).

Al-Madkhali prefer to call all these groups as *ahl al-ḥadīš*. Because the construction of their teachings is good in the fields of faith, worship, morals, politics and others in harmony with the manhaj of the Salaf which is based on the Book of Allah and the authentic hadiths of the Prophet. The division of his monotheistic teachings also comes from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Even though in reality many groups study and memorize hadiths and make them as guidelines, according to Al-Madkhalī *ahl al-ḥadīš* have the privilege that they adhere to and be faithful to the hadith of the Prophet in all religious discussions whether in matters of faith, worship, politics or others. To clarify his view, al-Madkhalī explained that the word *al-jama'āh* found in the hadith of *al-iftirāq means* al *-jam ā'ah alladẓīna ijtama'ū 'alā al-haq alladẓī jā'abihi Muḥammad peace be upon him.* (a group gathered in the truth as brought by the Prophet Muhammad), and they are none other than *ahl al-ḥadīš* which is the only group that corresponds to the character mentioned in the hadith: *"man kāna'alā mā ana 'alaihi wa aṣḥābi."* (Al-Madkhalī, 2009: 7, 9, 10, 15).

As a consequence of his exclusive view like that, al-Madkhalī then stated emphatically that Mu'tazilah, Khawarij, Rafidhah and Murji'ah are not included in *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (al-Madkhalī, 2009: 14). The Sufis belonging to the Hanafi school of law in Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as the Sufi schools of al-Tijaniyah, al-Marghaniyah, al-Naqsyabandiyah, al-Suhrawardiyah, al-Syadziliyyah and Burhamiyyah are also not included in *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (Al-Madkhalī, 2009: 13, 28, 29, 36). Al-Madkhalī's criticism of the currents that developed in the Islamic world led to the *al-ikhwan al-muslimun group* and *the shufi tariqah,* even in the book *al-Firqah al-Nājiyah Uṣūluhā wa 'Aqā'iduhā,* al-Madkhalī also specifically mentioned the

names of Sayid Qutb, Hasan al-Bana and al-Maududi as *ahl al-bida' wa al-ḍalāl* (al-Madkhalī, 2009: 30).

b. Rejective Understanding

On In the second half of the twentieth century in the Islamic world there was an Islamic awakening movement. A movement to awaken and encourage Muslims to rise from lagging behind in various fields, both economics, technology, science and politics. One of the conditions considered important for the revival of the people is unity and brotherhood. Therefore, the jargon *ukhuwwah islamiyyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and *tau ḥ īd ṣ ufūf al-muslimīn* (unification of the ranks of Muslims) are the jargons that are much buzzed about. But, contradictions and even conflicts still continue to occur in various parts of the Islamic world, whether caused by political problems, class fanaticism, or differences in religious thought. In the midst of this situation, some groups use the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* as a basis for being pessimistic and apathetic towards the reality of the division of the ummah, and even used as justification for the reality of the division that has occurred. By another group this hadith is used as an argument to make a truth claim, that their group is the right one while the other group is wrong and heretical. This situation caused animosity among Muslims to increase, both at the elite level of the clergy and among the ummah.

In this situation, some Muslim scholars tried to re-read the hadith *of al-iftirāq* which they considered not in line with the spirit of unity and became a trigger for hostility among the people. Among the figures who seriously criticized this hadith is Shaykh Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī (1926-2022), an Egyptian scholar who is domiciled in Qatar. In his book *al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah bayna al-Ikhtilāf al-Masyrū' wa al-Tafarruq al-Madzmūm,* al-Qaraḍāwī wrote a special sub-chapter regarding this *al-iftirāq hadith.*

The attitude of al-Qaraḍāwī tends to reject the authenticity of the hadith. The arguments put forward are: 1) *Iftirāq al-ummah hadith* is not found in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, the two most authentic and most authoritative hadith books. Al-Qaraḍāwī realizes that not all authentic hadiths are summarized in these two books, but Imam al-Bukhārī and Imam Muslim cannot possibly leave out important hadiths in a topic of discussion. In fact, this hadith is not found in the books of these two great Imams; 2) The *iftirāq al-ummah* hadith is narrated with various editorials, some reports only inform the divisions that occur among the people without the addition of *"kulluhā fi al-nār illā wāḥidah"* (all go to hell except one), while other narrations contain the addition. Al-Qaraḍāwī criticizes both of them. The history without additions originating from Abū Hurairah is considered weak because the entire chain of transmission goes through a problematic narrator, namely Muḥammad ibn 'Amr ibn 'Alqamah ibn Waqqāṣ al-Laiśī. Scholars consider the professionalism of this narrator's narration to be imperfect. Al-Qara ḍ āwī considers narrations accompanied by additional sentences to be weak. Even though the editorial was narrated through many friends, the quality of each channel is weak; 3) Al-Qaraḍāwī also criticizes the hadith from the point of view of its literal meaning. This hadith has a problematic meaning, which is to give the impression that Muslims are of inferior

quality to Jews and Christians, because the hadith informs that the number of divisions within Muslims is greater than the divisions experienced by Jews and Christians. Another problem is a problem at the practical level, this hadith encourages each group to claim to be a safe group, and accuse other groups of being heretical. This of course further exacerbated the disunity of the Muslim community; 4) To strengthen his opinion, al-Qaraḍāwī also refers to the opinions of classical scholars who also criticize and assess the weak quality of the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith*, such as Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456), Ibn al-Wazir (d. 840 H) (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2001: 34-38).

Although al-Qara ḍ āwī tends to reject the validity of this hadith, he realizes that many great scholars such as Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqānī consider it valid. Therefore al-Qara ḍ āwī provides two alternative meanings if the hadith is considered valid. The first alternative is that the divisions alluded to by the hadith have occurred in the past, so it is not appropriate if the hadith is used to read the reality of contemporary Muslims. The second alternative is to understand that groups (*firqah*) developed among the ummah are still considered part of the Islamic ummah. In the hadith it is recorded that all these groups were referred to by the prophet as *ummatī* (my people). Even if they go to hell as mentioned in the hadith, they will not last forever (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2001: 38-39). With this kind of understanding, the potential for conflict, hostility and hatred can be reduced.

Such a subjective view also appears in the opinion of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Idlibī (1948), a hadith scholar from Aleppo Syria. After mentioning the 12 companions of the Prophet who were recorded as having narrated the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* and explaining all the paths of their sanad, al-Idlibī then criticized his sanad and mata. From the sanad side, al-Idlibī concludes that all the existing sanad paths are problematic, because each path goes through low professional quality narrators, so al-Idlibī concludes that all of these hadiths are weak (*ḍa'if*). The many chains of sanad that support this hadith cannot raise the quality of the hadith to be valid or hasan, because according to al-Idlibī the matan of this hadith contains irregularities due to contradictions with other stronger texts (*syadz*). Through an analysis of criticism like this, al-Idlibī then concluded that this hadith contradicts several verses of the Qur'an, namely al-Baqarah: 213, al-An'ām: 37, Ghāfir: 59, and al-Naml: 73.

c. Inclusive Understanding

After the Islamic world was released from colonialization, it actually became an opportunity to rise and catch up in various fields. However, one of the problems that hinders Muslims from rising is the emergence of contradictions, hostility, fanaticism and even conflicts between thoughts, schools of thought, and groups. Conditions like this occur at almost all levels of the social structure, both at the level of the religious elite and the ummah. This situation is exacerbated by exclusive understandings of religious texts which further exacerbate conflicts and disputes. One of the religious texts that is considered to be a trigger for division and conflict among the people is the hadith *al-iftirāq*.

In In situations like this, some Muslim scholars offer re-reading of the hadith *al-iftiraq with* the aim that divisions among Muslims will not get worse. Among the scholars who try to offer an inclusive reading of the hadith *al-iftir ā q* are Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ibrāhīm

ibn 'Abd al-Bāiṡ al-Kattānī (1940), a hadith scholar as well as a Sufi from Alexandria of Egypt, and Shaykh Umar 'Abdallāh Kāmil (1952-2015) a scholar from Makkah, Saudi Arabia who also has Sufistic tendencies.

In contrast to the subjective reading model which rejects the authenticity of the hadith *al-iftir'aq, inclusive* readings still accept the authenticity of these hadiths, but they provide content of meaning that relatively does not cause problems both at the level of understanding and at the level of practice. To strengthen the validity of the hadith *al-iftirāq*, al-Kattānī displays the data of ten companions who narrated this hadith complete with their eyes and sources of existence in the primary hadith books (al-Kattaanī, 1997: 21-27). Even though they both regard it as an authentic and *mutawatir hadith*, al-Kattānī's model of reading the *al-iftirāq hadith* is different from the exclusive reading model, both in determining the main spirit contained in the hadith and in the meaning of several key terms in the hadith. Al-Kattānī emphasizes that the main message of the hadith *of al-iftirāq* is actually not an encouragement or recommendation to find fault or misguidance of other groups. The spirit ordered by the hadith is actually to raise vigilance so as not to leave the congregation of Muslims.

Among the key terms in the hadith that concern al-Kattānī is the word *ummat*. This word is interpreted by al-Kattānī as *ummat al-da'wah,* namely the people who were the target of the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad from when he was sent until the Day of Judgment, whether they accepted Islam or not. All humans who lived after the Prophet Muhammad was sent were the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (*ummatu Muḥammad*). On the basis of this interpretation, the division of the people that is alluded to by the hadith is not an internal division among Muslims, but a division that occurred among all mankind after the sending of the Prophet Muhammad (al-Kattānī, 1997: 30). On the other hand, in various editorials of the hadith it is stated that the divisions reached the number of 70, 71, 72 or 73. Al-Kattānī does not interpret this number as an essential number, so he does not believe that the number of divisions that occur must be the same as the number that occurs. mentioned in the hadith as understood by some classical scholars. Al-Kattānī considers that the numbers are just majazi expressions which mean there are many in number. So that this hadith should be understood that humanity as a whole, whether Muslim or not - all of whom are the people of the Prophet Muhammad - will experience many divisions.

The second key term that concerns al-Kattānī For building inclusive reading is the term *al-firqah al-nājiyah*. In the hadith it is clearly stated that groups are excluded *(al-mustaṡnā)* from hell. The various editorials used by the hadith to refer to this group, namely (a) *al-jamā'ah;* (b)*al-millah*; (c) *al-firqah*; (d) *al-sawād al-a'ẓam*; (e) *mā anā 'alaihi wa aṣḥābī.* According to al-Kattānī, although the words used are different, they refer to one meaning, namely *the people of al-ijābah* or Muslims. Thus according to al-Kattānī's view what is meant by *al-firqah al-nājiyah* who will enter heaven are all Muslims who fulfill the call of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (*ummat al-ijabah*) regardless of their class and school of thought (al-Kattaanī, 1997: 30).

Al-Kattānī's conclusion like this is of course supported by methodological arguments and scientific arguments. Methodologically, al-Kattānī uses the principle of confirmative-integrative thematic reading. One hadith must be understood together with other hadiths and also with *other naṣ*. One of the hadiths that supports al-Kattānī's view (1997: 30) that the survivors are all Muslims regardless of sect is a hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim and Imam al-Tirmidhi:

عَنْ معاوية بن حيدة بن معاوية ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: [كُنْتُمْ خَيْرُ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ]، قَ الَ: " إِنَّكُمْ تَتِمُّونَ سَبْعِينَ أُمَّةً خَيْرُهَا أَنْتُمْ وَأَكْرَمُهَا عَلَى اللَّهِ

"It was narrated by Mu'āwiyah ibn Ḥaidah ibn Mu'āwiyah that he heard the Prophet. bersaba -after conveying the verse of the Qur'an "You are the best people born for mankind": Verily you perfected the seventy people (before you), and you are the best people and the most noble people before Allah".

The above hadith clearly explains that the Muslim Ummah is a unit that complements the many previous Ummahs. This hadith certainly needs to be considered when reading the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* whose meaning is debated.

To strengthen his view that *al-firqah al-nājiyah* is all Muslims, al-Kattānī also puts forward an argument by explaining how the five terms which are the criteria for groups the survivors should be understood, namely the word *al-jamā'ah; al-millah*; *al-firqah*; *al-sawād al-a'ẓam,* and; *mā anā 'alaihi wa aṣḥābī.* The word *al-jamā'ah*, for example, should not be interpreted as understood by some people today, that is, a certain group or organization within the Muslim community. Based on the context, the word *al-jamā'ah* in many hadiths means the congregation of Muslims as a whole. Even the Prophet in his hadith states with the sentence *jamā'at al-muslimīn* (group of Muslims). In addition, the word *al-jamā'ah* also contains the meaning of unity or unity against *al-furqah* (division) (al-Kattānī, 1997: 236), as found in the hadith narrated by Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.

قال رسول الله صل الله عليه وسلم: عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْجَمَاعَةِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْفُرْقَةَ (رواه الترمذي)

"Rasulullah saw. said: Hold fast to unity, and avoid division." (HR al-Tirmidhi)

The word *al-firqah* contained in the hadith *al-iftirāq*. This word cannot be understood as a specific group or sect that exists among Muslims. The word *al-firqah* in this hadith should be understood by all Muslims. In one version of the hadith *al-iftirāq* narrated by 'Amr ibn 'Auf it is clearly stated that what is meant by *al-firqah* that survived is *al-Islām wa jamā'atuhum* (al-Kattaanī, 1997: 46).

عن عمرو بن عوف قَالَ: أَلا إِنَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ افْتَرَقَتْ عَلَى مُوسَى عَلَى إِحْدَ ى وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً كُلُّهَا ضَالَّةٌ إِلا فِرْقَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ الإِسْلامُ وَجَمَاعَتُهُمْ، وَإِنَّهَا افْتَرَقَتْ عَلَى عِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ عَلَى إِحْدَى ينَ وَسَبْع فِرْقَةً كُلُّهَا ضَالَّةٌ إِلا فِرْقَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ الإِسْلامُ وَجَمَاعَتُهُمْ، ثُ مَّ إِنَّهُمْ يَكُونُونَ عَلَى اثْنَتَيْنِ وَسَبْعِينَ فِرْقَةً كُلُّهَا ضَالَّةٌ إِلا فِرْقَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ الإِسْلامُ وَجَمَاعَتُهُمْ " (رواه الحاكم في المستدرك)

Between Conflict and Harmony… 117-139 (Arif Chasanul Muna)

On based on the above arguments, according to al-Kattānī a more precise understanding of the hadith *al-iftirāq* is that all human beings who lived after the sending of the Prophet Muhammad saw. there will be many divisions. Of all the groups that will survive are Muslims. Therefore, at the praxis level of al-Kattānī then emphasized that the differences that occurred among Muslims both in the form of *firqah* aqidah and *mazhab* fiqhiyyah both in the past and now are not differences that are alluded to in the hadith. Therefore, the grouping of *al-firqah al-nājiyah* and *firqah halikah/nāriyah* within the Muslim community is an inappropriate grouping. *Al-firqah al-nājiyah* is not the monopoly of a particular group in Islam, but rather it is a term to refer to Muslims as a whole (al-Kattānī, 1997: 49).

Furthermore, al-Kattānī also explained that each group or sect in Islam is not right if it claims to be the most correct group. Each of them also may not judge other Muslim brothers as infidels or have left *the millah* (al-Kattānī, 1997: 53). At the end of the book entitled *Ibrā' al-Dzimmah bi Taḥqīq al-Qaul Ḥaula Iftirāq al-Ummah,* al-Kattānī specifically directs the discussion to the phenomenon of *takfīr* (disbelief) that occurs among Muslims, one of the triggers of which is the inaccurate reading of this hadith. As a result of this misreading, some Muslims became the target of this takfīr movement, including among the Sufis. Therefore, in the fourth chapter of his book, al-Kattānī specifically explains and defends some of *the practices* commonly practiced by Sufis who are often accused of being *infidel* or shirk by other groups. It appears from the narrative developed, al-Kattānī tries to defend the Sufi community and sits the problem proportionally including in understanding the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith* (al-Kattānī, 1997: *155-235*).

Apart from al-Kattānī, another scholar who also has an inclusive view in reading *al-iftirāq hadith* is Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd Allāh Kāmil. In his book entitled *Kalimah Hādi'ah fī Aḥadīš Iftirāq al-Ummah,* Shaykh 'Umar Kāmil emphasized that *the ummah* that was divided was *the ummat al-da'wah,* namely the people who were the target of the Prophet Muhammad's preaching. So that the divisions referred to in the hadith are not divisions among Muslims, but the divisions that occur are divisions among mankind. Thus according to 'Umar Kāmil's view, what is meant by *al-firqah al-nājiyah* who enters heaven is the *ummat al-ijabah,* namely all Muslims who fulfill the call of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad saw (Kāmil, tt: 7). The differences that occur among Muslims in religious matters can be categorized into two domains, namely the realm of fiqh and the realm of aqidah. These differences that occur among them do not cause them to leave Islam and be released from the bonds *of lā ilāha illallāh.*

Similar to al-Kattānī's reading model, Umar 'Abd Allāh Kāmil also stressed the importance of reading the hadith *al-iftirāq thematically* together in an integrative manner with other hadiths and verses of the Qur'an which have the same theme . The misunderstanding of some Muslims towards this hadith is caused because they do not fully understand it and do not relate it to other narrations, other hadiths and also other Qur'anic texts. Another similarity that appears between these two figures is that they both use the interpretation of this hadith as a medium to defend the Sufi community and rectify the understanding of

other parties who have an *al-takfīr tendency*. This is of course different from exclusive reading which tends to use this hadith as ammunition for criticizing and blaming other groups.

d. Understanding Introspective

The right figure to represent the model of introspective reading is Syaikh Salm ān ibn Fahd al- 'Audah (1956). Anxiety about the increasingly sharp animosity and conflict between Muslims encouraged al- 'Audah to offer several solutions, one of which was to reinterpret the *iftirāq al-ummah hadith*. Al-'Audah himself is a Saudi Arabian scholar and is affiliated with a salafi group, but he often makes internal criticisms of contemporary salafi thought and movements, including the issue of salafi attitudes towards other groups that tend to be exclusive and hateful. Al-'Audah's reading of the *iftirāq al-ummah* hadith is unique, because it is different from the readings of the salafi groups in general such as al-Sa'dān and al-Madkhalī which tend to be exclusive, and also different from the readings of the hadith-Sufi experts such as the reading of al- Kattānī and the inclusive Umar 'Abd Allāh Kāmil. Al-'Audah positions the hadith of *al-iftirāq* as an ideal criterion that every Muslim must strive for, not as a tool to justify insiders and outsiders, so that the recitation of al-'Audah is more introspective, so that people always do self-introspection whether they meet the ideal criteria. in hadith or not.

First important point of reciting al-'Audah, the issue of the authenticity of the hadith. Al-'Audah *stipulates* that the validity of the hadith *of al-iftirāq* does not need to be doubted about its validity, as is done by the subjective group. Based on the data collected by al-'Audah, the hadith was narrated by at least 13 companions with various editorials. Some only mention information about the occurrence of divisions among Muslims, and some others are accompanied by information about who survived *(al-firqah al-nājiyah)*. According to a l-'Audah, all of these hadiths are of authentic quality or at least hasan (al-'Audah, 1990: 19, 51).

In interpreting the word *ummah* which is the first key word in this hadith, al-'Audah agrees with the understanding of most salafi circles who state that what is meant by *ummah* in hadith are Muslims. This is of course different from the opinion of the Sufi scholars al-Kattānī and Umar 'Abd Allāh Kāmil who expanded the meaning of *ummah* as all human beings. So according to al-'Audah the disputes and divisions referred to in the hadith are divisions that will occur within the internal circle of Muslims. According to al-'Audah, the most valid editorial of hadith relates to the number of divisions it is the editor who mentions the number 73. However, the true meaning of this number is not understood, the number only shows that there are many of them (al -'Audah , 1990: 51). So that the hadith in general can be understood that there will be many divisions among Muslims.

Salmān al-'Audah's interesting view that distinguishes it from previous views is his opinion regarding *al-firqah al-nājiyah*. Al-'Audadah disagrees with efforts to determine specifically which group belongs to *al-firqah al-nājiyah*. It is at this point that the main difference between al-'Audah's view and the exclusive Salafi view. Al-'Audah understands that the hadith only mentions the criteria that must be possessed by *al-firqah al-nājiyah,*

namely *al-jamā'ah, mā anā 'alaihi wa aṣḥābī* and *al-sawād al-a'ẓam* (al-'Audah, 1990: 80). This criterion must be pursued by Muslims from any group if they want to be included in a very low group. Furthermore, al-'Audah then elaborated on the characteristics that must be owned by *al-firqah al-nājiyah,* namely (a). Receiving full revelation as a source of knowledge in various fields of faith, sharia and morals; (b) Live and absorb the faith deeply to the heart, so that the group that is safe has a clean heart, will not be arrogant and look down on other groups; (c) Applying revelation in life both individually and communally (al-'Audah, 1990: 83, 94, 103, 104). These three aspects, namely knowledge based on revelation, arrangement of the heart *(tazkiyah al-nafs)* and optimal implementation in life are a unity that cannot be separated as the character of *al-firqah al-najiyah* (al-'Audah, 1990: 111).

Al-'Audah also straightened out the exclusive understanding that refers to the early generations of scholars (*mutaqaddimin*) which many mention that *al-firqah al-nājiyah is* ahl al-*ḥadīš*. Al-'Audah explained that the early generation of scholars -such as Imam al-Ḥā kim, al-Kha ṭ ī b al-Baghd ād ī and Ibn Qutaibah - did state that the survivors were experts on hadith, but they set criteria characteristics that must be possessed by hadith experts so that they can be categorized as *al-firqah al-nājiyah.* The hadith expert in question is not just a person who concentrates in the field of hadith, but who fulfills certain criteria (al -'Audah, 1990: 114). On the other hand the term *ahl al-ḥadīš* at that time also needs to be related to the context and also needs to be aware of changes in meaning according to the context of the time. At the present time *ahl al-ḥadīš narrowly interpreted so that they are often only identified with people who are concerned with the study of hadith both in the aspects of riwāyah* (transmission) and dirāyah (understanding). Based on the above arguments, al-'Audah then emphasized that the term *al-firqah al-nājiyah should* not be associated with a particular group or class, including also to communities that claim to be *ahl al-ḥadīš* (al-'Audah, 1990: 118, 119, 127).

According to al-'Audah i the term *al-firqah al-nājiyah* must be straightened out and its meaning must be expanded. Al-'Audah's view on this matter is summarized in the following important quote,

فالعدل والإنصاف يقتضى أن لا تكون "الفرقة الناجية" أشخاصا محددة فحسب، بل خصائص وسمات ينبنى عل

يها منهج يُتَّبع، وطريق يسلك، وأصول يلتزم بها، بحيث يكون الموافق لهذه الأصول، المتبع لهذا المنهج، المتاح لي

بهذه الخصائص والسمات، ممن يرجى دخوله فيها، فردا كان أو جماعة، وبأي اسم تسمى، ما دام لا يدين ببدعة

ولا يتعمد مخالفة الكتاب والسنه

"The view that is fair and objective is the view that says that *al-firqah al-nājiyah* it does not lead to certain persons only, but it is the character and criteria that form the basis for a manhaj that must be followed, the method that must be followed, and the basic principles that must be adhered to. Anyone who is in accordance with these principles, who follows this manhaj and has these characteristics and criteria, then he has the potential to enter *al-firqah al-nājiyah.* Whoever he is, whether personal or group, using any name or designation as long as he does not believe in a bid'ah and does not deliberately contradict the Qur'an and Sunnah" (al-'Audah, 1990: 119).

Elsewhere al-'Audah emphasized,

ان الفرقة الناجية خصائص وصفات وأصول، من تمسك بها —فردا أو جماعة— فيرجى أن يكون من الناجين، ومن

أعر ض عنها فيخشى أن يكون من الهالكين. ويرجى لكل مسلم —فردا أو جماعة— من النجاة بقدر قربه من تلك

الصفات، وتحققه بها، ويخاف عليه من الهلاك بقد ر تقصيره، أو ضعفه، أو إخلاله بها

"Indeed *al-firqah al-nājiyah* are characteristics, properties and also principles. Anyone, both individuals and groups who stick to these characters, traits and principles, has the great potential to be safe. And anyone who is not in harmony with these characters, traits and principles, it is feared that they will be included in the wretched group. Every Muslim, both individually and as a group, has the potential to be safe according to his closeness to the characters that have been mentioned, and also depends on his efforts to implement these characters. Vice versa, they are feared that they will be harmed depending on their negligence and carelessness in implementing this character". (al-'Audah, 1990: 124).

Meanwhile with regard to the group of unsaved which in the hadith is referred to as the group that will go to hell (*kulluhā fi al-nār*), al-'Audah states that they cannot be considered as infidels, they are still part of the Muslim community *and ahl al-qiblah.* They will not be in hell forever. The Prophet himself in the hadith referred to them as *ummati,* so that all of them are still considered as Muhammad's people (al-'Audah, 1990: 62). However, al-'Audah emphasized once again that this hadith is not appropriate if it is used as a tool to accuse other groups of being the experts in hell. According to al-'Audah, the correct attitude towards this hadith is that of the early generations of Islam. The companions of the Prophet after hearing this hadith which stated that Muslims would later be divided, what came to their minds was the question which of these groups would survive, and they hoped to be included in that group of survivors. After hearing this hadith, their initial response was not to look for which of them would be harmed and go to hell (al-'Audah, 1990: 59). The introspective perspective of friends like this makes them worry if they are included in the unfortunate group, and at the same time they try to qualify themselves to be a group of survivors. This is different from the phenomenon that is currently developing, where most people when they hear the hadith of *al-iftirāq* immediately look for who will get hurt, so that their attention is not on improving themselves but throwing accusations of heresy, disbelief, hypocrisy, ungodliness and bid'ah to other parties. Even felt that he was perfect without flaws (al-'Audah, 1990: 122).

Al-'Audah finally concluded that in the hadith *al-iftirāq,* the Prophet not only informed that the Muslims would be divided, but also provided a solution to the problem. (al-'Audah, 1990: 12). Hadis *al-iftirāq* not only gives a message so that Muslims are aware of the occurrence of divisions (*takhwīf* and *taḥdzīr*), but also gives good news that among Muslims there will always be *al-firqah al-nājiyah* (*tabsyīr*) and at the same time providing

guidance on how to become a safe group *(tabṣīr)*, namely by adhering to the criteria explained in the hadith (al-'Audah, 1990: 51).

3. Analysis of Contested Understanding of *Iftir āq al-Ummah Hadith* in the Contemporary Era

After examining the four reading models above, it appears that *al-iftiraq hadith* is understood and interpreted differently and has different practical impacts . The group that reads with an exclusive model understands this hadith as a guide to determine which groups are safe and which groups are misguided. According to them, in the present reality, *al-firqah al-nājiyah* is claimed to exist within the group because the group is in accordance with the criteria mentioned in the hadith. While other groups are categorized as *al-firqah al-nariyah*. This reading model has a negative impact on the continuity of Muslim brotherhood. On the one hand, it causes them to be confined to their group, and at the same time creates the potential for conflict among Muslims, both at the elite level of the clergy and ordinary people.

Seeing the negative impact of this exclusive reading model, many people try to evaluate and criticize it. The first group to criticize is a group that considers that *the iftirāq al-ummah hadith* cannot possibly originate from the Prophet. Seeing the negative impact of division and conflict that has arisen, this group doubts its validity and makes a subjective reading of the hadith. The second group that criticizes the exclusive reading model is the group those who understand this hadith are not hadiths to divide the ummah. The spirit of this hadith is actually to unite Muslims even though they have different schools of thought. With an inclusive reading, they consider all Muslims with their various sects to be the people of Muhammad who are in one *al-jamā'ah* and all of them are trying to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet and his companions. So that the group that survived were all Muslims with their various sects. Meanwhile the third group that did the critique was the group that did the introspective reading. They make this hadith as a guide to treading life so that it is in accordance with the teachings of the rails. *Al-firqah al-nājiyah* for this group is a set of criteria and *manhaj* that must be used as a guide if anyone wants to be safe. *Al-firqah al-nājiyah* is not in the form of a particular group, but each group should adhere to the principles and *manhaj* set by the Prophet and his companions. Whoever the group is, if it fulfills these principles, it will become *al- firqah al-nājiyah*.

Differences in understanding of the hadith as above certainly have a practical effect in the life of Muslims. The first view creates a closed attitude, claims to a single truth and has the potential to cause divisions either by the appearance of accusations *of heresy, dhalāl* or *kafir*. The second view carries the spirit of brotherhood, but has a serious impact on the disciplinary order of hadith. They contradict most of the scholars who consider the hadith to be valid, so indirectly they doubt the authentication method used by the hadith scholars. The third and fourth views, although there are slight differences, both give a feel of openness to other groups, and open the faucet of unity, without causing problems in the realm of the method of selecting hadith experts.

The difference in the reading model as above is of course caused by several factors. The first factor is of course related to *the syarḥ al-hadīš* principles. (Muna, 2019: 490-520). Exclusive reading places more emphasis on formal and literal linguistic aspects, tends not to pay attention to the historical context of the emergence of hadith texts, and also does not consider the current condition of the ummah where there are many differences and disputes. Hadith messages which is demonstrated to bring out an outward looking attitude: measuring and judging other groups by the standards in the hadith that are considered to have existed within the group.

The second reading, namely the subjective reading model, is trapped in a reactive attitude towards understanding echoed by an exclusive group which does cause problems at the practical level. They do not try to reinterpret the hadith text, but they position the hadith as a text that is contrary to other, more authoritative texts that carry the spirit of unity and brotherhood among the people. Such a confrontational view encourages them to reject the validity of hadith.

Meanwhile, inclusive reading emphasizes linguistic and thematic-confirmative principles and succeeds in producing solutive meanings for the life of contemporary Muslims. namely upholding unity and reducing division. However, the contextual-historical aspect of hadith texts has not been explored so that *ma'nā maqāṣidī* from the text (the spirit of ummah unity) is not drawn from an analysis of the reality that underlies the appearance of the text, but *ma'nā maqāṣidī* is built from the present reality of the ummah.

While the fourth reading, namely introspective reading accommodates almost all the principles of *syarḥ al-ḥadīs.* The Prophet's position and function as *murshid* (guide) is very significant in this reading. Linguistic principles, thematic-confirmative, past and present contexts are also considered. This reading also produces constructive meaning products: making all groups within the same distance from *al-firqah al-nājiyah.* All groups are brought to an inward looking attitude, namely an atmosphere of hope and anxiety about their own destiny whether they belong to *al-firqah al-nājiyah* or *al-firqah al-nāriyah.*

Based on Gadamer's hermeneutics, the differences in understanding and interpretation of each of these groups are of course influenced by the historical horizon or aspects of each interpreter, whether in the form of tradition, culture, life experiences or interests (Syamsuddin, 2011: 37). The exclusive model reading is dominated by Salafi-Conservatives Which has the main purification agenda in the fields of faith, sharia and morals (al-Ṭarīqī, 2010: 8). This hadith is used by them as an instrument to strengthen the purification programs that are being carried out. They used this hadith as a clear standard of demarcation between their group and groups whose beliefs and practices were considered wrong. Meanwhile, the subjective reading model was put forward by several different groups. Al-Qarāḍawī for example can be categorized as a Salafi-Modernist whose big agenda is the revival of the Muslim community (*al-ṣaḥwah al-islāmiyyah*). So that all factors that can hinder the progress of the ummah must be removed, including the factors that cause divisions in the ummah. Meanwhile al-Idlibī is a pure academic who has the same passion, namely, the progress of Muslims. Meanwhile, inclusive reading is dominated

by a group of hadith experts among the Sufis. Muḥammad al-Kattānī and Umar Abd Allāh Kāmil are two figures active in the contemporary Sufi movement. One of the principles that they cherish is the attitude of *al -raḥmah* **to** anyone. On the other hand, their amaliyah practices are often the target of criticism from some of the main exclusive groups. This condition affects the nuances of their reading of the *al-iftirāq hadith.* So according to them the hadith is actually not an *iftirāq hadith* but the hadith of *al-i'ti ṣ ām* and *ittiḥād,* hadiths that carry a message of peace and unity among Muslims.

Whereas al-'Audah who read hadith introspectively was part of the Salafi- Reformist group (al-Ṭarīqī, 2010: 19). Most of this group is young people who were born from the third wave of the salafi movement. They have experienced and seen the negative effects that have arisen from the views and attitudes of the exclusive-literalist-absolute and extreme groups of the Salafi so far, both the negative impacts on internal salafi circles where there has been a lot of friction and in disharmonious relations with other groups. This condition affects their reading of the hadith *al-iftirāq.* Their readings not only produce solutive meanings for the unity of the people but also criticize the attitude of exclusive and absolute meanings of the hadith.

The four groups in reading the hadith *of al-iftirāq* certainly have their own *pre-understanding,* namely pre-understanding which is formed and influenced by certain situations that surround them. The model of understanding that seems to be able to make a dialogic reading between the interpreter and the text is the third and especially the fourth model . They are capable of *fusion of horizons,* communicating between the horizon in the text and the contemporary horizon that surrounds the reader. They are also able to demonstrate *meaningful sense* (meaning that is more meaningful than just literal meaning) *which is excavated from the text of al-iftirāq* hadith for the benefit of the life of Muslims more broadly, namely the meaning of unity and brotherhood of Muslims.

Differences of opinion are something that inevitably happens, including differences in understanding religious texts. Differences like this need to be addressed wisely. Academic and scientific enthusiasm must be put forward to seek the truth. The comprehensiveness of the data and the complexity of the analysis need to be carried out to get a clear picture and the right conclusions. Exclusive attitudes and self-righteousness in understanding hadith, especially in the academic world, must be removed. The results of the mapping of *the al-iftirāq* hadith reading model show that an undisciplined understanding in applying the principles of interpretation of religious texts will cause problems both in the realm of discourse and implementation. Therefore, this article recommends understandings that prioritize academic enthusiasm, moderate in addressing differences need to be mainstreamed both in the world of education, socio-religious life and among policy makers. Thus, a harmonious and tolerant life even though there are differences can be realized in life.

CONCLUSION

Discourse about the backwardness of Muslims in the contemporary era cannot be separated from the issue of divisions and internal conflicts in the Islamic world. Almost all experts agree that the basic capital for the progress of a nation is harmony and harmony. Disunity, let alone conflict, will hamper the progress of development, and can even lead to the decline of a nation. In the Islamic world itself, many factors are considered to be obstacles to the realization of integration and unity of the Muslim Ummah, one of which is the fanaticism of religious groups and sects. The phenomenon of division among Muslims is increasingly complex, when some parties use religious arguments to strengthen the existence of their group and negate other groups. H adis *iftiraq al-ummah* is one of the religious texts that is often used for this purpose. Discourse on contemporary debates regarding hadis iftirāq *al-ummah* interesting, because on the one hand the hadith triggers conflict and on the other hand it is reinterpreted so that it becomes a driving force for harmony. When the hadith is used as an instrument to claim truth and mislead other parties, it becomes a trigger for division and conflict. However, when the hadith is used as a motivational instrument to continue adhering to the true teachings and raise awareness so as not to go astray, then the hadith – along with other religious texts – becomes a driving factor for the formation of harmony among Muslims.

Contemporary debate regarding the understanding of hadis *iftirāq al-ummah* clarifies that the interpreter of religious texts has an important position as a bridge between the text and the audience who live in a dynamically changing environment. The task of religious interpreters is to become a mediator so that religious texts remain relevant to changing situations. In terms of coherent reasons (*coherent arguments*) the four models of understanding hadis *iftirāq al-ummah* that developed in the contemporary era have equally put forward logical arguments and are acceptable to academic reason. However, on the pragmatic *arguments side* , models of inclusive and introspective understanding provide a more meaningful meaning for life, namely building harmony amidst differences. In terms of hadith science, the understanding of these two models also does not cause academic problems as raised by the model of subjective reading. More than that, these two understandings are able to carry out the function of interpreting religious texts to reproduce meaning and bridge the text with contemporary audiences. Further research regarding the understanding of the *iftirāq al-ummah* hadith by other contemporary scholars from various different backgrounds needs to be carried out, in order to obtain a broader picture of the model of understanding hadith that is developing in the contemporary era.

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