



## **BID'A IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY AND LAW**

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**Abstract:** *Bid'a*, literally translated as religious heresy and innovation, has become a topic of controversy amongst Muslims. There are Prophetic traditions that address *bid'a* in the most critical term, declaring its perpetrators of misguided persons threatened by hellfire. This paper critically examines the notion of *bid'a* and conceptually analyzes it from the perspectives of Islamic theology and law. Based on textual analysis of this term as this is found in some Prophetic traditions and their interpretation by Muslim scholars, this paper shows that the meaning of *bid'a* covers various aspects of Islam, including theology and law. Muslims scholars understand the hadith on *bid'a* literally and contend that all innovations are misleading. Other scholars, however, suggest that based on their critical examination of the term from linguistic, contextual and practical aspects, not all *bid'a* are misguided. These scholars tend to comprehend *bid'a* from the perspective of Islam law rather than theology. According to Islamic law, human actions fall into five legal categories: compulsory, recommended, neutral, reprehensible and forbidden. *Bid'a* must be put into this perspective. In other words, not all new things and innovation are forbidden because they can be categorised as neutral or recommended, depending on the relevant legal considerations.

**Keywords:** *Bid'a*, Islamic Law, Theology

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### **Introduction**

HUMANS' LIFE is ever-changing and always develops in accordance with the time and places they live in. Every time and place pose different challenges and questions. This entails innovations in response to those challenges. Innovation is, therefore, required to answer those challenges. However, in the case of Islamic religious

tradition, innovation is often seen as a heresy that will lead to hellfire, as one famous tradition maintains. Here is the problem. Does the tradition restrict all innovations or a particular innovation? Does innovation in Islam always mean something wrong? Or is there another interpretation of the tradition so that this will not impede innovation?

Muslims believe that Islam provides guides and norms for its followers. The guides are contained in its fundamental sources such as the Qur'an and Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad. They serve as valid sources for worship and human interactions. While the rules of worship never change, human interactions are subject to modification and adaptation to new circumstances. A Muslim jurist and philosopher Ibn Rhusd once stated<sup>1</sup>

الواقع بين أشخاص الأناسى غير متناهية و النصوص و الأفعال و الإقرار متناهية

"Problems amongst people never lasts while the Islamic texts, the action of the Prophet, and his provisions are limited".<sup>2</sup>

This, therefore, calls for critical thinking to consider the fact that the Islamic religious texts, such as the Qur'an and the Prophet tradition, are limited while changes and problems are unlimited. In other words, continuous effort to understand those sources to respond to new challenges is necessary. Likewise, any change and innovation, including in Islamic religious matters, is unavoidable and cannot be simply seen as heresy. Many Muslims argue that such innovation is heresy and all heresies are misleading that will bring the perpetrators to the hellfire. Such notion is based on a

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<sup>1</sup>Ibn Rushd his full name is Abu Walid Muhammad Ibn Muhammad . He was born in Cordova, a city in Andalus in 510 H / 126 AD, He is more popular as Ibn Rushd while Westerners call it an Averrois name that his title was taken from the name of his grandfather. His descendants come from pious and respectable families, even famous for families that have much knowledge. His grandfather and father were former judges in Andalus and he in 565 H / 1169 AD was also appointed as a judge in Seville and Cordova. Because of his outstanding achievements in jurisprudence, in 1173 AD he was promoted to head of the Court. See at Faturohman, "Ibnu Rusd dan Pemikirannya," *Tsarwah* 1, no. 01 (January 16, 2016): 110, accessed January 8, 2019, <http://jurnal.uinbanten.ac.id/index.php/tsarwah/article/view/133>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid* (Dār al-Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, n.d.), 2.

prevalent Prophetic tradition that is almost always recalled by puritan Muslims in Friday sermon or religious teaching and learning. The hadith is narrated by Muslim from Abū 'Abdullāh al-Hāfiẓ from Abū 'Abdullāh:

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْحَافِظُ أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: «أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ..»  
رواه مسلم في الصحيح

“Abū 'Abdullāh told us al-Hāfiẓ told us Abū 'Abdullāh said: After that, actually good conversation is the book of God, and the best referrer is the instructions of Muhammad, the worst case is the innovation, and every heresy is heresy ... (Narrated by Muslim in Saheeh)”

So, what does the hadith mean by *bid'a* (innovation) and *ḍalāla* (misguidance)? Do these two terms express the meaning as puritan Muslims understand them? In other words, does any and every innovation is misleading, and heresy, or is there any specific innovation that the hadith wants to address?

This is a conceptual and philosophical study about *bid'a* as one of the most contested words that often incite controversies amongst Muslims.<sup>4</sup> The study aims to analyze this term from the perspective of Islamic theology and law as the two fields from which debates and disputes over *bid'a* commonly emerge.

### Definition of Heresy

The word بدعة, commonly translated into English as “heresy”, is a noun taken from the word “بدع – يبدع – بدعا” and means to create something without a valid example or precedent from the

<sup>3</sup> Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn Ibn 'Alī Al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā wa Zaylih al-Jawhar al-Nuqā*, vol. 2 (India: Majlis Dār al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyya, 1344), 206.

<sup>4</sup> On the debates over this issue in South Asian context, see SherAli Tareen, “Normativity, Heresy, and the Politics of Authenticity in South Asian Islam,” *The Muslim World* 99, no. 3 (2009): 521–551. On the debates of the issue of *bid'a* (Islamic religious innovation) during the Ottoman, see Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Ottoman Puritanism and Its Discontents: Ahmad Al-Rumi Al-Aqhisari and the Qadizadelis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Prophet.<sup>5</sup> This understanding is based on the book of *al-Ta'rifa*, especially if the word is read with (كسرة) on the letter ba' "ب".<sup>6</sup> This word is also used in the Qur'an below.<sup>7</sup>

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

The word "بدیع" in verse above shows that Allah is the Creator of the skies and earth without referring to any previous existing example because in the Islamic theology the Lord can do and create something just by saying "be"; then the intended thing exists or comes out afterwards.<sup>8</sup> Based on this verse, the meaning of heresy according to original Arabic language refers to a new creation without precedence. In the context of Islamic religion, it thus relates to action, worship or belief or theology that is new and is not supported by valid precedent. However, the meaning of heresy, according to legal terms as described by Muslim scholars, varies. Ibnu Manzūr, for example, says:

الْبِدْعَةُ الْاَحَدُتْ وَ مَا اُبْدِعَ مِنَ الدِّينِ بَعْدَ الْاِكْمَالِ

"Heresy is a new action and held something after the perfection of religious teachings."<sup>9</sup>

According to this scholar, heresy is a new thing as an addition or subtraction after finalization of Islamic teachings marked with the death of the Prophet. The meaning of heresy, as mentioned above, is very common; whatever a new thing may be called "heresy". While the other scholars, such as al-Shāṭibī, especially define heresy as a new thing in Islamic worship. He states:

<sup>5</sup> Ahmad Warson Munawir, *Al-Munawwir, Kamus Arab-Indonesia* (Krapiyak, Yogyakarta: Unit Pengadaan Buku-buku Ilmiah Keagamaan Pondok Pesantren al-Munawir, n.d.), 70.

<sup>6</sup> 'Abd al-Qāhir ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, *Al-Ta'rifa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabiyy, 1405), 119.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Qur'an sura al-Baqarah (2), verse 117

<sup>8</sup> Abū 'Abdullūh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Anṣārī al-Qurtūbī, *Al-Jamī' li-'Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Riyad-KSA: Dār al-'Ālam al-Kutub, 2003), 95; Al-Imām Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, vol. 1 (Riyad: Dār al-Tayyibah li al-Nashar wa al-Tawzī', 1999), 398.

<sup>9</sup> Muḥammad ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-'Arabī* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), 87.

طَرِيقَةً فِي الدِّينِ مُخْتَرَعَةً تَضَاهِي الشَّرْعِيَّةَ، يُقْصَدُ بِالسَّلُوكِ عَلَيْهَا الْمُبَالَغَةُ فِي التَّعْبُدِ  
لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ

"Heresy is a method made in religion that resembles shari'a actions and aims to be carried out as new worship to Allah.<sup>10</sup>

Heresy, according to the definition above, refers to something inserted into religious worship without having a religious foundation. Something is said to be heresy if this has no Islamic religious basis. Or if the innovation is meant to be Shari'a itself and is related to worship and has no precedent in the time of the Prophet.<sup>11</sup> One scholar, Wasim Fathullah, further defines *bid'a* as the following:<sup>12</sup>

هي الفعلة المخالفة لسنة، سميت البدعة لأن قائلها ابتدعها من غير مقال إمام، وهي الأمر المحدث الذي لم يكن عليه الصحابة و التابعون ولم يكن مما اقتضاه الدليل الشرعي

"Heresy is an act that contradicts the Sunnah and is called heresy because the person who says it is made up without legal basis from saying of the imam, namely things that have never been done by followers or actions that are not based on the arguments from the syari'ah".

His criteria of *bid'a* is not so much different from the other definition. According to him, innovation is *bid'a* if this contradicts Sunna and is not found or conducted by the Prophet's companion and the generation after them (*tābi'in*) and does not fit Shari'a. Heresy is something that has not happened at the time of the Prophet. This is not both indicated by shari'a whether it is about the prohibition or obligation.<sup>13</sup>

So, there are two streams of the definition of heresy that are mutually reinforcing. The first emphasizes that heresy is an act

<sup>10</sup> Abū Ishāq al-Shātibī, *Al-I'tisām* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-'Arabiya, n.d.), 21. See also at "Abd al-Ra'ūf Muḥammad 'Uthmān, *Maḥabbah al-Rasūl bayn al-Itbā' wa al-Ibtā'* (Riyad: Ri'asah Idārah al-Buḥuth al-'Ilmiyah wa al-Iftā' wa al-Da'wah, 1414), 285.

<sup>11</sup> Abū Bakr Jābir bin Mūsā al-Jazā'irī, *al-Inṣāf fi Qilā fi al-Mawlid min al-Ghulū wa al-Ijhā* (Riyad: al-Rais al-Ammah li Idārah al-Buḥuth al-'Ilmiyah wa al-Iftā' wa al-Irshād, 1405), 18.

<sup>12</sup> Wāsim Fathullāh, *al-Bid'ah wa Atharuhā al-Sayyi' fi al-Ummah*, n.d., 21.

<sup>13</sup> "Alī Ṣa'id al-Aduwī al-Mālikī, *Hashiah al-Aduwī 'Alā Sharḥ Kifāyah al-Ṭalib al-Rabbānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1412), 157.

that never existed in the Prophet's time and contradicts the *Sunna*, whether it is good or, let alone, evil deeds. The second emphasizes the definition of heresy as a new act that never happened during the Apostle's time, whether it was good or bad.

### ***Bid'a* in the Prophetic Tradition**

There are several prophetic tradition that deals with *bid'a*. These traditions have a slightly different narration but hold the same idea that *bid'a* is misleading. They are conveyed by several narrators and reported by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Nasā'ī, al-Turmudhī, Dāwūd. Below is one example.

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْإِخْفَاطُ أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- إِذَا خَطَبَ أَحْمَرَتْ عَيْنَاهُ، وَعَلَا صَوْتُهُ، وَاشْتَدَّ غَضَبُهُ حَتَّى كَانَتْهُ مُنْذِرُ جَيْشٍ يَقُولُ: « بُعِثْتُ أَنَا وَالسَّاعَةَ كَهَاتَيْنِ ». وَيَفْرُقُ بَيْنَ إِبْصَعِيهِ السَّبَابَةِ وَالْوَسْطَى وَيَقُولُ: « أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَخَيْرُ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ »

"Abū 'Abdullāh told us al-Hāfiẓ told us Abū 'Abdullāh said: it was the Messenger of Allah when he delivers sermon his eyes were red, his voice was high, and his anger was loud, so he was like a reminder of the army while saying: "I have been sent like this while stretching his index finger and middle finger and saying:" After that, actually the best conversation is the book of God, and the best guide is the guidance of Muhammad, and the worst matters is the innovation, and every *bid'a* is misguided.<sup>14</sup>

The other relevant, similar narrative is reported by al-Nasā'ī in his work *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*.<sup>15</sup>

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ فِي خُطْبَتِهِ.... إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ وَأَحْسَنَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ وَشَرُّ الْأُمُورِ مُحْدَثَاتُهَا وَكُلُّ مُحْدَثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ فِي النَّارِ

"It was told from Jābir bin 'Abdullāh that the Prophet had said in his sermon: "Indeed, the more exact speech is the book of Allah and the best guide is the instructions of Muhammad. While the worst matter is

<sup>14</sup> Muḥammad Ibn Ḥibbān bin Aḥmad Abū Ḥatim al-Tamīmī Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān bi Tartīb Ibn Balīban*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, 1414), 148.

<sup>15</sup> Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Alī ibn Sīnān al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan al-Nasā'ī al-Mujtaba*, vol. 3 (Halb: Maktabah al-Maṭbu'ah al-Islamiyah, 1406), 189.

innovation and every innovation is *bid'a* and every *bid'a* is misguided, and every misguidance goes to the hellfire.

In the other tradition, heresy is defined as something new, which is originally outside of Islamic religion but is now inserted into it and becoming part of it. This tradition is narrated by al-Turmudhī below.

عَنْ كَثِيرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ هُوَ ابْنُ عَمْرِو بْنِ عَوْفٍ الْإِمَزِيُّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لِبِلَالِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ: أَعْلَمْ! قَالَ: مَا أَعْلَمُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: أَعْلَمْ يَا بِلَالُ! قَالَ مَا أَعْلَمُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: "إِنَّهُ مِنْ أَحْيَا سَنَةٍ مِنْ سَنَتِي قَدْ أُمِيتَتْ بَعْدِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مِنَ الْأَجْرِ مِثْلَ مَنْ عَمَلَ بِهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَنْقُصَ مِنْ أَجُورِهِمْ شَيْئًا وَمَنْ ابْتَدَعَ بِدْعَةَ ضَلَالَةٍ لَا تَرْضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ آثَامِ مَنْ عَمَلَ بِهَا لَا يَنْقُصُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَوْزَارِ النَّاسِ شَيْئًا"

"It is narrated from Kathīr ibn 'Abdillāh, namely ibn is 'Amar bin 'Awf al-Muzannī from his father from his: that the Prophet saw had said to Bilāl bin al-Hārith: "Know, hi Bilāl" (Bilāl replied: "What should I know hi Messenger of Allah? – replied by the Messenger of Allah - "Indeed, whoever revives a tradition from my traditions while it was abandoned after me, then he/she will receive a reward as the reward given to somebody else who follows that tradition without reducing the reward of the first person. Whoever creates innovation that Allah and His messenger do not recommend, he/she will get sin as the sin of the people following his/her innovation without reducing his/her sin."<sup>16</sup>

And so does the following tradition. It conjoins Muslims to hold the tradition of the Prophet and the guided successors of him and prohibits the creation of new things since it may be misleading. The tradition is narrated by Abu Dāwūd as follow.

حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَمْرِو السَّلْمِيِّ وَحُجْرٌ... فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ بَعْدِي فَسِيرِي اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الْمُهَدِّدِينَ الرَّاشِدِينَ تَمَسَّكُوا بِهَا وَعَصُوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِذِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ

"It is narrated from 'Abdurrahmān bin 'Amar al-Sulamī and Hujrun. The Messenger of Allah said: "Surely those who live after me will see many differences, therefore hold on to my ordinances and the ordinances of al-Khulafā' who are guided and give instructions and braids hold on to him

<sup>16</sup> Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā al-Sulamī al-Ḍarīr al-Būghī al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Turmudhī*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Arabī, n.d.), 45.

and bite with your molten teeth. Avoid things that are made up, because in fact every case that is made up is *bid'a* and every *bid'a* go astray".<sup>17</sup>

Those traditions become the legal source of the prohibition of *bid'a*. However, the narrators put the hadith of *bid'a* on the different section in their respective work,<sup>18</sup> meaning that they perceive the issue quite differently, as this is discussed in the next section.

### Muslim Scholars' Interpretation of *Bid'a*

Despite the number of Prophetic tradition on *bid'a*, scholars have different opinions about it. For example, al-Shāfi'ī classifies innovation into two categories: good innovation and bad innovation. One scholar of the Shafi'ite Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī states<sup>19</sup>

البدعة بدعتان محمودة ومذمومة فما وافق السنة فهو محمود وما خالفها فهو مذموم

"Heresy has two forms; *maḥmūdah* (commendable) and *mazmumah* (abhorrent). And then something that is by the Sunnah is praised and what is violate the sunnah is despicable."

Some Muslim scholars and jurists after al-Shāfi'ī, such as 'Izz al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Salām,<sup>20</sup> al-Qarafī, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Athir,<sup>21</sup> and al-Nawāwī,<sup>22</sup> endorse the two categories of *bid'a*. Although al-Shāfi'ī still relies the definition of *bid'a* as something against the

<sup>17</sup> Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath as-Sijistānī Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 200.

<sup>18</sup> Ahmad Thantawi, "Hadits-hadits *Bid'ah* Perspektif Ulama," *Jurnal Al-Irfani: Jurnal Kajian Tafsir Hadits* 1, no. 1 (March 2017): 53–71, accessed January 11, 2019,

<http://ejournal.kopertais4.or.id/sasambo/index.php/alirfani/article/view/2877>.

<sup>19</sup> Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1379), 253.

<sup>20</sup> 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn 'Abd al-Salām, *Qawā'id Al-Aḥkam Fi Maṣalih Al-Anām*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'arif, n.d.), 113.

<sup>21</sup> Abū al-Sa'ādāt al-Mubārak Muḥammad al-Jazīrī, *al-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Aḥādith wa al-Athar* (Beirut: Al-Maktabah al-'Ilmiyyah, 1978), 106–107.

<sup>22</sup> 'Abdullāh bin 'Abd al-Azīz bin Aḥmad al-Tawjirī, *al-Bidā' al-Ḥawliyah*, n.d., 11.



prophet tradition, he accommodates innovation which is reasonable and not contrary to that tradition.

He seems to be realized that innovation is inevitable. People work, dress, eat and live in a very dynamic way. So long as these do not contrary to the tradition of the Prophet, then they are acceptable. In contrast, it will be complicated if all innovations counted misleading. In this perspective, the problem is not on innovation itself, but the one that is against the Sunna of the Prophet. Consequently, an innovation that is under the Sunna of the Prophet is called commendable heresy. *In contrast, the lousy heresy is an action which is not following the Sunna of the Prophet.* However, Ibn Hajar asserts that heresy is something new inserted into religion, without legal basis of the prime source or the views of scholars, whether it is good or bad, and as it is claimed as part of religion.

But literally, the term heresy/innovation has many meanings. In principle, it means something new regardless of its status as good or bad. Here is the example of the literal meaning of *bid'a* :

المحدثات جمع محدثة والمراد بها ما أحدث وليس له أصل في الشرع ويسمى في عرف الشرع بدعة. وما كان له أصل يدل عليه الشرع فليس بدعة فالبدعة في عرف الشرع مذمومة بخلاف اللغة فان كل شيء أحدث من غير مثال يسمى بدعة سواء كان محمودا أو مذموما

"The word "المحدثات" is plural of "محدثة". It means here something new which has no basis in religion, and this is known in shari'a/religion as "heresy". The first actions of religion 'are not included in the category of "heresy". Therefore, heresy in religion view is despicable, but it is different in the meaning of language because of something that done without an example, even if it is commendable or despicable is heresy.<sup>23</sup>

Some scholars interpret the hadith mentioned, arguing that heresy cannot be divided into two types or more, as this is supported by al-Shāṭibī, Ibn Hajar al-Haytāmī, Ibn Rajab al-Ḥambalī, Ibn Taymiyya, al-Zarkāshī, and others.<sup>24</sup> For example, Ibn Taymiyya argues that heresy only happened in religious teaching without basis legal and is not blessed by Allah and the

<sup>23</sup> al-Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, 253.

<sup>24</sup> al-Tawjirī, *al-Bidā' al-Hawliyah*, 12.

Prophet, both those are related to the duties or recommended thing, as shown in the following expression:<sup>25</sup>

أن البدعة في الدين هي ما لم يشرعه الله ورسوله ، وهو ما لم يأمر به أمر إيجاب ولا استحباب

Indeed heresy is something done in the Islamic religion; namely, it has not ordered (to be done) as a duty or recommended thing.

Clearly, the points of the view show that *bid'a* relates to something new without the guidance of Allah or the Prophet permission.<sup>26</sup> According to supporters of the literal meaning of the heresy, there is no good religious innovation because all innovations are heresy. They go on to say that those who divide the heresy into several parts are also heretics because there is no argument for the division. Nevertheless, it is evident in the Muslim scholar's view that heresy can impact the attitude of unbelievers or infidels with the recognized indications. In fact, there is a rebuttal that the person who divides the heresy into several parts has done heresy too because of lack of argument for that division.

Al-Shāṭibī says:

وقد رد على هذا التقسيم الإمام الشاطبي رحمه الله بعد أن ذكر التقسيم وصاحبه: "والجواب أن هذا التقسيم أمر مخترع لا يدل عليه دليل شرعي، بل هو في نفسه متدافع؛ لأن من حقيقة البدعة أن لا يدل عليها دليل شرعي: لا من نصوص الشرع ولا من قواعده، إذ لو كان هناك ما يدل من الشرع على وجوب، أو ندب، أو إباحة؛ لما كان ثم بدعة، وكان العمل داخلاً في عموم الأعمال المأمور بها<sup>27</sup>

Syathibiy's rejection of a variety of heresy is pushed by the fundamental definition regarding the heresy where it is the specific antithesis of the Shari'ah in an unspecified form that it does not own a basis of religion, either in general or in particular. If there is general argumentation in the Qur'an or hadith, it is not called heresy. The impact of heresy is that the doer of heresy is categorized as a sinner.<sup>28</sup> So, there is no way to escape from heresy,

<sup>25</sup> Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 (Dār al-Wafa', 2005), 107.

<sup>26</sup> Sā'id bin 'Alī bin Wahfa al-Qahtahnī, *Nūr al-Sunnah wa Zulūmāt al-Bid'ah fi Daw' al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnah*, n.d., 33.

<sup>27</sup> al-Jazā'irī, *al-Inṣāf*, 25.

<sup>28</sup> Hāfiẓ bin Aḥmad al-Ḥakim, "Alam al-Sunnah al-Manshūrah li 'Itqad al-Ṭā'ifah al-Najīyah al-Manṣūriyah (Wazarah al-Shu'un al-Islāmiyyah wa al-Awqaf wa

because of any types of the heresy is sin, although it is a really good thing because of it is recognized as the new thing and has not happened in the prophetic era and the follower's time.

### Analysis of the Hadith about *Bid'a*

The text of hadith, as mentioned above, is the basis of the difference of Muslim scholars views related to the concept of heresy. Among them is who gives clearness the aims of hadith by dividing the heresy into two types: good and bad heresy. However, some scholars do not make anything to divide it as long as the collected argumentation and the understanding are from the authoritative text. For example, al-Nawāwī argues that the hadith is still general and, therefore, can be reviewed specifically. So, the meaning of heresy in terms of language can be entered following the classification of the Islamic law that consists of the five categories: *wājib* (obligatory), *harām* (forbidden), *makrūh* (reprehensible), and *mubāh* (neutral), *mandūbah* (recommended). Innovation is thus provisional; it can fall into either legal categories. Al-Nawāwī states<sup>29</sup>

قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم «كل بدعة ضلالة» هذا من العام المخصوص لأن البدعة كل ما عمل بغير مثال سبق قال العلماء وهي خمسة أقسام واجبة ومندوبة ومحرمة ومكروهة ومباحة، وقد ذكرت أمثلتها واضحة في «تهذيب الأسماء واللغات»

"The Prophet's words" كل بدعة ضلالة 'are general in nature because heresy is any deed that has no previous example; therefore, the scholars include it into five categories: obligatory, recommended, forbidden, reprehensible, and neutral. I have mentioned a few examples in the book "Tahzib al-Asma' Wa al-Lughah".

Also, 'Izz al-Dīn ibn 'Abd al-Salām classifies heresy according to Islamic law. Therefore, *bid'a* or innovation in religion can be obligatory, forbidden, neutral or reprehensible. For example, innovation may fall into the category of obligatory due to mandatory consideration of making of doing that even though it

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al-Da'wah wa al-Irshād, 1422), 272. See also 'Abdullāh 'Abd al-Azīz, *Tahzīb Tashīl al-Aqīdah al-Islāmiyah*, 1425, 212.

<sup>29</sup> Abū Zakariyyā Maḥyuddīn Yahyā bin Sharf al-Nawāwī, *al-Majmū' Sharḥ al-Muḥadḍḥab*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1417), 437.

never happened before. Ibn Abdissalam's view was expressed by al-Syarwani as follows:<sup>30</sup>

"قال ابن عبد السلام البدعة منقسمة إلى واجبة ومحرمة ومندوبة ومكروهة ومباحة قال والطريق في ذلك أن تعرض البدعة على قواعد الشريعة فإن دخلت في قواعد الإيجاب فهي واجبة كالاشتغال بعلم النحو أو في قواعد التحريم فمحرمة كمذهب القدرية والمرجئة والمجسمة والرافضة قال والرد على هؤلاء من البدع الواجبة أي لأن المبتدع من أحدث في الشريعة ما لم يكن في عهده صلى الله عليه وسلم أو في قواعد المندوب فمندوبه كبناء الربط والمدارس وكل إحسان لم يحدث في العصر الأول كصلاة التراويح أو في قواعد المكروه فمكروهة كزخرفة المساجد وتزييق المصاحف أو في قواعد المباح فمباحة كالمصافحة عقب الصبح والعصر والتوسع في المآكل والملابس"

“Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām said that heresy is divided into five laws: compulsory (wājib), forbidden (harām), reprehensible (makrūh), recommended (mandūb), and neutral (mubāh). He said that the way to know the heresy is by being offered to sharia rules. So, if the heresy includes in the binding terms, then heresy would be an obligation, such as busying in the studying for Grammatical knowledge. If the heresy enters into prohibiting rule, the heresy becomes a prohibited thing, such as following the ideas of Murji'a, Rafidha, Qadariyya, or Mujassima. Next, he said: the refusing to them was as an obligatory because an innovator to something was the one who made a new thing in Shari'ah which had never happened in the time of the Apostle (the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If heresy is included in the matter of change, then heresy becomes a mandatory, such as building a hut, a school, and any good that never happened during the first period of companions, such as tarawih prayer. If the heresy includes in the reprehensible rule, then heresy becomes reprehensible, such as making decorating to the mosque and covering the Qur'an, and if the heresy includes in the rule of the permission, then heresy becomes neutral, such as shaking hands after praying in the morning (Fajr) and afternoon ('Aṣar) and providing the food and clothing widely”.

The difference in views of Muslim scholars on the hadith about heresy is not due to the validity of the hadith in terms of hadith knowledge. Instead, what makes them different is the word "كل". Because the word "كل" can point into two meanings; “all” or

<sup>30</sup> ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sharwānī, *Ḥawāshī al-Sharwānī ‘alā Tuḥfah al-Muhtāj bi Sharḥ al-Minhāj*, vol. 10 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 232. See also Muḥammad al-Khātib al-Shabīnī, *Mughni al-Muhtaj ilā Ma'rifah Ma'ani Alfaẓ al-Minhaj*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 436. See the description of al-Mālikī, *Hashiah al-Aduwi*, 157.

“part”, as will be explained later. However, further attention must be paid toward the meaning of the Prophet's hadith above since the main problem is the meaning of the derived sentence from the hadith mentioned as follows:

كل محدثة بدعة # و كل بدعة ضلالة # وكل ضلالة في النار

Everything that is made up is heresy,  
every heresy is misguidance (dalālah),  
Moreover, every misguidance is in hell."

The derived statement from hadith above is that if its sentence is changed with an inverted sentence arrangement, it logically will be dubious because of every new thing is in the hell, such as the following expression:

وَكُلُّ ضَلَالَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ # وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ مُّحَدَّثَةٌ # وَكُلُّ مُّحَدَّثَةٍ فِي النَّارِ

Every misguidance is heresy  
Every heresy is a contrived matter  
Every a contrived matter is in the hell

Obviously, the reading of a text like this is impossible, because its meaning is that all new actions are heresy (and it will be put into the hell), including the matter of transactions that have not happened or carried out by the Prophet in his time. While the development of human being activity never ends, but it becomes new (*muhdathah*). So, this cannot immediately be said that it was the denounced thing. However, if the logic of the composition of the sentences is juxtaposed with the following expression, then it is not wrong:

كُلُّ مَا سِوَى اللَّهِ مَخْلُوقٌ # وَكُلُّ مَخْلُوقٍ مُّحَدَّثٌ # وَكُلُّ مُّحَدَّثٍ عَالَمٌ

Everything besides God is a creature,  
Every creature is new (made),  
and every contrived is nature

If the example expression above is read by reversal, such as the method done above, it will give the right meaning in one meaning as follows:

وَكُلُّ عَالَمٍ مُّحَدَّثٌ # وَكُلُّ مُّحَدَّثٍ مَخْلُوقٌ # وَكُلُّ مَخْلُوقٍ مَا سِوَى اللَّهِ # وَكُلُّ مَا سِوَى اللَّهِ عَالَمٌ

Every nature is *muhdath* (the newly created thing)  
Every *muhdath* (the newly created thing) are creatures

Every creature is other than Allah  
 Anything other than God is nature

Regarding the manner of reading as above, it gives the same meaning, where it is started, namely the understanding that "everything besides Allah is nature". Therefore, if reading like this is used to read the hadith about *bid'a*, it will give an error in the meaning; because logically it will give an implication of the meaning that every new thing is in the hell. So, it is an impossible and unwise way to read and understand the hadith.

### The analysis of the word "كُلُّ"

The difference of Muslim scholars' view toward the meaning of heresy is mostly caused by language aspect. Here, for example, the meaning of the word of "كُلُّ" in the hadith, because the fact the view of the scholar is divided into some categories. *The first*, there are among Muslim scholars, who argue that the meaning of the word "كُلُّ" is "all" without exception. Especially if the word is followed by another word (*mudāf ilayh*),<sup>31</sup> for example, is the following verse:<sup>32</sup> *كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ* and *كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مِمَّا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةً*<sup>33</sup>, the meaning of each "كُلُّ" in those verses is understood in the same meaning in the hadith related to heresy as described by Muslim scholar by the following expression:

( كل بدعة ضلالة ) جملة موجبة كلية، (موجبة): لم يسبقها ناصب ولا جازم (كلية): أي مكررةً بلفظ (كل) الذي يفيد العموم والشمول، وهذا كقوله عليه الصلاة والسلام: ( كل مسلم ) فهي جملة من أقوى الجمل، بل هي قاعدة فقهية لشمولها، ولا تسمى القاعدة قاعدة إلا إذا انتظمت كل الجزئيات تحتها<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, it can be affirmed that the meaning of "كل" includes all thing without exception as it was understood in the verses or hadith. Based on the meaning of hadith, it gives sense that all type of heresy is misguided and was a lousy thing naturally and its place is in hell. It appears that thought of some scholars is similar to a follower's attitude of Prophet that the text of hadith is not

<sup>31</sup> Majmu'ah min al-Mu'allifin, *al-Jāmi' fi al-Mawlid*, vol. 5, n.d., 10.

<sup>32</sup> Qs. Surat Ali Imran (4) verse 185

<sup>33</sup> Qs. Surat al-Mudastir, (74) verse 38

<sup>34</sup> Hijazī Muḥammad Sharif, *al-Bid'ah wa Atharuhā fi Mihnah al-Muslimīn*, vol. 5, n.d., 3.

specified by other sentences, so naturally, the general meaning of the word "كُل" is covering the whole, both in worship or other, because followers know more the language of Prophet and exactly they were the first people do the heresy<sup>35</sup> and it was known by the following expression:

وَأَنْ مَالِكاً رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى قَالَ: لِتَلْمِيزِهِ الْإِمَامَ الشَّافِعِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: إِنْ كُلُّ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابِهِ دِينًا لَمْ يَكُنْ الْيَوْمَ دِينًا. وَقَالَ: مَنْ ابْتَدَعَ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ بَدْعًا فَرَأَاهَا حَسَنَةً فَقَدْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَدْ خَانَ الرِّسَالَةَ ، وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَالَ: الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ<sup>36</sup>

The critical thing as argumentation to proof that heresy is terrible is an action of the Prophet's follower, where if an activity in the prophet era, although it was "kindness" type, it was surely too done by them, because of the follower toward the religion are more understandable than the others as such said by the following expression:<sup>37</sup>

"وَقُلْ فِي مَا قَالُوا " أَيْ: إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَنْ تَقُولَ قَوْلًا فَقُلْ فِيْمَا قَالَ السَّلَفُ وَلَا تَزِدْ. كَمَا قَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَحْمَدُ - رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ -: "إِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَتَكَلَّمَ فِي مَسْأَلَةٍ لَيْسَ لَكَ فِيهَا إِمَامٌ مِنَ السَّلَفِ"; لِأَنَّهُمْ أَهْلُ هُدًى وَحَقٍّ وَبَصِيرَةٍ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى. " وَكَفَّ عَمَّا كَفُّوا " أَيْ: الشَّيْءَ الَّذِي كَفَّ عَنْهُ السَّلَفُ كَفَّ عَنْهُ ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْخَوْضَ فِيهِ مِمَّا لَا خَيْرَ فِيهِ ؛ لِأَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ خَيْرًا لَسَقَوْنَا إِلَيْهِ."

Strictly speaking, all forms of new things that have a secure connection with the field of religion, then the benchmark is the practice of followers (the generation after the Prophet's companion). Did they do it or not, because they have the best understanding of the words of the Prophet. If the general statement in the hadith above is not yet complete, indeed, followers will ask; where are the limits of heresy, what is heresy, and how it was?

The second idea is among scholars who stated the word "كُل" does not always mean a "whole", but it sometimes means "partial" with indications that excludes it, such as described by two verses

<sup>35</sup> Burhān al-Dīn Abī al-Ḥasan Ibrāhīm bin 'Umar al-Buqā'ī, *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyātī wa al-Suwar*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1415), 123.

<sup>36</sup> 'Abdullāh bin 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Atharī, *al-Wajiz fī Aqīdah al-Salafī al-Ṣālih, (ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah)* (Saudi Arabia: Wazarah al-Shu'un al-Islāmiyyah wa al-Awqaf wa al-Da'wah wa al-Irshād, 1422), 155.

<sup>37</sup> 'Abd al-Razāq bin 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Badri, *Tazkirah al-Mu'tisī Sharḥ Aqīdah al-Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Ghanī* (Gharas li al-Nashar wa al-Tawzī', 2003), 46.

below, namely verse in *Sura al-Aḥqāf* talking about the condition of the unbeliever:<sup>38</sup>

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَّتِهِمْ قَالُوا هَٰذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا بَلْ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ رِيحٌ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ تَدْمِرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا

The word of “كُلَّ شَيْءٍ” does not mean all of the things that can be destroyed by wind, like the angel is a thing that can not be destroyed and also earth, moon, and stars. So, the scope of the meaning of “كُلَّ” is partial and limited. Here, it is the same meaning as the hadith on *bid’a*. Likewise, the content of the next verse that mentioned in *Sura al-Kahfi* talking about the bad king is the same meaning as the following text:<sup>39</sup>

أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا

The word “كُلَّ” in two verses points to the meaning of “part” not “whole”, because such meaning (part/partial) is needed by the text.<sup>40</sup> Likewise, it occurs in some scholars' understanding of the word “كُلَّ” mentioned before in hadith, which means “partially” because there is an indication for this. As a result, the meaning is not all heresy as a “whole”, but heresy is divided into parts as it was in accordance with the view of al-Nawāwī as follows:<sup>41</sup>

من سن في الاسلام سنة حسنة فله اجرها ( إلى آخره فيه الحث على الابتداء بالخيرات وسن السنن الحسنات والتحذير من اختراع الاباطيل والمستقبحات وفي هذا الحديث تخصيص قوله صلى الله عليه و سلم كل محدثة بدعة وكل بدعة ضلالة وأن المراد به المحدثات الباطلة والبدع المذمومة.

<sup>38</sup>al-Qur’an, al-Aḥqāf ( 46 ) verse 24 – 25.

<sup>39</sup>al-Qur’an, al-Kahfi (18) verse 79

<sup>40</sup> The word Kullu here shows partial eating, not meaningful whole, which is termed the term “General” - “special”. See more information to Abū ‘Umar Yūsuf bin ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Abd al-Bar al-Zamrī, *al-Tamhīd limā fī al-Muwaṭṭa’ min al-Ma’ānī wa al-Asānīd*, vol. 18 (Al-Maghrab: Wazā’ir ‘Umūm al-Awqāf Wa al-Shu’un al-Islāmiyyah, 1378), 56; ‘Alī bin Muḥammad al-Āmidī, *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Iḥkām*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Arabī, 1404), 301.

<sup>41</sup> Abū Zakariyyā Maḥyuddīn Yahyā bin Sharf al-Nawāwī, *al-Minhāj Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Arabī, 1392), 10; al-Nawāwī, *al-Majmū’*, 4:43.



The point of view of al-Nawāwī above is that hadith talking about heresy is having general meaning and can be specified its meaning by another hadith. His view is similar to that of Zarqanī, who contends that the hadith talking about heresy in general.<sup>42</sup>

وحديث "كل بدعة ضلالة" عام مخصوص

Further, Zarqanī stated that heresy is something without having a legal basis in religion. However, if it has a legal basis in religion, either individual or general ground, it cannot directly be named as heresy, even though in language aspect it is inserted as heresy. Therefore, people who put intentionally and believe in anything as part of the religion without a legal basis would be called as the perpetrators of heresy. He argues<sup>43</sup>

والمراد بالبدعة ما أحدث مما لا أصل له في الشريعة يدل عليه وأما ما كان له أصل من الشرع يدل عليه فليس ببدعة شرعا وإن كان بدعة لغة وفي صحيح مسلم قال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم: "من ابتدع بدعة ضلالة لا يرضاها الله ولا رسوله كان عليه مثل آثام من عمل بها لا ينقص ذلك من أوزارهم شيئا".... فقلوه صلى الله عليه وسلم: "كل بدعة ضلالة" من جوامع الكلم لا يخرج عنه شيء وهو أصل عظيم من أصول الدين وهو شبيه بقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "من أحدث في أمرنا ما ليس منه فهو رد" فكل من أحدث شيئا ونسه إلى الدين ولم يكن له أصل من الدين يرجع إليه فهو بريء منه وسواء في ذلك مسائل الاعتقادات أو الأعمال أو الأقوال الظاهرة والباطنة وأما ما وقع في كلام السلف من استحسان بعض البدع فإنما ذلك في البدع اللغوية لا الشرعية فمن ذلك قول عمر رضي الله: "نعمت البدعة هذه"

Zarqawi's view above is supported by al-Sayyid Muḥammad bin al-Sayyid 'Aluwī al-Mālikī al-Ḥasanī who stated that heresy is something new done intentionally in religion, whether it was as an addition or reduction, that is forbidden by the Prophet, although

<sup>42</sup> Muḥammad bin 'Abd al-Baqī bin Yūsuf al-Zarqānī, *Sharḥ al-Zarqānī "Alā Muwaṭṭa'" al-Imām Mālik* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, 1411), 340.

<sup>43</sup> Abū al-Farj 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Aḥmad bin Rajab al-Ḥambalī, *Jāmi' al-"Ulūm wa al-Ḥikām fī Sharḥ Khamsīn Ḥadīthan min Jawāmi'" al-Kalīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1407), 266; Muḥammad 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mubārakī, *Tuḥfah al-Aḥwaz bi Sharḥ al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 7 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 366.

in language aspect the heresy can be divided into five law. He states:<sup>44</sup>

وإذا علمت أن البدعة في الأصل هي: "كل ما حدث و اخترع على غير مثال فلا يغيب أن الزيادة أو الاختراع المذموم هنا هو الزيادة في أمر الدين ليصير من أمر الدين، و الزيادة في الشريعة ليأخذ الصبغة الشرعية فيصير شريعة متبعة منسوبة لصاحب الشريعة، وهو الذي حذر الرسول بقوله: "من حدث في أمرنا هذا ما ليس منه فهو مردود". فالحد الفاصل في الموضوع هو قوله: "في أمرنا هذا"، ولذلك فإن تقسيم البدعة إلى حسنة و سيئة في مفهومنا ليس إلا للبدعة اللغوية التي هي مجرد الاختراع والأحداث، ولا نشك جميعاً في أن البدعة بالمعنى الشرعي- الذي هو الزيادة في الدين و المنسوب للشرع- ليست إلا ضلالة و فتنة مذمومة مردودة مبغوضة"

"If you know fundamentally, the heresy is "everything that happened and made without its examples, so it is not unseen that addition or bad discovery here is addition in religion in order be part of religious business and the addition in religion to take the legitimacy until it is being the followed rule and related to the owner of shari'a. This is which the Prophet warns: "Anywho makes something in this case, where it is not of it (religion), then it is rejected". The separating boundary is in the theme of his word "our business". So that, indeed in our understanding the division of heresy into a good and evil is not only for heresy grammatically which is only making a something. All of us are no doubt that the meaning heresy in religion is the addition for religion self and labeled to religious activity; it is a misguided, despicable, rejected and hated thing."

The prime view of Sayyid al-Mālikī is that everything inserted by someone internally with a belief that it is part of religion without argumentation based on Shari'a, is *bid'a* and a misguided way that must be rejected.

### The Scope of Heresy

If the concept of "heresy" is seen in terms of language, then its scope is very wide, whether it is related to religion or not. Heresy is something new without any previous example, such as engineering, transportation, communication devices, medicine, agriculture and others that have not had examples. However, if the concept of heresy is seen in from its literal meaning, all new

<sup>44</sup> al-Sayyid Muḥammad bin al-Sayyid 'Aluwī al-Mālikī al-Ḥasanī, *Manhaj al-Salaf fi Fahm al-Nuṣūṣ Bain al-Naẓariyah wa al-Taṭbīq*, 1419, 338.

things cannot necessarily be called heresy. Therefore Muslim scholars have classified heresy into some categories. Some argue that the hadith of heresy covers all elements, including worship and social interactions. Perpetrators of *bid'a* can be called unbeliever or sinner. Such implication, however, depends on the motives of the perpetrators themselves. For example, transportation to fulfil the illegal purpose or permitted purpose. While the heresy that is considered to bring *shirq* is an action that lead to it.<sup>45</sup> Strictly speaking, the heresy in this view covers a broad scope, and that it may cause sin or infidel.

On the other hand, some Muslim scholars divided heresy in accordance to the legal category, so this has implications for law; obligatory (*wājib*), forbidden (*harām*), neutral (*mubāh*), recommended (*sunnah*), and reprehensible (*makrūh*). The "thing that has ever been done" by the Prophet is divided into three categories, namely:

- a. *Al-Sunna al-Mu'akkada*, namely the actions described by the Prophet (sayings or deeds) that are highly recommended to be carried out. So that if it is not done, there is no sin such as praying in congregation, *adhan* (calling to pray), and the other actions that are always (ordinary) done by the Prophet.
- b. *Al-Sunna al-Zayda (al-Nāfila)*, namely a new act not always done by the Messenger of Allah, but it is done and abandoned at some time, such as giving the gift, fasting at Monday and Thursday, non-obligatory praying, and others. People who do not carry out of these are not getting reproached.
- c. *Al-Sunna al-Bashariya* which is a virtue that does not become a *shari'a* (rule), such as the way (style) of walking, eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, and the like where they serve as a symbol of humanity, and if it is not believed as a religious provision this does not impact to sin, because the manner of the Prophet is human habits.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Abd al-'Azīz bin Bāz and Muḥammad Šālih al-Uthaymīn, *Fatāwā Muḥimmah li 'Umum al-Ummah* (Riyad: Dār al-'Ašimah, 1413), 33.

<sup>46</sup> 'Abd al-Wahhāb Khallāf, *Ilm Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1978), 112.

Muslims may perform things that have never been done by the Prophet as long as they do not contradict the Qur'an and hadith. Nevertheless, if they are contradictory to these sources, then they are forbidden (*muharrama*) heresy, such as prayer by remembering only, changing the number of *rakaah* of prayer, fasting on two feast holidays, and so on. However, if an action has a strong argument, then it is permissible.

Therefore, the "action that has never been done" cannot be used as an argument to forbid innovation. When the Prophet did not do something does not mean he prohibited it. For example, he avoided eating or drinking something. However, the unwillingness of the Prophet shows that the act did not point to it as forbidden. Moreover, the Prophet did not do something because sometimes he forgot it. For some reason, he also did not perform something for being afraid that this, later on, became an obligation for his people, such as *tarawih* prayer at night of Ramadhan. The Prophet might not have done anything because it did not come to cross at his mind, such as unwillingness to lean back on the tree of dates, but he did not think about chairs to preach. Furthermore, the Prophet was not used to do an activity because it was included in the general verse or hadith, such as he did not do morning prayer (*ḍuḥā*) at one time. For some other reasons, the Prophet just did not do anything because he was afraid of a change in the heart of his friends (such as a hadith telling about the demolition of the Ka'bah as Abraham did).<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, Muslim scholars explained the concept of "not doing deeds". It can take two meanings. The first is "ترك المقصود" which is similar to the "ترك الوجود", namely that something is done by the Prophet and he later stopped doing it. The second is "ترك غير المقصود" or "الترك العدمي". It refers to a statement/word that has never been done/spoken. It leaves unanswered, and if it occurred after the Prophet's time, it would become a center of contention amongst scholars,<sup>48</sup> such as "heresy" (new things), because there was neither argument nor command for it.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 416.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

To deal with such unanswered things, Muslim scholars will look at the general prescription of the Shari'ah law and ask if such things fall under the category of prohibition or something else. This is following the view of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalānī. He said<sup>49</sup>

والبدعة أصلها ما أحدث مثال سابق وتطلق في الشرع في مقابل السنة فتكون مذمومة والتحقيق أنها أن كانت مما تدرج تحت مستحسن في الشرع فهي حسنة وأن كانت مما تدرج تحت مستقبح في الشرع فهي مستقبحة وإلا فهي من قسم المباح وقد تنقسم إلى الأحكام الخمسة

"Heresy is basically something that is held without any previous examples. It is used in the opposite meaning of the sunna so that it becomes despicable. However, after being adequately observed, then if this is below the good value according to religion, the heresy will be useful, so if it falls into a lousy value according to religion, it will become ugly and rejected. If not, it will be included in the corrupt part, and sometimes it will be divided into 5 (five) laws.

Following al-Asqalānī, it is best stated that heresy must be put into the category of law, meaning that it does not necessarily forbid. It is, therefore, contingent upon several points or aspects of the law.

*The first* is that there is no law that can be applied in any form unless it is supported by the authoritative textual base, including in the field of theology as pointed by the verse of al-Qur'an below:<sup>50</sup>

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا

"We will not punish until we send a prophet (as the reminder)."

The explicit text of verse explains that God will not punish someone for misbehavior or misconduct until God sends a messenger who explains to people what is allowed and what is not. So what is forbidden and what is commanded are transparent and based on a legal text. In other words, something cannot be said as permitted or forbidden without a legal basis.

*The second* is that if the concept of *heresy* is not recognized as part of the law, it will lock the freedom of the using of logic. At the same time, Islam encourages the use of logic as the basis of reasoning as long as suitable with law directly and indirectly. It was known that not only once a time the Qur'an orders the use of the logic such as 'don't you think' or 'don't you ponder'. In contrast, if the concept of heresy is set in theology (not law), then the implication is that whoever conducts or believe things which is not based on a sound basis or precedent from the

<sup>49</sup> al-Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, 245.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Qur'an sura al-Isrā' (17), verse 15.

Prophet, this may cause big sin and conversion. So, such a narrow view (including theology in terms of heresy) will decrease the flexibility of Islam because this religion is accommodative to local custom and changing situation, both of which imply new things and unrecognized in the era of the Prophet.<sup>51</sup>

*The third* is that there are hadiths which describe events that are considered as heresy (new things) occurring during the time of the Prophet or his companions in the form of addition, such as the sentence of “رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ” added by follower in praying with teaching of the Prophet. As reported in a lengthy hadith, the saying of this sentence in prayer is not forbidden by the Prophet; even he praised it.<sup>52</sup> The other case (of new things in worship which has no ground) is concerned with the addition of the dhikr (chanting God’s name) in praying that performed by a companion. According to a hadith, a companion read *Sura al-Ikhlāṣ* twice in one *raka’ah*. This case is complained by some other companions and reported it to the Prophet. Surprisingly, the Prophet allowed such reading of the *sura* although he had been not ordered it.<sup>53</sup> There are some other reports on similar accidents.<sup>54</sup> However, the Prophet may prohibit a new action which was deemed unnecessary or exaggerated. In a report, the Prophet forbade the deeds of Abu Isra’il, who was fasting talking and sheltering from the heat of the sun, and not sitting. The Prophet denounced this type of fasting because it could cause harm.<sup>55</sup>

Some examples that are shown in some reports is pointing that suitable addition or innovation with the general statement in the Qur’an is allowed although it is not taught, such as the sprite of the meaning of some verses. Other reports relate to the deeds of

<sup>51</sup> A scholar says

نعتقد أن الإسلام دين ودولة، وعبادة وحكم وأنه صالح لكل زمان ومكان

“We believe that Islam is both religion and state, worship and law and it is always suitable for all time and place”. See Al-Nadwah al-‘Alamiyyah li Ṣabab al-Islāmī, *al-Mawsū‘ah al-Muyassarah fi al-Adyān wa al-Madhāhib wa al-Aḥzāb* (Dar al-Nadwah al-‘Alamiyyah, n.d.), 16.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 2:95.

<sup>53</sup> Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Bardizbah al-Ju‘fī al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb Adhan (Kairo: Dār al-Sha‘b, n.d.). in collecting two chapters in one *raka’at*, No. 774 see more to al-Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, volume 2, 258.

<sup>54</sup> Muslim bin al-Hajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Dhikr, The Chance of Gathering Together To Read the Qur’an and Dhikr Number 2701

<sup>55</sup> al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* no. 6704.

the companions. For example, the First Caliph Abu Bakar collected the verse of the Qur'an<sup>56</sup> and the Third Caliph Ustman standardized and unified some manuscripts into a single official manuscript of the Qur'an and burnt other manuscripts.<sup>57</sup> All these decisions by the Prophet's companions and his successors, although without the approval of the Prophet suggests that innovation does not necessarily mean heresy, like the hadith of heresy reveal. There are many new things and innovation but relevant to Islamic doctrine, and consequently, does not need to be recalled heresy.

## Conclusion

This study shows that heresy is a controversial issue and become a subject of heated discussion amongst Muslim scholars and lay people. Muslim scholars make heresy as a critical field to be taught to the community. Some argue that the meaning of *bid'a* do not include theology because the consequence is rampant and dangerous; those who make or believes things which are unknown in the Prophet's time could be considered an infidel. Therefore, these scholars compiled books to discuss heresy comprehensively and cautiously. Consequently, some Muslim scholars tend to discuss *bid'a* in terms of the law. As a legal category, *bid'a* is not always wrong or forbidden. Depending on the *illat* (reason), *bid'a* may be classified obligatory, recommended, neutral, reprehensible or forbidden.

Nevertheless, here can be emphasized too, that Muslim scholars have agreed that heresy means something new, innovation, created in a later period after the Prophet's era, whether it is good or bad deeds. However, Muslim scholars disagreed about the meaning of the hadith on heresy. Some have concluded that heresy covers all kinds of new things or innovation. Consequently, all heresies must be avoided because they lead to error and finally bring into the hellfire. Some scholars

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<sup>56</sup> Al-Daniyī Abū 'Umar, *al-Ahruf al-Sab'ah li al-Qur'an* (Makkah Al-Mukarramah: Maktabah al-Manarah, 1408), 62.

<sup>57</sup> Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥis fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Maktabah al-Ma'ārif wa al-Tawzi', 2000), 146.

argue that all heresy is not misguided (*dalāl*). They argue that heresy refers to the thing that is added or reduced in religion intentionally without a legal basis from the provisions of Allah and His Messenger. Therefore, some Muslim scholars view that heresy only can be measured by the law or legal categories.

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