



THE PERCEPTION OF KARRÂMIYYA IN MÂTURÎDÎ RECOURCES*

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Abstract

Karrâmiyya, about which there are insufficient studies in Islamic intellectual history, appears at the end of h. 3rd century and gains a lot of followers in Khorasan and Transoxiana regions. In the beginning, Karrâmiyya, which emerged in Murji'ah, turns into a sect that has a specific theology and fiqh. However, the sect could not reach the present day despite its strength in the region, and the pioneering scholars' works, notably Muhammed b. Karrâm. For this reason, the existing data about Karrâmiyya consists of opponents' perception of Karrâmiyya in their resources. Our aim in this paper is to illuminate the perception of Karrâmiyya that dominates Mâturîdî resources and the background of this perception.

Keywords: Karrâmiyya, Muhammed b. Karrâm, Mâturîdî resources, Murji'ah.

1. Introduction

Karrâmiyya is a sect that has produced ideas about such issues as Allah and His attributes, faith, imamate and prophecy. The founder of the sect, Muhammed b. Karrâm (d. 256/869), brings his ideas forward in the h. 3rd century and begins to find followers.¹ Karrâmiyya has become a cult with its own theology thanks to the contributions of the important leaders after Ibn Karrâm.² However, during the early years, which take in the period until the middle of h. 4th century, Karrâmiyya offers a kind of Sufi structuring rather than a cult of kalam and fiqh.³ Hence, the early Karrâmiyya is subjected to Hanafism in fiqh and to Murji'ah in aqidah. It is mostly for this reason that in the maqâlât works written before h. 4th century, Karrâmiyya is stated as a distinct sect. However, this cannot be reduced only to the

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¹ Ibn Karrâm is a discipline of Murji'ah Ahmad b. Harb. Apart from various cities of Khorasan, Ibn Karrâm has set foot in Damascus, Mecca, and Jerusalem, as well. Especially from the villages of Nishabur, a lot of people have been subjected to him. See also Baghdâdî, *Farq*, 215-216, Sam'ânî, *Ansâb*, V/44; Ibn 'Asâkir, *Târîhu Madînah al-Dimashq*, LV/128; Subqî, *Tabaqât*, II/304.

² In some sources the Karrâmîs are claimed to be subject to their own fiqh. See Maqdisî, *Ahsan al-Taqâsim*, 37; Ibn Da'î ar-Râzî, *Tabsirat al-'Avâm*, 76, 90.

³ Most of the sources mention about the ascetic and abed personalities of Ibn Karrâm and Abû Ya'kub Ishak b. Mahmashâz, and that the Karrâmîs used to wear in the way the Sufis did. See Hâkim al-Nîshâbûrî, *Târîhu Nîshâbûr*, 84; Subqî, *Tabaqât*, II/304; Saksakî, *Burhân*, 35-36; Zahabî, *Târîh*, XXVII/60; Safadî, *Wâfi*, IV/265. Besides, in the region of Khorasan and Transoxiana, it is said to be found a lot of khaniqahs that belong to the Karrâmîs. The fact that the khaniqahs were used as the places of dhikr (takiyah) as different from the madrasas with the education mission indicates the Sufic structuring of the Karrâmiyya. See Maqdisî, *Ahsan al-Taqâsim*, 179, 238, 323, 365.

fact that Karrâmiyya has not completed its formation. Although its getting a sect identity is an important factor, it will be wrong to claim this as the single reason. The fact that Karrâmiyya has been ignored by maqâlât writers and has not been mentioned on purpose can be stated as a reason. Indeed, the period that the Karrâmiyya is seen in the maqâlât works coincides with the period during which it is supported by the state and it has gained a great deal of supporters in a wide range of geography.⁴

The main subject of this paper, the reflection of Karrâmiyya on Hanafi-Mâturîdî tradition can be examined under two categories. The first of these categories is the classification of Karrâmiyya in Hanafî firaq literature, and the other is the Karrâmiyya ideas having reflected on Mâturîdî kalâm works. Based on the chronology, the study tries to identify the historical changes about Karrâmiyya in the related literatures.

2. Karrâmiyya in Hanafi Firaq Tradition

Karrâmiyya has been considered within Murji'ah⁵ because of its views on faith and within Anthropomorphism-Anthropopathism⁶ because of its view on Allah and His attributes by maqâlât writers from different sects. The point that draws attention in Hanafî tradition is that it is mostly based on the views of Karrâmiyya on Allah and his attributes in classifying the Karrâmiyya. However, the case is a bit different in Abû Mutî' Makhûl b. Fadl al-Nasafî's (d. 318/930) *Kitâb al-Radd*, the oldest work of Hanafî firaq literature to survive. Nasafî presents "Ahl al-Jama'at Murji'ah" as the saved sect. He does not express Karrâmiyya among the bid'ah sects and defines faith in a way that suits the Karramîs' conception of faith.⁷ Besides, in his *Lu'lu'iyât*, he often refers to Muhammed b. Karrâm (d. 256/869), his master

⁴ Karrâmiyya had been protected by the Samanids before the Ghaznavids. When Mahmûd of Ghazni arrived in Khorasan, it was a well known fact that the Samanids, who had been protecting the Karramîs, were influential in the region. In that period, the region was ruled by the Samanid ruler Nuh b. Mansûr and he supported the Karramîs. After their rule over the region, the Ghaznavids supported the Karramîs as well, and the power of Karramîs increased in this period. See Zahabî, *Târîh*, XXIX/69; Juzjânî, *Tabaqât al-Nâsirî*, I/365; Watt, *The Majesty That Was Islam*, 204.

⁵ Ash'ari shows Karrâmiyya as the twelfth of Murji'ah sects and the supporters of Muhammed b. Karrâm (d. 255/869). As for Zahabî, he shows himself as Murji'ah after claiming Muhammed b. Karrâm as the leader of Karrâmiyya. In Abû Bakr el-Hallâl's *al-Sunnah*, it is stated that what the Murjites mean by the deeds of the organs is the deed of the tongue. When the general tone of the supporters of Hadith is taken into consideration, it is seen that Karrâmiyya, the sub-identity, is handled within Murji'ah without being touched separately. This indicates the Murji'ah background of Karrâmiyya. See Abû Bakr al-Hallâl, *al-Sunnah*, I-III/570-572; Ash'ari, *al-Maqâlât*, 141; Zahabî, *al-'Ibar*, I/366.

⁶ Mâturîdî does not mention about Karrâmiyya by name. Yet he mentions a group from Anthropopathism who claim Allah to be transferring hadith but he himself is not the hadith. From this information corresponding to the data about the Karramîs' claiming the presence of the descendents in Allah's entity (mahal al-hawadith), it can be said that he accepts Karramîs from Anthropopathism. The other figures to relate Karrâmiyya with Anthropopathism are Abu'l-Ma'âlî (485/1092) and Ibn Yahya. Ibn Yahya describes Karrâmiyya as the extremists of Anthropopathism for their comparing Allah's entity. According to him, other groups of tashbih are interested in Allah's divine attributes, and so the case with Karrâmiyya is more problematic. Pazdawî, on the other hand, relates Karrâmiyya both with Anthropomorphism and Anthropopathism. For more information, see Mâturîdî, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, 90; Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 48a, 48b; Abu'l-Ma'âlî, *Bayân al-Adyân*, 25-27; Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 33, 84, 250.

⁷ Nasafî classifies the sects in accordance with Hanafî-Mâturîdî firaq tradition as $6 \times 12 + 1 = 73$. Bid'ah sects are divided into six, which are Harûriyya, Rawâfid, Kadariyya, Jabriyya, Jahmiyya and Murji'ah. The one nearest to the salvation is presented as "Ahl al-Jama'at Murji'ah." See Nasafî, *Kitâb al-Radd*, 61-62.

Ahmad b. Harb (d. 234/848) and Yahya b. Mu‘az (d. 258/872). In two of the four points that he refers to Ibn Karrâm, he mentions about him as “az-zâhid.”⁸ As to Ibn Karrâm’s master Ahmad b. Harb, his name is mentioned in more than twenty points.⁹ The most mentioned figure in the work is Nasafî’s master, Yahya b. Mu‘az, and he has many respective quotations from Yahya b. Mu‘az and Ahmad b. Harb in many parts of his work.¹⁰ The fact that Nasafî gives a wide coverage to Karrâmiyya and figures related to Karrâmiyya, and the information in *Kitâb al-Radd*, is the demonstration of the bond between him and Karrâmiyya.

As for the most classical maqâlât written in Hanafi tradition after Nasafî, it is the maqâlât section in the translation version of Samarqandî’s *al-Sawâd al-A‘zam*.¹¹ In maqâlât section, Karrâmiyya is mentioned just before Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jama‘at, which is mentioned as the sect to attain salvation. The sect that is given with most details is Karrâmiyya. Karrâmiyya is examined separate from Murji‘ah in maqâlât part. However, at one point in the work, the Karrâmîs are shown as an astray community similar to Murji‘ah. The prior issue to be handled under the title of Karrâmiyya is that of faith. Karrâmiyya is presented as a mass that defines faith as the confession by word without the inner conviction. Besides, Karrâmiyya is stated to envision Allah like a human being and to claim that Allah has limbs.¹² The information given about Karrâmiyya in the translated version almost half a century after Nasafî suggests the change of the perception of Karrâmiyya in Hanafi tradition, as Nasafî does not mention Karrâmiyya or its views even though he states Murji‘ah among the Bid‘ah sects. Yet, the views of Karrâmiyya about Tashbih come to the fore about half a century later and so it ranks among the Bid‘ah sects.

Al-‘Iraqî (500/1106) does not draw a link between Murji‘ah-Karrâmiyya and mentions Karrâmiyya as a branch of Anthropopathism in his *al-Firaq al-Muftariqa*. He mentions about Karrâmiyya as a mass that personifies Allah. He says that they claim the presence of the descendents in Allah’s entity (mahal al-hawadith), and that they claim Allah

⁸ The work is the most classical one to mention Ibn Karrâm. He is stated as *Muhammed b. Karrâm az-Zâhid* in 173a and 200b, while as *Muhammed b. Karrâm* in others. Nasafî, *Lu‘lu‘iyyât*, 173a, 182b, 200b, 241a.

⁹ Nasafî, *Lu‘lu‘iyyât*, 172b, 188a, 193a, 197a, 203b, 204a, 209a, 209b, 211a, 214a, 218a, 218b, 220b, 226a, 229b, 243b, 248b, 249a, 252b, 253b, 254a.

¹⁰ It is not necessary to state all the quotations made from Yahya b. Mu‘az one by one as his name is mentioned in more than a hundred points, but for the respective quotations made from him and Ibn Harb, see Nasafî, *Lu‘lu‘iyyât*, 193a, 197a, 203b, 204a, 214a, 218a, 218b, 220b, 226a, 229b, 252b, 253b, 254a-254b.

¹¹ About eighty years after Samarqandî wrote *al-Sawâd al-A‘zam* (around h. 370), the work was translated into Farsi with the order of Khorasan âmir, Nuh b. Mansur. The sect classification in the work does not suit with 6X12 classification seen in the East-Hanafi firaq tradition. While it is far from the systematic of the East-Hanafi firaq tradition, it does not follow a certain systematic in its classifying the sects, either. Rather than stating the main titles and putting the secondary sects in order, the sects are mentioned separately. For this reason, there is no link neither between Karrâmiyya and Murji‘ah nor among other sects that are usually stated as related to each other in firaq literature. See Samarqandî, *Tarjumat al-Sawâd al-A‘zam*, 12-13, 166-190.

¹² Samarqandî, *Tarjumat al-Sawâd al-A‘zam*, 178, 186.

to be a kind of body, though different from others. He criticizes Karrâmiyya to attribute Allah such features as palsy, insurrection, and dwelling, as he does about Anthropopathism.¹³

The only one to show a link between Karrâmiyya and Murji'ah in Hanafî firaq tradition is Nasafî. He cites Murji'ah among the Bid'ah sects. Meanwhile, he mentions the saved sect as "Ahl al-Jama'at Murji'ah." The fact that Nasafî both cites Murji'ah among the Bid'ah sects and describes the saved sect as Murjites reminds of the discrimination between pernicious and magnified Murji'ah. He must have evaluated Karrâmiyya, to which he does not allude among Bid'ah sects, within the context of "Ahl al-Jama'ah Murji'ah." However, the representatives of the same tradition after him do not make such a connection between Karrâmiyya and Murji'ah. Apart from Nasafî, the information about the similarity between the Karramîs and the Murjites can be found only in the section of Samarkandi's work added to the Farsi version. But for this, there is no link made between the two sects in classifying the sects. Karrâmiyya is mentioned as a separate sect. The representative of h. 5th century, al-'Iraqî takes each of the two sects as separate but Bid'ah sects. He prefers to study Karrâmiyya under the title of Anthropopathism on the grounds that they attempt to personify Allah.

3. Karrâmiyya in the Mâturîdî Kalam works

We will try to identify the reflection of Karrâmiyya in the prominent Mâturîdî kalam works ranging from h. 3rd century to the late h. 6th century. In this way we will have the chance to see the differences about the information given about Karrâmiyya in a period of three centuries, during which the Karrami ideas first appeared, its theology took its shape-it was seen as a separate sect- and later lost its power.

As he was the founder of Mâturîdîsm and lived in a period close to that of Ibn Karrâm, the way Abû Mansûr al-Mâturîdî presents Karrâmiyya is important. Mâturîdî does not mention Ibn Karrâm in his *Kitâb al-Tawdîd*. Yet, he is aware of Karrâmiyya and its views. It is not known whether Mâturîdî got the information about Karrâmiyya and its views directly or indirectly, because there is no data about the doings of Karrâmiyya in Samarkand and around in that time. So we can say that Karrâmiyya was not influential in Samarkand, then. It is not known if Mâturîdî went out of Samarkand, either. When the effect of Balkh, Ray and Nishabur on the Samarkand scholarship circle and the fact that some of Mâturîdî tutors were from this city are taken into consideration it can be said that he went to these places, and even if not, these scholars came to Samarkand to lecture for a while. After all, when his works

¹³ The author classifies the sects as 6X12+1 in accordance with Hanafi-Mâturîdî firaq tradition. For more information, see 'Iraqî', *al-Firaq al-Mufteriqa*, 3-10, 85.

are studied closely, it can be seen that he was aware of the views of other sects, he knew well about madhhab and divinity schools in Islam and he did not confine himself to Samarkand environment alone.¹⁴ In the light of all this knowledge, we can claim that Mâturîdî was quite knowledgeable about Karrâmiyya, its followers and leaders, which started to gain power in the region of Khorasan after the late h. 3rd century. However, in accordance with his general approach, he prefers to mention about the prominent views of the sects rather than to speak of figures in *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*. He mentions namely about Karrâmiyya and his prominent view on faith; while he only implies it in other issues.

Mâturîdî's essential addressee about consent and confession in faith is Karrâmiyya. At the beginning, he mentions a group that claims the faith to be limited to confession by word only and it has no relation to heart. The group that he refers to without giving the name directly is Karrâmiyya since he gives the name of Karrâmiyya explicitly afterwards. He emphasizes that the core of the faith is the heart by claiming that there are rational and conveyed evidences that banish the faith understanding of Karrâmiyya. He shows a lot of ayahs as evidence to support his opinion.¹⁵ Mâturîdî claims that the faith conception of the Karrâmîs is based on the idea that the recognition of munafiqs or similar groups is enough to apply the Zahiri decrees. However, he criticizes the faith understanding of Karrâmiyya by asking the question why they have been deprived of infinite blessing and eternal reward promised in the event that their confession is enough for the presence of faith.¹⁶

Apart from its view of faith, the other issue criticized most about Karrâmiyya is that it claims the presence of the descendents in Allah's entity (mahal al-hawâdith). It can be said that the reason for which Karrâmiyya is related to Anthropopathism in many works and even stated under the title of Anthropopathism in some maqâlât sources is that it claims the presence of the descendents in Allah's entity (mahal al-hawadith) and its perception of enthronement. We are in the opinion that Mâturîdî includes Karrâmiyya into this group with reference to the knowledge that a group from Anthropopathism claimed that Allah transfers hadith but He himself is not hadith.¹⁷

Mâturîdî says that some of the Muslim scholars accept enthronement as Allah's dwelling about the issue of the Throne. On this issue where he does not mention Karrâmiyya namely,

¹⁴ Kutlu, *Imam Mâturîdî ve Maturidilik*, 19.

¹⁵ Mâturîdî, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, 471.

¹⁶ By stating the ayahs that order to fight with the mushrikûn, he states that such ayahs base themselves on external conditions and the necessity of having kufr and shirk in their heart is out of question. It is possible that they were ordered to fight with the mushrikûn until they believe in Allah. Even though the place for faith is the heart, they are forbidden to fight with them if they show their faith with word. Because, the physical appearance is not an obstacle for the reality that the place for the faith is the heart. Mâturîdî, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, 474-475.

¹⁷ Mâturîdî, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, 90.

Mâturîdî explains the problems that can come out when the enthronement is understood in the real sense. We have seen that his explanations have been used to criticize the enthronement understanding of Karrâmiyya by the important Mâturîdî figures coming after him.¹⁸

Hakîm al-Samarkandî, a follower and sahabah of Abû Mansûr al-Mâturîdî, gives some information about Karrâmiyya that cannot be found in *Kitâb al-Tawhîd* in his *Sawâd al-A'zam*, in which he settles the doctrines of Ahl al-Sunnah. While handling with the opinion that those who are from *Ashab al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'at* must believe in the superiority of al-anbiya over al-awliya, he claims that the ones who think the opposite are Ahl al-Bid'ah and they are called as Karrâmî.¹⁹ Inspired from the knowledge about Karrâmiyya as to its valuing some of the awliya above those of al-anbiya,²⁰ there is information in some sources about the fact that the Karramîs claimed Muhammad b. Karrâm to be superior to Muhammad b. 'Abdillah.²¹ We can relate the reality that the idea of superiority of awliya over al-anbiya, which is based on the extreme of Sûfis, is accepted by the Karrâmiyya with their Sûfî aspect. However the argument that Karramîs take Muhammad b. Karrâm above Muhammad b. Abdillah is seen as a claim the opponents brought forward with the discourse that the Karramîs had been involved in deception.

Samarkandî refers to different conceptions of faith while studying this subject. He describes the ones who confess Allah by word but not by heart as munafiq, and those who defend the idea that faith is sheer confession by word as Karrâmî. He puts forward the idea that the truest idea is the one which accepts that the faith is confirmed by heart and confessed by word.²² The information Samarkandî cites about the faith understanding of the Karramîs shows that the main idea under the definition of faith in Karrâmiyya is its confession by word. Otherwise, the Karrâmîs' understanding of faith would be the same with that of munafiqs'. Yet, he uses the expression of *without knowing Allah with heart* only for the munafiqs. This knowledge shows that the Karrâmîs believe that the avowal is used as the base for being described as mu'min. The fact that he does not touch on the idea of *without the confirmation of heart* while discussing the faith understanding of Karrâmiyya is an indicator of this situation.

What is different in Samarkandî's work is that he mentions the thought of kasb of the Karramîs', which is not stated frequently. According to Karrâmiyya someone's working more than he needs is haram. Samarkandî, on this issue, specifies that the renouncement of kasb is

¹⁸ Mâturîdî, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, 90, Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 41-42; Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 158.

¹⁹ Hakîm al-Samarqandî, *al-Sawâd al-A'zam*, 23.

²⁰ Apart from Hakîm al-Samarqandî, Baghdâdî mentions this view of Karrâmiyya. See Baghdâdî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 188, 316.

²¹ See Ibn Dâ'î ar-Râzî, *Tabsrât al-'Avâm*, 65-66.

²² Hakîm al-Samarqandî, *al-Sawâd al-A'zam*, 32.

approval; and the rejection of it is kufr, and those who do such are the Karramîs.²³ We have come across their rejection of kasb idea in Samarkandî's work. The understanding of rejection of kasb which is based on Karrâmiyya by Samarkandî, is about the mystical aspect of the sect. The fact that Karrâmiyya appeared as an ascetism movement and it was internalized especially by the poor folk of the countryside is effective on the acceptance of this idea.

While expounding *Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, one of the earliest works of Mâtûrîdîsm written by Abû Salama Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Samarkandî (mid IV/X century), Ibn Yahya mentions about Karrâmiyya in different parts of his work.²⁴ Ibn Yahya refers to his scholar Rustuġfanî as *Fakîh Abu'l-Hasan* and gives place to his scholar's ideas about Karrâmiyya. Rustuġfanî says that giving alms to Karramîs is not mubah and presents them among Anthropopathism. He even claims that the Karramîs are the extremes of Anthropopathism as they personify the existence of Allah; the rest of Anthropopathism personifies the divine attributes of Allah. For this reason, he finds the case with the Karramîs more problematic and claims that the alms from them cannot be accepted as well, since they are Ahl al-Bid'ah.²⁵

Apart from this, he states that the Karramîs take the recognition of ordeal as faith²⁶ and they describe Allah with attributes and phrases that He is exempt. Because they claim that Allah is a matter, different from others, though. Besides, they attribute Allah with direction, movement and tranquillity.²⁷

He gives place to Abû Salama's ideas, the author of *Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, on Karrâmiyya besides his tutor Rustuġfanî. With the statement *Fakîh Sahibu'l-Kitâb*, he says that Abû Salama uses the statement *the idolatrous Anthropomorphism* wherever he mentions Karrâmiyya.²⁸ Besides, he tells us that Abû Salama compared the khanqah of the Karramîs to a church during an expedition and did not allow the ghazis to lodge there. He does not include Karrâmiyya among the Islamic sects by considering the views of Ibn Yahya, Rustuġfanî and Abû Salama. In this case, he needs to explain that they are not to give jizya and they are not to be fought. He says that they are treated in this way since their shahada is a seeming one. He bases the fact that even though they explicitly show bid'ah, they are left as a group to Ahl al-

²³ Hakîm al-Samarqandî, *al-Sawâd al-A'zam*, 33.

²⁴ The student of Mâtûrîdî's student, Ibn Yahya mostly refers to his scholar Rustuġfanî and then Abû Mansûr al-Mâtûrîdî in his *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*. He uses Mâtûrîdî's ideas as evidence to his ideas by citing his views more than twenty times. For the different places that mention Mâtûrîdî, see Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 18b, 20a, 29a, 31a, 34a, 39a, 46b, 52b, 53a, 61b, 64b, 68a, 68b, 88b, 93b, 110a, 117b, 118b, 127b.

²⁵ Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 48a, 48b.

²⁶ Abu Salama takes Mâtûrîdî's ideas about the subject as the basis when he rejects this understanding of the Karramîs'. According to Mâtûrîdî, the 'balâ' answer given to Allah's question does not show a discourse. This answer is not one that each of the people from Adam's lineage expresses by word and it is an answer of genesis. When one reaches puberty, he thinks on his creation and observes that Allah is his creator. See Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 34a.

²⁷ Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 49b, 50a, 51b.

²⁸ The author alludes to Abu Salama, the author of *Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, with this phrase.

Sunnah's sureness to be deceived by them and he relates this opinion to Abu'l-Hasan ar-Rustuġfanî. He says that they are not included to seventy three sects mentioned in the hadith because of their unacceptable ideas about tawhid and religious matters.²⁹

Two of the important figures of Matûrîdîsm in the h. 5th century, Abu'l-Yusr al-Pazdawî and Abu'l-Mu'în an-Nasafî give a large place to Karrâmiyya in their works. Abu'l-Yusr al-Pazdawî deals with Karrâmiyya under the title of Anthropomorphism. Pazdawî gives some information about Karramîs' using the concept of cism for Allah, which is not handled in the works of its followers. Some of the Karramîs have different comments on the issue by claiming that they use the concept of term only namely, not in the real sense.³⁰ In the Mâtûrîdî sources before Pazdawî, we have not met any knowledge about Karramîs' not using the concept of cism in the real sense and just to put a name. It is known that Ibn Haysam tries to explain some of the ideas of Karrâmiyya in an acceptable way because of the criticism directed to Karrâmiyya.³¹ For this reason, it can be said that this term, which had not been used before, is derived from Ibn Haysam's explanations that shaped the theology of Karrâmiyya.³² After he has given the views of Karrâmiyya about the issue, the author criticizes the use of the concept of cism by Karrâmiyya within the circle of the ideas of Ahl al-Sunnah and Jama'at about the subject.³³

Pazdawî evaluates the Karramîs' opinions about enthronement and vision within the scope of their taking Allah as cism. Related to the meaning they give to the concept of cism, the enthronement perception of Karramîs becomes different, as well. According to the meaning they give to the concept of cism, a group from Karrâmiyya attaches Allah with six aspects while another group attaches one. The ones who attach six aspects are the ones who accept that Allah is a cism, but unlike other cisms (ecsam). Those who attach one aspect claim that He has stability with that aspect in the Throne. Pazdawî states this group as the one that argue that Allah cannot be called as cism in the real sense but only namely. This group claims

²⁹ Just after this knowledge, it is cited that the features of Karrâmiyya are mentioned without giving a name besides Muhammad b. Sirin. When the Karramîs are described as people of ascetic and worship and mentioned as people who wear dirty clothes and eat dirty food, Ibn Sirin implies that being Ahl al-Zuhd and Taqwa does not comply with nastiness. Ibn Sirin passed away in h. 110. When the death of Ibn Karrâm is considered, the earliest possible date of the appearance of Karramîs is the first half of the h. 3rd century. When this information is taken into consideration, it is seen that the author has a kind of anachronism. Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 49b, 50a.

³⁰ Its followers say about the subject that Karramîs have an explanation as "He is matter, but not like the other matters." Pazdawî, *'Usûlu'd-Dîn*, 34-35.

³¹ For more information, see Sharistânî, *al-Milal wa'n-Nihal*, 103-104, 116-117.

³² Utbî, *Yemîni*, 308; Zahabî, *Târîh al-Islâm*, XXX/497; Safadî, *al-Wâfi*, V/113; Ibn Kathîr, *Bidâya*, XII/38; 'Askalânî, *Tabsîr al-Muntabih*, III/1191.

³³ According to Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'at, Allah is not even namely *matter* in the general aspect of Mu'tazila ve Ash'ari. He can be named as *thing*, *self*, and *entity*. Pazdawî has different explanations about the use of matter (cism) for Allah. For him, Allah must not be matter as He is not similar to anything from living creatures. Because matter consists of the togetherness of the elements and matters, and due to the elements it looks similar. Matter is shaped by at least two elements. For this reason, Allah cannot be a matter. The fact that he separately mentions Ash'ari after Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'at shows that he does not include them to the scope of Ahl al-Sunnah. See Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 34-35.

Allah to be in the transcendent excluded from place. The second group, which attaches Allah with one single aspect, supports this view with various ayahs from Quran.³⁴ Apart from these ayahs, they use Muhammad's ascending to Mi'raj and the Muslims' opening their hands up to the sky while praying as other evidences. Besides, the same group claims that Allah's creating the universe below his own position is more suitable for wisdom and as a feature, his act of creating while He is above does not produce any changes in Allah's identity.³⁵

According to Pazdawî, the groups that accept Allah as cism also accept that His sight has occurred bodily as a natural result. Karrâmiyya is one of such groups and it asserts that Allah is to be seen as the other creatures are seen.³⁶

Pazdawî says that the Karramîs describe faith as sheer confession. He mentions about the ayahs and hadiths that are the base of this understanding.³⁷ Besides, he shows iqrar al-belâ as the basis of their understanding of faith. Pazdawî, who also mentions about the Karramîs' views about the discussions on Allah's having an agreement with the human being before its creation, mentions that the Karramîs are defenders of the idea of having faith in Allah as a mass. Moving from this acceptance, the Karramîs claim the Christian children before puberty to be Muslims.³⁸

What is different in Pazdawî's work is that it mentions the decrees that the Karramîs have acquired on the basis of their understanding of faith. While the Mâturîdî figures before

³⁴ "To him mount up (all) words of purity: It is He who exalts each deed of righteousness." Al-Fatir 35/10 and "We sent it down during a blessed night." Ad-Dukhân 44/3

³⁵ Pazdawî thinks that what is meant by the mounting of the words of purity is metaphoric, because words, especially words of those without baqaa, cannot be thought to mount up in the real sense. Besides, he claims that the ayah is concise and Allah's intention cannot be known for sure. He maintains that the ascent is that of *state* and *honour* rather than *place* and *person*. He criticizes the Karrâmiyyan idea that Allah created the universe with one aspect of his aspects. Because, aspect is a side of the place. As for Allah, He is not in a single place, He cannot be thought to be at one side of the universe as He did not create the universe in one place. Pazdawî expresses that the ascension of Muhammad means arrival and from this one cannot conclude that Allah is above, and indeed Moses was ordered to mount up the Tûr mountain but this order was not understood as Allah's being on that mountain. He criticizes the opponents' ideas with the example that the humans' being commanded to visit Kaaba cannot be understood as the presence of Allah in Kaaba. When it comes to opening the hands up to the sky while praying, it is because the sky is the place from which the grace is to come and because people are commanded to do this as they are to visit Kaaba. For more information, see al-Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 41-42.

³⁶ Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 84.

³⁷ "Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto Us..." Al Baqarah 2/136; "Our Lord! we believe. Count us among the witnesses. What cause can we have not to believe in Allah and the truth which has come to us, seeing that we long for our Lord to admit us to the company of the righteous? And for this their prayer hath Allah rewarded them with Gardens, with rivers flowing underneath, - their eternal home. Such is the recompense of those who do good." Al Maida 5/83-85. He also says that the Karramîs use the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad "Whoever says *Lâ ilâha illallâh* has a place in heaven." and "I was told to struggle with the people till they say *Lâ ilâha illallâh*." See Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 150.

³⁸ The Karramîs show Âl Imran, 3/106 ayah as evidence for this view: "On the day when some faces will be (lit up with) white, and some faces will be (in the gloom of) black, To those whose faces will be black, (will be said): "Did you reject faith after accepting it?" Taste then the penalty for rejecting faith." Âl Imran 3/106. They claim that the phrase 'Did you reject faith after accepting it?' indicates that they have accepted before. A group from Ahl al-Sunnah, including Qadariyya and Imâm Mâturîdî, do not accept that everybody makes a confession of ordeal one by one. Because the Kâfirs must be condemned as apostate as they reject their confession. However, the ijma of the ummah shows that the Kâfirs are not condemned as apostate. And this shows that Allah does not have a covenant. After giving his opinions about the matter, Pazdawî says that the A'râf ayah 7/172, used by the Karramîs as evidence of their views, has been interpreted differently by the glossators. The Jews reject after they believe in Prophet Muhammad and this ayah is sent about them. Besides, Pazdawî mentions about a rumour of Abû Umama al-Bâhilî that tells this ayah to be sent about the Khawarijs. See Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 218-220.

him contend with showing the Karramîs' conception of faith to be consisting of confession, Pazdawî gives place to the opinions of the opponents in his work in a detailed way.

The author, who generally prefers to mention the base of their ideas, too, while presenting the opponents' views, does not make an explanation when he states the view of Karrâmiyya on the torment of the grave. He contents himself with stating that the Karrâmiyya is in the opinion that a person can be tormented after death.³⁹ Besides, he presents the standpoint of Karrâmiyya under the title of whether the imamate of two imams in the same period is mubah or not. He claims that Karrâmiyya takes the imamate of two imams at the same time as mubah contrary to *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'at*.⁴⁰

The fact that he mentions some views about Karrâmiyya that are not mentioned by Ibn Yahya and Samarkandî and he usually gives these views together with their basis are some differences met in Pazdawî. That the Karrâmiyya had its strongest time during the h. 5th century by increasing its influence in the leadership of important figures shows its effect on the works written in that period. The information in *Usulu'd-Dîn* about Karrâmiyya is one of the manifestations of this influence. In its rise and the reflection of this rise on literature, the effect of the fact that Karrâmiyya has appropriated Muhammed b. Haysam is of great importance.

A contemporary of Pazdawî, Abu'l-Mu'în an-Nasafî gives a large place to Karrâmiyya in his *Tamhîd* and *Tabsîrat al-Adillah*. He places Karrâmiyya among the groups⁴¹ that personify Allah, as Pazdawî does. The information Nasafî gives about this issue is almost the same with that of Pazdawî. The difference is that Nasafî makes more detailed philological analysis as to the meaning of matter.⁴² Nasafî emphasizes that what the followers of Karrâmiyya mean by cism is its literal meaning in the dictionary. That is, he defends the idea that when the early Karramîs called Allah as cism they did not mean the existing or self-sufficiency meaning; and this meaning was given by its followers in an effort to get rid of the criticism directed to them.⁴³

The fact that Nasafî uses the term *the descendants of Karrâmiyya* for those who assign

³⁹ Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 168.

⁴⁰ Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 195.

⁴¹ Nasafî talks about a Jewish sect that he does not mention namely, Hanbelism, Jawâribiyya, Jawâliqiyya and Hishamiyya from Rafida sects, Karrâmiyya and a rumour from Hisham b. Hakem as the groups that personify Allah. See Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 68, 137-138.

⁴² He criticizes those who oppose them about the use of cim with the meaning of self-sufficiency (he means Karramîs as the opposers) by saying that matter is used for compound entities with its literal meaning. He also criticizes those ones who use the term cim but with a different meaning rather than compound meaning by claiming that they take the term out of the requirements of language. He says, "If this were mubah, it would also be mubah to use the term of *adult* for Allah to mean His self-sufficiency. See Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 68-69, 139-142.

⁴³ Nasafî, *Tabsîrat al-Adillah*, I/177-178. In the text, there is no expression of Karramîs, but it mentions its followers and subjects and states that the meaning they give to cism is different. For this reason, we chose to use the phrase of early Karramîs. Besides, Nasafî uses the phrase early Karramîs in various parts where he gives information about Karrâmiyya. See also Nasafî, *Tabsîrat al-Adillah*, I/214.

the meaning of *self-sufficiency* to Karramîs' concept of matter supports this information.⁴⁴ Even though the period mentioned by Nasafî when he uses the term *descendants* is not certain, it can be said that he uses this term to emphasize the differences between the ideas of early Karrâmiyya and those of the following periods. It is highly probable that Nasafî refers to the period after Muhammed b. Haysam, who brought verbal basis to the ideas of Karrâmiyya. Because the first figure who gives place to the explanations of the Karramîs on what they mean with matter is self-sufficiency in Mâtûrîdî tradition is Ibn Yahya.⁴⁵ When the fact that Ibn Yahya and Ibn Haysam were efficient during the same period is taken into consideration, the reason why this issue is not handled in the works of Hakîm al-Samarkandî and Mâtûrîdî before Ibn Yahya can be understood. In this case, it is seen that the Karrâmiyya gave this meaning to matter around the late h. 4th century.

Nasafî, who accuses Karrâmiyya of accepting the munâfiq as mu'min in terms of its faith perception, can be said to have a different approach from Pazdawî about this issue. Pazdawî does not imply anything about their taking the munâfiq as mu'min and prefers to mention mental and conveyed evidences on which the Karramîs base their understanding of faith. But according to Nasafî, Karrâmiyya accepts those munafiqs described as kafir by Allah as real mumin through its view of faith. The fact that they call them as mumin contrary to Allah's naming them as munâfiq means that they attribute a mistake to Allah (His denotation) and object to the decree. And this is kufr.⁴⁶ Contrary to the ones before him, Nasafî makes a hard criticism, which is not as hard as that of Ash'aris use of language towards Karrâmiyya.

According to Nasafî, Karrâmiyya is a group which takes wisdom and talent as identical, claims the presence of the descendents in Allah's entity (mahal al-hawadith), and accepts that might comes before deed.⁴⁷ Besides, Karrâmiyya is in the opinion that genesis is different from the created, the genesis is the hadith and Allah is self-sufficient. In the case of accepting genesis as hadith, the question of whether Allah was the creator in the pre-eternity comes out. Karrâmiyya tries to overcome this problem by explaining that Allah is the creator in the pre-eternity with His creativity, and creativity means the ability to create. Karrâmiyya differentiate between wish and willpower. While wish is the eternal attribution of Allah, willpower is different and it is a subsequent attribution in Allah's archaic self. And Allah has

⁴⁴ Nasafî, *Tabsirat al-Adillah*, I/158-159.

⁴⁵ There may be other Mâtûrîdî authors before Ibn Yahya to give this information. Our finding comprises the works of Mâtûrîdî figures examined in this study. Among these names, it is Ibn Yahya who mentions about this issue for the first time. See Ibn Yahya, *Sharh Jumal Usûl al-Dîn*, v. 49b, 50a.

⁴⁶ Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 386, 389; *Tabsirat al-Adillah*, II/405.

⁴⁷ Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 68-69, 90, 178-179.

as much willpower as those given willpower. Each of those with will exist in Allah's self-existence before they are created.⁴⁸

By evaluating the term *the first Karrâmiyya* that Nasafî uses about this issue and *the late Karrâmiyya* together, we can say that Karrâmiyya has completed its construction and there are differences between the early and late Karrâmiyya. Nasafî claims that the group which he describes as the late Karrâmîs argue that Allah is not in the heaven (Arsh), He is above the heaven and there is a distance between the heaven and Allah, and they exclude such features as touching, meeting, and settling (permanence) from Allah.⁴⁹

When it comes to h. 6th century, the names of Saffâr al-Bukhârî (d. 534/1139) and Nuraddîn as-Sabûnî (d. 580/1184) come to the fore in the Mâturîdî tradition. Saffâr el-Bukharî states some of the Karrâmî ideas under the title of Ahl al-Bid'ah and he declares the ones who accept these ideas as the non-believers.⁵⁰ Saffâr criticizes Anthropopathism, Karrâmiyya and Hishamiyya all of whom describe Allah with movement and tranquillity and accept Allah's contact with arsh.⁵¹ In the related part, he mentions about Anthropopathism and Karrâmiyya separately. However, he mostly handles with Karrâmiyya in relation to Anthropopathism and Anthropomorphism.

He uses the phrases "Mujassim Karrâmiyya" and "Khorasan Mujassimah" under the title of Ahl al-Bid'ah. Saffâr, besides, contents himself with describing some of the Karrâmîs as Ahl al-Bid'ah while he declares the others as non-believers. In the two parts that he uses the term "Khorasan Karrâmiyya" about Karrâmiyya, the author describes this group as one that claims Allah to be a cism like the other cisms.⁵² As for the section he uses "Mujassim Karrâmiyya," he states that this group do not see a difference between the existence of a thing and its permanentness. For them, what is permanent is nothing else than what exists.⁵³

⁴⁸ Nasafî, *Tabsirat al-Adillah*, I/492.

⁴⁹ Nasafî, *Tabsirat al-Adillah*, I/216.

⁵⁰ Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, II/726-727.

⁵¹ Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, II/467.

⁵² He denounces the Karrâmîs as they use the concept of cism for Allah, they give a limitation to Him, and they accept that He has an ending concerning His direction downwards. Besides, he also denounces those who accept the idea that Allah has only power upon the beings in His entity; and He has no power upon those that exist without a location or exist apart from His self. However, he names those who use the term cism for Allah but states *not like the other cisms as* Ahl al-Bid'ah. He says that the controversy between the ones accepting this view and themselves is about the meaning given to the term and so it is not necessary to declare this group as non-believers. See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, II/732, 856.

⁵³ Saffâr shows Jubbâi, Abu'l-Huzayl al-'Allâf and Mujassim Karrâmiyya as the ones accepting this idea. Karrâmiyya claims that all of the entities are eternal with all their forms until they disappear. Every matter and being in the universe exist twice in Allah's self. One of them is Allah's commanding its existence and the other is His order to become. In the same way, everything to disappear (or has disappeared) exists twice in Allah's self. One of them is His commanding its destroy and the other is His order to perish. For them, the beings are eternal until Allah destroys them. The beings can exist in two or more time. The first confession of the human being is eternal and this confession does not die out with his death, but it only destroys with his abjuration. In the same way, as long as the marriage continues, the wedding word is valid. It only loses its validity in the event of death or divorce. Saffâr criticizes these arguments in that they may give way to mahal al-hawadith. See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, I/301, 305-306.

Saffâr, who mentions that Karrâmiyya accepts Allah has a quality and this quality is to be comprehended by the sixth sense, confines himself to stating Pazdawî's opinion on the issue. Pazdawî says that the use of quality by Karrâmiyya evokes personification and so he claims that the use of the word quality for Allah is not mubah.⁵⁴

Before Saffâr, Pazdawî says that Karrâmiyya is in the opinion that human can be tormented after death.⁵⁵ As to Nasafî, he says that Karrâmiyya accepts the torment of the grave but rejects the return of the life.⁵⁶ Saffâr makes some addition to this knowledge. He bases his information on Ibn Kerrâm. According to Ibn Kerrâm, the soul will be returned to the body during the questioning of Munkar and Nakir and it will leave the body after the questioning. If the dead deserves torment, it will be tormented, and if it deserves the return of the soul, it will be done so without life.⁵⁷ About the issue of whether death banishes wisdom and might, Saffâr defends the idea that wisdom and might disappear with death and he claims that this idea belongs to Ahl-al-Haqq. However, Karrâmiyya claims that death will only banish the attribution of might, not wisdom.⁵⁸

The author uses the terms Mushabbih Karrâmiyya, Karrâmiyya from Mushabbihah and Mujassimah from Karrâmiyya from time to time.⁵⁹ While this attitude matches up with the fact that not all of those that personify Allah are the Karramîs, it also indicates that not all the Karramîs personify Allah. He also uses the terms Mushabbihah and Mujassimah interchangeably. The fact that those who accept personification also accept to materialize Allah in Islamic view explains the reason of this use.

In contrast to the Mâturîdî figures before him, the information he gives about the faith conception of the Karrâmiyya is very limited. At only one point, he shows Karrâmiyya among those who reduce faith to the confession by word.⁶⁰ Different from his followers regarding Karrâmiyya, he states that Karrâmiyya finds Allah's creating human beings that He knows will not believe in Him against His might. Karrâmiyya also does not accept the idea that Allah created the non-living before the living.⁶¹

⁵⁴ We have not seen this information, which Saffâr states as the view of Pazdawî, in Pazdawî's *Usûl al-Dîn*. See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, II/689.

⁵⁵ Pazdawî, *Usûl al-Dîn*, 168.

⁵⁶ Nasafî, *Tamhîd*, 354.

⁵⁷ Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, I/247.

⁵⁸ Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, I/97-98.

⁵⁹ See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, I/301, 305-306, I/423, 463, II/732.

⁶⁰ The other groups that he mentions are Fadliyya and Sa'îdiyya. Fadliyye is the companion of Fadl ar-Rakkâshî's and Sa'îdiyya is the companion of Abû 'Abdillah Muhammad b. Sa'îd al-Kattân. See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, 724-725.

⁶¹ See Saffâr, *Talhîs al-Adillah*, I/326-327, II/616-617.

The last name that we will put emphasis on in Mâturîdî tradition is Nuraddîn as-Sâbûnî (d. 580/1184). Although Sâbûnî mentions about Ahl al-Sunnah⁶² and Mâturîdîyya⁶³ quite often, he talks about Murji'ah only once. This approach shows that he does not include Murji'ah within the Ahl al-Sunnah.⁶⁴ Sâbûnî does not show a connection neither between Ahl al-Sunnah and Murji'ah nor Murji'ah and Karrâmiyya.

Sâbûnî repeats such kalam issues as whether Allah, whom Karrâmiyya emphasizes with itself, can be called as matter, the divine attributions of Allah, Allah's ascend to arsh, and imamate in his work.⁶⁵ His single difference from his followers is that he states Karrâmiyya among those who differentiate name from its designation.⁶⁶ Besides, he says that the Karramîs claim the divine attributes of Allah and Allah's entity to be separate.⁶⁷ The information Sâbûnî presents is his inference from Karrâmiyya's opinions about Allah and His divine attributions rather than being new. That he does not give new information about Karrâmiyya is quite natural. The fact that Karrâmiyya loses its effect in h. 6th century and begins to disappear explains this issue.

4. Conclusion

In the light of such information, we can say that Karrâmiyya is a sect which is accepted as a separate one from Murji'ah in this tradition and which is rather related to Anthropopathism-Anthropomorphism. While the followers of Hadith consider themselves within Murji'ah as it takes the Karramîs' faith conception to its center Mâturîdîs take their view of Allah and His divine attributions on the issue.

It is seen that in the period during which Karrâmiyya is weak, it is not taken as necessary to be mentioned about or only limited information is given about it while the amount of information given about Karrâmiyya in Mâturîdî tradition increases together with its rise. Besides, as Karrâmiyya loses its political support and its authority in the region begins to shake (it keeps its power in the region for one more century after it loses the political support), the criticism directed to Karrâmiyya becomes severer. In parallel to its disappearance day by day, the information given about Karrâmiyya in the Hanafi-Mâturîdî tradition decreases.

⁶² See Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 1, 8, 15-16, 18-21, 24, 48-49, 54, 60, 65-66, 72, 96, 104, 107, 111, 122, 124, 131, 133, 137, 140, 141, 150.

⁶³ See Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 1, 8, 9, 18-20, 24, 26, 45.

⁶⁴ Having declared the view of Ahl al-Sunnah about Ashab al-Kabâir, he cites the motto of Murji'ah on this issue; *as obedience is not useful together with kufr, sin does not harm if with faith*. The only point that the author refers to Murji'ah is this one. See Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 140.

⁶⁵ See Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 44, 51, 61, 68-69, 100.

⁶⁶ He says that *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'at Mâturîdîyya* takes the name and designation as one. See Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 54.

⁶⁷ Sâbûnî, who claims that the divine attributions of Allah are neither same with nor different from Allah's self, gives various examples to support his argument. For more information, see Sâbûnî, *Bidâyah*, 51.

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