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Shūrā in the Nine Canonical Ḥadīth Collections: A Source-Critical and Thematic Reconstruction

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Abstract: Shūrā is a central principle of Islamic governance, yet the *Kutub al-Ḥadīth al-Tisʿah* do not place it in a dedicated chapter. As a result, modern discussions of consultation often rely on Qurʾanic verses and a few familiar reports without first mapping the *ḥadīth* evidence systematically. This article addresses that gap through a thematic *takhrīj* of all reports containing derivatives of the root *shīn-wāw-rāʾ* in the Nine Major Ḥadīth Collections. It combines lexical retrieval, source tracing, *isnād-cum-matn assessment*, and thematic classification. The study finds that the *shūrā* corpus is larger and stronger than usually assumed: it consists of 44 discrete accounts and 107 transmission routes, including two non-Muslim reports, eight prophetic sayings, thirteen prophetic action reports, eighteen Companion reports, and three Successor reports. Of these routes, 83 are *ṣaḥīḥ*, 12 *ḥasan*, and 12 *ḍaʿīf*, so 95 routes meet at least the threshold of acceptability. The study also shows that *shūrā* operates through five overlapping registers: ethical trust, personal consent, crisis deliberation, legal reasoning, and political legitimation. These registers share the same lexical root but carry different legal and institutional implications. The corpus challenges two modern assumptions: shūrā is neither a morally neutral procedure nor identical to modern electoral democracy. At the same time, it rejects unilateral authority by withholding legitimacy from allegiance made without communal consultation. This article concludes that *shūrā* in the ḥadīth corpus is not merely a meeting or the expression of opinions, but a process of consultation that must be guided by trust, sincerity, and a righteous purpose. It also proposes a graded way of reading the evidence on *shūrā*, by prioritizing the strongest reports before drawing broader legal, social, or political conclusions.

Keywords: *consultation; governance; ḥadīth criticism; shūrā; takhrīj.*

Abstrak: Shūrā merupakan prinsip penting dalam tata kelola Islam. Namun, *Kutub al-Ḥadīth al-Tisʿah* tidak menempatkannya dalam satu bab khusus. Akibatnya, pembahasan modern tentang musyawarah sering bertumpu pada ayat-ayat Al-Qurʾan dan beberapa riwayat populer, tanpa terlebih dahulu memetakan bukti hadis secara sistematis. Artikel ini mengisi celah tersebut melalui takhrīj tematik terhadap seluruh riwayat yang memuat turunan akar kata *shīn-wāw-rāʾ* dalam

sembilan kitab hadis utama. Kajian ini menggabungkan pencarian leksikal, penelusuran sumber, penilaian *isnād-cum-matn*, dan klasifikasi tematik. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa korpus *shūrā* lebih luas dan lebih kuat daripada yang sering diasumsikan. Korpus tersebut mencakup 44 riwayat induk dengan 107 jalur periwayatan, terdiri atas dua laporan non-Muslim, delapan hadis qaulī, tiga belas hadis fiʿlī, delapan belas atsar sahabat, dan tiga atsar tābiʿīn. Dari seluruh jalur itu, 83 berstatus ṣaḥīḥ, 12 ḥasan, dan 12 ḍaʿīf, sehingga 95 jalur memenuhi batas minimal keterterimaan. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa *shūrā* bekerja melalui lima ranah yang saling berkaitan: amanah etis, persetujuan pribadi, musyawarah dalam situasi krisis, penalaran hukum, dan legitimasi politik. Kelima ranah ini memiliki akar leksikal yang sama, tetapi membawa implikasi hukum dan kelembagaan yang berbeda. Selain itu, korpus hadis menolak dua asumsi modern: shūrā bukan prosedur yang netral secara moral dan tidak identik dengan demokrasi elektoral modern. Pada saat yang sama, shūrā juga menolak otoritas sepihak karena legitimasi politik tidak dapat dibangun dengan mengabaikan musyawarah umat. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa shūrā dalam hadis bukan sekadar rapat atau pemberian pendapat, melainkan proses musyawarah yang harus dijalankan dengan amanah, kejujuran, dan tujuan yang benar. Artikel ini juga menawarkan cara membaca dalil shūrā secara bertingkat, yaitu dengan mendahulukan riwayat yang paling kuat sebelum menarik kesimpulan hukum, sosial, atau politik.

Kata Kunci: *kritik hadis; musyawarah; shūrā; takhrīj; tata kelola.*

1. Introduction

The Qurʾān presents shūrā as a defining trait of a righteous community, a prophetic practice, and even a domestic norm. The believers are described as those whose affairs are conducted through consultation among themselves, wa amruhum shūrā baynahum (Q. 42:38). The Prophet is commanded to consult his followers, wa shāwirhum fī al-amr (Q. 3:159). Parents are instructed to make the decision of weaning by mutual consent and consultation, ″n tarāḍin minhumā wa tashāwur (Q. 2:233). These three Qur'anic formulations give shūrā a high normative place, but they do not by themselves provide a detailed map of its social, legal, and political forms.

The ḥadīth corpus would seem to be the natural place to seek that map. The Sunnah records how the Prophet spoke, acted, advised, judged, and led the community.[1] Yet the Nine Canonical Collections, namely *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Muwaṭṭaʾ Mālik, Sunan al-Dārimī,* and *Musnad Aḥmad*, contain no independent *kitāb* or comprehensive *bāb* devoted exclusively to shūrā.[2] The material is scattered through chapters on marriage, military expeditions, judicial settlement, knowledge, etiquette, public health, legal

[1] Muḥammad ʿAjjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth: ʿUlūmuhu wa Muṣṭalaḥuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1989), 19-20.

[2] A. J. Wensinck et al., *al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras li-Alfāẓ al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī*, 8 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936–1988). The nine collections indexed in this concordance are Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Muwaṭṭaʾ Mālik, Sunan al-Dārimī, and Musnad Aḥmad.

penalties, and succession.[3] This dispersion explains why modern writing on shūrā often moves quickly from Qur'anic verses to political theory, without first asking what the hadith evidence actually contains and how strong that evidence is.

Previous studies have advanced the discussion but have not closed this gap. Abulahi and Aukadi collected a limited set of ḥadīths on *shūrā* but did not provide systematic grading. Muʿamish studied the relation between text and history but did not reconstruct the full ḥadīth corpus. ʿAbd al-Qahhār Ṣabrī discussed prophetic and caliphal applications but treated the reports illustratively.[4] Other works examine particular themes, periods, or battles. They are valuable, but none offers a compact source-critical map of all shūrā material in the Nine Books together with a thematic reading of its contemporary implications.

This article therefore pursues two aims. The first is technical: to identify every relevant occurrence of the root *shīn-wāw-rāʾ* in its consultative sense within the Nine Books, trace the reports through their transmission routes, and classify their grades according to classical and contemporary hadith criticism. The second is interpretive: to ask what this verified corpus says about consultation as an ethical, legal, social, and political practice. The novelty is threefold. First, the article reconstructs shūrā as a corpus rather than as a small collection of proof-texts. Second, it differentiates the functions of shūrā instead of treating all consultation as one political category. Third, it shows that the corpus complicates two dominant assumptions: that shūrā is simply equivalent to modern democracy, or that it is merely a non-binding symbolic gesture. In the hadith material, shūrā is better understood as a range of practices shaped by trust, competence, consent, public welfare, and textual authority.

2. Method

This study is a qualitative library-based inquiry using thematic *takhrīj al-ḥadīth*. The primary corpus is the *Kutub al-Ḥadīth al-Tisʿah*. The research began with lexical retrieval through the root letters *shīn-wāw-rāʾ*, assisted by *al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras li-Alfāẓ al-Ḥadīth* and cross-checked through digital searches in *Jāmiʿ Kutub al-Ḥadīth al-Tisʿah* and al-Maktabah al-Shāmilah. The lexical search included derivatives such as *shāwara, istashāra, tashāwara, ashāra ʿalā, mashūrah, and shūrā*. Occurrences

[3] This observation is based on the author's survey of the kitāb and bāb headings in the nine collections and on the distribution of reports containing derivatives of the root shīn-wāw-rāʾ across the corpus. See Wensinck et al., *al-Muʿjam al-Mufahras*, s.v. "sh-w-r."

[4] Fatima Abulahi and Fatima Aukadi, "al-Aḥādīth al-Wāridah fī al-Shūrā Jamʿan wa-Takhrījan" (master's thesis, University of Ahmed Draia, 2017); ʿIzz al-Dīn Muʿamish, "al-Shūrā bayna al-Naṣṣ wa al-Tārīkh," *Islāmiyyat al-Maʿrifa* 21, no. 83 (2016): 11–50; ʿAbd al-Qahhār Ṣabrī ʿAbd Allāh, "al-Shūrā fī al-Islām ma″ Namādhij min Taṭbīqātihi fī ʿAṣr al-Risālah wa al-Khulafāʾ al-Rāshidīn," *Majallat Kulliyyat al-ʿulūm al-Islāmiyyah* 13, no. 4 (2020): 151–90.

of ashāra ilā in the sense of mere physical pointing were excluded, unless the wider context indicated advice or counsel.[5]

Each report was then examined through three analytical questions. Who seeks counsel, the *mustashīr*? Who is consulted, the *mustashār*? What matter is being deliberated, the mustashār fīh? These questions allowed the reports to be classified into five broad groups: non-Muslim deliberation, prophetic sayings, prophetic actions, Companion reports, and Successor reports. The study distinguishes between a discrete account and a transmission route. A discrete account refers to a distinct narrative or statement, while a transmission route refers to each occurrence or chain through which that account appears in the Nine Books. This distinction is important because a single report, such as al-mustashāru muʾman, may occur through several Companions and multiple chains.

For grading, the study follows the internal conventions of ḥadīth criticism. Reports in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* are treated as *ṣaḥīḥ* according to the standard authority of the two collections. Reports outside the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* are evaluated through the comments of the compilers when available, especially al-Tirmidhī, and through the critical annotations of *Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾuṭ, Ḥusayn Salīm Asad*, *Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf*, and other editors. Where chains converge, the study considers corroboration and matn stability in a manner broadly compatible with isnād-cum-matn analysis, while remaining within the operative framework of Muslim hadith sciences.[6]

The method has two limits. *First*, it is a source-critical and thematic article, not a full political theory of *shūrā*. Its aim is to establish the corpus and draw controlled implications from it. Second, because the article is condensed for journal publication, it does not reproduce the complete *takhrīj* of all 107 transmission routes. Instead, it provides the full numerical map and discusses representative reports that most clearly reveal the corpus's structure, authenticity profile, and contemporary relevance.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Corpus Map and Lexical Logic

The search produced 44 discrete accounts that expand into 107 transmission routes. These accounts are not distributed evenly. The largest group consists of *āthār* from the Companions, followed by prophetic action reports, prophetic sayings, reports involving non-Muslim deliberation, and a small number of Successor reports. The authenticity profile is also notable: 83 routes are *ṣaḥīḥ*,

[5] A. J. Wensinck et al., *Concordance et Indices de la Tradition Musulmane*, 8 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1936–69); Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Mufradāt Alfāẓ al-Qurʾān* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1992); Muḥammad ibn Mukarram Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1994).

[6] Harald Motzki, "The Muṣannaf of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan″nī as a Source of Authentic Aḥādīth of the First Century A.H.," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 50, no. 1 (1991): 1–21; Jonathan A. C. Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Ḥadīth Canon* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-Takhrīj wa-Dirāsat al-Asānīd* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1996).

12 are *ḥasan*, and 12 are *ḍaʿīf*. Thus, 95 of 107 routes meet at least the threshold of acceptability. This does not mean that every theme carries equal normative weight, but it does show that the hadith basis for shūrā is broader and stronger than the few famous citations usually invoked in discussions of Islamic governance.

Table 1. Distribution of shūrā Reports in the Nine Canonical Ḥadīth Collections

Category	**Discrete accounts**	**Transmission routes**	**Main function in the corpus**
Non-Muslim deliberation	2	2	Shows that consultation as a procedure is value-neutral and depends on its end.
Prophetic sayings	8	21	Frames counsel as trust, sincerity, consent, and communal welfare.
Prophetic actions	13	46	Shows consultation in crisis, diplomacy, family matters, and judicial accommodation.
Companion reports	18	35	Institutionalizes *shūrā* in law, public health, councils, and succession.
Successor reports	3	3	Extends consultative practice beyond the first generation.
Total	44	107	83 *ṣaḥīḥ*, 12 *ḥasan*, and 12 *ḍaʿīf* routes.

The lexical field of *shūrā* helps explain this range. Classical lexicographers link the root shīn-wāw-rāʾ to extracting, displaying, and presenting something valuable. In consultation, what is extracted and presented is raʿy, considered judgment. Al-Rāghib defines *mushāwarah* and *tashāwur* as *istikhrāj al-raʿy bi-murājaʿat al-baʿḍ ilā al-baʿḍ*, the extraction of an opinion through reciprocal reference among parties. This etymology is important because it prevents shūrā from being reduced to a formal institution. It is first a disciplined act of drawing out judgment from those able to see what the decision maker may not see alone.[7]

The corpus confirms this lexical logic. Some reports concern political legitimacy, but others concern marriage consent, household crises, military strategy, water rights, plague policy, legal penalties, and the moral responsibility of an adviser. The same root moves across all these settings. The unifying concept is not modern voting, nor simple advice, but entrusted deliberation oriented toward a decision.

3.2. Shūrā as a Means: The Moral Valence of Consultation

Two reports describe consultation among non-Muslims. The first concerns Quraysh deliberating in Mecca over how to harm the Prophet, whether to bind him, kill him, or expel him. A wording in Musnad Aḥmad from Ibn ʿAbbās states: *tashāwarat Quraysh laylatan bi-Makkah*. Al-Arnaʾuṭ grades the immediate chain weak, although the broader episode is supported by a corroborating report. The second concerns the Quraysh envoys to the Negus. They first approach the Abyssinian

[7] Ibn Fāris, Aḥmad ibn Fāris al-Qazwīnī. *Maqāyīs al-Lugha* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1979); al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, *Mufradāt Alfāẓ al-Qurʾān*.

courtiers and ask them to advise the king to hand over the Muslim emigrants without hearing them: *fa-tushīrū ʿalayhi bi-an yuslimahum ilaynā*. Al-Arnaʾuṭ grades this report *ḥasan*.[8]

These two counter-examples establish a crucial interpretive principle. Shūrā is not automatically virtuous simply because several people deliberate. It is a wasīlah, a means, and the legal-moral character of a means follows the end it serves. Consultation deployed to plot injustice remains injustice. This insight is often missing from modern celebratory accounts of shūrā. The hadith corpus does not sanctify deliberation as a procedure detached from moral ends. It asks what is being pursued, by whom, and for what purpose.

3.3. Prophetic Sayings: Trust, Sincerity, and Consent

The prophetic sayings on shūrā are fewer than the Companion reports, but they provide the corpus's ethical grammar. The most important maxim is al-mustashāru muʾman, 'the one consulted is entrusted.' It appears eight times across five of the Nine Books through Abū Hurayrah, Abū Masʿūd, and Umm Salamah. The Abū Hurayrah route in Sunan Abī Dāwūd is graded ṣaḥīḥ, while other routes range from ḥasan to weak. As a whole, the maxim is firmly established.[9]

The maxim gives consultation its moral core. A person asked for counsel is not merely offering an opinion. He or she receives an *amānah*. This principle is sharpened by another report: *man ashāra ʿalā akhīhi bi-amrin yaʿlamu anna al-rushda fī ghayrihi faqad khānahu*, '*whoever advises his brother toward a matter while knowing that right guidance lies elsewhere has betrayed him*.' The report is graded *ḥasan* through corroboration. Together, these two sayings define the negative and positive duties of advice: to respond sincerely when asked, and never to use another person's vulnerability as an opportunity for deception.[10]

A second group of sayings concerns marriage. The Prophet says, *al-bikru tustaʿmar wa al-thayyibu tushāwar,* '*the virgin is asked, and the previously married woman is consulted*.' Another report states, *ashīrū ʿalā al-nisāʾ fī anfusihinna, 'counsel women regarding themselves*.' The first report is *ṣaḥīḥ*, while the second is *ṣaḥīḥ li-ghayrihi* through corroboration. Their significance lies in the fact that *shūrā* is not limited to public governance. It enters the private law of marriage and protects the agency of the person most directly affected by the decision. This material also complicates contemporary debates on gender and ḥadīth, because the strongest reports concerning women and

[8] Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾuṭ et al. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 2001), nos. 3251, 1740, 22498.

[9] Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾuṭ and Muḥammad Kāmil Qurrah Balālī (Beirut: Dār al-Risālah al-ʿĀlamiyyah, 2009), no. 5128; Muḥammad ibn ʿIsā al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1998), nos. 2369, 2822, 2823; Muḥammad ibn Yazīd Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾuṭ et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Risālah al-ʿĀlamiyyah, 2009), nos. 3745–46; ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, ed. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad al-Dārānī (Riyadh: Dār al-Mughnī, 2000), no. 2493; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, no. 22360.

[10] Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, no. 3657; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 8266, 8776.

shūrā are not exclusionary. They are reports of consultation, consent, and correction of unilateral guardianship.[11]

Two weaker sayings are still instructive when read cautiously. One states that if Abū Bakr and ʿUmar had agreed in counsel, the Prophet would not have opposed them. Another says that had the Prophet appointed someone without consultation, he would have appointed Ibn Umm ʿAbd. Both contain weak chains, but they point to a remembered ideal: important appointments and grave decisions should not be isolated from counsel. A third report, *wa umūrukum shūrā baynakum*, links the flourishing of communal life to consultative affairs, but al-Tirmidhī classifies its chain as *gharīb* because it passes through Ṣāliḥ al-Murrī. This means its broad ethical sense may cohere with Qur'anic teaching, but the specific wording cannot bear the same weight as the sound reports above.[12]

Table 2. Representative Shūrā Reports and Their Thematic Contribution

Report or episode	Primary location	Grade profile	Conceptual contribution
al-mustashāru muʾman	Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, al-Dārimī, Aḥmad	*Ṣaḥīḥ as a corpus*	Advice is an entrusted act.
Women asked and consulted in marriage	Aḥmad and parallel meanings	*Ṣaḥīḥ or ṣaḥīḥ li-ghayrihi*	Shūrā protects consent and personal agency.
Badr consultation	Muslim and Aḥmad	*Ṣaḥīḥ or ḥasan depending on route*	Consultation can include disagreement and responsibility.
Ḥudaybiyyah	Aḥmad, with wider sīrah context	*Ṣaḥīḥ on the criteria of the two Ṣaḥīḥs*	Deliberation and diplomacy can work together.
Plague at Sargh	Bukhārī, Muslim, Mālik	*Ṣaḥīḥ*	Consultation integrates public welfare and prophetic precedent.
al-khilāfatu shūrā	Muslim and Aḥmad	*Ṣaḥīḥ*	Political succession requires consultative legitimacy.

3.4. Prophetic Practice: Deliberation in Crisis, Family, and Judgment

The prophetic action reports show shūrā as practice rather than slogan. In the Miʿrāj narrative, the Prophet repeatedly turns to Gabriel when Moses advises him to ask for a reduction in the prescribed prayers. The wording says he turned to Gabriel as if seeking his counsel, ka″nnahu yastashīruhu fī dhālik. Since this report is in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, it is ṣaḥīḥ. Its significance is not procedural politics but prophetic habitus. Even in a moment of direct divine command, the narrative portrays the Prophet as receptive to counsel.[13]

[11] Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 5720, 17724.

[12] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, no. 2266; Jonathan A. C. Brown, "The Rules of Matn Criticism: There Are No Rules," *Islamic Law and Society* 19, no. 4 (2012): 356–96.

[13] Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir (Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 2001), no. 7517.

At Badr, consultation becomes a matter of strategic commitment. When news of Abū Sufyān's approach reached the Prophet, he consulted the Companions. Abū Bakr spoke, then ʿUmar, and then the Anṣār understood that the Prophet wished to know their position. Saʿd ibn ʿUbādah or another Anṣārī declared that they would follow him even if ordered to plunge their horses into the sea. The report is ṣaḥīḥ in Muslim and sound through Aḥmad's routes. The episode shows that prophetic shūrā is not a mechanical poll. The Prophet listens sequentially, draws out the party whose commitment is decisive, and transforms consultation into moral participation.[14]

The consultation regarding the prisoners of Badr demonstrates a second feature: *shūrā* may produce real disagreement. Abū Bakr recommended ransom because the captives were kinsmen and might later be guided. ʿUmar recommended execution because the matter involved active enemies of the community. The Prophet accepted the counsel of Abū Bakr, while revelation later commented on the decision. The report is graded ḥasan through its major routes. This episode prevents an idealized reading of consultation. Shūrā does not guarantee consensus. It exposes disagreement, obliges the leader to weigh arguments, and leaves responsibility with the decision maker.[15]

The Ḥadīth al-Ifk presents consultation in the most intimate and socially dangerous setting. Before revelation declared ʿĀʾishah's innocence, the Prophet consulted ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Usāmah ibn Zayd regarding his household. Usāmah affirmed what he knew of the household's innocence, while ʿAlī suggested further inquiry. The Prophet then asked the community what they advised regarding those who had slandered his family. The report is ṣaḥīḥ and appears in both Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. Al-Bukhārī's placement of the report under the Qur'anic verse wa amruhum shūrā baynahum is itself a major hermeneutical clue: the compiler read this painful domestic crisis as an instance of Qur'anic consultation in action.[16]

Ḥudaybiyyah provides the clearest diplomatic example. When the Prophet learned that Quraysh had mobilized to block the Muslims from reaching the Kaʿbah, he said, ashīrū ʿalayya, 'advise me.' He presented two options: turn against those who aided Quraysh or continue toward the House and fight only if blocked. Abū Bakr advised the latter, and the Prophet accepted it. Later, when the Companions hesitated to slaughter their sacrificial animals after the treaty, Umm Salamah advised the Prophet to act silently first, by slaughtering his own animal and shaving his head. The Companions then followed. The report's chain in Aḥmad is graded ṣaḥīḥ on the criteria of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. This episode strengthens recent readings of Ḥudaybiyyah as a model of strategic

[14] Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, n.d.), no. 1779; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 12022, 12954, 13296, 13703.

[15] Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, no. 1714; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 208, 221, 13555.

[16] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, nos. 2661, 4141, 4757, 7369–70; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 2770.

patience, but it adds a necessary textual point: strategic patience emerged through counsel, including counsel from a woman at a moment of political consequence.[17]

Two further examples clarify the boundary between consultation and binding judgment. In the takhyīr episode, the Prophet tells ʿAʾishah that she need not rush her decision until she consults her parents. She immediately chooses God, His Messenger, and the Hereafter. Consultation here enlarges autonomy. It is offered as deliberative space, not imposed as procedural delay.[18] In the irrigation dispute between al-Zubayr and an Anṣārī man, the Prophet first proposes an accommodating settlement. When the Anṣārī rejects it with an accusation of favoritism, the Prophet shifts from advisory accommodation to explicit judicial ruling. This report shows that ishārah, advice, and ḥukm, judgment, are distinct speech acts in the prophetic repertoire.[19]

3.5. Companion and Successor Reports: Institutionalizing Shūrā

The Companion reports reveal how shūrā moved from prophetic habit to institutional practice. Maymūn ibn Mihrān reports that Abū Bakr judged first by the Book of God, then by known prophetic precedent, then by asking Muslims whether they knew a relevant sunnah. If no precedent was found, he gathered the leading and best people and consulted them. Although the chain is interrupted because Maymūn did not meet Abū Bakr, the report is conceptually important. Consultation appears as the residual field of ijtihād when explicit text and known precedent do not settle the matter.[20]

ʿUmar's practice gives this residual field a more structured form. In one report from Ibn ʿAbbās, al-qurrāʾ, whether elders or young men, are described as the companions of ʿUmar's assembly and consultation. When ʿUyaynah ibn Ḥiṣn insulted ʿUmar, al-Ḥurr ibn Qays restrained the caliph by reciting Q. 7:199. ʿUmar stopped at the verse. The report is ṣaḥīḥ in al-Bukhārī. It shows that membership in the consultative circle was not only a matter of age or tribal rank. It was tied to Qur'anic competence. It also shows that a consultative circle can restrain a ruler's anger through shared submission to scripture.[21]

The plague at Sargh is among the most sophisticated examples of structured consultation. When ʿUmar learned that plague had broken out in Syria, he consulted the early Muhājirūn, then the Anṣār, then the elders of Quraysh who had emigrated after the conquest of Mecca. The first two groups differed. The final group agreed that he should return with the people and not expose them to the plague. When Abū ʿUbaydah challenged this as fleeing from God's decree, ʿUmar answered: 'We

[17] Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 18928–29; Mursal Farman and Salih Yucel, "Rereading the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya: A Model for Islamic Diplomacy," *Religions* 14, no. 5 (2023): 666, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14050666; Perry S. Smith, "The Ḥudaybiyya Model of Islamic Diplomacy," *Florida Journal of International Law* 18, no. 1 (2006): 135–68.

[18] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 1478; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 25517, 26271.

[19] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 2708; Aḥmad ibn Shuʿayb al-Nasāʾī, *Sunan al-Nasāʾī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (Aleppo: Maktab al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Islāmiyyah, 1986), no. 5407; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, no. 1419.

[20] Al-Dārimī, *Sunan*, no. 163.

[21] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, nos. 4642, 7286.

flee from one decree of God to another decree of God.' ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf then arrived with a prophetic report confirming the policy: if plague occurs in a land, do not enter it, and if it occurs where you are, do not flee from it. The episode is ṣaḥīḥ in al-Bukhārī and Muslim. It models consultation that integrates public welfare, staged deliberation, and prophetic precedent.[22]

ʿUmar's consultation on the penalty for wine-drinking shows shūrā as legal development. The Prophet and Abū Bakr had punished wine-drinking with approximately forty strokes. Under ʿUmar, social conditions changed, and he consulted the people. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf proposed eighty, analogizing it to the lightest fixed penalty. In a parallel report, ʿAlī reasons that intoxication leads to raving, raving leads to slander, and slander carries eighty lashes. The Anas route is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ according to al-Tirmidhī, while other routes are ṣaḥīḥ on the criteria of the two Ṣaḥīḥs. Here shūrā becomes collective legal reasoning under changed circumstances.[23]

The strongest political formulations appear in ʿUmar's speeches. One report states that whoever gives allegiance to a man without the consultation of the Muslims, min ghayri mashūratin min al-muslimīn, has no valid pledge. Al-Bukhārī records the report, and Aḥmad's route is also sound. This is one of the corpus's clearest statements that political legitimacy cannot bypass communal consultation. It does not define a modern electoral procedure, but it does deny legitimacy to a unilateral seizure of allegiance.[24]

The fullest institutional expression is ʿUmar's testament after he was stabbed: *fa-in ʿajila bī amrun fa al-khilāfatu shūrā bayna hāʾulāʾ al-sittah, 'if something hastens my end, the caliphate is shūrā among these six men.'* The report is ṣaḥīḥ in Muslim and Aḥmad. The subsequent process, associated with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf, involved the withdrawal of one member from candidacy, private consultation with leading figures and the people of Medina, and the eventual pledge to ʿUthmān. This is not democracy in the modern procedural sense. It is a delegated consultative process among recognized figures, followed by public pledge. Yet it is also not authoritarian appointment without consultation. The report anchors a middle category: consultative political legitimacy shaped by elite competence, public sounding, and communal bayʿah.[25]

3.6. Contemporary Relevance: Gender, Diplomacy, Living Hadith, and Democracy

The reconstructed corpus matters for contemporary scholarship because it changes the evidentiary base of several debates. On gender, the corpus resists simple conclusions. The strongest marriage-related reports require women to be asked and consulted regarding themselves. The Ḥadīth

[22] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 5729; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 2219; Mālik ibn Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1997), no. 2611.

[23] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 1706; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, no. 1443; Mālik, *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ*, no. 2399; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 12805, 12855, 13880.

[24] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 6830; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, no. 391.

[25] Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 567; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, nos. 186, 341; Sucilawati, "The Concept of Shura and the Caliphate of ʿUmar," *IJOBSOR* 8, no. 1 (2020): 18–32.

al-Ifk shows the Prophet consulting close advisers in a crisis affecting ʿAʾishah's honor, while the Ḥudaybiyyah report shows Umm Salamah providing decisive practical counsel. At the same time, a weak or singular report associates societal decline with affairs being left to women. The methodological consequence is clear: gender claims about shūrā must distinguish between ṣaḥīḥ narrative practice and weaker normative formulations. Recent work on ʿAʾishah's marriage and orientalist criticism of marriage reports confirms the importance of reading individual reports within the wider legal and ethical corpus of consent.[26]

On diplomacy, the Ḥudaybiyyah reports provide a concrete textual basis for viewing the treaty as strategic patience rather than passive concession. The Prophet consults before choosing the diplomatic path, then receives Umm Salamah's counsel when the Companions are emotionally unable to enact the treaty's consequences. Modern studies of Ḥudaybiyyah emphasize compromise and covenantal reliability. The hadith material adds that compromise was sustained through deliberation and embodied leadership, not through mere command.[27]

On living hadith, the findings invite movement from textual criticism to institutional observation. Living hadith studies ask how ḥadīth texts are received, embodied, and normalized in Muslim communities. An institution such as Darus-Sunnah, with deliberative student bodies, represents precisely the kind of social embodiment that should be studied after the textual corpus has been mapped. The present article supplies the source-critical layer. Future research can examine how maxims such as al-mustashāru muʾman function in organizational culture, how consultative councils define membership, and how participants understand the moral burden of advice.[28]

On democracy, the corpus neither proves simple identity nor absolute opposition. The bayʿah report and ʿUmar's testament indicate that legitimate authority cannot be detached from consultation. The Badr, Sargh, and wine-penalty reports show that leaders are expected to gather opinion and expertise before deciding. Yet the process by which ʿUthmān was chosen was not a mass election or numerical aggregation of votes. It was delegated, elite-mediated, and tied to bayʿah. This is why the corpus supports a more precise claim: shūrā supplies a textual foundation for accountable and participatory decision making within Islamic categories, but its institutional translation remains

[26] Mohd Al Adib Samuri et al., "Ḥadith of ʿĀʾishah's Marriage and Its Critical Examination," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 21 (2022): 93–105, https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.21.2022.229; Md Kamruzzaman and Abdulrahman Hussein Obeid, "Orientalist Criticism of the Hadith of ʿĀʾishah's Marriage," *Journal of Hadith Studies* 8, no. 2 (2023): 19–28, https://doi.org/10.33102/johs.v8i2.259.

[27] Farman and Yucel, "Rereading the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya"; Smith, "The Ḥudaybiyya Model."

[28] Muh Syaifudin and Izzatus Sholihah, "Living Hadith and Interdisciplinary Approaches," *SAMAWAT: Journal of Hadith and Qurʾānic Studies* 9, no. 1 (2025): 10–17; Diva Queen Berliana, Iklima Iliyin, and Zulfa Syarifah Muthmainnah, "Living Qurʾān and Living Hadith: An Epistemological Framework," *al-Karīm: International Journal of Quranic and Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2026): 21–50, https://doi.org/10.33367/al-karim.v4i1.8404.

historically variable. Contemporary comparisons with democracy should therefore begin from the full corpus rather than from isolated proof-texts.[29]

The central theoretical contribution of the article can now be stated compactly. Shūrā in the Nine Books functions through five overlapping registers: ethical trust, personal consent, crisis deliberation, legal reasoning, and political legitimation. These registers share the same lexical root but do not carry identical legal force. Advice in a household is not the same as a binding judicial ruling; consultation before battle is not identical to a succession council; seeking parental advice before takhyīr is not the same as requiring communal consultation before bayʿah. The novelty of a corpus-based approach is precisely that it preserves these differences while showing that they belong to one consultative moral imagination.

A source-critical reading of the corpus also shows that *shūrā* reports cannot be treated as having equal evidentiary force. The material includes *ṣaḥīḥ* reports, *ḥasan* reports, weak reports with corroborating meanings, and weak reports that are useful only as historical memory or secondary illustration.[30] Normative arguments about *shūrā* should therefore begin with the strongest evidence, such as the Qurʾanic commands, the maxim *al-mustashāru muʾtaman*,[31], the Badr and Sargh consultations,[32] and the reports on bayʿah and succession,[33] rather than relying on isolated or gharīb formulations such as *wa umūrukum shūrā baynakum*. Weak reports should not be ignored entirely, because they may reveal how early Muslims remembered the relevance of consultation in leadership and appointment, but they should not bear the main burden of proof. This layered approach also clarifies the relation between isnād and matn: some reports may cohere thematically with the wider corpus while remaining weak in transmission, whereas sound reports may still require careful contextual interpretation. The resulting methodological rule is to map the strongest reports first,

[29] Anum Gul and Esha Fiaz, "Democracy Spirit in Islamic Thought: Insights from Classical and Contemporary Thinkers," *al-Iʿjāz: Research Journal of Islamic Studies & Humanities* 8, no. 2 (2024): 46–56; M. Abdul Aziz, "The Principles of Islamic Polity in the Qurʾān and Sunnah: Revisiting Modern Political Discourse," *al-Burhān: Journal of Qurʾān and Sunnah Studies* 7, no. 1 (2023): 1–28.

[30]al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir et al., 2nd ed. (Egypt: Sharikat Maktabat wa Maṭbaʿat Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1395 AH), no. 2266, in Abwāb al-Fitan ʿan Rasūl Allāh, "Bāb." al-Tirmidhī himself classified this as gharīb, known only through Ṣāliḥ al-Murrī, who transmits unparalleled (gharāʿib) material that is not corroborated.

[31]Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʿūṭ and Muḥammad Kāmil Qurah Balalī (Dār al-Risālah al-ʿAlamiyyah, 1430 AH); al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 1395 AH; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 1430 AH; al-Dārimī, *Sunan al-Dārimī*; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, 1421 AH. The Abū Dāwūd chain via Abū Hurayrah is graded ṣaḥīḥ by al-Arnaʿūṭ; the Tirmidhī chains range from ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ garīb to garīb; the Ibn Mājah chain via Abū Hurayrah is ṣaḥīḥ; the Aḥmad/Dārimī chain via Abū Masʿūd is graded ḍaʿīf by al-Arnaʿūṭ (Sharīk ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Nakhaʿī being weak in memory) though other editors (Muḥammad Fuʿād ʿAbd al-Bāqī; Ḥusayn Sulaym Asad al-Dāranī) grade it ṣaḥīḥ or ḥasan respectively.

[32]al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muḥammad Zuhayr ibn Nāṣir al-Nāṣir (Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 1422 AH), no. 5729, Kitāb al-Ṭibb, Bāb mā Yudhkar fī al-Ṭāʿūn; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, no. 2219, Kitāb al-Salām, Bāb al-Ṭāʿūn wa al-Ṭiyarah wa al-Kahānah wa naḥwihā; Mālik ibn Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭaʿ*, no. 2611, Kitāb al-Jāmiʿ, Bāb mā jāʿa fī al-Ṭāʿūn. Graded ṣaḥīḥ as transmitted by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

[33]al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, "Bāb Mushāwarat min al-Muslimīn fī Bayʿah," from ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb's khuṭbah; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, no. 1419. Graded ṣaḥīḥ as transmitted by al-Bukhārī, with Aḥmad's chain ṣaḥīḥ on the criterion of Muslim per al-Arnaʿūṭ et al.

read acceptable corroborating material next, identify weak but historically influential reports cautiously, and only then move from textual evidence to broader political or institutional theory.

3.7. A Five-Register Model of Shūrā

The findings can be synthesized into a five-register model of shūrā. These registers share the same lexical root, but they do not carry the same legal, ethical, or institutional function. This model prevents shūrā from being reduced either to private advice or to modern electoral procedure.

Register	**Main Evidence**	**Core Meaning**	**Function**
Ethical trust[34]	*al-mustashāru muʾtaman* and reports on betrayal in advice	Counsel is an amānah	Defines the moral duty of sincerity in giving advice.
Personal consent	Reports on women being asked and consulted in marriage; the *takhyīr* report	Consultation protects the person most affected by a decision[35]	Guards against unilateral control in family and personal matters. [36]
Crisis deliberation	Badr, the prisoners of Badr, the Ifk incident, and Ḥudaybiyyah	Counsel is needed under pressure, uncertainty, and communal risk	Shows that authority may remain decisive while still being receptive to advice.
Legal reasoning	Abū Bakr's reported method,[37] ʿUmar's consultation on the wine	Shūrā operates when texts must be applied or when precedent is absent	Places consultation within ijtihād, legal judgment, and public welfare.

[34]Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, nos. 8266, 8776; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, "Bāb al-Mustashār Muʿtaman," no. 3747. Graded ḥasan (Abū Dāwūd chain) and ṣaḥīḥ li-ghayrihi (Ibn Mājah chain), per al-Arnaʿūṭ et al., "al-Taʿlīq ʿalā Sunan Ibn Mājah," in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* (Dār al-Risālah al-ʿAlamiyyah, 1430 AH), 4/681–682.

[35]See the corpus's treatment of "*al-bikr tustaʿmar wa al-thayyib tushāwar*" and "*ashīrū ʿalā al-nisāʿ fī anfusihinna*" among the prophetic verbal reports (al-aḥādīth al-qawliyyah) on marriage and women's consent.

[36]Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*. Graded ṣaḥīḥ as transmitted by Muslim and Aḥmad, per al-Arnaʿūṭ et al., "al-Mawsuʿah al-Ḥadīthiyyah Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (164–241)," 42/335.

[37]See the corpus's treatment of Abū Bakr's consultative method among the reports of the Companions (āthār al-ṣaḥābah) on shūrā.

	penalty, [38] and the irrigation dispute[39]		
Political legitimation	The bayʿah report[40] and ʿUmar's testament on the six-person council[41]	Authority cannot bypass communal consultation	Establishes consultative legitimacy without equating shūrā with modern mass democracy.

This five-register model shows that shūrā is best understood as entrusted deliberation oriented toward right action. Advice in a household, consultation before battle, collective legal reasoning, and political succession all belong to one consultative moral imagination, but each operates with a different degree of legal and institutional force.

4. Conclusion

This article has condensed and reconstructed the shūrā corpus in the Nine Canonical Ḥadīth Collections. Through root-letter retrieval, thematic takhrīj, and isnād-cum-matn evaluation, it identified 44 discrete accounts expanding into 107 transmission routes. These consist of two non-Muslim reports, eight prophetic sayings, thirteen prophetic action reports, eighteen Companion reports, and three Successor reports. Of the 107 routes, 83 are *ṣaḥīḥ*, 12 are *ḥasan*, and 12 are *ḍaʿīf*. The corpus is therefore both wider and more authentic than is usually assumed in discussions of Islamic consultation.

The study's main conclusion is that shūrā should be read as a structured ethical and practical spectrum. It is not automatically virtuous as a procedure, because consultation can serve unjust ends. It is not merely private advice, because it becomes a condition of political legitimacy in the reports

[38]Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Ḥudūd, Bāb Ḥadd al-Khamr; al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Abwāb al-Ḥudūd, Bāb mā jāʿa fī Ḥadd al-Sakrān; Mālik, *al-Muwaṭṭaʿ*, Kitāb al-Ashribah, Bāb al-Ḥadd fī al-Khamr; al-Dārimī, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, Kitāb al-Ḥudūd; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*. Graded ṣaḥīḥ as transmitted by Muslim; al-Tirmidhī grades the Anas chain ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ; al-Zahrānī grades the Dārimī chain's narrators thiqāt; al-Arnaʿūṭ et al. grade Aḥmad's two chains ṣaḥīḥ on the criterion of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

[39]al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, no. 2708, Kitāb al-Ṣulḥ, Bāb Idhā Ashāra al-Imām bi-al-Ṣulḥ fa-Abā; al-Nasāʿī, *Sunan al-Nasāʿī*, no. 5407, Kitāb Ādāb al-Quḍāh; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, no. 1419, Musnad al-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām. Graded ṣaḥīḥ as transmitted by al-Bukhārī, per al-Arnaʿūṭ et al. and Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir on Aḥmad's chains, and per Muṣṭafā Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Dhahabī, "Ḍabṭ al-Uṣūl li-Sunan al-Nasāʿī bi-Sharḥ al-Imāmayn al-Suyūṭī wa al-Sindī," in *Sunan al-Nasāʿī bi-Sharḥ al-Imāmayn al-Suyūṭī wa al-Sindī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1431 AH), 4/622, on al-Nasāʿī's chain.

on bayʿah and succession. It is not simply democracy, because early Islamic consultative mechanisms do not map neatly onto modern electoral procedures. It is not symbolic rhetoric, because the strongest reports connect it to consent, trust, legal reasoning, public welfare, and the restraint of authority.

The most fruitful formulation is therefore this: in the hadith corpus, *shūrā* is entrusted deliberation oriented toward right action. Its moral core is amānah; its social function is the extraction of sound judgment; its political implication is that authority must not be exercised as isolated will. For contemporary Muslim institutions that invoke shūrā, this conclusion is demanding. To consult is not only to hold a meeting. It is to seek competent counsel, protect the agency of those affected, listen before deciding, and treat advice as a trust whose betrayal is a form of khiyānah. Future research should extend this article by producing a full annotated database of all 107 routes and by studying how modern Islamic institutions embody or fail to embody the ethical burden of al-mustashāru muʾman.

For hadith studies, the article also demonstrates that contemporary relevance does not require abandoning technical discipline. The movement from *takhrīj* to social analysis can be academically responsible when the textual hierarchy is made explicit. Sound reports are used as the primary basis, acceptable reports are used as corroboration, and weak reports are treated as reception data rather than proof. This graded method allows the discussion of *shūrā* to remain faithful to hadith scholarship while still speaking to current concerns of governance, institutional ethics, and deliberative culture.

For Islamic institutions, the practical lesson is equally clear. A body named *shūrā* is not automatically consultative in the moral sense. It becomes recognizable as *shūrā* when counsel is sought from competent persons, when affected parties are heard, when advice is given honestly, and when decisions remain accountable to just ends. The hadith corpus therefore makes *shūrā* both an ideal and a test. It dignifies consultation, but it also exposes performative consultation that lacks trust, sincerity, and responsibility.

The condensation undertaken in this article also requires several limits to be stated clearly. *First*, the article does not reproduce the full matn of every report. That decision was made to keep the article within journal length and to avoid turning the discussion into a catalogue. The complete technical takhrīj should remain available in a longer thesis, database, or appendix. The journal version instead presents the architecture of the corpus and analyzes the reports that are most decisive for interpretation.

Second, the article operates primarily within the internal discipline of Islamic hadith criticism. It acknowledges broader historical debates about the formation of *isnād*, but it does not attempt to resolve them. This is a deliberate scope decision. The article is written for hadith and contemporary studies, where the grades *ṣaḥīḥ, ḥasan*, and *ḍaʿīf* remain meaningful scholarly categories. A different

article could compare this internal method with Western historical-critical approaches, but such comparison would require a separate design and a different argumentative frame.

Third, the article is selective in its engagement with modern political theory. It cites scholarship on *shūrā*, democracy, diplomacy, gender, and living hadith only where those conversations clarify the thematic function of the corpus. It does not attempt to construct a complete Islamic constitutional theory. The source material suggests principles of legitimacy, competence, consent, and accountability, but the translation of those principles into modern states, universities, councils, and associations remains a matter of institutional *ijtihād*.

Future research can move in at least three directions. A first project would create a searchable annotated database of the 44 discrete accounts and 107 transmission routes, including Arabic matn, source location, Companion, madār, grade, and thematic register. A second project would study the reception history of key maxims such as *al-mustashāru muʾman* in *fiqh*, *adab* literature, political treatises, and modern institutional guidelines. A third project would conduct living hadith fieldwork in institutions that use consultative bodies, asking how participants understand shūrā, whether they know the relevant reports, and how ideals of *amānah* and *khiyānah* shape actual deliberation. These projects would extend the present article from textual reconstruction to historical reception and social practice.

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