

IT is generally believed that the *ahādīth* were transmitted orally for one hundred years at least. Then Zuhri recorded them by order of Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz. And in the view of some 'scholars', even his recording was lost. Both these assumptions are based on lack of knowledge of the early literary history of *ahādīth* and their literary style. Therefore, the problem of recording of *ahādīth* needs special attention. Meanwhile it ought to be remembered that mere recording of material is not complete guarantee of its safe preservation.However, a text can be kept fully preserved even without recording. For example, even if all the books on the earth were destroyed, the Holy Qur'an would still remain safe because millions of Muslims have memorized it completely or in parts.

Recording of *Hadīth* in the Life of the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions

We know that certain Companions wrote down *ahādīth* in the life of the Prophet ﷺ and in some cases the Prophet ﷺ dictated it to them. No doubt their numbers must have been smaller than those of the later scholars who wrote down *ahādīth*. I will try to give a summary of the work of some Companions who took part in diffusion of *hadīth* and devoted a great deal of time to it.

It is a well-known fact that not all the Companions had equal number of *ahādīth* for transmission. The proportion of the *ahādīth* varied. While some of them transmitted more than a thousand, most of them transmitted a *hadīth* or two only. The names of Companions who transmitted *ahādīth* in large numbers is as follows: The first name is that of Abū Hurairah, who transmitted, according to Baqī b. Makhlad, 5374 *ahādīth*. Actually, this is not the number of *hadīth*, but the number of channels through which *ahādīth* were transmitted. The most recent research shows that the number of *ahādīth* transmitted by him is 1236 only. He is reported to have had books of *hadīth* in his possession. At least nine of Abū Hurairah's students wrote *ahādīth* from him.

From Ch. IV—Recording of *Ahādīth*

STUDIES IN HADITH
METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE M. Muṣṭafa Azmi



SUHAIL
ACADEMY

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by
Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Azmi

Supplement
THE SCIENCE OF *RIJĀL* AS A METHOD
IN THE STUDY OF HADĪTHS

by
Iftikhar Zaman

www.peopleofsunnah.com

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Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Azmi

SUHAIL ACADEMY LAHORE
PAKISTAN

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Printed at the Carvan Press, Darbar Market, Lahore for
Muhammad Aslam Suhail

Produced and distributed by

Suhail Academy, Chowk Urdu Bazar, Lahore, Pakistan

First published in Pakistan —2002

Cataloguing in Publication Data: 1. Muhammad Mustafa Azmi
2. Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature 3. Islam
4. Hadith—Interpretation, History 5. Hadith—Methodology
Pp. viii +174, Size, cm 22.5 x 14.5
ISBN 969-519-041-3

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List of Abbreviations

A.	Abū
A.D.	Abū Dā'ūd, <i>Sunan</i>
A. Awāna	Abū 'Awāna
b.	bin
BU	Al- Bukhārī, <i>Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan</i>
Dārimī	<i>Sunan</i>
Ḥanbal	Ibn, Ḥanbal, <i>Musnad</i>
I. M.	Ibn Mājah, <i>Sunan</i>
Mīzān	Dhahabī, <i>Mīzān al-i'tidāl</i>
MU	Muslim, <i>Ṣaḥīḥ</i>
Nas	Nasā'ī, <i>Sunan</i>
Rāzī	See Ibn Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī <i>Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl</i>
Tayālisī	Abū Dā'ūd Tayālisī, <i>Sunan</i>
Tawsat	Ṭabarānī, <i>al-Mu'jam al-Awsat</i>
Tir	Tirmidhī, <i>Sunan</i>
Tkaber	Ṭabarānī, <i>al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr</i>
<i>Studies</i>	<i>Azami, Studies in Early</i> <i>Ḥadīth Literature</i>
Zaid	Zaid b. 'Alī, <i>Mus</i>

Transliteration

The transliteration of Arabic words in this book is according to the system indicated in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*.

INTRODUCTION

A TREMENDOUS amount of literature is available in Arabic on the methodology of the *Ḥadīth* but our new generation whose majority does not know Arabic is unable to benefit from it. Even those who speak Arabic find it difficult to use these books due to the terminology used in them. Only a few books on science of *Ḥadīth* have been written in English and most of them seem to be meant to confuse the readers. The only one in English which can claim scholarly merit is one by Professor Zubaīr Ṣiddiqī. I read it some 15 years ago, but it is out of print now and unavailable.¹ Therefore, I have written *Studies in Ḥadīth Methodology and Literature* to fulfill the need of college students, as well as that of educated laymen. I have avoided unnecessary details, and technical language as far as possible. I hope its careful reading would eliminate most of the doubts which have been created, deliberately or out of ignorance, by Orientalists and others and would provide basic knowledge of the subject. However, it would be naive to think that after reading this book one would gain the capacity to criticise the *Ḥadīth*.

The book has been divided into two parts. In Part One, I deal with the subject of *Ḥadīth* Methodology. In Part Two, I discuss the literature, introducing the six principal books, as well as six others which had great significance and represent a stage in the compilation of *Ḥadīth* books. Those interested in the early recording of *Ḥadīth* may go through my book *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature* while the problem of *isnād* has been discussed in my work *On Schacht's Origins of Maḥammadan Jurisprudence*. Much valuable information on the criticism of the *Ḥadīth* may be found in the introduction to *Kitāb al-Tamyīz* of Imām Muslim. Thus these early works have contributed too many chapters of the present work.

Two of my colleagues Dr. M. S. Al-'Awwa and Dr. Ja'far Shaikh Idrīs took the trouble to read the manuscript. I have benefited from their criticism and clarification. May Allah reward them for their help.

1 - The book, in its revised augmented edition, is available in the Suhail Academy reprints. (Publisher's Note)

Thanks are also due to Dr. El-Tigani Abūgideirī on whose initiative and persistent demand the book was written. One should not fail to mention Mr. 'Abdur Raḥmān of WAMY who worked hard to type the draft from my poor handwriting.

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Part One Ḥadīth Methodology

Ḥadīth, It's Meaning, Concept and Authority

The Word '*ḥadīth*' and its Meaning

THE Arabic word *ḥadīth* literally means communication, story, conversation: religious or secular, historical or recent.

Whenever used as adjective it means new. It has been used in the Qur'an 23 times. Here are a few examples:

Usage of the Word *ḥadīth* in the Qur'an for:

a) Religious communication, message or the Qur'an:

Almighty Allah says: *الله نزل أحسن الحديث كتابا*

"Allah has revealed (time after time) the most beautiful *ḥadīth* (Message) in the form of a book"¹.

Almighty Allah says: *فذرني ومن يكذب بهذا الحديث*

"Then leave Me alone with such as reject this *ḥadīth*² (meaning the Qur'an)³.

b) Story of a secular or general nature:

Almighty Allah says:

وإذا رأيت الذين يخوضون في آياتنا فأعرض عنهم حتى يخوضوا في حديث غيره

"And whenever you meet such as indulge in (blasphemous) talk about Our Message, turn thy back upon them until they begin *ḥadīth* (conversation) of some other things"⁴.

c) Historical story:

Almighty Allah says: *وهل أتاك حديث موسى*

"Has the *ḥadīth* (story) of Mūsā reached thee?"⁵.

d) Current story or conversation:

Almighty Allah says: *وإذ أسر النبي إلى بعض أزواجه حديثا*

"When the Prophet confided a *ḥadīth* (a secret) to one of his

1 - The Qur'an, 39:23

2 - Ibid., 68:44

3 - Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vii, 91.

4 - The Qur'an, 6:68

5 - Ibid., 20:9.

wives.”⁶

We may conclude that this word has been used in the Qur’an in the sense of story or communication or message, be it religious or secular, from a remote past or of the present time.

Usage of the Word ‘hadīth’ in the Sayings of the Prophet ﷺ

The word was used in the same sense by the Prophet ﷺ, as it has been used in the Qur’an. Here are a few examples.

(a) Religious communication:

The Prophet ﷺ says:⁷ أحسن الحديث كتاب الله

“The best *hadīth* is the Book of Allah”

And the Prophet ﷺ says:

غفر الله امرأ سمع منا حديثاً فحفظه حتى يبلغه فرب مبلغ أحفظ له من سامع

“Allah illumines a man who hears *hadīth* from me; preserves it carefully and passes it on to others . . .”⁸

b) Secular or general conversation or tale:

The Prophet ﷺ says:

من استمع إلى حديث قوم وهم له كارهون أو يفرون منه ، صب في أذنه الأثك

One who tries to eavesdrop on the *hadīth* (conversation) of the people when they dislike his doing so and want to keep away from him, in the Hereafter hot copper would be poured in his ear”⁹.

c) Historical story:

The Prophet ﷺ says: حدثوا عن بني إسرائيل

“You may transmit *hadīth* from Banū Isrā’īl”¹⁰

d) Current story, secret or conversation:

The Prophet ﷺ says: إذا حدث الرجل الحديث ثم التفت فهي أمانة

“If someone tells a *hadīth* (secret) then goes his way, his words become a trust”¹¹.

It is clear now, in the light of the above mentioned examples that the word *hadīth* has in its meaning the sense of story or communication.

In the early days of Islam the stories and communications of

the Prophet ﷺ (*hadīth*) dominated all other kinds of communications, so this word began to be used almost exclusively for the narration about or from the Prophet ﷺ¹².

The Term *Hadīth* and its Meaning According to Muḥaddithīn and Jurists

According to Muḥaddithīn it stands for ‘what was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ, his deeds, sayings, tacit approval, or description of his *ṣifāt* (features) meaning his physical appearance. However, physical appearance of the Prophet ﷺ is not included in the definition used by the jurists¹³.

Thus *hadīth* literature means the literature which consists of the narrations of the life of the Prophet ﷺ and the things approved by him. However, the term was used sometimes in much broader meaning in the sense to cover the narrations about the Companions and Successors as well¹⁴.

Sometimes some other words were also used in the same sense, such as *khobar* and *athar*. Most of the scholars used these three terms: *hadīth*, *khobar* and *athar* as synonymous. However, some scholars mostly of Khurāsān region used to differentiate between *khobar* and *athar*. They used the *khobar* in the sense of *hadīth*, and the term *athar* restricted to the sayings and decisions of the Companions. However, there is another key word, though a little different from the term *hadīth* in the meaning, yet used mostly as synonymous, that is the term *sunna*. Due to the importance of this term we shall discuss it in some detail.

The Word *Sunna*, its Meaning and Different Usage

Sunna, according to Arabic lexicographers means: ‘a way, course, rule, mode, or manner of acting or conduct of life’¹⁵.

In the Qur’an, the word *sunna* and its plural *sunan* have been used sixteen times. In all of these cases it is used in the sense of established course of rule, mode of life, and line of conduct¹⁶.

In Arabic literature, especially in the early *Hadīth-Fiqh* books it has been used in different meanings, such as:

Sharī‘a.

6 - Ibid., 66:3.

7 - Bukhārī, *Adab*, 70.

8 - Hanbal, I, 437.

9 - Bukhārī, *Ta‘bīr*, 45.

10 - Bukhārī, *Anbiyā*, 50.

11 - Tirmidhī, *Birr*, 39.

12- See Zafar Anṣārī, “Islamic Juristic Terminology”, p. 5.

13 - See Al-Jazā‘irī, *Taujīh an-Nazar*, p. 2.

14 - Jūrjanī. *Risāla*, 1. For detailed reference see, Al-Azami, *Studies*, 302.

15 - Lane, iv 1438.

16 - See Penrice. *Dictionary of the Koran*, p. 73.

Established non-compulsory religious practice without its being *farḍ* or *wājib* (compulsory).

That which is proved by means of *sunna*, one of the four Sources of Law.¹⁷

Tarīqat ad-Dīn.

Model behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ.

According to Abul Baqā' the term *sunna* is not restricted as such to the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ or of his Companions. In Shāfi'i, however, the use of the term *sunna* is restricted to the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ alone. According to Arabic lexicography, as we have seen, it means 'mode of life', etc. Therefore, when Almighty Allah ordered Muslims to obey the Prophet ﷺ and to take his life as a good model and follow it, the expression '*sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ' came into use. The usage began in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, and it was used by him.

Sometimes the Arabic definite article (AL) was affixed to the word *sunna* to denote the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ, while the general use of the word continued, though decreasing day by day. At the end of the second century it began to be used almost exclusively in the legal books for the norms set by the Prophet ﷺ or norms deduced from the Prophet's ﷺ norm.

As *sunna* means the mode of life, and the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ means the mode of the life of the Prophet ﷺ, and *hadīth* means the narration of the life of the Prophet ﷺ, these two terms were used almost interchangeably, though there is a slight difference between them. For a *hadīth* may not contain any *sunna* or a single *hadīth* may contain more than one *sunna*. However, to avoid confusion, we shall use them as interchangeable as they have been used by early scholars as well as by the present ones.

If *hadīth* literature stands for the narration concerning the Prophet ﷺ and sometimes his Companions, then what do the sciences of *hadīth* stand for? To err is human. In reporting, narrating and recording the life and conduct of the Prophet ﷺ some mistakes were committed even by the most sincere scholars, not to speak of some unscrupulous men who deliberately fabricated materials pretending to be concerned with the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, the science of *hadīth* was developed, to evaluate

17 - Thānawī, *Kashshāf*, 703 ff.

'every single statement ascribed to the Prophet ﷺ.'

Why was this painstaking task done? There have been many great rulers and leaders but nothing of this sort was developed to differentiate between correct and incorrect statements attributed to them. The answer to this question is the unique position of the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ, which demanded this care.

The Authority of the Prophet ﷺ

The scholars are unanimous that the authority of the Qur'an is binding on all Muslims. The authority of the Prophet ﷺ comes next only to the Qur'an. His authority is not derived through the community's acceptance of the Prophet ﷺ as a person of authority. His authority is expressed through Divine will. Allah describes His Prophet's ﷺ position in the following way:

The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and His Position According to the Qur'an

a) Expounder of the Qur'an

The Prophet ﷺ is the expounder of the Qur'an appointed by Allah. Almighty Allah says:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

"We have revealed unto thee the Remembrance, (the Qur'an) that you may explain to mankind that which has been revealed for them."¹⁸

The Qur'an commands—if we may take *ṣalāt* (prayer) as an example—the establishment of *ṣalāt* (prayer) in numerous verses, but does not prescribe the details for the method of praying. The Prophet's ﷺ task was to demonstrate the forms of prayer practically as well as orally.

b) Legislator

Almighty Allah, speaking about the legislative power of the Prophet ﷺ says:

ويجعل لهم الطيبات ويحرم عليهم الخبائث ويضع عنهم إصرهم والأغلال التي كانت عليهم

"He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibit for them only the foul, and will relieve them of their burden and the fetters which they used to wear"¹⁹. In this verse we find that the legislative authority is bestowed upon the Prophet ﷺ. So he acts as the society's law giver. The Prophet ﷺ initiated certain things which were later mentioned by the Qur'an as the standardized

18 - The Qur'an, 16:44.

19 - Ibid., 7:157.

practices of the community, e.g. the practice of *adhān* to which the Qur'an refers only as the 'existing practice'²⁰. This instance proves the legislative authority of the Prophet ﷺ and that his deeds were sanctioned by Allah.

c) *Model behavior for Muslim Society*

The Qur'an refers to the life pattern of the Prophet ﷺ.

"A noble model you have in Allah's Apostle, for all whose hope is in Allah, and in the Final Day, and who often remember Allah."²¹

If we consider the Prophet ﷺ as the model for the community, then Muslims have to follow his example in every way, especially as they have been specifically commanded to do so by Allah. These three essentials combined in the person of the Prophet ﷺ lead to the inevitable conclusion that Muslim Society must follow the Prophet ﷺ in every walk of life. Almighty Allah did not leave the question open to debate. He explicitly ordered total obedience to the Prophet ﷺ.

d) *Total obedience to the Prophet ﷺ*

Almighty Allah says:²² وما أرسلنا من رسول إلا ليطاع بإذن الله

"We sent no messenger save that he should be obeyed by Allah's leave."

He further says: قل أطيعوا الله والرسول فإن تولوا فإن الله لا يحب الكافرين .

"Say, 'Obey Allah, and the Messenger.' But if they turn their backs, Allah loves not the unbelievers"²³.

And says: وأطيعوا الله والرسول لعلكم ترحمون

"Obey Allah and the Messenger haply so you will find mercy"²⁴.

He further says:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول وأولي الأمر منكم فإن تنازعتم في شئ فردوه إلى

الله والرسول إن كنتم تؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر ذلك خير وأحسن تأويلا .

"O believers, obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. If you quarrel on anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is better, and fairer in the issue"²⁵.

20 - See Ibid., 62:9.

21 - Ibid. 33:21.

22 - Ibid. 4:64.

23 - Ibid. 3:32.

24 - Ibid. 3:132.

25 - Ibid., 4:59, there are so many references in the al-Qur'an that the question does not really need any reference on this subject.

In the light of these verses it becomes clear that the commands of Allah as well as the proven commands of the Prophet ﷺ are binding on a Muslim. He has equally to obey both of them. The Prophet's ﷺ total life is a good example for all Muslims, and ought to be followed by them. A Muslim should not feel hesitant in carrying out the orders of the Prophet ﷺ. Obedience here means full and not half-hearted submission.

Allah says²⁶:

فلا وربك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك في ما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في أنفسهم حرجا مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليما .

"But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe till they make thee the judge regarding disagreement between them and find in themselves no resistance against the verdict, but accept in full submission."

Before concluding this discussion, it is necessary to quote one more verse from the Qur'an. Allah says²⁷:

وما أتاكم الرسول فخذوه وما نهاكم عنه فانتهوا واتقوا الله إن الله شديد العقاب

"And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it. And whatsoever he forbids, abstain from it."

These are some of the many Qur'anic verses which state the authority of the Prophet ﷺ and emphasize the fact that his whole life, decisions, judgments and commands have binding authority and ought to be followed in all spheres of life by Muslim individuals and communities as well as by Muslim States.

It is obvious that this authority of the Prophet ﷺ does not rest on acceptance by the community or on the opinion of certain lawyers or scholars or the founders of the law schools. This point has been made clear by the Qur'an. For this reason, the Muslim community accepted the authority of the Prophet ﷺ from the very day the mission of the Prophet ﷺ began and has accepted all his verbal commands, his deeds, his tacit approval as the way of life, a binding factor and a model which ought to be followed.

All the activities of the Prophet ﷺ were covered by the *sunna*

26 - Ibid., 4:65.

27 - Ibid., 59:7. This verse was sent down in the context of the booty of war but it applies to all the cases as the Prophet explained. See Hanbal 1, 415. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, vi, 604. Therefore it would be erroneous to confine it to the case of booty only. This is the general trend of the Qur'an, a verse came for a certain occasion but it has general application.

of the Prophet ﷺ, which was and still is, and will remain one of the main sources of Islamic law, second only to the Qur'an.

Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ

As I have mentioned earlier, the term 'sunna' as such is not restricted to the sunna of the Prophet ﷺ²⁸. Therefore we find this term sometimes used for others than the Prophet ﷺ as well, which resulted in some misunderstanding by modern scholars. It is claimed by some modern scholars that Shāfi'ī was the first to define sunna as the model behavior of the Prophet ﷺ. The problem would not have arisen if they had realized that the concept of sunna predated the definition of that term.

The powers of legislation, for example, are determined by the constitutions of modern states. When constitutions endorse the legislative powers and the range of their legislation, nobody can challenge them or claim rightfully that he is not to be bound by them. Thus—according to Islamic concepts—it is not for the lawyers but for Almighty Allah who is the Law-Giver to determine the legislative authority if there is any.

The Qur'an never says that the source of law is sunna so that the early lawyers differed in its definition. The Qur'an, however, speaks time after time of obedience to the Messenger ﷺ of Allah, which is obligatory, and mentions his example which ought to be followed. Therefore, even if one agrees that the early scholars used this word or term in a broad sense, it should not create any perplexity because the source of law is not this particular 'word' or 'term' but the concept which derives its authority directly from the Qur'an.

When we come to this concept, we find it is clearly endorsed by the Qur'an, as we have seen earlier, and explicitly accepted by early lawyers. Hence we may conclude that the sunna of the Prophet ﷺ is a must for Muslims, be they individuals, communities or states.

The aḥādīth of the Prophet ﷺ are repositories for the sunna of the Prophet ﷺ, and therefore he must have made arrangements for its diffusion in the Muslim community. We shall discuss this point in the next chapter.

28 - For detailed study, see, Azami, On Schacht's Origins of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence.

Chapter II

The Prophet ﷺ And His Aḥādīth Teaching, Learning and Diffusing

Transmission of the Ḥadīth of the Prophet ﷺ

THE Ḥadīth, the storeroom of the Prophet's ﷺ sunna served an essential need of the Muslims, be they individuals or communities. In this chapter we shall try to sketch related activities and describe the means which were used to teach aḥādīth and to learn and preserve them, and the factors which helped the Companions in their task.

Teaching of the Aḥādīth by the Prophet ﷺ

The methods used by the Prophet ﷺ to teach his sunna or ḥadīth may be put in three categories:

1. Verbal teaching
2. Written medium (Dictation to scribes)
3. Practical demonstration

1. Teaching of sunna by the Prophet ﷺ in verbal form

The Prophet ﷺ himself was the teacher of his sunna¹. To make memorizing and understanding easy he used to repeat important things thrice². After teaching the Companions he used to listen to what they had learnt³. Deputations arriving from outlying areas were given in charge of Madinites, not only to be accommodated but also for education in the Qur'an and the sunna. The Prophet ﷺ asked them questions to discover the extent of their learning⁴.

2. Teaching of sunna by the Prophet ﷺ by written method

All the letters of the Prophet ﷺ to kings, rulers, chieftains, and Muslim governors can be included in the teaching of the

1 - See Al-Khatīb, *Al-Faqīh* ii, 124.

2 - BU, *ʿIlm*, 30.

3 - BU, *Wuḍūʿ*, 75.

4 - See Ḥanbal iv, 206.

sunna by written media.

Some of those letters are very lengthy and contain legal matters concerning zakāt, taxation, forms of worship, etc.⁵ We can estimate the numbers of letters which were probably sent by the Prophet ﷺ and the recording activities related to them if we remember that he had at least 45 scribes who wrote for him at sometime or the other⁶. In the same category, we may put what was dictated by the Prophet ﷺ to different Companions; such as 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, and some of the writings of 'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. Al-'Āṣ, and the Prophet's ﷺ orders for delivering a copy of his *Khuṭba* to Abū Shāh, a Yemenite⁷.

3. Teaching of *sunna* by the Prophet ﷺ by practical demonstration

As far as practical demonstration is concerned, the Prophet ﷺ taught the method of ablution, prayers, fasting and pilgrimage etc. In every walk of life, the Prophet ﷺ gave practical lessons in excellence, with clear instructions to follow his practice. He said, 'Pray as you see me praying'⁸. He further said, 'Learn from me the rituals of pilgrimage'⁹.

In answer to many questions, he used to tell the questioner to stay with him and learn by observing his practice¹⁰.

Measures Taken by the Prophet ﷺ for the Diffusion of *Sunna*

1. Establishment of Schools

'Schools' were established by the Prophet ﷺ in Madīnah very soon after his arrival¹¹. His general policy was to send teachers and preachers to different areas outside Madīnah.

For example, delegates were sent to 'Adhal and Qāra in 3 A.H., to Bīr Ma'ūna in 4 A.H., to Najrān and to Yemen and Hadramaut in 9 A.H.¹².

2. The Prophet's ﷺ Directions about Diffusion of Knowledge

The Prophet ﷺ says: "Pass on knowledge from me even if it is only one verse"¹³.

5 - See Ḥamīdullah, *Al-Wathā'iq al-Siyāsiyah*.

6 - Al-Azami, *Kuṭūb al-Nabī*, 25-112.

7 - BU. *ʿIlm*, 39.

8 - BU. *Adhān*, 18.

9 - MU. *Hajj*, 310.

10 - See for example, MU. *Masājīd*, 176.

11 - See for detail, al Azami, *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature*, p. 3-4.

12 - See for detail, Azami, *Studies*, p. 4-5.

13 - BU. *Anbiyā'*, 50.

The same emphasis is noticeable in his oration at the farewell Hajj where the Prophet ﷺ said: "Those who are present (here) should convey the message to those who are absent"¹⁴. It was, therefore, a common practice among Companions to tell absentees about the Prophet's ﷺ deeds and sayings. Delegations coming to Madīnah were ordered to teach their people after returning. For instance, Mālik b. Al-Ḥuwairith was ordered by the Prophet ﷺ, at his departure, to teach the people, a duty which he carried on even long after the death of the Prophet ﷺ¹⁵. The same kind of direction was given to other delegations as well.¹⁶ When the delegation of 'Abdul Qāis came to the Prophet ﷺ, it asked the Prophet ﷺ that they should be taught so that they may convey teachings from the Prophet ﷺ and teach their followers¹⁷.

3. Creation of incentive for teachers and students

The Prophet ﷺ not only gave directions to educate the people but also mentioned great rewards for teachers and students.

He stated that learning and the pursuit of knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim¹⁸. One who conceals knowledge is liable to go to hell¹⁹, a fact which is mentioned in the Qur'an²⁰.

(a) Rewards for students:

The Prophet ﷺ said: "If any one pursues a path in search of knowledge Allah will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise, and the angels spread their wings from good pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, and all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, even fish in the depths of water, ask forgiveness for him."²¹

(b) Rewards for teachers:

In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said: "When a man dies, his acts come to an end, with three exceptions: *ṣadaqa jāriya* (recurring charity), knowledge from which benefit continues to be reaped, and the prayers of a good son for him."²²

14 - BU. *ʿIlm*, 9.

15 - See Ibn Sa'd, vii, I, 29-30.

16 - BU. *ʿIlm*, 25.

17 - BU. *Manāqib*, 5.

18 - Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Intr. 17.

19 - Ḥanbal, II, 263.

20 - The Qur'an, 2: 159, 174.

21 - Ḥanbal, V, 196.

22 - MU. *Waṣīya*, 14. It means both male and female.

(c) Threat of Punishment:

For those who refuse to be tempted into the educative process even by these rewards, the Prophet ﷺ seems to have indicated punishment which would inevitably come as a result of not teaching and not learning.²³

I have now stated how the Prophet ﷺ taught his *sunna* to the Muslim community and the measures he took to spread it and to make the people active in its pursuit and what sort of rewards and punishment were mentioned. Let us see what was the response of the community to all these, and how the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ was received by the Companions.

How the *Sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ was Received by the Companions

Some of the measures taken by the Prophet ﷺ for the diffusion of *sunna* have been mentioned. Now we shall see what methods were applied by the recipients and what were the factors which helped them to learn those *sunna*.

It ought to be remembered that people always try to watch and thus remember the sayings and deeds of their beloved one. In this regard one can say with certainty that Muḥammad ﷺ was the most beloved person on earth in his community, and no one can stand beside him in this regard in the long history of humanity. Here I am going to quote a statement of one of his Companions to one of his deadly foes at that time.

Ṣafwān b. Umayya bought Zayd (the Companion of the Prophet ﷺ who was betrayed and taken prisoner b. polytheists) to kill him in revenge for his father Umayya b. Khalaf. Ṣafwān sent him with a freedman of his called Niṣṭās to al-Tan'īm and they brought him out of the Ḥaram to kill him. A number of Quraysh gathered, among whom was Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, who said to Zayd as he was brought out to be killed, "I adjure you by Allah, Zayd, don't you wish that Muḥammad was with us now in your place so that we might cut off his head, and that you were with your family?" Zayd answered, "By Allah, I don't wish that Muḥammad ﷺ be in my place now or that even a thorn should hurt him or I were sitting with my family." Abu Sufyān used to say, "I have

23 - Al-Haithamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, i, 164. This ḥadīth has a dubious *isnād* and is not well authenticated.

never seen a man who was so loved as Muḥammad's Companions loved him; Niṣṭās killed him (Zayd), Allah have mercy upon him".²⁴

Thus the Prophet ﷺ was the most beloved one in his community. The community's involvement in worldly pursuits was still minimal and thus a wider scope and greater opportunity for learning was available. Moreover, the Arabs had excellent memories. They used to remember by heart many verses of their tribal poets and others. When we recollect all these factors, as well as methods applied by the Prophet ﷺ to teach his *sunna*, it becomes clear that its learning was very easy for the Muslim community. However, they were not content with these natural facilities but utilized every possible method for its learning and preservation.

Learning of the *Aḥādīth* among the Companions

The Companions used all the three methods of learning: (a) memorization (b) recording (c) through practice, following the method applied by the Prophet ﷺ for teaching the *sunna*.

(a) *Learning by memorizing:*

The Companions used to listen to every word of the Prophet ﷺ with utmost care. They used to learn the Qur'an and the *ḥadīth* from the Prophet ﷺ mostly in the mosque. When the Prophet ﷺ went away for any reason, they started to recollect what they had learned. This practice has been described very well by Mu'āwīya²⁵. The same evidence can be seen in the statement of Abū al-Dardā'.²⁶ This practice can be seen in its culmination in the statement of Anas b. Mālik, the servant of the Prophet ﷺ. He says, "We sat with the Prophet ﷺ, may be sixty persons in number and the Prophet ﷺ taught them *ḥadīth*. Later on when he went out for any necessity, we used to memorize it amongst us, when we departed it was as if cultivated in our hearts."²⁷

The Companions faced the problems of daily life and its requirements as does everybody. So it was not practically

24 - Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrat Rasūlullah*, translated by A. Guillume, p. 427-8, However, I have used the word Allah for God, not as it was translated, as well as changed the translation in some places.

25 - Al-Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*, i, 94.

26 - Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vi, 443.

27 - Khatīb, *Al-Jāmi'*, 43a.

possible for all of them to attend the circle of the Prophet ﷺ on every occasion. Therefore, those who were absent sometimes from the educational circle of the Prophet ﷺ used to learn from those who were present. This process has been described very well by the Companion Barā' b. 'Āazib²⁸. Some of them came to an agreement between themselves to attend the circle of the Prophet ﷺ in shifts, as we find in the case of 'Umar²⁹.

This practice reached its highest point in the case of the Companion Sulait. A piece of land was given to him by the Prophet ﷺ. He used to stay there for some time and then return to Madīnah to learn what had been taught in his absence. The Companions used to inform him about the newly revealed portions of the Qur'an and the judgment of the Prophet ﷺ in different cases. He was so embarrassed that he requested the Prophet ﷺ that the land should be taken back from him as it stopped him from the attendance in the Prophet's ﷺ circle.³⁰

This was the atmosphere and environment in which the teaching and learning of *ḥadīth* was carried on.

(b) *Learning of aḥādīth through writing*

The Companions learned the *aḥādīth* by recording them in writing as well. There were good numbers of Companions who recorded the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.³¹

(c) *Learning of aḥādīth by practice*

It is essential to remember that the Companions put into practice whatever they learned by heart or by writing. The knowledge in Islam is for practice, not knowledge for the sake of knowledge, and the Companions knew this well. It is sufficient to note that Ibn 'Umar took eight years to learn the second *sura* of the Qur'an³².

This is a sketch of how the *ḥadīth* was learned by the Companions in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. After his death, the pattern remained almost the same except that the Messenger ﷺ of Allah was no more among them. Now we shall throw some light on the subject in the period after the Prophet's ﷺ death.

28 - Ibn Ḥanbal, *Ḥal*, 96b; Al-Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*, I, 127.

29 - Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 136, BU. *Ḥim*, 27.

30 - Abū 'Uбайд, *Al-Anwāl*, p. 272-3.

31 - For details see Al-Azami, *Studies*, 34-80.

32 - Suyūṭī, *Durr al-Manthūr*, I, 21 quoting *Muw.* of Mālik.

Learning of Aḥādīth in the Period of the Companions

Recollection of Aḥādīth

Recollection of *aḥādīth* was carried out in the time of the Companions as it was in the days of the Prophet ﷺ. Abū Hurairah used to divide the night in three portions; one third for sleeping, one third for prayer and one third for the recollection of the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.

'Umar and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī memorized *ḥadīth* through the night till the morning. We find the same in the case of Ibn 'Abbās and Zaid b. Arqam. Ibn Buraidah reports a similar situation with Mu'āwīya in the Syrian city of Ḥims.

On the other hand, we find a good number of the Companions such as 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī advising the Successors on the memorizing of *ḥadīth*. So the same pattern of learning of *ḥadīth* continued in the time of the Successors. They used to memorize *ḥadīth* either in groups or individually³³.

Official Patronage for the Teaching of the Qur'an and the Sunna of the Prophet ﷺ

'Umar, the second Caliph, entrusted his governors with the duty of teaching the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ³⁴. He used to send teachers for this purpose in good numbers: He even sent a teacher to Bedouins to find out the extent of their knowledge of the Qur'an³⁵.

Non-Official Activities

All the Companions who had knowledge of *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ took part in its diffusion whenever they had the opportunity or felt the necessity. However, they may be put into two groups.

Those who used to impart knowledge when they thought that the people were in need of it. They felt compelled to teach because they knew very well the sin of hiding the knowledge.

Those who gave much time for this purpose and used to teach regularly.

At this point we need to pay attention to some new factors.

33 - For detail see, Al-Azami, *Studies*, 184.

34 - Ibn Sa'd, III, I, 201; 243; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, I, 48.

35 - Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Iṣābah*, 'Awṣ b. Khālid al-Ṭā'ī, No. 332.

After the Prophet's death his Companions took up his mission. A quarter of a century after the death of the Prophet, Islam spread to Afghanistan, a part of what is now the U.S.S.R., Iran, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Libya. The Companions of the Prophet were pioneers in this activity which implies that knowledge of the *ahādīth* of the Prophet went with those Companions throughout the Muslim world. It also implies that not all the knowledge of *sunna* remained in Madīnah. Probably a certain *sunna* was known to a particular Companion, who went to Iraq or Egypt or somewhere else. Before the Companions died they entrusted the torch of *ahādīth* knowledge to the next generation which had to learn and be ready to take the responsibility. However, some unique conditions had been laid down for learning by *Muhaddithīn* and these are discussed in the next chapter.

Tahammul al-'Ilm Carrying of Knowledge of *Ahādīth*

WE have seen earlier how the Prophet taught his *ahādīth* and *sunna* and how it was received by the Companions. As the Companions were direct disciples of the Prophet, they had the special privilege and duty to spread his teachings. However in later days, as the knowledge of *ahādīth* spread all over the Muslim world, gathering of knowledge or collection of *hadīth* required much more extensive traveling, so new methods of learning had to be developed. These will be discussed here briefly.

Learning of *Ahādīth* in Early Days

For learning of *hadīth* the following eight methods were in use:

- (1) *Samā'*: that is reading by the teacher to the students.
- (2) *'Arḍ*: reading by students to teachers.
- (3) *Ijāzah*: to permit someone to transmit a *hadīth* or book on the authority of the scholar without reading by any one.
- (4) *Munāwalah*: to hand someone the written material to transmit.
- (5) *Kitābah*: to write *ahādīth* for someone.
- (6) *I'lām*: to inform someone that informer has permission to transmit certain material.
- (7) *Waṣīyah*: to entrust someone his books.
- (8) *Wajādah*: to find some books or *ahādīth* written by someone just as we nowadays discover some manuscripts in a library or somewhere else.

But in the period of the Companions only the first of these methods was in general use, while the use of other methods was negligible. The students stayed near their teachers at all times serving them and learning from them. When they imparted any *hadīth* the students wrote it down or memorized it. Al-Zuhrī says: "People used to sit with Ibn 'Umar, but none dared ask him questions till someone came from outside and asked him. We sat with Ibn al-Muṣayyib without questioning him, till someone

came and questioned him. The question roused him to impart *ḥadīth* to us, or he began to impart it at his own will". A little later the most common methods were numbers one and two. There has been a lot of discussion as to whether the first or the second is the best method of learning. In view of some scholars both methods have equal merit and Ṭahāwī (d. 328) wrote a booklet on the subject giving his opinion for the equality of both methods. Different terminology was used in transmitting the *ḥadīth* to show what method was used in learning the *ḥadīth*, as we see later. A man was not entitled to use any *ḥadīth* in his literary life if he had not received it by one of the eight above mentioned ways that is up to number seven. Number eight was not recognized by the scholars. Now we shall discuss these methods in some detail.

(1) Samā': سماع Reading by the Teacher to Students

This method has the following features:

Oral recitation, reading from books, questions and answers, and dictation.

1:1 Oral Recitation of *Aḥādīth* by the Teacher

This practice began to decline from the second half of the second century, though it persisted to a much lesser extent for a long period. Usually, the students were attached to a certain teacher for a very long time, until they were believed to be authorities on the *aḥādīth* of their teachers. Sometimes they were called *Rāwī* or *Ṣāhib* of so and so. Even if regular meetings were held for the teaching, only a few *aḥādīth* were taught in one lesson, say about three or four.

1:2 Reading from Books

Reading by the teacher, from his own book, which was preferred.

Reading by the teacher from the student's book, which was either a copy of or a selection from his own work. This method had a great many pitfalls for the teachers who did not learn their *aḥādīth* by heart. Some students and scholars played tricks. They would insert *aḥādīth* here and there into the teacher's *aḥādīth* and hand the book to the teacher for reading, to examine the soundness of his knowledge and memory. Teachers who failed to

recognize the additional material were denounced and declared untrustworthy.

1:3 Questions and Answers

In this method students used to read a part of the *aḥādīth* and the teacher read it in full.

1:4 Dictating the *Aḥādīth*

Apart from the Prophet's dictation and his Companions' rare dictations of *aḥādīth*, perhaps the Companion Wāthilah b. Asqa' (d. 83) was the first who held classes for dictation. This method was not encouraged in the early days because in this way a student could gather much knowledge in a very short time without much effort. It seems that Al-Zuhrī was the first to depart from this attitude. About the end of the first century we find him dictating *aḥādīth*, a method which he followed during the rest of his life.

There were certain scholars who had an extreme distaste for dictation and did not allow writing down. There were others who did not transmit *aḥādīth* until the students wrote them down. Some of them even refused to dictate *aḥādīth* if the students used wooden boards from which the writing could be erased. There were some others who wrote down *aḥādīth* and after memorizing erased them. Others used to learn by heart and after memorizing wrote them down. It seems that compared with other methods of the teaching of *aḥādīth*, these were rare and uncommon practices. From the second century onwards, besides the usual method of reading from books, dictations became usual. Sometimes regular classes were held for this purpose.

1:4:1 The Method of Dictation

For dictation, two methods were employed either from a book or from memory. In some cases the students refused to write *aḥādīth* being dictated from memory, yet it seems that it was the fashion of the time to rely on memory in transmitting or dictating *aḥādīth*. Perhaps it was a matter of prestige and reputation. This practice resulted in many mistakes owing to the inherent deficiencies of memory. The teachers had to go through their books to refresh their memories. In many cases when they were uncertain they did not dictate.

1:4:2 The *Mustamlīs*

The dictation method, due to large audience, gave rise to a new type of work for certain people who were called *Mustamlīs*.

They used to repeat the words of the Shaikh in a loud voice to the audience.

1:4:3 To Select Someone for Writing

As all the students could not write rapidly, sometimes a fast writer was chosen to take down *aḥādīth*, while others watched him writing, lest he should make any mistake. Later, either they borrowed the books or copied them in the presence of the owner. In literary circles a class of scribes or *Warrāqūn* was found for the purpose of copying, which gave rise to trade in books.

1:4:4 The Correction of Written Copies

It seems that the scholars were aware of the importance of revision after copying. Therefore we find them constantly advising their students, even helping them, in revision after copying. We find this practice from a very early stage. 'Urwah (22-93 H.) asked his son Hishām whether or not he revised after copying. Hishām replied, "No", upon which 'Urwah said that in fact it meant he did not write down².

After copying or dictating, either the students helped each other to correct the copies or did so under the supervision of their masters.

1:4:5 The Writing Materials.

It seems that wooden boards were mostly used for writing dictations and taking notes from which, later on, fair copies were made. A special shorthand method was sometimes used to save time and space.

(2) 'Arḍ: عرض Reading to Teachers

Another method was that the book was read by the students to the teacher or by a certain man called a *Qārī* and other students compared *aḥādīth* with their books or only listened attentively. Later they copied from the books. This method was called 'arḍ. Unfamiliarity with this terminology may cause misunderstanding even to Arabs.

It seems that 'arḍ was the most common practice from the beginning of the second century. In this case either copies were provided by the teachers themselves as many of them had their own scribes, *Kātib* or *Warrāq*, or students had their own books, copied earlier either from the original or from another copy of

2 - Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Kifāyah*, 237.

the same work. In copying they usually made a circular mark after every *ḥadīth*³. Whenever a student finished the reading of a *ḥadīth* he made a sign in the circle or somewhere else to show that this *ḥadīth* had been read to the teacher. This was necessary because even when a student knew *aḥādīth* through books he was not entitled to use those materials for teaching or for his own compilation till he received them through properly recognized methods of learning. If one did not follow this method, he could be accused of stealing *ḥadīth*, *sāriq al-ḥadīth*, which meant that a scholar used materials in teaching or in compiling his book which, even though genuine, were not obtained through the proper way. A modern parallel to this practice is the copyright law. A man can buy a million copies of a book but may not print even a few copies without permission. The early scholars had their own method of copyright, where one could not use materials simply by buying a book⁴.

When a *ḥadīth* was read more than once the students made additional marks for every reading. Sometimes scholars read the same book several times.

(3) *Ijāzah*: إجازة Permission

In *ḥadīth* terminology *Ijāzah* means to permit someone to transmit a *ḥadīth* or a book on the authority of a certain scholar who gave this permission, without having read the book to him. There have been different kinds of *Ijāzah*. Until the third century, it is difficult to find signs of the *Ijāzah* system, but it was widely used later. There have been differences of opinions about its validity.

This system, in certain cases, provided a kind of safeguard for the text. For example, when A permitted B to transmit *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī through the authority of A, then B ought to find out a copy of *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī which contained a reading certificate including the name of A. In this way the correct text could be kept free of alterations.

3 - See for detail, Azami, *Studies*.

4- However, some scholars copied information from certain manuscripts which they found and explained it explicitly that they had found so and so in certain manuscript. This had no validity in the view of early scholars, because a copy might be forged one or the scribe might have committed mistakes in its reading.

(4) *Munāwalah*: مناولة Handing the Book to a Student

When someone gave a student a manuscript along with the authority to transmit it. For example, Zuhrī (51-124) gave his manuscripts to several scholars, like Thaurī, Auzā'ī and 'Ubaidullah b. 'Umar⁵. It was called *munāwala*. This was not a common practice in the early days.

(5) *Kitābah*: كتابة Correspondence

This means writing *aḥādīth* to give them to someone else to transmit. In modern terminology this could be called learning by correspondence. There were quite good deals of activities of this sort. This practice started from very early days, and can be assumed to have started from the very beginning. Official letters of the rightly guided Caliphs contained many *aḥādīth* which were transmitted by scholars. Besides this many Companions and later on many scholars wrote down *aḥādīth* and sent them to their students. See for example Ibn 'Abbās's writings to Ibn Abī Mulaikah and Najdah⁶.

(6) *I'lām*: إعلام To Inform About *Aḥādīth*

I'lām meant to inform someone that informer has permission to transmit a certain book on certain scholars' authority. Some of the scholars permitted this method of transmitting *aḥādīth* while others rejected it. The only benefit from it was that the second person had to find the original copy which bore the certificate and the name of the person who gave permission. Signs of this method are difficult to trace in the early period.

(7) *Waṣīyah*: وصية

To entrust someone the book which may be transmitted on the authority of the one who entrusted the books. For example Abū Qilābah (d. 101) who entrusted his books to Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī⁷.

(8) *Wajādah*: وجادة

That is to find someone's book without any sort of permission to transmit on anyone's authority. This was not a recognized way

5 - See for detail, Azami, *Studies*, p. 88-93.

6 - For details see, Azami, *Studies* P. 41-2.

7 - For details see, Azami, *Studies*, 63.

of learning *aḥādīth*. According to the standard of the *Muḥaddithīn* one must state explicitly that the information he presented had been taken from the book of such a man. There are references to books of this sort from very early clays. An example is the book of Sa'd b. 'Ubādah (d. 15 A.H.)⁸.

Terms Used to Describe Transmission of *Aḥādīth*:

There are many terms employed by *Muḥaddithīn* for this purpose. As every *isnād* contains many names therefore these terms are repeated frequently.

To save space and time *Muḥaddithīn* used abbreviations or, say, shorthand method for this purpose, and even used to drop some word from *isnād*. These are the terms:

Haddathanā: حدثنا mostly written ثنا *Thanā* or *Nā* نا only.

Akhbaranā: أخبرنا mostly written أنا *Ana* only and rarely أرنا *arana*.

Haddathanā is used mostly to denote learning through the reading by the teacher (1st method).

Akhbaranā is used to denote learning through the second method, though some of the scholars used these two terms interchangeably.

Anb'anā أنبأنا is used in *Ijāzah* and *Munāwalah*, and sometimes even *Haddathanā Ijāzatan* is used in *Munāwalah*.

Sami'a: سمع it is used in the learning through the first method only.

An: عن it can be used in all the methods.

All these terms are not of equal value. *Sami'tu*, *Haddathanā*, *Haddathanī*, *Akhbaranā* and *Akhbaranī* are the most superior, though the authorities differ about which is best among them. However, *'an* is very inferior.

These terms should not be changed in copying. *'An* is not explicit for direct contact between narrators, therefore in case of a narrator who was accused of practicing *Tadlīs*,⁹ it might cause the *ḥadīth* to be judged a weak one.

Certificate of Reading

A regular record of attendance was kept and after the reading of a book was completed, a note was written either by the

8 - For detail see, Azami, *Studies*, 63.

9 - See for example Ibn Wahb, *Jāmi'*, p. 40, 77.

teacher or one of the famous scholars in attendance. This gave details of the attendance, e.g. who listened to the complete book and who joined partially, what part they read and what part was missed by them, giving dates and the places. If an attendant was under five years his age was mentioned with the title *حاضر* which meant, "attended". If he was five or more he was mentioned as a regular student. At its conclusion the book was usually signed by the teacher or by some famous attending scholar. In many cases, this certificate stipulated that no further entry could be made in the book, which had been completed.¹⁰ This certificate was called *Ṭabāq* by the *Muḥaddithīn*.

Education in *ḥadīth* was free. Only a few scholars charged some money but they were denounced for this practice. The students' relations with their teachers were based on reverence and respect. Some of them used to help or serve their tutors, but there were tutors who did not accept any kind of service lest it might be taken as service in return for teaching.

In many cases, the teachers even helped their students financially, and it was quite common to offer meals to them. A noteworthy phenomenon of the education in *ḥadīth* was the continuous traveling of students and scholars to collect *aḥādīth*. Perhaps journeying was an essential part of studentship. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī wrote a book on the subject¹¹.

The Ages of Students

First they learned the Qur'an, mostly by heart. Many scholars used to examine new students in the Qur'an. They also learned some other subjects such as Islamic Law, religious practices and grammar. Usually, they joined *Muḥaddithīn* circle around the age of twenty. In the era of the Successors students were about twenty years of age when they started learning *aḥādīth*.¹²

Zuhrī spoke of Ibn 'Uyaynah who was fifteen years old as the youngest student he had ever seen. Mūsā b. Ishāq says the Kufans sent their sons to learn *aḥādīth* when they were twenty. Al-Thaurī and Abu al-Ahwaṣ give 20 years as the age at which study of *ḥadīth* began. The Syrians began to write at 30. The

10 - For explanation of *Tadlīs*, see below, p. 65.

11 - See Khaṭīb, *Ar-Rihlah*.

12 - See Rāmḥurmuzī, *Al-Muḥaddith*, 186.

Basrites began to learn when they were only 10; Ibn Ḥanbal started when he was 16. It ought to be remembered that this was a common practice in literary circles, with many exceptions, and not a compulsory rule, which must be followed by everybody. However, in later periods it was not observed. Al-Dabarī transmitted 'Abdur-Razzāq's book, and when 'Abdur-Razzāq died his student was not more than 7 years old¹³. It was said that if a child could discriminate between a cow and a donkey then he could start learning *aḥādīth*¹⁴. It was at the time when the texts had been fixed, and learning meant transmission of a book through channels of *Isnād*. On the other hand, especially in the second century, many scholars were considered weak in their *aḥādīth* from certain teachers on the grounds of their youth when they wrote down from them. For example, 'Amr al-Bairuti is considered weak in the *aḥādīth* of Auzā'ī as he was young when he wrote down from Auzā'ī. Similar charges were made against Ibn al-Madīnī, Ibn Abī Shaibah, Hishām b. Ḥassān etc.

However, later the situation changed completely. People began to bring even their infants to the lectures on *ḥadīth*. The attendance of a child at such lectures entitled him to a certificate, which gave the name of the child, if he was under five, as proof that he attended the lectures. But if a child was five or more it was mentioned in the certificate (*Ṭibāq*) that he learned certain books from certain scholars.

This practice, according to which a child of five years was awarded a certificate of matriculation or graduation in *ḥadīth* sounds like a joke. But as a matter of fact the case is not so ridiculous as it seems and the practice was not as silly as it appears to be.

Let us see what was the task of this 'graduate' of 5 years in *ḥadīth* when he grew up. All he had to do was to read the text. Usually he was not supposed to interpret or explain it so his learning would not have much effect on its explanation.

The main use of this certificate was to mark the purity and authenticity of the text itself. The graduate's name was put in the certificate of reading, which was not written on a sheet of paper but either on the margin of the book, or at the title or at the end

13 - Khaṭīb, *Kifāyah*, 64.

14 - *Ibid.*, 65.

of the book¹⁵. After being grown up, he was not entitled to read any copy of the same book. No, he must read either from the same manuscript or from a copy transcribed from the book which bore his name and which was checked carefully.

Therefore, by this very means, the scholars were able to safeguard the purity of the text while keeping the *Isnād 'Ālī*, that is the least number of scholars between the reader and the Prophet ﷺ.

The Number of Students

There are references to hundreds of teachers from whom Al-Thaurī, Ibn al-Mubārak, al-Zuhrī, etc. had written down *aḥādīth*. In the works of biographers we find a long list of teachers and students of eminent scholars. For example, even if we take only one scholar, al-Zuhrī, we do not know precisely how many students wrote down from him, and how many attended his lectures. However, we have at least fifty references to his students who made their written collections from him¹⁶. The growing number of transmitters resulted in tremendous growth in the number of books. The books grew so voluminous that it was difficult to handle them. Therefore, to avoid chaos and discrepancies, Shu'bah advised writing the famous *aḥādīth* from the famous scholars.

This growth of books resulted in the growth of numbers of *aḥādīth*. A contributing factor was the method of *Muḥaddithīn* who counted every *Isnād* as one *ḥadīth*. Thus if a single statement of the Prophet ﷺ is narrated by one hundred *Isnāds* it would be counted as one hundred *ḥadīth*. Thus a few thousand *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ reached to over 600,000 *aḥādīth*. This fact and method which is unknown to many modern scholars caused them to make many mistakes.¹⁷

15 - See Appendix No. 1.

16 - For detailed study of Zuhrī's students and their writings of *aḥādīth* from him, see *Studies*, pp. 88-93.

17 - For detailed study of the subject see, *Studies* p. 302-5.

Recording of *Aḥādīth*

IN the previous chapter, I have discussed the methods used by early scholars in teaching and learning the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.

In seven methods of learning out of eight, from two to eight depend almost totally on the written material. I have also mentioned that the most common were the first and second methods. In many ways, even the first method, that is reading or dictation by the teachers, involved written material in many cases, while the second method, that is reading by students to their teachers required almost exclusively written materials.

However, it is generally believed that the *aḥādīth* were transmitted orally for one hundred years at least. Then Zuhrī recorded them by order of Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Azīz. And in the view of some 'scholars', even his recording was lost. Both these assumptions are based on lack of knowledge of the early literary history of *aḥādīth* and their literary style. Therefore, the problem of recording of *aḥādīth* needs special attention. Meanwhile it ought to be remembered that mere recording of material is not complete guarantee of its safe preservation. For example, we know that in the existing Greek Bibles there are some 200,000 variants, some of them minor and some of them very important, which is sufficient to prove that mere recording of a subject is not a sure guarantee of its safe preservation¹. However, a text can be kept fully preserved even without recording. For example, even if all the books on the earth were destroyed, the Holy Qur'an would still remain safe because millions of Muslims have memorized it completely or in parts.

Recording of *Ḥadīth* in the Life of the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions

We know that certain Companions wrote down *aḥādīth* in the life of the Prophet ﷺ and in some cases the Prophet ﷺ dictated it to them. No doubt their numbers must have been smaller than

1 - P. Auvray. A. Barueq etc. *Introduction A La Bible*, P. 111.

those of the later scholars who wrote down *aḥādīth*. I will try to give a summary of the work of some Companions who took part in diffusion of *ḥadīth* and devoted a great deal of time to it.

It is a well-known fact that not all the Companions had equal number of *aḥādīth* for transmission. The proportion of the *aḥādīth* varied. While some of them transmitted more than a thousand, most of them transmitted a *ḥadīth* or two only. The names of Companions who transmitted *aḥādīth* in large numbers is as follows: The first name is that of Abū Hurairah, who transmitted, according to Baqī b. Makhlad, 5374 *aḥādīth*. Actually, this is not the number of *ḥadīth*, but the number of channels through which *aḥādīth* were transmitted. The most recent research shows that the number of *aḥādīth* transmitted by him is 1236 only.² He is reported to have had books of *ḥadīth* in his possession. At least nine of Abū Hurairah's students wrote *aḥādīth* from him.

Next to Abū Hurairah comes the name of Ibn 'Umar, who according to Baqī, transmitted 2630 *ḥadīth*³. We have authentic reports that he had a written collection of *ḥadīth*. At least eight of his students wrote *aḥādīth* from him. Others who transmitted large numbers of *ḥadīth* were:

Anas Ibn Mālīk, who served the Prophet ﷺ for ten years and transmitted 2286 *ḥadīth*. At least sixteen persons have *ḥadīth* from him in written form though some of them are not fully reliable.

Ummul-Mu'minīn 'Ā'isha who transmitted 2210 *ḥadīth*. At least three persons had her *aḥādīth* in written form including her nephew, 'Urwah, one of the greatest scholars amongst the Successors.

Ibn 'Abbās, who transmitted 1660 *ḥadīth*. At least nine of his students had *aḥādīth* from him in written form.

Jābir b 'Abdullah who transmitted 1540 *ḥadīth*. At least fourteen of his students had his *aḥādīth* in written form.

Abū Sa'id al-Khudrī who transmitted 1170 *ḥadīth*. He seems

2 - Diyā ur-Raḥmān al-A'zamī, *Abū Hurairah fī daw Mariyātihī*, p. 7, (M.A. Thesis, Shari'ah College, Makkah).

3 - The number of *aḥādīth* mentioned with the names of other Companions do not refer to the actual number of *aḥādīth*. The actual number would be much smaller, as we have seen in the case of Abū Hurairah, but there is no extant study of the subject.

to have been opposed to the writing down of *aḥādīth*, though according to Khaṭīb he himself wrote a few *aḥādīth*.

Ibn Mas'ud who transmitted 748 *ḥadīth*. We have no information about his students who wrote down *ḥadīth* from him, but his own book was in the possession of his son.

'Abdullah b. 'Amr b. Al-'Āṣ, who transmitted 700 *ḥadīth*. We know that he used to write *ḥadīth* while the Prophet ﷺ was alive and titled his books by the name of 'Al-Ṣaḥīfah al-Ṣādiqah'. At least seven of his students have *ḥadīth* from him in written form.

The second Caliph, 'Umar, 537 *aḥādīth* have been transmitted by him. He used to quote *aḥādīth* in official letters and in this way many *ḥadīth* were recorded by him.

The fourth Caliph, 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He transmitted 536 *aḥādīth*. At least eight of his students had his *ḥadīth* in written form.

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, transmitted 360 *ḥadīth*. Some of his *ḥadīth* were in the possession of Ibn 'Abbās in written form.

Al-Barā' Ibn 'Āzib transmitted 305 *ḥadīth*. He used to dictate *ḥadīth*. I am going to stop at this point, because the instances I have given are sufficient to throw light on the problem under discussion. In the light of above mentioned facts, it is quite safe to assume that probably most of *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, if not all, came to be written during the life of the Companions⁴.

Some Misunderstanding about the Recording of *Ḥadīth*

If what I have written concerning the early recording of *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ is correct then how does one explain the general belief that the *aḥādīth* were recorded very late?

I think this mistake is due to the following reasons:

- (1) Misinterpretation of the words *Tadwīn*; *Taṣnīf* and *Kitābah* which were understood in the sense of record.
- (2) Misunderstanding of the terms *Haddathanā*, *Akhbaranā*, 'An etc. which were generally believed to be used for oral transmission.
- (3) The claim that the memory of the Arabs was unique and they had no need to write down anything.
- (4) *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ against recording *aḥādīth*.
- (5) Misinterpretation of early scholars' statements concerning

4 - For a detailed study of the problem, see Al A'zami, *Studies* p. 34-182.

recording of *ḥadīth*.

Points four and five need some discussion.

The *Ḥadīth* against Writing down the *Aḥādīth*

In *Taqyīd al-'Ilm*, al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī deals at full length with the subject of the recording of *aḥādīth* and discusses whether or not it was allowed by the Prophet ﷺ. The first part of the book is mainly concerned with the disapproval of writing; and the first chapter of this part mainly contains *aḥādīth* from the Prophet, transmitted by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Abū Hurairah and Zaid b. Thābit, forbidding writing of anything except the Qur'an.

In this first part there are the *aḥādīth* of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī which had two different versions, one of them transmitted by 'Abd ur-Raḥmān b. Zaid. The authorities agree unanimously that he was a weak narrator and according to al-Ḥākim and Abū Nu'aim he transmitted even false *aḥādīth*; and in the words of Ibn Ḥibbān, "He used to reverse *aḥādīth*, without knowing it, and put the full *isnād* for an interrupted (chain), so he deserved to be abandoned". Therefore, the *ḥadīth* of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī transmitted by 'Abd ur-Raḥmān b. Zaid is weak and unacceptable.

The same 'Abd ur-Raḥmān b. Zaid occurs in the *ḥadīth* of Abū Hurairah. Therefore, this *ḥadīth* is also weak and unacceptable.

The third Companion is Zaid b. Thābit. His *ḥadīth* is *Mursal*.⁵ The transmitter from Zaid is al-Muṭṭalib b. 'Abdullah who did not learn from Zaid, therefore there is a link missing whose honesty is unknown. So this *ḥadīth* is also unacceptable. Furthermore, *ḥadīth* from Zaid has two versions. In one of them, his disapproval of the writing of *ḥadīth* is based on the order of the Prophet ﷺ, while in another statement it is said that he disapproved of it because the written materials were his personal opinions. Therefore, this statement does not confirm his disapproval of the recording of the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.

There is only one *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* (trustworthy), transmitted by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, in this matter which reads, "Do not write from me anything except the Qur'an and whoever has written anything from me other than the Qur'an should erase it."⁶ This *ḥadīth*, which is transmitted by Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ is disputed among scholars. According to al-Bukhārī and others, it is the statement of Abū Sa'īd

5 - For the explanation of the term, see, below, p. 64.

6 - Mu. *Zuhd*, 72.

himself, that is erroneously attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, and it actually meant that nothing should be written with the Qur'an on the same sheet as this might lead someone to conclude erroneously that sentences or words written in the margin or between lines belonged to the Qur'an. It should be remembered that this command was given when the Qur'an was being revealed and the text itself was incomplete. Otherwise there does not appear to be any sound reason to forbid the writing of *ḥadīth*.

The Prophet ﷺ himself sent hundreds of letters. Many of them were lengthy, containing the formulae for forms and rituals of worship. According to the Qur'an his conduct and deeds should be followed by the community. The Qur'an itself demands a record of financial transactions. Therefore, it looks as if there were no general instructions not to record the *aḥādīth*, though it might have been understood by some of the scholars in this way. On the other hand there is clear evidence to show that the Prophet ﷺ approved of recording the *aḥādīth*. Furthermore, we find that quite a number of Companions recorded *aḥādīth* and among them were also those people who transmitted *aḥādīth* which forbade its recording. Bearing all this in mind one arrives at the conclusion that the Prophet's ﷺ disapproval of writing down *aḥādīth* most probably meant the writing of the Qur'an and non-Qur'anic material on the same sheet because that might have led to misunderstanding.

There is another theory that it was forbidden to write down *aḥādīth* in early days because all attention should be paid to the Qur'an and its preservation, and later on, when there was no danger of neglecting the Qur'an, the previous order was abrogated and people were permitted to write down *aḥādīth*.⁷

Misinterpretation of the Statements of Early Scholars

There have been many scholars who wrote down *aḥādīth*, and sometimes disliked doing so, giving reasons for their attitudes which were not based on the Prophet's ﷺ teachings. In many cases, the reasons were omitted, or even when the statements were given in full they were interpreted as against writing without any serious consideration.

Some Examples

1. It is reported that Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī was against writing.

The reason he gave for disapproval was that "whoever

7 - For detailed discussion, see Al-A'zami, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature* p. 18-27.

writes becomes dependent on it." According to the conception of some early scholars, books were bad stores of knowledge, and the best store was one which is kept in memory which could be used anywhere and at any time. One of the Bedouin said: a word in your memory is better than ten in your book.

2. The name of 'Āmir al-Sha'bī has been given in the lists of those against writing. If one reads his statement carefully one must reach the conclusion that al-Sha'bī was not against writing. We have two of his statements on the subject. In one of them he says, "I neither wrote with black on white nor did I ask any man to repeat a *ḥadīth* twice to me". The purpose of this statement is to show his great power of memory so that he never needed to ask anyone to repeat a *ḥadīth* and to hear it only once was sufficient for him to memorize it. The statement has no connection with the subject of the recording of *ḥadīth*. In another statement he advises his students to write down everything they hear from him; if they did not have paper they were even asked to write on walls.

No doubt there were some scholars who disliked the writing down of *ḥadīth* at one time or another for reasons which were not based on any religious authority.

The most famous scholar during the late first and early second century was Zuhri, who had written down almost everything which he had heard from his teachers. But when he began to teach he did not agree to dictate the *aḥādīth*, till pressure was exerted on him through the Caliph Hishām.⁸ Why was it so? To understand the reason thoroughly we need to see it in his own statement as well as of Mālik b. Anas who was the student of Zuhri. One of the students of Mālik read *al-Mū'atta'* to him in forty days, upon which Mālik said: The knowledge which I have collected in forty years you are gaining in forty days. How little can you understand it!⁹ Perhaps he wanted to say: How little can you appreciate it. Once al-Sha'bī transmitted a *ḥadīth*, then said to the student that you are really getting it for nothing, otherwise even for less, one had to make a journey from Iraq to al-Madīnah¹⁰. Actually it was the general attitude of that

time that the teachers could hardly be brought to speak. The students had to accompany them and when their teachers spoke, they wrote it down or memorized it. Zuhri says: "People used to sit with Ibn 'Umar but none dared call upon him till someone (from outside) came and asked him. We sat with Ibn al-Muṣayyib without questioning him, till someone came and questioned him, the question roused him to impart *ḥadīth* to us, or he began to impart of his own will"¹¹. Therefore, although al-Zuhri wrote down *ḥadīth* for his own use, he was not in favour of making them public. One who wants to learn must strive, and the student should not be given any ready-made knowledge in the shape of a book or dictation.

Summing up the argument regarding the reasons for disliking recording, there is no evidence that the interdiction of writing was based on the order of the Prophet ﷺ. It was based at one time or another on personal preference. Nevertheless the same scholars committed *aḥādīth* to writing. The recent research has proved that almost all the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ was written down in the life of Companions, which stretched to the end of the first century.

If the recording is carried out for the preservation of recorded material, then no doubt *aḥādīth* were preserved in this way. However, due to unique theory of learning which I have described in the chapter on *Taḥammul al-'Ilm*, direct approach to these books by everyone was regarded improper. It had to be through scholars authorized by proper teachers. These scholars themselves became part of the information and cannot be separated from it. In other words, sources of information became essential part of information, without which the information had no value. These sources of information are called *isnād*, the chain of the transmitters. In the next chapter we shall discuss the problem of *isnād*.

8 - Abū Nu'aim, *Al-Hilya*, iii, 363.

9 - Al-Zurqānī, *Shārh al-Mūwaṭṭā'* i.7.

10 - Al-Khatīb, *Al-Riḥlah*, 61-62.

11 - For detail see, A'zami, *Studies*, 284.

Isnād System (Chain of Transmitters)

EVERY *ḥadīth* consists of two parts. Here is a *ḥadīth* quoted from Bukhārī.

Bukhārī said that Sulaimān Abū ar-Rabī' informed him saying that Ismā'īl b. Ja'far said that Nāfi' b. Mālik informed him on the authority of his father that Abū Hurairah related that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The signs of a hypocrite are three:

Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie;

Whenever he makes a promise, he breaks it;

Whenever trusted with something, he proves to be dishonest".

This *ḥadīth* contains a series of names of narrators, and then the actual subject relating to the Prophet ﷺ.

The first portion is called *isnād* while the actual statement or information relating to the Prophet ﷺ is called *matn*. *Isnād*, according to Arabic lexicography means the thing on which another relies. As we rely on the narrators for the knowledge of the statement of the Prophet ﷺ, this chain is called *isnād*. Its plural is *asānīd*. Sometimes, the term *ṭarīq* is used instead of *isnād*, and sometimes the term *wajh* is used for the same purpose.

Origins of Isnād

It appears that *isnād* was used casually in the literature of the pre-Islamic period in a vague manner, without attaching any importance to it. The *isnād* system was also used to some extent in transmitting pre-Islamic poetry¹. But it was in the *ḥadīth* literature that its importance culminated till it was counted as part of the religion.² The system was used to the full, and in some cases to extravagant limits, for documenting the *ḥadīth* literature—the store room for the *sunna*. The *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ being a basic legal source, it was natural to deal with

1 - Nāṣir al-Asad, *Maṣādir al-Shi'r al-Jāhili*, 255-267.

2 - MU, *Introduction*, pp. 14-16.

these documents with utmost care. Thus with the introduction of *isnād*, a unique science *ʿIlm al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* came into existence for the evaluation of *isnād* and *aḥādīth*.

I have described earlier that it was the common practice among Companions—even in the life of the Prophet ﷺ—to transmit the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ when they saw each other. Some of them had even made special arrangements to attend the Prophet's ﷺ circle in shifts and to inform each other of what they had heard and seen in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ.

Naturally in informing their fellows they would have used sentences like: 'the Prophet ﷺ did such and such' or 'the Prophet ﷺ said so and so'. It is also natural that one of them who had gained knowledge at second hand, while reporting the incident to a third man, might have disclosed his sources of information and might have given the full account of the incident. There are ample references of this kind in the *ḥadīth* literature. Only one will be quoted here.

Dimām b. Tha'labah came to the Prophet ﷺ and said to him: "Muḥammad ﷺ, your messenger came to us and told us..."³ These methods, which were used in the early days for the diffusion of the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ, gave birth to *isnād*, and this was the rudimentary beginning of the system. In this regard Ibn Sīrīn's statement would be very helpful. He says, "They did not ask about the *isnād*, but when civil war—*Fitnah*—arose they said 'Name to us your men'; those who belong to *Ahl-al-Sunnah*, their *aḥādīth* were accepted and those who were innovators their *aḥādīth* were neglected."⁴

This gives the impression that the *isnād* was used even before the *Fitnah*, but the narrators were not so perfect in applying it. Sometimes they employed it and at others neglected it. After the civil war they became more cautious and began to enquire about the sources of information and scrutinized them. At the end of the first century the science of the *isnād* was fully developed. Shu'bah used to watch the lips of Qatādah, in the lecture, to discriminate between his first and second hand information. There are ample references to asking and enquiring about the *isnād* in the first century of the Hijrah.

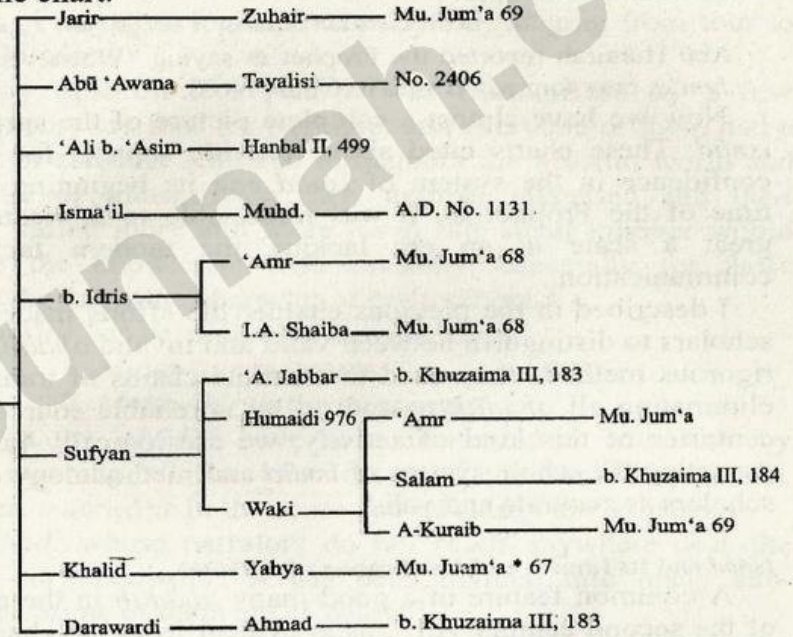
3 - MU, *Imān*, 10.

4 - MU, *Introduction*, 15.

Madīnah, Baṣrah and Kūfah.

Without going into details, however, I draw a diagram for this ḥadīth to show how easy it was for ḥadīth knowledge to spread throughout the Islamic world and how the number of transmitters, in most cases, increased in each generation.

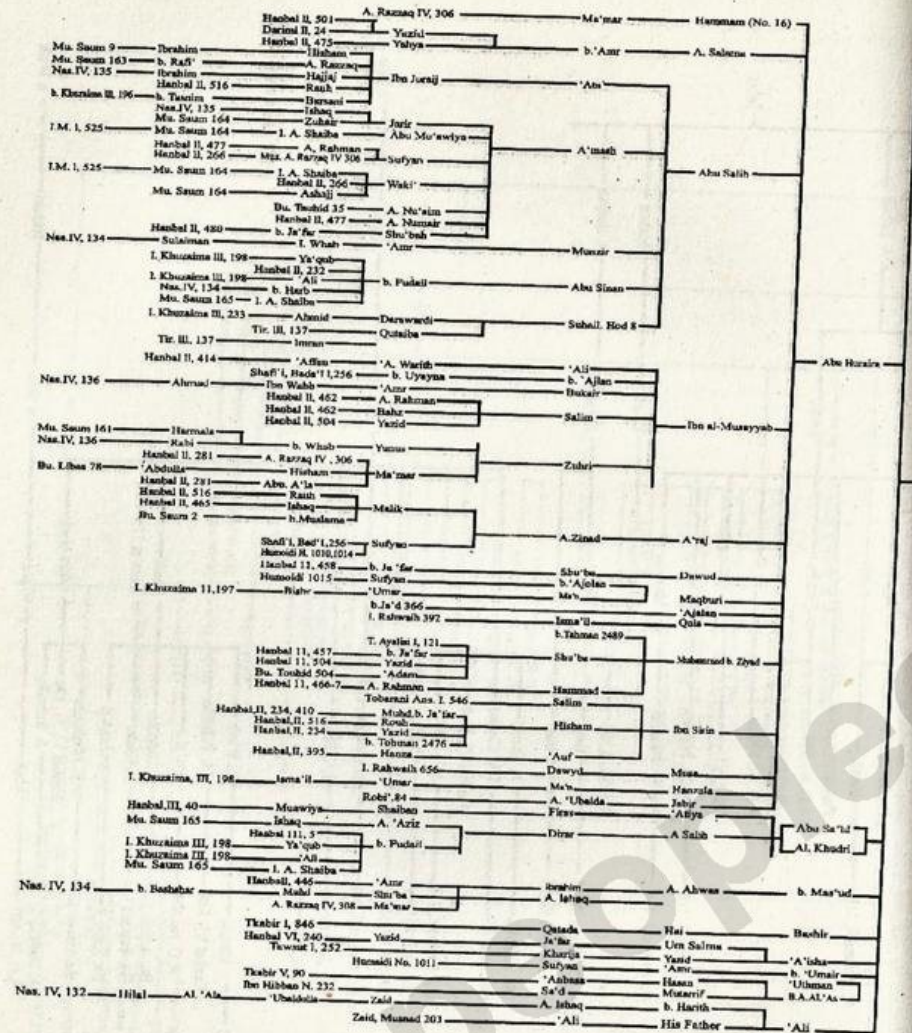
Here is the chart.



Further down the chain, the number of narrators increases and localities spread even further into different provinces. The flourishing of isnād and diffusion of aḥādīth in this way made it easy to check the faults of scholars, or any forgery that was committed. This proves the early existence of the isnād system and shows how impossible it would have been to fabricate isnād on this large scale.

A second interesting point is that not all the Madīnese, Baṣrites or Kūfans are the students of one man. Three of the Baṣrites trace the source of their knowledge to one Baṣrites, but the other two cite two different Madīnese as their source. The Chart No.5 shows the isnād of this ḥadīth.

The illustrations serve to show how well documented are the isnād of the majority of aḥādīth, how the system is used in



If we confine the discussion only to the third generation of narrators from Abū Hurairah, belonging mostly to the first half of the second century of the Hijrah, the following features appear: There are twenty-two third generation transmitters—nine from Madīnah, five from Baṣrah, four from Kūfah, and one each from Makkah, Wāsiṭ, Ḥijāz and Khurāsān. These variously trace their source to eleven students of Abū Hurairah, whose homes were in

examining the statements of scholars, and how it was and can be used for eliminating mistakes.

No doubt not all the *aḥādīth* were spread so widely. There are *aḥādīth* which were transmitted—according to our available sources—through a single scholar from a single scholar for three or four generations.

Here is an example:

وقال أبو هريرة ، قال النبي ﷺ : "إذا صليت الجمعة فصل بعدها أربعاً"

Abū Hurairah reported the Prophet ﷺ saying "Whenever you pray *Jum'a*, pray four *rak'a* after it. Chart No.6.

Now we have almost a complete picture of the spreading of *isnād*. These charts cited above provide support for complete confidence in the system of *isnād* and its beginning from the time of the Prophet ﷺ. It was impossible to fabricate on this great a scale in an era lacking the modern facilities of communication.

I described in the previous chapter the efforts made by early scholars to distinguish between valid and invalid *aḥādīth* and the rigorous methods they used to examine chains of transmission, eliminating all *aḥādīth* passed on by unreliable sources. Given centuries of this kind of activity, we are logically justified in accepting the whole system of *isnād* and methodology of *ḥadīth* scholars as accurate and valid.

Isnād and Its Impact on Classification of *Aḥādīth*

A common feature of a good many *aḥādīth* in the early part of the second century A.H., as is evident from the charts, is the great number of transmitters who belong to different provinces and countries. However, not all the *aḥādīth* had the one pattern in the spread of *isnād*. We have seen that some of the *aḥādīth* were transmitted by many Companions and many successors⁵ while some others were related by a single Companion only from whom it was narrated by a single Successor, who in turn had a single student who transmitted this particular *ḥadīth*.⁶

Therefore *aḥādīth* were graded according to the numbers of narrators. In this regard the following terms need attention: a: *Mutawātir*, b: *Āḥād*.

a) *Mutawātir*: report of a large number of narrators whose agreement upon a lie is inconceivable. This condition must be

5 - For examples, see Charts No 2-4.

6 - For example, see Chart No 5.

met in the entire chain from the origins of the report to the very end.

In the view of Muslim scholars any *ḥadīth* which has been transmitted by *tawātur* and whose reporters based their reports on direct, unambiguous perception, unmixed with rationalization would produce knowledge with certainty.

However, there is a difference of opinion about the required number of narrators for *mutawātir ḥadīth*, ranging from four to several hundred.

In my opinion if a *ḥadīth* was transmitted by a few Companions, say four for example, and everyone of them had a number of students scattered throughout the Muslim world and in course of transmission their number increased and their locality varied more and more, even this small number would produce the knowledge with certainty, especially for those people who knew the character of early scholars.

Mutawātir has been divided in two groups:

1. *Mutawātir* by words,
2. *Mutawātir* in the meaning.

Only a few *aḥādīth* have been mentioned as *mutawātir* by words, meaning all the narrators used the same expression. However, *mutawātir* in the sense and meanings are numerous.

b.) *Āḥād*: whose narrators do not reach anywhere near the number for *mutawātir*. It has been divided into many subdivisions. Some of them are as below:⁷

Al-Mashhū: (well-known) That is a *ḥadīth* transmitted by three or more transmitters in every stage.

Al-'Azīz: That is a *ḥadīth* transmitted by at least two narrators in every generation.

Al-Gharīb: If an *isnād* had a single narrator either throughout its *isnād*—after the Companion — or in any stage, it is called *gharīb*.

Al-Fard: which has been divided into two sub-divisions:

- i) *Fard muṭlaq*, which means that this particular *ḥadīth* was transmitted by that particular person alone.
- ii) *Fard Nisbī*: which has several meanings:

7 - Sometimes more than one definition has been given by the scholars. However, I have mentioned only one that is accepted by the majority of the scholars.

- a) None of the trustworthy transmitters narrated that particular *ḥadīth* except that particular person (narrator) or others narrated it as well but they were not trustworthy.
- b) None of the people of other regions transmitted that particular *ḥadīth* except the scholars of that particular region.

- Marfū'*: That is *isnād* of the *ḥadīth* goes back to the Prophet ﷺ, though it might be broken somewhere.
- Musnad*: That is *isnād* of the *ḥadīth* is uninterrupted and goes back to the Prophet ﷺ.
- Muttaṣil*: That is *isnād* of the *ḥadīth* is unbroken.
- Mauqūf*: The *isnād* of *ḥadīth* goes back to the Companion only.
- Maqtū'*: A *ḥadīth* going back to the Successor only.
- Mursal*: Transmission of a Successor from the Prophet ﷺ directly dropping the Companion from the *isnād*.
- Mu'allaq*: An *isnād* in which one or more authorities from the beginning (from the author or book) is omitted.
- Munqaṭi'*: An *isnād* having a single link missing somewhere in the middle, in one place or more.
- Mu'dal*: An *isnād* in which two continuous links are missing in one or more than one place.
- Mu'an'an*: In the *isnād*, in transmitting the material the term '*an*' has been used, which is not explicit in describing the method of receiving the *ḥadīth*.
- Musalsal*: A *ḥadīth* all of whose narrators had a similar situation. For example, all of them used same terminology in narration such as *sami'tu*. Or all of them belong to one region or one occupation. Or they narrated the *ḥadīth* with the same action, e.g. all the narrators smiled while narrating a *ḥadīth* because the Prophet ﷺ had smiled while saying it.

Al-Ḥadīth al-Qudsī

Some of the *aḥādīth* are narrated by the Prophet ﷺ, saying that Almighty Allah says so and so. These *aḥādīth* are called

Ḥadīth Qudsī. The meaning of these *aḥādīth* was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ who put them in his own expression. The Holy Qur'an is the real word of Almighty Allah and the Prophet ﷺ had only to receive it and then to teach it to the people, explain it and act accordingly. However, other *aḥādīth* which are not called *Qudsī* cannot be said to be totally uninspired by Allah. The Prophet ﷺ was never left unguided by Allah. Even his *ijtihādāt* were sanctioned by Allah and in case of any lack of clarity it was corrected by Him. Therefore, a good deal of *aḥādīth* is *Qudsī* in a sense, but cannot be distinguished from the ones which belong to *ijtihādāt* of the Prophet ﷺ. Thus we simply have to name them *aḥādīth*, being the possibility of *ijtihādāt* of the Prophet ﷺ. An example of *Ḥadīth Qudsī*:

Abu Dharr reported Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another. My servants, all of you are liable to err except one whom I guide on the right path, so seek right guidance from Me so that I should direct you to the right path. O My servants, all of you are hungry (needy) except one whom I feed, so beg food from Me, so that I may give that to you. O My servants, all of you are naked (need clothes) except one whom I provide garments, so beg clothes from Me, so that I should clothe you. O My servants, you commit error night and day and I am there to pardon your sins, so beg pardon from Me so that I should grant you pardon. O My servants, you can neither do Me any harm nor can you do Me any good. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and even the whole of the human race of yours, and that of *Jinns* even, become (equal in) God-consciousness like the heart of a single person amongst you, nothing would add to My power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of *Jinns* too in unison become the most wicked (all beating) like the heart of a single person, it would cause no loss to My power. O My servants, even if the first amongst you and the last amongst you and the whole human race of yours and that of *Jinns* also all stand in one plain ground and

ask Me and I confer upon every person what he asks for, it would not, in any way, cause any loss to Me (even less) than that which is caused to the ocean by dipping the needle in it. My servants, these deeds of your which I am recording for you I shall reward you for them, so he who finds good shall praise Allah and he who does not find that should not blame anyone but his own self⁸.

These are some of the classifications of *aḥādīth* basing on the various condition of *isnād*. But there is another classification of *aḥādīth*, different from these, which basically concern acceptance or rejection of *aḥādīth*. This classification came into existence due to criticism carried out by *Muḥāddithīn*. In the next chapters we will discuss the history and methodology of *ḥadīth* criticism, and later on its grading and classification.

Ḥadīth Criticism History and Methodology

I HAVE pointed out the fact that all the problems concerning *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ rest upon the central question of the status of the *sunna*, or we may say *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ which is the second main source of Islamic law, valid forever, and the life of the Prophet ﷺ is a model which ought to be followed by Muslims irrespective of time and place. For this reason, the Companions, even in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, began to diffuse the knowledge of the *sunna* and they were ordered by the Prophet ﷺ to do so. However, this does not mean that the door was wide open for everybody to transmit the *aḥādīth* even if he was sure that he was not committing an error. The Prophet ﷺ warned the people saying: "If anyone tells a lie about me intentionally, let him be sure of his place in Hell-fire."¹

In another *ḥadīth*, he said: "If anyone intentionally ascribes to me what I have not said, and then let him be sure of his place in Hell-fire."² These warnings produced tremendous effect on the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Many Companions refrained from imparting *ḥadīth* in case of doubtful memory. In this regard one may give examples of Anas b. Mālik³, Zubair b. al-'Awwā⁴, Shu'ayb⁵, Zaid b. Arqam⁶, as well as 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar⁷.

We find certain Companions checking other Companions, asking them to be very sure and precise as to what they related, on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ.

Forgery and Errors in Transmitting of *Aḥādīth*

Scholars, especially early scholars, played their roles with due

1 - BU. 'Ilm, 38.

2 - *Ibid.*

3 - *Ibid.*

4 - *Ibid.*, 3.

5 - Al-Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, 1.138.

6 - I.M. *Introd.* 3.

7 - Ḥanbal, iv, 433.

caution in transmitting or copying *aḥādīth*. But, as is known to all scholars, even the most sincere one may make a mistake at one time or another.

As the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ is an everlasting example for the Muslim community, the community, too, cannot afford to let it be polluted or diluted in any way. Therefore, to check mistakes of all sorts, it was necessary to use criticism with full force. The following incidents throw some light on this point.

Yaḥya b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān, one of the greatest scholars of the second century, was on his death bed. He asked one of the attendants, "What do the people of Baṣrah say about me?" He replied, "They admire you, but they are only afraid of your criticism of the scholars." On which, he said, "Listen to me, in the Hereafter I would prefer to be opposed by anyone rather than have the Prophet ﷺ saying: 'You heard a *ḥadīth* attributed to me, and it came to your mind that it was not true but you did not criticize it.'"⁸

With this intention the criticism of *ḥadīth* was carried out, without fear or favor. One finds that a father graded down his own son, a son criticized his father, a brother criticized his own kin and friends criticized their dear one without any fear or favor except the fear of Allah. I think this is very hard to appreciate in the 20th century, because respect for father or brother or love of children has become minimal, but anyone who knows the early history and knows how tight the social unit was, and that it was almost impossible to live cut off from the family and family honor, would realize how courageous *Muḥaddithīn* were in this respect.

The other point which needs clarification is that in real-life experience we find people always grading their friends higher and lowering the grades of their opponents. Could that have happened in the grading done by *Muḥaddithīn*? It could have, because this is human weakness and *Muḥaddithīn* were human beings. They tried their best to be objective yet there are some traces here and there which indicate that personal enmity played some part in grading lower. The scholars have discussed the subject as well as the case where it was committed. But apart from the exceptions the opposite is true.

8 - Ibn Rajah, *Sharḥ 'Ilal* 43 a.

Naqd al-Ḥadīth: Criticism of Ḥadīth

In Arabic literature, the word *naqd* is used for criticism. This word was used by some early scholars of *ḥadīth* in the second century.⁹

In Arabic literature these words occur: نقد الكلام ونقد الشعر which mean: "He picked out the faults of the language and of the poetry."

He separated the good money from the bad.¹⁰ نقد الدراهم

Going through the Qur'an and *ḥadīth* we do not find this word used in the sense of criticism. Does this imply that the concept of criticism came very late in *ḥadīth* literature? No, as a matter of fact, the Qur'an uses the word *yamīz* for this purpose, meaning "separated one thing from another".¹¹

A third century scholar, Imām Muslim, named his book *al-Tamyīz*, whose subject is methodology of *aḥādīth* criticism. Some *ḥadīth* scholars used the word *naqd*, but it did not gain currency in their circle. They named the science which deals with criticism of *ḥadīth*, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* (the knowledge of invalidating and declaring reliable in *ḥadīth*).

Beginning of Criticism

If criticism is the effort to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, then we can say that it began in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. But at this stage, it meant no more than going to the Prophet ﷺ and verifying something he was reported to have said. Actually, at this stage, it was a process of consolidation so that the hearts of the Muslims might be at ease, as has been described by the Qur'an in the case of Ibrāhīm.¹² Dimām b. Tha'labah came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "Muhammad, your messenger came to us and told us . . . so and so." The Prophet ﷺ said, "He told the truth."¹³

We find this sort of investigation or verifying was carried out by 'Alī¹⁴, Ubaī b. Ka'b¹⁵ 'Abdullah b. 'Amr¹⁶, 'Umar¹⁷, Zainab

9 - Rāzī, *Introd.* 232.

10 - Lane, *Lexicon*, 2836.

11 - See, the Qur'an, 2:179.

12 - The Qur'an, 2:260.

13 - MU, *Imān*, 10, read with BU. 'Ilm 6.

14 - Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, v, III.

15 - Ḥanbal, v, 143.

16 - BU, *Maghāzī*, 25.

wife of Ibn Mas'ūd¹⁸, and others. In the light of these events, it can be claimed that the investigation of *ḥadīth* or, in other words, criticism of *ḥadīth* began in a rudimentary form during the life of the Prophet ﷺ. This practice of referring to the Prophet ﷺ ceased naturally with the death of the Messenger ﷺ of Allah. But it was the duty of Muslim individuals, community and state to follow the way of the Prophet ﷺ. Consequently they had to be very careful in ascribing statements to the Prophet ﷺ, and had to scrutinize them carefully.

The first Caliph Abū-Bakr Ṣiddīq was the pioneer in this field. Next came 'Umar and 'Alī. During this early period there were other Companions too like 'Ā'isha, and Ibn 'Umar, who carried out criticism of *ḥadīth*.

With the spread of Islām, the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ also began to spread. There were many Companions in the Islamic armies who fought as commanders of entire formations as well as ordinary soldiers in the battlefield. Pious worshippers in the silence of the night and teachers all the time, they were constantly spreading the knowledge of *Sunna*. Another factor which helped in disseminating the *ḥadīth* was the concern of 'Umar who used to send teachers of Qur'an and *Sunna* to outlying provinces in good numbers. We know that ten were sent to Baṣrah alone.¹⁹

To err is human, so, with the spread of *ḥadīth* in different regions of the Islamic world, the possibility of mistakes arose. Consequently, the necessity for criticism became apparent.

Meanwhile, in the very early stages of the diffusion of *ḥadīth* in the Islamic world, the community faced some very grave events, and there was a great upheaval a quarter century after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. I refer to the *fitnah* of the assassination of 'Uthmān and the war between 'Alī and Mu'āwīya which produced a breach among Muslims. Here, it seems as if the first fabrication of *ḥadīth* began in the political sphere, crediting or discrediting the party concerned. One is quite sure that neither 'Alī nor Mu'āwīya took part in it, nor any other Companion, but there were some who tried to fish in troubled waters and, as the English proverb has it, were more Catholic than the Pope.

17 - MU. *Musāfirīn*, 120.

18 - BU, *Zakāt*, 44.

19 - Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā*. II, 345, 363.

At this stage, the general trend in *ḥadīth* learning became stricter. We have already referred to Ibn Sīrīn's statement regarding *isnād*. Regional schools of criticism began to appear. For convenience's sake we will deal with two prominent schools of that time, the school of Madīnah, and the school of Iraq.

We have just seen that the criticism of *ḥadīth* began in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. After his death, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Alī, Ibn 'Umar, 'Ā'isha and other companions took part in it. According to Ibn Ḥibbān, after 'Umar and 'Alī came the turn of the Successors Ibn al-Muṣayyib (d.93); al-Qāsim b. Muhammad b. Abū Bakr, (d.106); Sālim b. 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (d.106); 'Alī b. Ḥusain b. 'Alī, (d. 93); Abū Salamah b. 'Abdur Raḥmān (d.94); 'Abdullah b. 'Abdullah b. 'Utbah; Khārijah b. Zaid b. Thābit, (d.100) 'Urwah b. al-Zubair, (d.94); Abū Bakr b. 'Abdur Raḥmān b. al-Ḥarith (d.94) and Sulaimān b. Yasār (d.100)

It is interesting to note that all of these scholars belong to the first century of Hijra, though a few of them lived in the first decade of the second century. Later on, in the Madīnah region, there were three scholars Zuhri, Yahya b. Sa'id, and Hishām b. 'Urwah who learned this science from the above-mentioned scholars. The most famous of these three was Zuhri (d.124).

In Iraq too the *ḥadīth* critics were active in the first century, prominent among them being Sa'id b. Jubair, al-Sha'bī, Ṭāwūs, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.110) and Ibn Sīrīn (d.110)

All these Iraqi scholars belong to the first century of the Hijra, though some of them lived in the first decade of the second century. After them came the names of Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī and Ibn 'Awn. They belong to the first third of the second century.

After this period, the criticism of *ḥadīth* entered a new phase. Though journeying for the acquisition of *ḥadīth* or the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ began in the life of the Prophet ﷺ, and later on many Companions and Successors traveled a lot, but their journeys cannot be compared to the journeys of scholars during the second and third centuries. The prevailing spirit is described in a saying of Yahya b. Mu'in (d. 233):

"There are four kinds of people who never became mature in their life; among them is he who writes down *ḥadīth* in his own town and never makes a journey for this purpose."

Thus from the second century to a few centuries later a

general requirement of a student of *ḥadīth* was to make extensive journeys for learning *ḥadīth*. As the early scholars mostly learned under the scholars of their own locality, their criticism was confined to the same locality. But when people began to learn *ḥadīth* from hundreds and thousands of *Shaikhs* throughout the Islamic world, their criticisms were not confined to scholars of one centre but they began to scrutinize scholars and their *aḥādīth* in general. Due to the extent of these activities, some new centres emerged for this purpose. Let us go back once again to the most famous critics of the second century. Among them were:

- Sufyān al-Thaurī of Kūfah, (97-161)
- Mālik b. Anas, of al-Madīnah (93-179)
- Shu‘bah of Wāsiṭ, (83-100)
- Al-Auzā‘ī of Beirut, (88-158)
- Ḥammād b. Salamah, of Baṣrah (d.167)
- Al-Laith b. Sa‘d, of Egypt (d.175)
- Ḥammād b. Zaid, of Baṣrah (d. 179)
- Ibn ‘Uyayanah of Makkah (107-198)
- ‘Abdullah b. al-Mubārak of Marw (118-181)
- Yaḥya b. Sa‘īd al-Qaṭṭān, of Baṣrah (d.198)
- Wakī‘ b. al-Jarrāh of Kūfah (d.196)
- ‘Abdur Raḥmān b. Maḥdī of Baṣrah (d.198) and
- Al-Shāfi‘ī of Egypt (d.204)

But the most famous one out of them were Shu‘bah, Yaḥya b. Sa‘īd and Ibn Maḥdī.²⁰ Shu‘bah was the teacher of Yaḥya al-Qaṭṭān in this field.

The above mentioned scholars in turn produced numerous famous scholars in the field of criticism, but the most gifted ones were:

- Yaḥyā b. Mu‘īn of Baghdād (d.233)
- ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī of Baṣrah (1.234)
- Ibn Ḥanbal of Baghdad (d.241)
- Abū Bakr b. Abū Shaibah of Wāsiṭ (d.235)
- Ishāq b. Rāhwiah of Marw (d.238)
- ‘Ubaidullah b. ‘Umar al-Qawārīrī of Baṣrah (d.235)
- Zuhair b. Ḥarb of Baghdad (d.234)

Out of these the earlier three were the most distinguished

20 - Ibn Ḥibbān, *ibid.*, 16 b.

scholars in this field.²¹

Their most famous students were:

- Al-Dhuhālī
- Al-Dārmī
- Al-Bukhārī
- Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī
- Abū Ḥatim al-Rāzī
- Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Nisāpuri
- Aḥmad b. Shu‘aib

We stop here because this was the most fertile period of *ḥadīth* studies.²²

Methodology of Ḥadīth Criticism

As far as it concerns the criticism of the text or in other words ‘documents’, there were several methods, but almost all of these methods may be brought under the broad heading of ‘comparison’ or cross question and cross reference. By gathering all the related materials or, say, all the *aḥādīth* concerned, comparing them carefully with each other, one judges the accuracy of the scholars. Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī, a Successor, (68-131) says: “If you wish to know the mistakes of your teacher, then you ought to sit down with others as well.”²³

Another scholar Ibn al-Mubārak (118-181) says: “To reach an authentic statement one needs to compare the words of scholars with each other.”²⁴ Most of the classification of *ḥadīth* was done through this method. The scholars applied it from the very early days of Islam.

The method of comparison was practiced in many ways. The following are some of them:

1. Comparison between the *aḥādīth* of different students of one scholar.
2. Comparison between the statements of a single scholar at different times.
3. Comparison between oral recitation and written

21 - Ibn Ḥibbān, *ibid.*, 17 b.

22 - For detail and references of history of criticism, see, Al-A‘zami, *Intro. to Tamayūz*, 12-18.

23 - Dārimī, *Sunan*, 1, 152.

24 - Khaṭīb, *Jāmic*, 5a.

documents.

4. Comparison between the *ḥadīth* and the related text of the Qur'an.

To illustrate the methods I shall give a few examples which should be sufficient.

Criticizing *Ḥadīth* by Comparison between the *Ḥadīth* of Different Students of One Scholar

For an understanding of the full implication of the method, I begin with the third century scholar Ibn Ma'īn (d.233). He went to 'Affān, a pupil of a great scholar Ḥammād b. Salamah, to read the books of Ḥammād to him. 'Affān asked him whether or not he had read those books to any students of Ḥammād. Upon which Ibn Ma'īn replied, "I have read these books to seventeen students of Ḥammād before coming to you". 'Affān said "By Allah I am not going to read these books to you." Ibn Ma'īn answered that by spending a few dirham he would go to Baṣrah and read there to the students of Ḥammād. He went to Baṣrah to Mūsā b. Ismā'īl, another pupil of Ḥammād. Mūsā asked him: "Have you not read these books to anybody else?" He said "I have read them completely to seventeen students of Ḥammād and you are the eighteenth one." Mūsā asked him "what he was going to do with all those readings. Ibn Mu'īn replied: "Ḥammād b. Salamah committed mistakes and his students added some more mistakes to his. So I want to distinguish between the mistakes of Ḥammād and those of his students. If I find all the students of Ḥammād committing a certain mistake unanimously, then the source of the mistake is Ḥammād. If I find the majority of Ḥammād's students say something, and some of them go against them then this mistake was committed by that particular student of Ḥammād. In this way I make a distinction between the mistakes of Ḥammād and those of his students." 25

Before advancing further, one may comment on this method in a few words. By this method, Ibn Mu'īn not only discovered the mistakes of Ḥammād and those of almost every student of Ḥammād's, but Ibn Mu'īn was also able to grade the different students of Ḥammād and determine their accuracy. This was the most fundamental basis of judgment when *ḥadīth* narrators were graded and put into different categories. This method of Ibn Mu'īn was not invented by him and he was not the first to apply

25 - Ibn Ḥibbān, *Majruḥīn*, 11 a.

it. We find it in usage from the time of the first Caliph Abū Bakr. There is, of course, a difference in the quantity of the documents concerned, but not the quality, and even this difference was due to dispersal of documents.

Here are a few examples from the very early period.

Abū Bakr and the Comparison of Statements

When a grandmother came to Abū Bakr asking about her share in the inheritance of her grandson, he replied: "I have not found a share for you in the book of Allah. I knew not that the Prophet ﷺ has fixed any share for such a case." He asked the Companions about it. Mughīra said that the Prophet gave a grand-mother one-sixth. Upon which Abū Bakr asked him, "Is there anyone with you?" meaning "Can anyone testify to your statement?" Upon which Muḥammad b. Maslamah al-Anṣārī stood up and stated as Mughīra b. Shu'bah had said earlier. Upon this statement, Abū Bakr gave the grand-mother one-sixth. Commenting on this al-Ḥākim, a great scholar of the fourth century, says that Abū Bakr was the first who took care in accepting the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ. When he heard a *sunna*, he did not base it on the first statement but he had it testified by another. 26

'Umar and Comparison

We find that 'Umar, the second Caliph, applied comparison in several cases.

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī went to see 'Umar. He went to the door of 'Umar's home and gave his salutation three times, and getting no response, he returned. 'Umar called him and asked him what prevented him from entering. He said, "I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying: 'When one of you asks permission three times and it is not granted, he should go away.'" 'Umar asked him to prove this statement of the Prophet ﷺ otherwise action would be taken against him. Then Abū Mūsā brought a witness. 'Umar told Abū Mūsā Al-Ash'arī that he did not suspect the authenticity of his

26 - See Al-Ḥākim, *Madkhal*, 46. One may think that there is apparently no concordance here between these two statements. But that is not so. When Abū Bakr heard the testimony of Muḥammad b. Maslamah he must have made a comparison between their testimonies to find the agreement and disagreement among them.

statement but he was only concerned that people should be more careful in transmitting the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ.²⁷

Abū Hurairah and Comparison

Abū Hurairah transmitted a *hadīth* from the Prophet ﷺ saying: "He who attends the funeral till the prayer is offered for (the dead), his is the reward of one *Qirāt*, and he who attends till the dead is buried, for him is the reward of two *Qirāts*." 'Abdullah b. 'Umar asked him to be careful as to what he transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ, as he was transmitting too much. Then Abū Hurairah took the hand of Ibn 'Umar and brought him to 'Ā'isha, who testified to the narration of Abū Hurairah.²⁸ Later on Ibn 'Umar used to say, "We lost many *qarārūt*." After the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, the Successors used the same method. A few names may be mentioned in this connection such as Ibn Abū Mulaikah²⁹, al-Zuhri³⁰ and Shu'bah etc.

I shall give one example from Muslim, the student of Imām al-Bukhārī.³¹ Ibn 'Abbās once spent a night in the room of his aunt Maimūna. After some time—according to his statement—the Prophet ﷺ stood up, made the ablution, and began to pray. Ibn 'Abbās did the same, and after making the ablution came and stood to the left of the Prophet ﷺ, upon which the Prophet ﷺ turned him from the left, and made him stand on his right. This incident was narrated by scholar Yazīd b. Abū Zinād on the authority of Kuraib, from Ibn 'Abbās, stating that Ibn 'Abbās stood on the right of the Prophet ﷺ and later on he was made to stand on the left. To explain the mistake of this later statement, Imam Muslim applied the following method.

He gathered all the statements of the colleagues of Yazīd, the students of Kuraib, who unanimously agreed that Ibn 'Abbas first stood to the left of the Prophet ﷺ. As a next step, he gathered all the statements of the colleagues of Kuraib and the students of Ibn 'Abbas, who unanimously agreed that Ibn 'Abbas first stood to the left of the Prophet ﷺ and then was moved to the right. Later on he collected the other incidents where certain Companions had prayed with the Prophet ﷺ when alone. In all

27 - Mālik, *Mū'ītā, Istīdhān*, 3; also, BU. *Buyū'*, 9; MU. *Adab*, 36.

28 - Ḥanbal ii. 387.

29 - Ibn Ḥanbal, *ʿIlal*, 1, 396.

30 - BU. *Shahādat*, 2.

31 - MU. *Intr.* 23-4, Rāzī, *Intr.*, 158.

these cases it was confirmed that the correct method is that the other man stood to the right of the Prophet ﷺ. Consequently, he proved that what was related by Yazid b. Abū Zinād was a mistake.³²

Example of the Comparisons of the Statement of a Scholar After a Gap of Time

Once 'Ā'isha told her nephew 'Urwah to go to 'Abdullah b. 'Amr and ask him about the *hadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, as he had learned a lot from the Prophet ﷺ. 'Urwah met 'Abdullah and asked him about the *hadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ. One of the *hadīth* he learned was about how knowledge will be taken away from the earth. 'Urwah returned to 'Ā'isha and narrated what he had learnt. She became discontented about this particular *hadīth*. After a year or so, she said to 'Urwah: " 'Abdullah b. 'Amr has come back, go and ask him *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ and then ask him the particular *hadīth* concerning knowledge and its removal from earth". 'Urwah went then and asked about the *aḥādīth*. He came back to 'Ā'isha, and told her that 'Abdullah repeated the same *hadīth* once again. Upon which she said, "I think he must be correct, as he has not added anything to it and neither has he shortened it."³³

Comparison between Written Documents And *Aḥādīth* Transmitted from Memory

Muḥammad b. Muslim and al-Faḍl b. 'Abbād were learning *hadīth* in the presence of Abū Zur'ah. Muḥammad transmitted a *hadīth* which was not accepted by al-Faḍl, and he transmitted it in another way. They argued together, then asked Abū Zur'ah to say who was right. Abū Zur'ah referred to a book and found out the said *hadīth* where it became clear that Muḥammad b. Muslim was mistaken.³⁴

A *hadīth* was transmitted by Sufyān through Ibn Mas'ūd, regarding the raising of hands while going for *Rukū'*. Yaḥya b. Ādam said that he checked the book of 'Abdullah b. Idrīs where he did not find the particular disputed sentence. Commenting on it, Bukhārī says, "This is correct, because the book is more

32 - Muslim, *Tamyīz*, 136-8.

33 - Mu. *ʿIlm*, 14.

34 - Rāzī, *Intr.* 337.

accurate (*ahfaz*) in the eyes of scholars, e.g., a man sometimes narrates a *ḥadīth* and then he goes through the books. In case of difference the version in the book will be accepted as accurate.”³⁵

‘Abdur Raḥmān b. ‘Umar transmitted a *ḥadīth* through Abū Hurairah concerning *Zuhr* prayer, which may be delayed in summer from its early time. Abū Zur‘ah said that it is incorrect. This *ḥadīth* was transmitted on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd. ‘Abdur Raḥmān b. ‘Umar took it very seriously and did not forget it. When he returned to his town, he checked in his book and found himself mistaken. Then he wrote to Abū Zur‘ah, acknowledging his mistake, asking him to take trouble and to inform such and such a person and other people who had asked about it from his students, and to tell them about his mistake, and, he said Allah would give him the reward, for shame is much better than Hell.³⁶

Comparing the *Ḥadīth* with Related Verses of the Qur’an

We find that this method was used by ‘Umar in rejecting the *ḥadīth* of Fāṭimah bint Qais concerning maintenance money for divorced women.³⁷ This method was also applied by ‘Ā’isha in several cases.³⁸

Rational Approach in *Ḥadīth* Criticism

I have described criticism of *ḥadīth* through *isnād* or the chains of narrators. But was pure reasoning or rational approach used in such criticism?

Reason was applied in criticizing *ḥadīth* at every stage but strictly speaking, there are limits here to the use of rationalization. The rational faculty helps very little in accepting or discarding the *ahādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ. In most of the cases which are dealt with in *ḥadīth* literature, pure reasoning has no place. For example, we find in *ḥadīth* books that the Prophet ﷺ used to sleep on his right side, and before retiring to bed he used to recite certain prayers, (*du‘ā*). After getting up, he used to recite certain prayers. He used to drink water in three breaths

35 - Bukhārī, *Raf‘al Yadain*, 9.

36 - Rāzī, *Introd.* 336, see for another example of referring to the book, *Mizān*, II, 201.

37 - Mu. *Ṭalāq*. 46 referring to the Qur’an, *Ṭalāq*, 1.

38 - See Azami, *Introduction to Tamyīz*, p. 48.

using the right hand for drinking pots, etc. Now let us check all these statements rationally: A man can sleep on his back, on his right side or on his left side, every position is possible. We cannot say, using our rational faculty that a certain position is possible and the other is impossible. The same may be said about prayers and drinking water etc.

In all these cases ‘*Aql* can neither prove nor disprove. What is correct or incorrect can be decided only through reliable eye witnesses and narrators. Thus reasoning itself leads us to accept the statement of honest and reliable narrators, except in cases where we find that the episode goes against ‘*Aql* (reasoning). From the very beginning, ‘*Aql* was given its proper place in *ḥadīth* literature. According to al-Mu‘allimī al-Yamānī, it was applied at every stage of *ḥadīth*, in the learning of *ḥadīth*, in the teaching of *ḥadīth*, in judging the narrators, and in judging the authenticity of the *ḥadīth*.³⁹

Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī says: “The goodness of a *Dīnār* is known when it is measured against another. Thus if it differs in redness and purity, it will be known that it is a fake. The kind of diamond is examined through measuring with another one. If it differs in sparkle and firmness, it will be known to be glass. The authenticity of a *ḥadīth* is known by its coming from reliable narrators and the statement itself must be worthy of being the statement of Prophethood”⁴⁰.

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī says: “All the statements come under three categories. Of them is one which is known to be erroneous. The cause of this knowledge is that ‘*Aql* refused to accept it”⁴¹.

I have tried to give a broad outline of the methodology of *ḥadīth* criticism, avoiding technical language as far as it was possible. One may say that it is only a glimpse and no more. But I do hope that it will help a non-specialist who wants to know something about the method of criticism. The results produced by this methodology of criticism will be discussed in the next chapter.

39 - Mu‘allimī Yamānī, *Al-Anwār-al-Kāshifa*, 6-7.

40 - Rāzī, *Introduction*, 351.

41 - Khaṭīb, *Kifāyah*, p. 17.

Grading of Scholars And its Impact On Grading of *Aḥādīth*

THE method of criticism which I have discussed helped the scholars in finding out the degree of accuracy of a particular transmitter of *ḥadīth*, resulting in his grading in the light of his literary achievement. However, the *Muḥaddithīn* did not consider this sufficient for accepting the transmitted material no matter how accurate the scholars might be.

There were some further requirements which must be met by the transmitter so that his narration may be acceptable.

To accept a *ḥadīth* according to the criteria of *ḥadīth* critics, it is not sufficient that the statement be authentic in itself. Besides this, the narrator must be *ʿAdl*, i.e. of righteous conduct. In other words his character must be Islamically acceptable.

One of the second century scholars, Ibn al-Mubārak (118-181 A.H.) put the problem of personal character in this way. The narrator must be a person who:

- Prays in congregation;
- Does not drink *Nabīdh* (which could cause intoxication if kept for long period of time);
- Does not tell a lie and does not suffer from any mental disqualification¹.

A man may be a great scholar, but if his morals are doubtful, a *ḥadīth* narrated by him is not acceptable.² In the opinion of the *ḥadīth* scholars, all the scholars with the exception of the Companions, whose character is testified to by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ, need this testimony of character if their word is to be accepted. It is obvious, too, that in most of the cases one has to depend on contemporary authorities to find out the personal character of those people. These contemporaries were sometimes influenced by enmity or favor. To deal with such problems, there have been detailed discussions among scholars, and certain rules

1 - Khatīb, *Al-Kifāyah*, 79.

2 - See, Azami, *Studies*, 305

have been laid down.³ In some cases it was and still is possible to discover the falsification and lies, going through historical data, checking the documents, kinds of papers and ink used in the writing. This process was applied by the *Muḥaddithīn*, but it could not be a general method because one cannot always discover the moral integrity of the scholar by this way.

However, when these two faculties; moral character or *ʿAdl*, and the highest literary accuracy, both combined in a person, he was called *thiqa* (trustworthy), whose narrations are generally accepted by *Muḥaddithīn*.

If a scholar's personal character was acceptable but his literary accuracy was not of the highest grade, and he was the scholar of the second grade, he was called *ṣadūq* (truthful). His narration would be accepted as a genuine one except in a case where he differed from an authority of higher accuracy than him. Next to him comes a scholar whose character was agreeable but his literary achievement was very limited and he committed many mistakes. He was called *ṣadūq yahim*. If a scholar was charged with indecency in his character, material transmitted by him was not accepted no matter how big a scholar he might have been.

Thus to be a man whose transmitted materials are accepted, the narrator must fulfill both requirements: moral and literary. Moral weakness cannot be compensated, though in certain cases literary shortcoming may be overcome.

For example, a man who committed many mistakes in transmitting the *ḥadīth* was called 'weak'. If he narrated a *ḥadīth* alone and no other scholar could verify his narration, then the *ḥadīth* cannot be accepted, for it is suspected of having a mistake in its transmission. But if another scholar though himself a weak narrator in his literary achievement, transmitted a *ḥadīth* which agrees in the meaning and the sense of the early *ḥadīth*, then it would be accepted, though it would be placed in a very low grade, just like a student passing with grade 'D' ('passed').

A system of grading was worked out to place the accepted or rejected statements of scholars. The later scholars have been more refined in grading. Where early scholars have four grades, the later ones have suggested six. Given below are the gradings

3 - See Al-Yamānī, *Al-Tankī*, 52-59.

of Ibn Hajar (773-852) one of the greatest *hadīth* scholars of the later period. He placed the scholars in twelve grades.

Ṣahābah. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

Thiqātun thabt'un. Those scholars who have been awarded the highest marks, such as *thiqatun thabtun*, or *awthaqun-nās*, meaning the most truthful and accurate scholars.

Those who have been awarded good grades without being given superlative degree, such as *thiqatun* (trustworthy) *mutqinun* (accurate) etc.

Those whose position is less than grade three, and have been awarded a good grade, such as *ṣadūq* (truthful).

Those whose grading is lower than No. 4 and given a grade like *ṣadūq yahim*. (truthful, but committing mistakes sometimes).

The one who transmitted a little knowledge, and there is no proof of his being unreliable, nor do we have any positive proof of his high accuracy, is called *maqbul* (acceptable). If his narration is verified by some other scholars' statements he would be named *layyin* (mild).

One who has more than one student who transmitted *aḥādīth* from him, but scholars did not (*tauthīq*) declare him authentic is called *majhūl al-ḥāl* (meaning one whose integrity is not verified), in other words one whose reliability is externally evident, but about whose reliability nothing is known.

One who has not credit from any scholar on his behalf and some of the scholars have spoken against him, is called *da'if* (weak).

One who is not known in literary circles at all except through narration of a single scholar, and has not credit of scholars for him is called *majhūl* (unknown).

One who has no certificate of credit at all from the scholars and they have spoken against him giving reasons for their statements, one who committed many mistakes or he was a *fāsiq*, did not meet the legal requirement of righteousness, or was stupid.

One who was charged with or blamed for forgery, is called *muttāham bil kadhib*.

One who was named *Kadhdhāb* (liar) *waddā'* (forger).

These grading were mostly followed by later scholars. For every grade there are many terms that have been used by different scholars. Details can be found in Arabic works. Moreover, there is some difference of meaning in the terms used by some of the early scholars. Therefore, a student must be sure in using the

grading terms of the early scholars and the standards for which it was used by the particular scholar. For example some universities have the following grading for the teaching staff: Teacher, Assistant Professor, Professor. Other universities have the following grading for the same academic purpose and qualifications: Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor.

While these universities agree on the application of the term Professor, they may differ in the application of the term Assistant Professor. The same is true about certain terms used by the early critics in that the meaning and standard of certain terms used by them differ in their implications. Therefore, when one student has insufficient knowledge of these differences, there is every chance that he may make serious mistakes. However, these are the grading mostly used by the later scholars.

I have explained how the critics were able to grade the literary accuracy and personal character of early scholars, and that they were placed by Ibn Hajar in twelve grades. Their system of grading resulted in the grading of *aḥādīth*.

Grading of *Aḥādīth*

Ḥadīth can be graded into two groups:

Accepted (*maqbul*) and rejected (*mardūd*)

(1) The accepted ones may be divided into two groups:

Ṣaḥīḥ. (authentic)

Ḥasan. (agreeable)

Both groups are sub-divided into two sub-groups:

Authentic by itself. (*Ṣaḥīḥ li dhātihi*)

Authentic owing to presence of others. (*Ṣaḥīḥ li ghairihi*)

Ḥasan li dhātihi. (agreeable by itself)

Ḥasan li ghairihi. (agreeable owing to the existence of others)

As a matter of fact this last one is a weak *hadīth* which acquires strength from other *aḥādīth* which verify it because the same subject or the same sort of problem dealt with in other *aḥādīth*, which thus support the weaker one.

(2) The rejected ones may be divided into two groups:

Rejected as such, but may be accepted if it acquired strength from outside. However, rejected ones have many names.

Rejected totally.

We shall discuss it later on.

Requirements for *Hadīth Ṣaḥīḥ* (Authentic *Hadīth*)

All of its narrators must belong to grades one to three mentioned below:

(1) Continuity of the chain must be preserved, which means the completeness of the chain of transmitters all the way back to the final authority.

(2) Should not be an isolated one, (*Shādh*), which means that particular *hadīth* must not be in contradiction with the narrations of the other authorities who were more in number while belonging to the same group or must not be in disagreement with an authority that has higher reputation than the one under discussion.

(3) Should not have any hidden defect. For example, a trustworthy scholar transmitted a *hadīth* as being the statement of the Prophet ﷺ, while majority of the scholars narrated the same *hadīth* as the statement of the Companion. Here it becomes clear that this particular scholar committed a mistake in ascribing the statement to the Prophet ﷺ. But if we do not go into detailed study of the subject and only look at the single chain of the *hadīth* it would appear to be the correct one due to the grading of narrators and fulfillment of other conditions. I have mentioned hidden defect, that is called '*illa qādiḥah*', which implies that the defects are not entirely taken into account. It may be put in the following way:

Usually all the public services require a health certificate of the candidate. Sometimes a candidate looks very handsome and fit for the duty, while the medical examination declares him unfit for the job. In other cases, some of the candidates have a clear defect in their shape or body, but after medical check up they are declared fit for the post, because their apparent defect does not affect the ability of carrying out the duty. The same is true of '*ilal al-ḥadīth*', illness of *hadīth*. In some cases it affects the authenticity of *hadīth*, and is called, '*illah al- qādiḥah*', while in other cases it does not.

***Hadīth Ḥasan Lidhātihi* (Ḥasan by Itself)**

All the above mentioned conditions for *hadīth ṣaḥīḥ* are required for *hadīth ḥasan lidhātihi*, except that any one or all the narrators would be of grade 4, *ṣadūq*, or other terms equal to it.

Hadīth Ḥasan Lighairihi

If the narrator of *hadīth* belongs to grade 5 or 6 and has some other *aḥādīth* supporting it either in form or in sense only, it would count as *Ḥasan li ghairihi*. However, it ought to be remembered that if a chain of *isnād* consists of ten authorities, and nine out of them belong to second grade and only one of them belongs to grade 8, then the *hadīth* would be rejected. The overall acceptability is based on the weakest authority. Thus a single weak narrator would result in weakening the *hadīth*. If one of the narrators was labeled a liar, and the rest of them were *thiqah* (authentic) and the *hadīth* is not known through other channels, then it would be graded as *maudū'* (spurious). Even if it has been proved authentic by other *isnād*, the *hadīth* would be said to be *maudū' bi ḥādhā al-isnād*, 'spurious by this chain'.

It is clear now that in grading the *hadīth*, scholars checked the biography of every narrator who took part in transmission of the *hadīth*. Later on they verified the narrated *hadīth* with other scholar's narrations of the same *hadīth* to find confirmation or contradiction, and then they passed their judgment after all possible precautions.

This thorough search for verification gave the scholars ample information about every scholar: how many *aḥādīth* he transmitted, and in how many cases he had other authorities who verified *aḥādīth* transmitted by him, and how many *aḥādīth* were transmitted by him alone and no one shared with him. If a narrator who was graded as *thiqah*, (trustworthy), transmitted some *aḥādīth*, which were very limited in number compared to the quantity of his transmission, it would be accepted as *ṣaḥīḥ gharīb*, (authentic but strange). But if the narrator was of grade 4 or lower, then it would be graded as *munkar*. However, if the narrator related *aḥādīth* frequently which are not in agreement with others either in *isnād* or in the text, then the scholar would be graded as *matrūk*, which means his narrations will not be accepted and *aḥādīth* transmitted by him cannot be taken to verify other scholars' *aḥādīth*.⁴

It may come to some minds that in later periods a liar might have fabricated many *aḥādīth* and fabricated first class *isnād* for this sake, and thus was able to circulate those *aḥādīth* as genuine in the circle of *muḥaddithīn* who check *isnād* only. But it should

4 - See *Mizān*. iii. 140-1.

be quite clear now that besides checking the data concerning that particular narrator, they would check the same *aḥādīth* to see whether or not they are narrated by other scholars who were the students of the authority mentioned. Thus they would find that the *aḥādīth* are not known except by this narrator, and would label him a liar.

As a matter of fact, the approach of *muḥaddithīn* was very realistic. In our personal experience, if after years of dealing we find someone always correct, then in certain cases we believe his statement even if he has no evidence, unless we have any positive ground on which to falsify his statement. So, after long trial, if we find a narrator accurate in relating hundreds of *aḥādīth*, and he was graded as trustworthy and one who always spoke the truth then in a case where he has no evidence to support him, we would accept his statement till the contrary is proved.

Rejected *Aḥādīth*

I have discussed the requirements and conditions laid down for accepting any *ḥadīth*. A *ḥadīth* which did not satisfy anyone of these was rejected. However, the causes of rejection may be divided in to three groups:

(1) Rejection owing to defect in narrator. (2) Weakness owing to discontinuity of *isnād*. (3) Weaknesses owing to some incidental reasons.

(1) Rejection owing to a defect in the narrator

According to Ibn Ḥajar's grading—as I have mentioned earlier—any narrator belonging to grade six or lower than it would cause weakness in *ḥadīth*. However, this weakness would differ. For example if a *ḥadīth* was transmitted by a narrator of 12th grade only it would be called spurious (*mauḍūʿ*). If he was of 11th grade it would be called *bāṭil*. If the narrator belonged to grade 10 his *ḥadīth* would be *munkar*. The narrators belonging to these three groups and their narrations cannot be taken as witness to fortify other *aḥādīth*. However, if a narrator belongs to either of the grades from six to eight his *ḥadīth* would be weak, but if he has support of another narrator who belongs to the same grade or to a higher one and narrated *aḥādīth* of the same sense and substance, then this weak *ḥadīth* would be counted as *Ḥasan li Ghairihi*.

(2) Weakness owing to discontinuity of *isnād*

In this category one may mention, *mursal*, *munqaṭiʿ*, *muʿdal*. Sometimes *mauqūf* and *maqtūʿ* are also mentioned. But as these *aḥādīth* have others than the Prophet ﷺ as final authority, they are not legally binding.

Muʿanʿan also comes in this category if the narrator who used this term was famous for *tadlīs*.⁵ In his case it would be counted as a broken chain. But if the narrator was not known for practicing *tadlīs*, and he had learned from the authority from whom he narrated though we do not know that he learned that particular *ḥadīth* from him, or in case we have no positive proof of his learning, but there was a possibility of his learning as both lived in one city in one period, then it would be counted as an unbroken *isnād*.

Tadlīs means concealment of defect in goods by merchants who want to sell them. The term is taken from *dalas* which means mixing of light with darkness. This meant a transmitter narrated a *ḥadīth* from an authority whom he met but from whom he did not learn that particular *ḥadīth* but had learned it from someone else going through that authority. Thus he did not mention the immediate authority and transmitted it from higher authority using a term which can be used for both direct and indirect learning, or used a scholar's name which was not commonly known instead of using the name for which he was famous.

Ibn ʿUyaynah (107-198) is one of the most famous and reliable students of Al-Zuhrī (51-124). Once he transmitted a *ḥadīth* saying: *qāla al-Zuhrī* (Zuhrī reported). The students stopped him asking whether he heard that particular *ḥadīth* from al-Zuhrī. He repeated the same sentence, and was interrupted by the students. He replied: I heard this *ḥadīth* from ʿAbdur Razzāq (127-207) who transmitted it on the authority of Maʿmar (96-153) who transmitted it from al-Zuhrī. As Ibn ʿUyaynah was the famous student of al-Zuhrī, he used the word *qāla* (said) which can be used in direct hearing from the authority or through someone else. This is similar to the modern situation when we say that the king or the president said so and so, though we have not opportunity to hear him directly, except through press or TV

5 - For the meaning of *tadlīs* see the following paragraph.

etc. But this expression may be used in direct hearing as well. Therefore, the one who practiced that sort of dubious term was called *mudallis*. Many books have been written on people who committed this sort of discrepancy. Detailed study led to the grading of scholars. They have been put by Al-'Alā'ī in five categories:

- a. Those who committed *tadlīs* very rarely and ought not to be placed in this category, such as Yahya b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī etc.
- b. Those who practiced some *tadlīs*, but their narrations were accepted by early scholars for certain reasons such as their fame as great scholars. They were supposed to be aware of the responsibility they were taking on their shoulders by dropping the authority. Or their *tadlīs* was very little in proportion to their total materials. Or they left out the names of trustworthy scholars only.
- c. Those who practiced *tadlīs* were categorized by scholars in various ways. Some were counted as people belonging to second group, while other scholars counted them of lower grade and did not accept a *ḥadīth* from them till they explicitly described their direct learning.
- d. Those who practiced *tadlīs* and left out even weak and unknown authorities. The chain of their narrations was accepted as unbroken if they explicitly described their direct learning.
- e. Those who were weak narrators themselves and practiced *tadlīs*. The rule is that transmission by those who belong to grades c and d would not be accepted if they did not explicitly say that they learned those *aḥādīth* directly. Transmission by those in grade e was rejected. Narration by those in grades a and b would be counted an unbroken series even if their terminology does not denote direct learning, except in cases where we have positive information contrary to this. But if a narrator explicitly made a false statement that he learned certain *aḥādīth* from 'certain' authority, then upon being exposed, he would be counted as a liar, and thus all the *ḥadīth* transmitted by him would be rejected.

(3) Weakness owing to some incidental reasons

In this category are *maqlūb*, *muḍṭarab* and *mu'allal aḥādīth*.

(a) *Maqlūb* means upside down. It has been divided in two groups.

i) Reversion in the naming of the authority as it was attributed to someone other than its real transmitter. Thus if it was famous that a *ḥadīth* was narrated by Ibn Dīnār from Ibn 'Umar and then someone deleted Ibn Dīnār's name and put another name of the same generation, imagining that nobody would transmit this *ḥadīth* by this chain, he would be able to boast that he knew another *isnād* for this *ḥadīth* which is not known to other scholars. As a result people would learn this particular *ḥadīth* from him. Those who did this intentionally were called *Sāriq al-ḥadīth* (one who steals *ḥadīth*).

ii) Reversion in the name or in the text by reversing the arrangement, for example: Ka'b b. Murra or Murra b. Ka'b.

(b) *Muḍṭarab* is a *ḥadīth* in which the transmitting authority differed and it was not possible to prefer one narration to another, as both narrators were of equal standard. This defect occurs sometimes in *isnād*, sometimes in *matn*, and sometimes in both. But if it was possible to prefer one narration to another one it would be called *al-Rājih*. For example two trustworthy students of Zuhrī differed in a narration of a *ḥadīth*, but one of them studied under him for a very long period while the other did so for a short period. Here the first one's will be accepted as the correct narration of Zuhrī.

Example of *muḍṭarab*: It is a sin to pass in front of a man who is praying. So while praying it is better to put something in front of oneself as *sutra*, so that people could pass. But in one *ḥadīth* it occurs that if one does not find anything to put in front, then he should at least draw a line.⁶

The following are some of its *isnād*.

Bishr—Ismā'īl—Abū 'Amr b. Muḥ. b. Ḥuraith—His grandfather—Abū Hurairah—Prophet ﷺ.

Thaurī—Ismā'īl—Abū 'Amr b. Ḥurairah—His father—Abū Hurairah—Prophet ﷺ.

Humaid—Ismā'īl—Abū 'Amr. b. Muḥ. b. 'Amr—grandfather—Ḥuraith b. Salim—Abū Hurairah.

Wuhaib—Ismā'īl—Abū 'Amr b. Ḥuraith—grandfather.

6 - See, Suyūṭī, *Tadrib*, I, pp. 262-63.

Ibn Juraij—Ismā‘īl—Ḥuraith b. ‘Ammār—grandfather
Ḥuraith b. Sulaimān Ibn ‘Uyayanah—Ismā‘īl Abū Muḥ.
b. ‘Amr. b. Ḥuraith—Grandfather.

(c) *Al-Ḥadīth al-Mu‘allal*:: Sick *ḥadīth*, that is usually a *ḥadīth* which apparently seems accurate but has some hidden defect. This defect occurs mostly in *isnād*, as a *ḥadīth* was *mursal* but someone related it as *muttaṣil* or it was a saying of the Companion but in some *ḥadīth* it was attributed to the Prophet ﷺ.

Sometimes it occurs in the text itself, for example text of two *aḥādīth* got mixed up, or a scholar made a mistake in copying or missed a line in copying. Al-Ḥākim has divided this defect into ten kinds. There are many books on the subject, perhaps the largest one is *Al-‘Ilal* by Dāraqūṭnī, which is still in manuscript form.

We have discussed up till now different kinds of weak *aḥādīth* that is those which have certain types of shortcomings. The worst of these *aḥādīth* are the spurious ones which were, in fact, falsely attributed to the Prophet ﷺ. We will, therefore, now deal with this kind of false *ḥadīth* in some detail in a separate chapter.

Fabrication of *Ḥadīth*: Causes and Means of Elimination

IT is a well known fact that some people are always trying to forge valuable things such as diamonds, jewels, or works of art, etc. For Muslims, except the Qur’an, there was and is nothing more precious than the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, from different motives and for different purposes, different kinds of people fabricated a variety of *aḥādīth*. Some of them were heretics, others were those who had lost their countries to Islam and still others illiterate, though sometimes well-intentioned, Muslims themselves.

The attribution of false statements to the Prophet ﷺ may be divided into two categories:

- (1) Intentional fabrication of *ḥadīth*. That is usually called *ḥadīth mauḍū‘*.
- (2) Unintentional attribution of a false *ḥadīth* to the Prophet ﷺ by mistake despite due care or due to carelessness. That is usually called *ḥadīth bāṭil*.

The result in both conditions is the same, that is a statement is falsely attributed to the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, scholars who collected *aḥādīth* of this sort put them together and did not make separate books for these two types. In many cases, they did not draw a line between *mauḍū‘* and *bāṭil* even in judgment though it would have been useful to know it.

Intentional Fabrication of *Ḥadīth*

1. Those who committed this great sin belonged to different categories. Among them were *Zindīqs* who could not fight Islam openly, and took shelter under the cloak of scholarship. The *Zindīqs* included Mughīra b. Sa‘d al-Kūfī and Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd al-Shāmī who was crucified for treachery. They imitated the learned scholars, fabricated *aḥādīth* and narrated them to cast doubt in people’s minds. Muḥammed b. Sa‘īd al-Shāmī who was crucified reported from Ḥumaid from Anas from the Prophet ﷺ saying: “I am the seal of the prophets, there will be no prophet

after me unless Allah wills." He forged this exception to support the heresy and infidelity to which he summoned people and to buttress his claim to be a prophet.

However, a very important point ought to be noticed. There were a number of people who were reported to have said that they fabricated certain *aḥādīth* or so many *aḥādīth*. Their claims have been reported without giving any detail of the materials. Sometimes this statement was given by someone who was going to be punished for a certain crime. In some other cases it is attributed to a certain person that after repentance, he confessed that he fabricated so many *aḥādīth*, and he did not know what to do. Early scholars have mentioned their statements without giving any detail. In my opinion, this statement is not sufficient. After confession we grade him as a liar. And it might be a part of a conspiracy that when that person was unable to destroy the faith of the people in the *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ, he used this final trick. It is unanimously held that if a man told a lie about the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, his transmission would not be accepted even after he repented. Therefore, to judge the fabrication of *ḥadīth*, we cannot depend on the statement of a liar.

2. There were some weak-minded people who fabricated *aḥādīth* with good intentions in their mind. Abū 'Umāra al-Marwazī says that Abū 'Isma was asked, "Where did you get from 'Ikrima from Ibn 'Abbās *aḥādīth* about the excellence of the Qur'an sura by sura, when 'Ikrima's students do not possess this?" It ought to be noticed how the scholars were making cross references to detect the fault and falsehood. He replied, "I saw that people had turned away from the Qur'an and occupied themselves with the *Fiqh* of Abū Ḥanīfa and the *Maghāzī* of Muḥammad b. Ishāq, so I forged these *aḥādīth* seeking reward in the next world."

3. There were some story tellers who used to stand in the market places or in the mosques and used to attribute *aḥādīth* falsely to the Prophet ﷺ.

Scholars, mention a class of fabricators who used to fabricate for the sake of rulers. It is very remarkable that one finds only one example of this sort which has been repeated by the scholars.

4. There were certain religious men who fabricated to support their sectarian attitude, either in law or in theology, or in politics or due to their prejudice for race or country or certain

people, or those who fabricated for their personal interest. These classes should be put under the category of the people who fabricated intentionally.

Unintentional Fabrication of *Ḥadīth*

There are, however, other people who committed mistakes though they did not fabricate the statement itself.

1. Those who took a well known *ḥadīth* and gave it a new *isnād* for the sake of novelty, so that they might become a focus for learning.

2. Those scholars who committed mistakes in transmission, e.g., while *isnād* was ended with the Companion or Successors only, he erroneously attributed statements to the Prophet ﷺ which were as a matter of fact the sayings of the Companions or Successors.

One ought to bear in mind that as every *ḥadīth* consists of text and *isnād*, and every *isnād* contains many names which usually end with the Prophet ﷺ, it was quite easy to commit a mistake of this sort where the *isnād* stopped one step earlier.

3. Pious people who did not take the trouble to be exact, and did not give the time and attention required for the study of *ḥadīth*, and were very busy in their *'ibādah* (worship) committed many mistakes in transmitting *aḥādīth*. Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Qaṭṭān, a second century scholar, reported that "I have not seen more falsehood in anyone than in those who have a reputation for goodness." It implies that the *Muḥaddithīn* were well aware and not impressed by apparent worship and piety.

4. Scholars who learned *aḥādīth* from certain shaikhs, and later discovered that there were some other *aḥādīth* transmitted by the same shaikhs which they had missed. Instead of being content with what they learnt directly from the authorities or being precise about differentiating what they learnt directly and what they did indirectly, they transmitted all, pretending that they learnt them.

5. Those who learnt books from authorities but did not copy what they learnt at that time. When they grew old and were asked *aḥādīth* by students, their ignorance and desire to appear scholars lead them to transmit *aḥādīth* from copies of the same book which they acquired, but it did not contain notes certifying their learning. It seems that in the 4th century this sort of mistake

was common. It ought to be noted that scholars did not allow the transmission of *aḥādīth* from a book, say for example *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī, other than the copy which one read to the shaikh with the chain going back to the author. Then it had to contain a note that a certain student studied it under a certain shaikh or that the shaikh permitted him to transmit this book, because it was quite possible that two copies of the same work may differ. There is another opinion, a milder one, that a very famous book like *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī, copies of which were and are very common, may be transmitted if the scholar thinks that the copy in hand, even though it does not contain a note of learning, is similar to one from which he had learnt. However, early scholars did not agree with this, and in some similar cases they labeled the scholar a liar.

6. People lacked the necessary qualifications for teaching of *ḥadīth* that is a sharp memory, alertness or a correct book. Then a student came and read *aḥādīth* to them which were not transmitted by them but they ignorantly confirmed them. It ought to be noticed that many times students used to do this trick on their teachers to test the knowledge of their teacher. If they found that the teacher was alert and did not fall in their trap they learned from him.

7. Scholars who traveled in search of *ḥadīth* and were recognized *Muḥaddithīn*, but lost their books. Later on when they taught students they used copies other than their own, without bearing in mind that there might be some differences between two copies of the same work. Or they transmitted from their defective memories. On this account they resorted to guesswork (*takhmīn*). No doubt the value of what they taught depended on whether their book was sound or not.

Means for Detection of Fabrication in *Ḥadīth*

Scholars who spent a great deal of their lives with the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ developed a sense which they could use instantly in detecting error. Their example was like that of a man who lived with a beloved friend for scores of years, knew him very well in every situation and so could easily say which statement belonged to him and which did not. Similarly a literary critic who studies a poet for a long time and becomes fully acquainted with his style can, on the basis of his perception and

personal experience, easily detect a poem which does not belong to the poet. However *Muḥaddithīn* did not depend solely on personal experience as it may be counted a form of subjective criticism. In short if a *ḥadīth* was not transmitted by any trustworthy scholar, and there was a liar or a person accused of lying in the chain of transmission it was said to have been fabricated by that person.

However, scholars laid down certain rules according to which one could reach conclusions about the spuriousness or genuineness of *aḥādīth* even without going into detailed study of *isnād*. Here is a summary of the method described by Ibn al-Qayyim.

Ibn al-Qayyim's description of general rules about rejection of *ḥadīth* are as follows:

If the *ḥadīth* contains an exaggerated statement that the Prophet ﷺ could not have made. For example, a false *ḥadīth* attributed to the Prophet ﷺ that when one pronounces *Lā ilāha ill Allāh* God creates from this sentence a bird with seventy thousand tongues.

Experiment rejects it.

Ridiculous kind of attribution.

Contradicts a well known *sunna*.

Attributes a statement to the Prophet ﷺ which was supposed to have been made in the presence of a thousand Companions but all of them supposedly concealed it.

The statement has no resemblance to other statements of the Prophet ﷺ. Sounds like the saying of mystics or medical practitioners.

Contradicts the clear and obvious meanings of the Qur'an.

Inadequate in its style.

Besides these general rules, the entire system of *isnād* was applied to detect the fabrication.

Scholars had knowledge of almost all the narrators, how many *aḥādīth* they transmitted, how many of these were confirmed by other narrators throughout the Muslim world and how many of them have not been confirmed by other narrators. For this purpose they used the term *Lā Yutāba 'u*.

In many cases even if a *ḥadīth* was well known and authentic but the scholars suspected that a certain narrator who transmitted the *ḥadīth* had not received it through proper channel, they

would check the ink and the paper to see whether it was a new writing or an old one.¹

These are some of the tests which were applied by cholars prior to, or if they did not use it, instead of *isnād* criticism.

Literature on Spurious *Aḥādīth*

The early scholars did not merely compile works on spurious *aḥādīth*. They also noted such *aḥādīth* in the books of *ʿIlal*, biographies or histories etc. It seems that the first scholar who devoted his book totally to this purpose was Ḥusain b. Ibrāhīm al-Jauzajānī (d.543). Later on a great number of books were compiled on the subject. The most useful one for a layman is that of Shaukānī called *al-Fawāi'd al-Majmū'ah Fī al-Aḥādīth al-Maudū'ah*, edited by Mu'allimī Yamānī.

Part Two Hadīth Literature

1 - For detail see, A'zami, *Introduction to Tamyiz*, p. 78-9.

Earlier *Hadīth* Books: What Happened to Them?

AFTER extensive research it has been found that in the pre-Islamic era some Arabic poetry and some sayings of wise men were recorded. But it is quite safe to assume that the history of Arabic literature begins with the Holy Qur'ān, the first book in the Arabic language.

As far as *hadīth* literature is concerned, I have established in my doctoral thesis *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature* that even in the first century of the Hijrah many hundred booklets of *hadīth* were in circulation. If we add another hundred years, it would be difficult to enumerate the quantity of booklets and books which were in circulation. Even by the most conservative estimate they were many thousands.¹

Nature of the Books

The books or booklets which appeared in the first, or even in the early second century, might be put in two categories:

Books containing the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ only, mere collections, without any sort of arrangement of the material.

Booklets containing *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ mixed up with legal decisions of the rightly guided Caliphs and other Companions as well as Successors. These materials were also not arranged systematically and formed only some sort of collections.

From the middle of the first century of Hijrah, books on separate subjects of practical interest began to appear. The booklet of the famous Companion and the Scribe of the Prophet ﷺ, Zaid b. Thābit (d.45), on *Farā'id* (share of inheritance) deserves mention here. Later on we find books mentioned by authorities

¹ - For estimation and detailed study, see, A'zami, *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature*, 34-182.

relating to judicial problems such as marriage and divorce, compensation for injuries etc. Thus in the early era when systematic compilation began the books mixed the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ with the judicial decisions of Muslim authorities and scholars. At this stage it seems that every book was about a single subject.

In the second century the trend changed a little and books covering almost all the legal problems began to appear. The book of Imam Mālik called *Al-Mū'ttā* belongs here. It was arranged according to chapters on law covering the whole range of human life, from worship, *zakāt*, *hajj*, marriage, divorce, to agriculture and trade etc. It is a compilation of the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ as well as the opinions of the Companions and Successors.

It is safe to assume that thousands of books in *ḥadīth* literature, which were in circulation in the 2nd century, were not arranged chapter wise. The books which were arranged according to chapters contained a mixture of *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ and the sayings and decisions of the Companions and Successors. However, from the end of the second century the literary trend began to change and books containing only the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ with certain systematic arrangement began to appear. Later on in the third and fourth centuries most of the books which appeared contained the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ only. Some books appeared in this period as well which were compiled on the pattern of the second century, such as *Muṣannaḥ* of 'Abdur Razzāq and Ibn Abū Shaibah (d. 235 A.H.) or *Al-Awsaṭ* of Ibn al-Mundir (d.319). However, the bulk of the literature which was produced by the *Muḥaddithīn* contained the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ only. These books were compiled with different patterns, and were called *musnad*, *jāmī'*, *ṣaḥīḥ*, *sunan*, *mustakhraj*, or *mu'jam*. Besides the pure *aḥādīth* literature hundreds of other books on the subjects relating to *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ were compiled. We shall discuss some of the *aḥādīth* books with special reference to one important book of each kind. Some of the books relating to the subjects concerning *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ will be listed.

No doubt most of the early books have either been lost or absorbed by the later encyclopedic literature of *ḥadīth*, and thus did not retain their separate entity. But if we understand the literary style of that period correctly we can still locate or rather

reproduce many early books. Of course, we may not be entirely sure of their form, but we can produce with certainty the original materials belonging to the early authorities. Let us see the literary style of that period.

What Happened to the Earlier Ḥadīth Literature?

I have mentioned earlier that hundreds and thousands of books of *ḥadīth* were in circulation in the first and second century. Only a very small amount of this *ḥadīth* literature has survived. It could be said that either what I have described is totally wrong, or these books were in existence at sometime but were lost later. This second hypothesis raises another problem, i.e., of the negligence of the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ by Muslim scholars. Is it possible that they did not feel any necessity of *ḥadīth* literature and so it was destroyed?

As a matter of fact, my position is precise and correct. These books were not destroyed nor did they perish, but were absorbed into the work of later authors. When the encyclopedia-type books were produced, scholars did not feel the necessity to keep the early books or booklets, and so, slowly, they disappeared. To explain this point I will describe the method of quotations in early days which would prove my point.

Methodology of Quotations in Ḥadīth Literature

No doubt the *ḥadīth* literature at our disposal belongs mostly to the third century. There was a gap of more than two centuries between the authors of these books and the Prophet ﷺ. What was the level of literary honesty in the learned circle? It is indeed astonishing that they had developed a system of references and of quotations which is unsurpassed even by modern researchers.

The modern method of references and quotations consists of: Quotations word by word and exact copying put between double quotation marks.

Quoting exactly word by word, but making necessary interpolations enclosed in square brackets.

Quoting exactly but dropping irrelevant details indicating material left out by three dots.

Quoting by paraphrasing, in one's words and expressions.

However, in these entire cases one refers to the authorities from whom he quoted, mentioning either books and authors or

only one of them.

Muḥaddithīn's Pattern of Quotations

Going through the writing of *Muḥaddithīn*, we find almost a similar pattern of quotations. Here are a few examples.

First method of quotation:

Mālik reported a *ḥadīth* in *Mū'tṭā* as follows:

Mālik from Ishāq b. 'Abdullah b. Abū Ṭalḥa from Abū Murra, maulā of 'Aqīl b. Abū Ṭālib from Abū Wāqid al-Laithī.

The same *ḥadīth* is recorded by Bukhārī with the same wordings², adding an additional authority, Ismā'īl, who reported this on the authority of Mālik.

The same *ḥadīth* is reported by Muslim on the authority of Qutaiba b. Sa'īd who transmitted it on the authority of Mālik with the same wordings.³

The same *ḥadīth* is reported by Tirmidhi on the authority of Mālik with the same wordings.⁴

The *ḥadīth* has been reported several times by Ibn Ḥanbāl and other authors as well. Though I have produced it as an example of quotations word by word, it ought to be remembered that in quoting here the book is not referred to at all. Reference is to the authority through whom this information was obtained. Needless to say that the book was used in transmitting this *ḥadīth*.

We may conclude that when certain scholars transmit *aḥādīth* from a certain teacher, and their wordings are very closely similar, it means that in transmitting the information a book was used and memory was not the only basis.

Zuhrī (51-125) compiled a biography of the Prophet ﷺ which was absorbed into the works of later authors and thus perished in the course of time as a work on its own. Some modern researchers have doubts about this report. Recently almost the whole work of Zuhrī, which is more than 200 pages, has been published in one of the *ḥadīth* works of the third century which has come to light for the first time. Even the editor did not notice that it was the work of Zuhrī. A detailed study was carried out,

2 - Bukhārī, *Ilm* 8, *ḥadīth* No. 66, with the omission of only one word.

3 - Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ, Salām*, 26, page 1713, with the omission of only one word.

4 - Tirmidhī, *Sunan Istidhān*, 29, with the omission of only one word.

and it was found that several students of Zuhrī reported portions of this book. This information was recorded by authors who died some 150 years after Zuhrī yet their wordings are very similar, which is almost impossible except if the original book was used.⁵

Second method of quotation:

Quoting exactly word by word, but adding external material in the body of a book.

Most of the people who listened to *aḥādīth* and copied them out had their own books. Students felt at liberty to include additional material even in a fixed text to clarify some obscure word, or to express their own opinion. As any additional material would have a completely different *isnād* or the name of the inserter, there was no danger of distorting the text.

Examples for this sort of interpolation may be found in almost every book. Here is an example taken from *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim.

"Qatādah has narrated a *ḥadīth* like this with another chain of transmitters. In the *ḥadīth* transmitted by Jarīr on the authority of Sulaimān, Qatādah's further words are: When (the Qur'ān) is recited (in prayer), you should observe silence, and (the following words are) not found in the *ḥadīth* narrated by anyone except by Abū Kāmil who heard it from Abū 'Awāna (and the words are): Verily Allah vouchsafed through the tongue of the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) this: Allah listens to him who praises Him. Abū Ishāq (a student of Imām Muslim) said: Abū Bakr has (critically) discussed this *ḥadīth*. Imām Muslim said: Whom can you find a more authentic transmitter of *ḥadīth* than Sulaimān? Abū Bakr said to him (Imām Muslim): What about the *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah i.e. the *ḥadīth* that when the Qur'ān is recited (in prayer) observe silence? He (Abū Bakr again) said: Then, why have you not included it (in your compilation)? He (Imām Muslim) said: I have not included in this every *ḥadīth* which I deem authentic: I have recorded only such *aḥādīth* on which there is an agreement amongst the *Muḥaddithīn* on their being authentic."⁶

5 - See, A'zami, *Introduction to Sīra of Zuhrī*. (Under print).

6 - MU. *Ṣalāt* 63.

This *hadīth* has been transmitted by Qatādah with the same chain of transmitters (and the words are) "Allah, the Exalted and the Glorious, commanded it through the tongue of His Apostle ﷺ; Allah listens to him who praises Him".

Third method of quotation

Quoting exactly, but dropping irrelevant material.

For the third type of quotation we may refer to hundreds of places in *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī. It was his habit to cut down *hadīth* and quote the portion relevant to the chapter, though he quotes complete *hadīth* as well.

For example:

Bukhārī puts the heading of a chapter

"Women's ungratefulness to their husbands, and disbelief is of different grades."

Later on he recorded the following *hadīth* on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās reporting that the Prophet ﷺ said: "I was shown Hell-fire, and most of its inhabitants were women, as they practice *kufr*. It was asked: Do they disbelieve (*Yakfurna*) in Allah? He said (Not for their disbelief in Allah) but for their ingratitude⁷ to their husbands and ingratitude to kindness. Even if you were to treat one of them kindly for ever, but if she later saw anything (displeasing) in you, she would say I have never seen any good in you".⁸

The same *hadīth* has been repeated by Bukhārī at least six times in different places. In the chapter of 'Prayer at the time of solar eclipse it is given in full detail, and the portion which has been recorded here appears at the end of that *hadīth*.⁹

Fourth method of quotation

Fourth type of quotation was that of paraphrasing.

It is called in the term of *Muḥaddithīn: Riwāya bil Ma'na* which means to transmit a *hadīth* using one's own words and expressions. Some of the scholars disapproved of this method while the majority accepted it with the

7 -The word *kufr* has two senses, disbelief and ingratitude. The Prophet ﷺ meant the latter but they thought that he meant the former.

8 - BU. *Imān*, 21. For its repetition and dropping of details, see BU. *hadīth* No. 431, 748, 1052, 3202, 5197.

9 - BU. *Khusūf* 9.

following conditions:

1. The narrator must be a scholar in Arabic language, which knows the words of *hadīth* and their full implications and then relates it with some other expression which gives the same sense and meaning though the words were changed. However, it was accepted only in the early days.

After the books were compiled transmission of *hadīth* after translation into one's own expression was forbidden.

The early scholars were not fond of paraphrasing. They tried to stick to the words they learned from their teachers, but due to failure of memory they used a synonymous word or an expression equivalent to what they heard.

We have described how the Muslim scholars especially *Muḥaddithīn* in the first century introduced the system of quotations with complete literary honesty. However, there is a fundamental difference between the present day literary style of quotations and theirs. The methodology applied by *Muḥaddithīn* did not allow anyone to quote any *hadīth* verbally or from any book, except if he had obtained permission from relevant authorities to use it, by one of the recognized methods of learning *hadīth*.¹⁰ Thus the terms used in *isnād* such as *ḥaddathanā* and *akhbaranā* etc. are a kind of certificate of permission by which a narrator explains how he got this piece of information and is entitled to pass it on to others. But if a scholar has no permission from the authorities, and he obtained the book by buying or copying or as a gift from some unauthorized person and began to quote or transmit *hadīth* from it he was named a liar. The scholar must mention that he found it in such and such book but even then the piece of information coming by this way had no value till it is proved by some other means, owing to possibility of a false copy or statements attributed to authorities. The authenticity of most modern documents would be doubtful if the strict criteria of *Muḥaddithīn* were applied to them.

10 - See above Chapter III.

In conclusion, there remains one more point. Under certain conditions the use of one's own expression was permitted and thus there was always a chance of a slight change in the sense. As it is permissible to select only a portion of the *ḥadīth* on condition that its meaning, sense and impression did not change, there was always a chance that the original document might contain some more information. To make sure of these points constant checks were made through methods called *muṭābi'āt* and *shawāhid*. Thus in case some extra information was found in the narration of a scholar while his colleagues were silent, then if the narrator was of "A" grade this extra information may be accepted, otherwise it would be rejected. This is called *Ziyādāt ath-Thiqah* (extra information from a trustworthy narrator). Meanwhile, if after cross reference it was found that a scholar's paraphrase of a *ḥadīth* had made its sense wider, it was rejected.

Publishing the Books

The appearance of several editions of the same book with minor alterations, deletion and additions is a common phenomenon in modern times. Similar was the situation in the era of the early scholars. Various editions of their works contained variations. Let us take the work of Bukhārī on the biographies of *Muḥaddithīn: Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* which has about 20,000 entries of names with some information about each. The first version was copied by Al-Faḍl b. 'Abbās al-Ṣā'igh. The second version was transmitted by Muhammad b. Sulaimān b. Fāris-al-Dallāl (d.312). The third and perhaps final version, was transmitted by Muḥammad b. Sahl al-Muqri'. These three versions naturally differ at a few places but the difference is not significant. Sometimes a student read these different versions to the author. For example, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Lu'lu'ī put a note after *ḥadīth* No. 911 in *Sunan Abū Dā'ūd* that the author did not read this *ḥadīth* in the fourth reading, even though he recorded it.¹¹ 'Alī b. Ḥasan b. al-'Abd says that he learned Abu Dā'ūd's *Sunan* from him six times. But the sixth time he was not able to complete it. Thus students read in different ways and recorded accordingly. As a result there were differences in versions of the same book. It was easy to recognize when this difference was due to a different student who transmitted the work. But when there was a single

transmitter from the author and different students of this *Rāwī* or transmitter differed among themselves here and there, putting a heading or discarding it, or mentioning a *ḥadīth* or eluding it, why and how did it happen?

In the case of Lu'lu'ī we have seen how he explicitly admitted that the author did not read *ḥadīth* No. 911 in the fourth reading, yet he put it into the book and transmitted it. He thought that the author's earlier permission to transmit this *ḥadīth* entitled him to do this though the author did not retain it in the later version. Therefore, when a student had a version of a book different from the author's, and he had permission to publish it, then the new version of the book does not cancel the early permission. Therefore, this transmitter or *Rāwī*, transmitted a different version of the book to different students causing some variation in this way.

Sometimes mistakes in copying, a word or sentence dropped or a word erroneously used, caused this difference. Anyone who has experience of compiling books knows how even after every care some mistakes remain.

Some other problems concerning the methods of early scholars of the problems of authorship and the 'get up' of the books, have been discussed in my work on early *ḥadīth* literature.¹²

Now I shall give brief descriptions of some important authors and their books in *ḥadīth* literature.

11 - Abū Dā'ūd *Sunan* 1, 331.

12 - *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature*, pp. 200-207.

Imām Mālik bin Anas

MĀLIK b. Anas b. Mālik b. Abū 'Amīr al-Asbahī. He was probably born in 93 A.H. at Madīnah though dates ranging all the way from 91 to 97 A.H. have also been given. His grandfather Mālik was a Successor and his great grandfather was a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ. Originally his family belonged to Yemen, and in the time of the Prophet ﷺ they settled in Madīnah. His family consisted of his wife Faṭimah and three children: Yaḥya, Muḥammad and Ḥammād.

It seems that his father carefully looked after his son, and used to revise his lessons with him. Once Mālik made a mistake in answer to his father's question, upon which his father told him that this must be owing to the time he spent playing with pigeons. That was a good lesson for Mālik and henceforth he concentrated his full attention on his studies.

He did not travel abroad for learning *aḥādīth* yet had very good opportunity to learn from the famous scholars of the world as most of them visited Madīnah. The number of his students exceeds a thousand and several books have been written on the subject.

His relations with the political authorities were amicable, though he did not do them any favors. When asked about his relations with the Caliphs and Governors, he replied that they are in need of sincere advice. It is the duty of every learned person to meet them and direct them towards good and forbid them from doing evil.

His Modesty and Far-Sightedness

The Caliph Abū Ja'far asked Mālik to write a book which may be promulgated as the law of the state all over the Islamic world, and it would be used to judge and govern, and anyone who differed from it would be prosecuted. Imām Mālik disagreed with this and said that the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were scattered all over the Muslim world, especially in the time of the Caliph 'Umar who used to send them as

teachers. The people learned from the Companions, and every generation learned from the previous ones. In many cases there is more than one choice in practicing Islam. One of the aspects of Islam has been emphasized by some scholars, while others took other aspects. As a result there has been a variety of methods and most are of equal status. Therefore, if one tries, to change them from what they know to what they do not know they will think it is a heresy. Hence it is better to leave every city with whatever knowledge it has of Islam. Abū Ja'far appreciated this farsightedness.¹³ Even when the Caliph wanted that Mālik should read this book to the princes, the scholar replied. "Knowledge does not go to people but people come to it." When the Caliph requested that other students should not join the class with the princes, he refused this favor saying they would sit where they found an empty place.

He was physically beaten by order of the Governor of Madīnah, Ja'far b. Sulaimān, because one of his *fatwās* (legal decisions) was regarded as a move against the authorities. He died in 179 A.H.

His Works

The following works have been attributed to him:

- Risālah ilā Ibn Wahb fil Qadr
- Kitāb an-Nujūm
- Risālatun fil Aqdīya
- Tafsīr Li Gharīb al-Qur'ān
- Risālah ilā Al-Laith b. Sa'd
- Risālah ilā Abū Ghassān
- Kitāb al-Siyar
- Kitāb al-Manāsik
- Kitāb al-Mu'aṭṭa

The fate of most of these books is unknown. However, Mālik is famous for his school of thought, his personal character, his scholarship and his book *Mū'aṭṭa*.

Plan and Purpose of Mū'aṭṭa

It records *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ and the legal decisions of early scholars of Madīnah. A famous lawyer 'Abdul 'Azīz b. 'Abdullah al-Majshūn (d.164) compiled a book containing the

legal decisions only. Mālik criticized his work and said that if he had compiled the works he would have begun with the *āthār* and then followed them with legal decisions. Later on Mālik produced his work on this pattern. *Mu'atta* is not purely a *ḥadīth* book. It contains the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ, legal opinions of the Companions and the Successors and of some later authorities.

He refers very frequently to the unanimous opinions of the scholars of Madīnah on subjects where there is no *ḥadīth* from the Prophet ﷺ, or even in understanding the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet ﷺ and its application.

Quantity of the Material

It seems that he collected a huge amount of material and selected a few thousand *aḥādīth* out of it. Whatever Mālik learned in perhaps forty years is available in *Mu'atta*. He steadily revised this work and as a result reduced the material in it. Therefore, it has more than eighty versions. Fifteen of them are more famous and now only one version of Yahya b. Yahya is available in its original form, complete and printed. This version contains:

Aḥādīth from the Prophet ﷺ

Āthār from the Companions

Āthār from the later authorities

A vast literature has been produced on this book, and in this context perhaps it stands next to the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī.

Commentaries on *Mu'atta*:

The most famous commentaries are by: Ibn 'Abdul Barr who compiled two commentaries. *Al-Tamhīd* and *Al-Istidhkār*

Al-Bājī, Sulaimān b. Khalaf (d. 474) compiled two commentaries:

Al-Istīfā' and *Al-Muntaqā*, (mostly an abridgment of the above). Seven volumes.

Az-Zurqanī, Muhammad b. 'Abdul Bāqī (d. 1122) four volumes printed several times.

Al-Kāndhalawī, Muḥammad Zakarīya (1315-) wrote *Aujāz-al-Masālik Sharḥ Mu'attā Imām Mālik*, which has been published more than once in India and Egypt.

Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal

Abū 'Abdullah Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal

HIS father Muḥammad was a *Mujāhid* who lived in Baṣrah. He went to Marw as a Ghāzī, where Aḥmad was born in 20th of Rabī' al-Awwal 164 A.H. Later on, while Aḥmad was still an infant, he was brought to Baghdad. His father died at the age of 30. His mother was: Ṣafiyah bint Maimūna bint 'Abdul Mālik ash-Shaibānī.

Personal Features

He used to dye his hair, and was a tall, dark brown man.¹⁴ He began to study *aḥādīth* in 179 A.H. when he was 16 years old and memorized a million *aḥādīth* in his lifetime. He is one of the leading personalities in Islamic history that combined knowledge of *aḥādīth* and law. He was sublime in his God-consciousness and in defending Islam. He challenged the Caliph and his religious authority, was imprisoned for a long time and was treated very harshly by the authorities. But he never surrendered. There are books written on his inquisition.

Ibn Ḥanbal and *Miḥnah*

The Mu'tazilites—so-called free thinkers in Islam—had great impact on the Caliphs Mā'mūn, al-Mu'taṣim and al-Wāthiq who accepted the Mutazilite viewpoint, accepted it as their creed and made it the duty of the state to force it on all Muslims. Ibn Ḥanbal and other *Muḥaddithīn* refused to profess it. Ibn Ḥanbal was brought before the inquisition from Baghdad to Ṭarsūs in heavy chains.

Under Mu'taṣim he patiently suffered corporal punishment and imprisonment. The Caliph Mu'taṣim requested Ibn Ḥanbal again and again to accept the creed of the Mu'tazilites in which case the Caliph himself would free him of all the chains and follow his steps. After flat refusal Ibn Ḥanbal was trampled under the feet of Mu'taṣim's servants and some of his joints

¹⁴ - Aḥmad Shākir, *Intro. to Musnad*, 60.

were dislocated. Later a large group of executioners was brought and each of them whipped Aḥmad two stripes with all his strength. After a while Aḥmad lost his consciousness. When he regained consciousness he was offered some drink but refused it saying that he did not want to break his fast. However, this is not the proper place to discuss the suffering of Ibn Ḥanbal for the sake of Islam. A doctoral thesis has been written by Patton on the inquisition of Imām Aḥmad. The most interesting thing in the character of Imām Aḥmad is that when the government's policy was changed in the caliphate of Mutawakkil, in favour of the *Muhaddithīn's* doctrine, and he was approached to take revenge from those who caused his inquisition, he refused it totally. Imām Aḥmad says that he was going through the meaning of a verse of the Qur'ān (*Sūrah Shūrā* 40). He found that a great scholar of the first century, Ḥasan al Baṣarī (2 1-110) explained its meaning saying that in the Hereafter all the nations of the world would be kneeling down in front of Allah. Then it would be proclaimed that those people should stand whose reward is due from Allah, upon which no one would stand except those who pardoned the wrongdoers in this world. Reading this passage Ibn Ḥanbal pardoned his wrongdoers and used to say what a man loses, if Allah does not punish some one for his sake.

He refused any favor from the government. Later on, without his knowledge and against his intention some pensions were offered to his sons and cousins. When he came to know of this he almost cut himself off from them. In the early days he used to borrow some things from their houses, but later he refused to have even his medicine and meals to be prepared on their stoves.

His Works

He compiled many works, some of which have been published and some of them have been lost, and some of them still need editing and publishing. Here is a list of some of his works:

- Al-'Ilal wa Ma'rifat ar-Rijāl
- Tārīkh
- An-Nāsikh wal-Mansūkh
- At-Tafsīr
- Al-Manāsikh
- Al-Ashribah
- Az-Zuhd

Ar-Radd 'Alā az-Zanādiqa wa al-Jahmīya
Al-Musnad

Of all of his works, he is most famous for *Musnad*.

Nature of *Musnad* Works

Musnad works are not compiled in accordance with issues in Law. The only criteria is to collect *aḥādīth* of a certain Companion in one place. However, the compilers differ in arrangements of the names of the Companions. Some of them begin with the four righteous Caliphs Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, followed by the remaining six of them who had tidings of Paradise from the Prophet ﷺ. These are followed by the Companions who embraced Islam first, and so on. Some of the books are arranged alphabetically and some according to regions. However, the *Musnad* is not easy to use because there is no subject by subject arrangement of material at all. Thus it is very difficult to find a particular *ḥadīth*.

Musnad was published in six volumes in 1313 A.H. A number of books have been compiled on the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad. In this century two scholars contributed the best part of their lives in the service of this book. One was Shaikh Aḥmad 'Abdur Raḥmān as-Sā'ātī, father of Imām Ḥasan al-Bannā, founder of the famous Society of Muslim Brothers, who arranged the original work according to chapters on legal matters. It has a good commentary and references to relative *aḥādīth* in other works. The book has been published in 24 volumes and is one of the best works on *Musnad*. The other scholar was Aḥmad Shākir who intended to publish a critical edition of the work in its original form. He published about a quarter of the original work in 15 volumes before he died. However, up till now its *aḥādīth* have not been counted. Scholars estimate that there are between 30,000-40,000 *aḥādīth*. This is perhaps the biggest book on *ḥadīth* at the present in our hands, or it might be the second biggest work. There have been many other works on *ḥadīth* much larger than *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad but these are no longer extant. However, over 80 *musnads* have been mentioned by Kattānī in his book *al-Risālah al-Mustaṭarfaḥ* (p. 74), some of them very voluminous. Ya'qūb b. Shaibah made a plan to compile a *musnad* work. If he had been able to complete it this huge project would have exceeded 200 volumes.

A tiny part of this grand book was discovered and has been published. A partial list of *musnads* is given below:

Musnads by (1) 'Abd b. Ḥumaid (2) Abū Ishāq (3) Abū Ya'la (d. 307) (4) Al-Bazzāz (d.292) (5) Ḥasan b. Sufyān (6) Ḥumaidī (7) Ishāq b. Rāhwaih (8) Tayālisī (9) Usāma b. Ḥārith (10) Ya'qūb b. Shaibah (d.262)

Imām Bukhārī

ABŪ 'Abdullah Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mughīra al-Ja'faī was born on Friday 13th Shawwāl 194 A.H. at Bukhārā. His father Ismā'īl was a scholar of *ḥadīth*, who studied the subject under some very famous scholars such as Mālik b. Anas, Ḥammād b. Zaid and Ibn al-Mubārak. While Bukhārī was quite young his father died. Bukhārī inherited a good fortune from his father. He entrusted it to someone for partnership. One of the clients owed him 25,000 dirhams and did not intend to pay it. It was suggested that Bukhārī should take the case to the governor so as to obtain the amount, but he refused to take any help from the governor, thinking that the governor might later ask him for favors. Bukhārī had an affectionate mother and an elder brother named Aḥmad.

Bukhārī began the study of *ḥadīth* while he was quite young, even less than ten years of age. By the age of sixteen, he had memorized many books of prominent early scholars such as Ibn al-Mubārak, Wakī' etc. He did not content himself with memorizing *aḥādīth* and books of early scholars, but also learned the biography of all the narrators who took part in transmission of any *ḥadīth*, their date of birth, death, place of birth and so on.

He stayed in Ḥijāz for six years to learn *ḥadīth*. He journeyed to Baghdad eight times. In one of his journeys to Ādam b. Abū Ayās his money was finished. Penniless, he lived for a time on the leaves of wild plants. He was an excellent marksman and used to go outside for practice that he may be ready for *Jihād* all the time.

In criticizing the early scholars to evaluate them he used very moderate and mild language but scholars know very well what those soft words of Bukhārī meant. He was very generous to his students. His scribe Muḥammad b. Abū Ḥātim says: "Bukhārī used to wake up in the night dozens of times, lit the lamp by flint, made some marks on certain *ḥadīth* and then slept. I asked him: "Why did you not call me and you suffer all these things

alone." He replied: "You are young and I did not wish to disturb your sleep".

When Bukhārī arrived in Baghdad, scholars gathered to examine his famous memory. They appointed ten men, everyone of them to read ten *aḥādīth*. All of them changed the *isnād* and put it with different *matn*. One by one they began to read *aḥādīth* asking him whether he knew it. He constantly replied, "Not known to me". Those who knew that it was an actual examination of Bukhārī said that he understood the case, while the general impression was that Bukhārī's knowledge was very meager and his memory was very bad. After the questions ended, he systematically explained to them which *isnād* belonged to which *ḥadīth*.

In his last days he faced some hardship and was ordered by the governor to leave the country. I do not know whether it was the curse or blessing of Bukhārī that the name of the governor has become part of history whereas hundreds of kings have been forgotten.

Bukhārī died on Saturday, night of 'Īd in 256 A.H.

His Works

Bukhārī compiled many works, some of them perished while others are in our hands.

1. *Qadāyā as-Ṣaḥābah wat-Tābi'īn* He compiled it when he was eighteen, and at present no information is available about it.
2. *Raf' al-Yadain*
3. *Qirā'at Khalf al-Imām*
4. *Khalq Af'āl Al-'Ibād*
5. *At-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*
6. *Al-Musnad al-Kabīr*
7. *Tārīkh Ṣaghīr*
8. *Tārīkh Awsat*
9. *Tārīkh Kabīr (8 vols.)*
10. *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*
11. *Birr al-Wālidain*
12. *Aḍ-Ḍu'afā'*
13. *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*
14. *Al-Ashribah*
15. *Al-Hibah*
16. *Asāmī as-Ṣaḥābah*
17. *Al-Wuḥdān*

18. *Al-Mabsut*
19. *Al-'Ilal*
20. *Al-Kunā*
21. *Al-Fawā'id*
22. *Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī*

Books No. 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 20 have been published, some of them several times. However, his most famous work is *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī. Its full title is *Al-Jāmi' al-Musnad aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar min Umūr Rasūlillāhi wa Sunanihi wa Ayyāmihi*, which means: "An epitome containing all types of authentic *musnad aḥādīth* concerning the Prophet ﷺ, his *sunna* and his wars". He spent sixteen years in its compilation. It seems that he made the framework for his book while he was in Makkah in the *Masjid al-Ḥarām*. He worked on it continuously and the final draft was made in the *Masjid* of the Prophet ﷺ.

For every *ḥadīth* he selected to put in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Bukhārī used to take a bath and pray two *rak'ah nafl* and made *istikhāra*. Later on, if he was satisfied he put the *ḥadīth* in his book.

Number of *Aḥādīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī

Bukhārī habitually took a portion of the *ḥadīth* for the heading of the chapter. Also he repeated *aḥādīth* time after time according to their legal deductions. The number of *aḥādīth* in his book is 9,082 but without repetition it goes down to 2,602. This number does not include *aḥādīth mauqūfah* and sayings of Successors.

His Methods of Revision

Usually authors make changes in their works and bring out new editions improving on the earlier one. So did al-Bukhārī. He stated that he composed his work thrice. We know for sure that his *Tārīkh Kabīr* was published three times and every edition differs a little and the last one was the most accurate. He did the same with his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Even after this final draft he continually made changes in it, adding and discarding, sometimes putting new headings, even without filling in the material required for them.

His Conditions for Acceptance of *Ḥadīth* for his *Ṣaḥīḥ*

He laid down the most strict conditions.

The narrator must be of a very high grade, of personal

character, of a very high grade of literary and academic standard.

There must be positive information about narrators that they met one another and the student learned from his *shaikh*.

It is as difficult to obtain complete data about every scholar. In fact we do not have complete information about any scholar's list of students. There was a difference of opinion relating to this matter between Bukhārī and Muslim. In Muslim's opinion if two scholars lived together where it was possible for them to learn from each other, then, even if we have no positive information about their meetings, we should accept their *aḥādīth*, regarding their *isnād* unbroken provided that they were not practicing *tadlīs*. Bukhārī did not agree with this position. He insisted on positive evidence of learning and teaching. He did not consider even this condition sufficient and required further scrutiny in selecting authorities.

Criteria in Selecting the Material

Most of the authors of six principal books of *ḥadīth* did not describe their criteria in selecting the material, except for a sentence here and there, but it is possible to arrive at some conclusions from their writings. Two scholars of the sixth century, Hāzimī and Maqdisī studied the subject. They studied the qualities of narrators whose *aḥādīth* have been recorded in those books and tried to find out a general rule. Hāzimī says that those scholars had certain criteria in accepting a narrator whose *ḥadīth* they were going to record in their books. For example, one who wishes to record only authentic *aḥādīth* must be careful of the narrator and his teacher and their positions. Sometimes, a certain narrator is a very good and accurate narrator from one teacher (*shaikh*) while he committed errors in narrating from another one. It means that in the first case his *aḥādīth* would be accepted while in the second case it would be rejected. If we take the comparable example of students, it seems that certain students obtain good results when they study the subject under certain professors. But the same students get poor marks either in another subject or in the same subject if they study under certain other professors. Meanwhile there are students who get 'A' in every subject whoever their teacher might be. This fact was observed by early scholars. To explain it more simply Hāzimī takes the example of Zuhri who had a great many students.

Hāzimī divided them in five categories:

1. Narrators from Zuhri who possessed the high quality of *itqān*, accuracy, *ḥifz*, (excellent memory) and a lengthy companionship with Zuhri, accompanying him even in his journeys.
2. The second group was 'Adl like the first group but they did not spend sufficient time with Zuhri to be able to remember his *ḥadīth* thoroughly and with accuracy, and thus were placed a little below group 1.
3. Those who lived long with Zuhri like the first group but have been criticized by the scholars.
4. Those who have been criticized by the scholars and meanwhile did not spend much time in the lectures of Zuhri.
5. Those who are held as weak narrators, or not known to early scholars. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imām Bukhārī mostly recorded the *aḥādīth* narrated by the first group, but sometimes recorded the *aḥādīth* of the second group as well.

Imām Muslim sometimes recorded the *aḥādīth* of the famous scholars of the third group as well. However, Nasā'i and Abū Dā'ūd quote frequently from the first, second and third groups. Abū Dā'ūd sometimes mentions *aḥādīth* of the fourth group as well. Tirmidhī records *aḥādīth* of the first, second, third and the fourth group, but he describes the weak narrators, a method not generally applied by Nasā'i or Abū Dā'ūd.

However, it is obvious that not all the scholars were famous like Zuhri, nor did all of them have so many students. Therefore, the rule which I have mentioned now regarding the group of the students of a certain scholar is applicable only to famous scholars who had many students.

In case of a scholar who had a few students, Bukhārī and Muslim accepted the material on the basis of trustworthiness and accuracy. Therefore, they sometimes recorded a *ḥadīth* even if the narrator had no other fellow who transmitted the same *aḥādīth*, as they were sure about the accuracy of that narrator due to their examination in other matters, but in most of the cases they recorded the *aḥādīth* of trustworthy persons which was attested to by other students' witness.¹⁵

15 - Ibn Hajar, *Huday as-Sārī*, I, 6.

Translation of *Ṣaḥīḥ*

The book has been translated into many languages, completely or partially.

Exegeses of *Ṣaḥīḥ*

Hundreds of exegeses have been written on the book, some of them exceeding 25 volumes.

The best ones are:

Fathul Bārī by Ibn Ḥajar (d.852) is the best one available.

‘Umdatul Qārī by ‘Ainī (d.855).

Irshād as-Sā’ri by Qaṣṭallānī (d.923)

Criticism of Bukhārī

Many scholars criticized Bukhārī’s work. The criticism concerns about 80 narrators and some 110 *aḥādīth*.¹⁶ The criticism showed that though these *aḥādīth* were not mistaken or false they did not measure up to the high standard which was set by Bukhārī.

A comparable example would be that of some colleges which do not accept any student less than ‘A’ grade, but after scrutinizing it may be found that they accepted in the mass of the students a few students of lower grade, say of grade ‘C’. This criticism implies that the highest grade was given to Bukhārī after very severe test. But it seems that in accepting the narrations of those low grade scholars he had some other evidence which satisfied him about the correctness of the *aḥādīth* he accepted.

Tirmidhī, speaking about Ibn Abī Laila says:

قال أحمد : لا يحتج بحديث ابن أبي ليلى ، وقال محمد بن إسماعيل : ابن أبي ليلى هو صدوق ولا أروى عنه لأنه لا يدري صحيح حديثه من سقيمه وكل كان مثل هذا فلا أروى عنه شيئا .

“Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl (al-Bukhārī) said: “Ibn Abī Laila is truthful صدوق but I do not transmit any *ḥadīth* through him, as it is not known which of his *aḥādīth* are correct and which erroneous. And anyone who was of this kind I do not relate *ḥadīth* through him”.¹⁷ It means that even a scholar of this grade was not acceptable to Bukhārī, except if he finds some means to differentiate among his *aḥādīth*. For example, if he had old

copies or original of the teachers of Ibn Abī Laila, and which was later transmitted by him Bukhārī would accept those *aḥādīth*, because he would be sure that Ibn Abī Laila did not make a mistake in transmission of these *aḥādīth*.

May Allah reward all of them as well as us.

Other Books called *Ṣaḥīḥ*

Besides Bukhārī, there are several books called *Ṣaḥīḥ* such as:

Ṣaḥīḥ of Ibn Khuzaima

Ṣaḥīḥ of Ibn Ḥabbān

Ṣaḥīḥ of Ibn as-Sakan (d. 353)

Ṣaḥīḥ of ash-Sharqī, a student of Imām Muslim, died in 325 A.H.

But the most famous one after Bukhārī is *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Muslim which deserves some detailed study.

16 - Suyūṭī. *Tadrīb*, I, 134; Ibn Ḥajar, *Huday as-Sārī*, II, 106.

17 - Tirmidhī *Sunan*, II, 199.

5 Imām Muslim

ABUL Ḥusain Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj al-Nisāpurī was born in 204 A.H. Unfortunately, available sources do not give us information regarding his ancestors, family and his early childhood. No doubt, he must have studied the Qur'ān, Arabic literature and grammar, before beginning the study of *ḥadīth* as it was the pattern of that period. However, he began the study of *ḥadīth* in 218 A.H., at the age of about 15 years.

As *riḥlah* (journey) for the study of *ḥadīth* was an essential element, Imām Muslim visited almost all the centres of learning many times. Perhaps his first journey was to Makkah for Hajj in 220 and in this journey learned from Qa'nabi and others, then he returned to his homeland in a short time. It seems that his real *riḥlah* began about 230 A.H. He journeyed to Iraq, Ḥijāz, Syria and Egypt. The last time he went to Baghdad was in 259 A.H.

His Teachers

The biographical works have mentioned a good deal of his teachers' names. We may mention a few of them, such as Zuhair b. Ḥarb, Sa'id b. Mansūr, 'Abd b. Ḥumaid, Dhuhālī, Al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ma'in, Ibn Abī Shaibah etc. However, their numbers are in hundreds.

His Students

The number of his students is very large. Hundreds of people read his books to him. We may mention a few of them, such as Tirmidhī, Ibn Abū Ḥātim Rāzī, Ibn Khuzaimah etc.

His Generosity

He was a merchant of good fortune and of best reputation. Dhahabī called him *محسن نيسابور*.¹⁸

Muslim and Bukhārī

Muslim benefited from *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī and later compiled

¹⁸ - Dhahabī, *Ibar*, II, 231.

his own work, and was influenced by Bukhārī's method. When Bukhārī came to Nisāpur, Muslim attended to him and used to visit him. Ahmad b. 'Abduh describes one of the meetings of Muslim and Bukhārī, saying: "Muslim came to Bukhārī and kissed him on his forehead, and said, 'Let me kiss your feet, O Master of *Muḥaddithīn* and Doctor of *Ḥadīth*.'"

There was a difference of opinion in theological questions between Bukhārī and Dhuhālī, upon which Dhuhālī asked his students not to attend the lectures of Bukhārī and most of them obeyed. Later Dhuhālī was informed that Muslim still visited Bukhārī. Dhuhālī declared anyone who followed Bukhārī's opinion should stay away from his lecture. Though he did not mention Muslim explicitly, yet Muslim understood it, and went to the house, and sent back with a porter all the books which he had written earlier from the lectures of Dhuhālī.

His Works

He compiled many books such as:

1. *Al-Asmā' wa al-Kunā*
2. *Ifrād ash-Shāmiyīn*
3. *Al-Aqrān*
4. *Al-Intifā' bi Julūd as Sibā'*
5. *Aulād as-Ṣaḥābah*
6. *Awhām al-Muḥaddithīn*
7. *Al-Tārīkh*
8. *At-Tamyīz*
9. *Al-Jāmī'*
10. *Ḥadīth 'Amr b. Shu'aib*
11. *Rijāl 'Urwah*
12. *Sawālātu Ahmad b. Ḥanbal*
13. *Ṭabaqāt*
14. *Al-'Ilal*
15. *Al-Mukhadramīn*
16. *Al-Musnad al-Kabīr*
17. *Mashā'ikh ath-Thaūrī*
18. *Masha'ikh Shu'bah*
19. *Masha'ikh Mālik*
20. *Al-Wuḥdān*
21. *As-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Musnad*

According to the report of Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. Sufyān, Imām Muslim compiled three books of *Musnadāt*:

1. Which he read to the people that is *Ṣaḥīḥ*.
2. Which contain *aḥādīth* of even some weak narrators.
3. Which contain even the weak narrators.¹⁹

Numbers 8, 20 and 21 have been published.

Numbers 1, 11, 13 are still in manuscripts in different libraries.

However, his most important work is *Ṣaḥīḥ*, which is the short form of the title. The original title is as following: *Al-Musnad as-Ṣaḥīḥ, al-Mukhtaṣar min as-Sunan, bi Naql al-'Adl'an al-'Adal'an Rasūl Allah*.²⁰

Nature of This Work

He did not pay any attention to legal extraction. He did not even mention the chapters which were added later.

Utmost attention was paid for *mutāba'at* and *shawāhid*.

This book comes next to the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī and a vast literature has been produced around this book. It seems that Muslim presented his book *Ṣaḥīḥ* to Abū Zur'ah, one of the greatest critics of *aḥādīth*, and wherever Abū Zur'ah pointed out any defect in any *ḥadīth*, Muslim omitted it without argumentation. Because he did not want to record *ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth* according to his own criteria alone, he recorded only those whose authenticity was accepted among scholars. This is clear from his own statements in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* that he recorded only what was unanimously accepted as authentic.²¹

Number of *Aḥādīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim

According to the numbering of Muḥammad Fuwād 'Abdul Bāqī of *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim, it contains 3033 *aḥādīth*. His method of numbering is not based on *isnād* system. He based his counting on subjects. We know *Muḥaddithīn* usually count by *isnād*. Therefore, if we apply their method, the number would increase perhaps to double.

Exegeses or Commentaries

There are many commentaries on this book. The most popular and widely used one is that of Imām an-Nawawī, (d.676) called *Al-Minhāj fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim b. Al-Ḥajjāj*. This commentary has been published several times.

19 - Ibn Khair, *Fihrist* 102.

20 - Ibn Khair, *ibid.*, 98.

21 - MU. *Ṣalāt* 63.

ABŪ 'Abdur Raḥmān Aḥmad bin Shu'aib b. 'Alī bin Sinān bin Baḥr al-Khurāsānī an-Nasā'ī WAS BORN in 215 A.H. He took extensive journey to learn *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ. He started travelling for this purpose when he was 15 years old. He learnt *aḥādīth* in Khurāsān, Iraq, Arabia, Syria, Egypt and al-Jazīra etc. He was a great scholar and critic. Some of the later scholars even esteemed him higher than Imām Muslim in his knowledge of *aḥādīth*. He went for *Jihād* accompanying the Governor of Egypt. He was very brave, and in the military camp he used to try to guide the governor and army to teach them *sunna* of the Prophet ﷺ and asked them to follow it. Meanwhile, he did not attach himself to the company of the governor. He lived in Egypt for a long time. We know about his son 'Abdul Karīm, himself a *muḥaddith*, and a narrator of *sunan mujtabā'* who died in Egypt in 344 A.H.²²

He was selective in his material, and did not use some very important material because of one of the narrators Ibn Lahi'ah was labeled as a weak narrator, because Ibn Lahi'ah's books were burnt and he had to depend on other scholars' copies of the same work. But as these copies did not bear the name of Ibn Lahi'ah in reading certificate, therefore Ibn Lahi'ah was supposed not to transmit any *ḥadīth* from those books.

Nasā'ī was very accurate in his recording. There was some misunderstanding between him and his teacher al-Ḥārith b. Miskīn. Therefore, Nasā'ī did not participate in the circle of al-Ḥārith but used to sit somewhere from where he could learn what was taught without being seen. When recording those *aḥādīth* Nasā'ī used to write: I heard this *ḥadīth* while it was read to al-Ḥārith bin Miskīn.

His Works

He compiled many works, some of which were:

As-Sunan al Kubrā

22 - Ibn Khair, *Fihrist*, 117.

As-Sunan al-Mujtabā
Kitāb at-Tamyīz
Kitāb aḍ-Ḍu'afā'
Khaṣā'is 'Alī
Musnad 'Alī
Musnad Mālik
Manāṣik al-Ḥajj
Tafsīr

It is quite possible that some of the above mentioned books may be the part of *as-Sunan al-Kubrā*.

Sunan of Nasā'ī

However, his most famous work is *as-Sunan al-Mujtabā*, which is, as a matter of fact, selection from *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* with some additions. It is said that when he compiled his great book *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* and presented it to the Governor of Ramlah, the governor asked him whether or not all the *aḥādīth* recorded into it are authentic, Nasā'ī replied in the negative. The governor asked him to select only authentic ones, thus by this way *Mujtabā* was compiled. But Nasā'ī did not content himself even in this book with authentic *aḥādīth* only. He recorded even weak *aḥādīth* as well. Thus, it seems that the story of the governor is of doubtful nature.

Actually it is a part of his methodology. He tries to record the different *isnāds* of *aḥādīth*, then records the *isnād* where some mistakes have been committed by narrators, then explains what is correct.²³ Thus he recorded the weak *aḥādīth* as well, but mostly to show what defect they had.

It was assumed for a long time that *as-Sunan al-Kubrā* has been lost, but الحمد لله lately it has been discovered in Turkey and half of it is in Mau, my home town in India.

Commentaries on Sunan of Nasā'ī

In this regard the book of Nasā'ī did not attract the attention of early scholars. Much later Suyūṭī wrote a short commentary on the book, titled: *Zahrur Rabā' Alā Al-Mujtabā*, which has been published several times.

Nasā'ī died in 303 A.H. However, there is difference among scholars about the cause as well as the place of his death.

23 - Ibn Rajab, *Sharḥ 'Ilal*, 15 b.

Imām Abū Dā'ūd

Abū Dā'ūd Sulaimān bin al-Ash'ath al-Azdi as-Sijistānī was born in 202 A.H. He must have studied the Qur'ān, Arabic literature and some other subjects as it was the custom of the time before beginning the study of *ḥadīth*. He travelled extensively for the study of *ḥadīth*. It is reported that he journeyed to Khurāsān, Rayy, Harat, Kūfah, Baghdād, Ṭarsūs, Damascus, Egypt and Baṣra. We find him in Baghdād in 221 A.H. It means that he started his journey for the learning of *ḥadīth* while he was less than 20 years old. He spent 20 years in Ṭarsūs.

He gained a wide reputation in his lifetime. Baṣrah was deserted due to disturbance of Zanj in 257 A.H. The Governor Abū Aḥmad visited Abū Dā'ūd in his house in Baghdād and requested that he move to Baṣrah so that the deserted city may be rehabilitated by his presence and gathering of the scholars and students.

The scholars are unanimous about his great ability, trustworthiness, honesty and accuracy. He was not only a narrator of *aḥādīth* and a good collector and compiler, but also a good lawyer and a very good critic. It is interesting to read that while criticizing the *aḥādīth*, he sometimes checked the written material, papers, and ink to discover their age. He criticized his own son 'Abdullah, denouncing him as a liar.

His Family

He was married and had children. One of his teenaged sons used to go with him to study in the circle of *ḥadīth* scholars.

Abu Dā'ūd died on Friday, 15th Shawwāl, 275 in Baṣrah.

His Works

Al-Marāsīl

Masā'il al-Imām Aḥmad

An-Nāsikh wal-Mansūkh

Risālah fī Waṣf Kitāb as-Sunan

Az-Zuhd
Ijābāt 'an Sawalāt Al-Ājurrī
As'ilah 'an Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal
Tasmiyat al-Akhwān
K. al-Qadr
Al-Ba'th wan-Nushūr
Al-Masā'il allati ḥalafa 'alaihā al-Imām Aḥmad
Dalā'il an-Nubuwwat
Faḍā'il al-Anṣār
Musnad Mālik
Ad-Du'ā'
Ibtidā' al-Wahy
At-Tafarrud fis Sunan
Akhbār al-Khawārij
A'lām an-Nubuwwat.²⁴
Sunan

Nature of Sunan Books

We have seen earlier the meaning of *sunna*, (plural *sunan*) but when the authors of *ḥadīth* books titled their books *sunan*, they meant that the book had been chapterized according to legal chapter such as *ṭahāra*, *ṣalāt*, *zakāt* etc. related on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ, and the opinions of the Companions are usually not mentioned in it.

Therefore these *sunan* books do not contain the *aḥādīth* concerning morality, history, and *zuhd* etc.

Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd

It seems that he compiled his book *Sunan* while he stayed in Ṭarsus for twenty years. He selected some four thousand eight hundred *aḥādīth* from 500,000 for this purpose. He was contented with one or two *aḥādīth* only in every chapter. He wrote to the scholars of Makkah explaining this:

"ولم أكتب في الباب إلا حديثاً أو حديثين ، وإن كان في الباب أحاديث
 صحاح فإنه يكثر ، وإنما أردت قرب منفعتي"

"I do not record more than one or two *aḥādīth* in every chapter though there were other authentic *aḥādīth* concerning the

same chapter, as it would be *كثير* too much as I meant one which could be used easily".²⁵

He said that even four *aḥādīth* out of them are sufficient for a man in this life and the hereafter.

The book was very widely circulated in the author's life itself. 'Alī b. Ḥasan said that he learnt this book six times from Abū Dā'ūd. The book is one of the best and more comprehensive than others on the subject of legal *aḥādīth*.

It ought to be remembered that not all the *aḥādīth* recorded by Abū Dā'ūd in this book are authentic. Abū Dā'ūd himself pointed out many weak *aḥādīth*, and there are *aḥādīth* not mentioned by him as weak but the scholars counted them as weak. Why did Abū Dā'ūd record some weak *aḥādīth* in his book *Sunan*?

In the opinion of Abū Dā'ūd a weak *ḥadīth*—if it were not very weak, just like some student had 50% of the mark—is better than the personal opinion of the scholars. Therefore, he recorded them instead of the legal opinions of the early scholars.

Commentaries on Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd

Many commentaries have been written on the book, and the best one available is that of Shamsul Ḥaq 'Azīmābādī's, *'Awn al-Ma'būd Sharḥ Sunan Abi Dā'ūd*. An equally good commentary on *Sunan* is *Badh al-Majhūd fī Ḥall Abi Dā'ūd* by Khalīl Aḥmad Anṣārī (d.1346). Another very important work has been published under the title *Tahdhīb Sunan Abi Dā'ūd* edited by Aḥmad Shākir and others in 8 volumes in Cairo, 1367-69/1948-50. It contains the books of Mundhirī and Ibn al-Qayyim, both leading scholars of seventh and eight century of Hijra. Lately a very valuable study of Abū Dā'ūd and his works has been published by a famous scholar Muḥammad Ṣabbāgh.

Many books on *Sunan* basis have been compiled. Here is a small list of those books. We will discuss some of them in detail.

Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd
Sunan of Tirmidhī
Sunan of Nasā'ī: Kubrā and Muḥtabā
Sunan of Ibn Mājah
Sunan of Aḥmad b. 'Ubaid

24 - Ibn Khair, *Fihrist*, 110. *A'lām an-Nubuwwat* may be the same as *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwat*.

25 - Abū Dā'ūd, His letters to Makkans, p. 23.

Sunan of Ismā'īl al-Qāḍī
Sunan of Baihaqī
Sunan of Ibn Juraij
Sunan of Khallāl
Sunan of Dāraqūṭnī
Sunan of Dārimī
Sunan of Sa'īd b. Manṣūr
Sunan of Sahl b. Abū Sahl
Sunan of Shāfi'ī
Sunan of Mūsā b. Ṭāriq

Imām Tirmidhī

MUḤAMMAD bin 'Īsa bin Saura bin Mūsā bin al-Ḍaḥḥāk Mat-Tirmidhī was born in the year 209 A.H. He began *riḥlah* for the study of *ḥadīth* most probably in 235 A.H. and returned to his home town Khurāsān before 250 A.H. He compiled his work after this date. He was very much influenced by Bukhārī, as in his book *'Ilal* he explicitly states that he did not find one like Bukhārī in Iraq or Khurāsān.

Tirmidhī died on 13th Rajab 279 A.H.

His Works

Al-Jāmī' Al-Mukhtaṣar min as-Sunan 'an Rasulillah
Tawārīkh

Al-'Ilal

Al-'Ilal al-Kabīr

Shamā'il

Asmā' as-Ṣaḥābah

Al-Asmā' wal Kunā

Al-Āthār al-Mauqūfa

His most famous work is Al-Jāmī' or As-Sunan at-Tirmidhī.

Aims of the Author

- a. To collect the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet systematically.
- b. To discuss the legal opinions of early Imāms regarding the subject. Therefore he mentioned only those *aḥādīth* which were mentioned by the early scholars as the basis for their legal decisions. However, there are a few *aḥādīth*, may be three or four, which are exempted from this rule.
- c. To discuss the quality of *aḥādīth* and if there was any 'illa, weakness or sickness, he would explain it. The book has been divided in 50 sub-books (*kitāb*). It contains altogether 3956 *aḥādīth*.

Nature of the Book *al-Jāmi'* in *Hadīth* Collection

A book containing all kinds of *aḥādīth* is called *Jāmi'*, that is, it contains *aḥādīth* concerning *Siyar* (International law) *Adab* (social behaviour) *Tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qur'ān), *'Aqīda* (belief) *Fitan*; *Aḥkām* (Laws of all kinds) *Al-Ashrāt* and *Manāqib* (Biographies of the Prophet ﷺ and certain Companions). As the *Sunan* of Tirmidhī contains all these chapters, therefore it is named, *Jāmi'* as well. This book was compiled on 10 Dhul-Ḥijja 270 A.H.

His Method in Arranging His Materials

Tirmidhī puts the heading, and then mentions mostly one or two *aḥādīth* from which the heading can be extracted. Afterwards he gives his opinions about the quality of *ḥadīth*, whether it is authentic or good or weak. For this purpose he uses a terminology not used by early scholars. He also mentions the opinions of early Jurists, Lawyers and Imams concerning the subject. More than this, he also indicates if there were *aḥādīth* transmitted by the other Companions concerning the same subject, even if it has its connection in a wider range.

Commentaries on the *Sunan* of Tirmidhī

There have been many commentaries compiled on this work. The best one available at present is the work of 'Abdur Raḥmān Mubārakpurī, titled: *Tuḥfatal Aḥwadhī* in four volumes and has been reprinted several times.

Imām Ibn Mājah

ABŪ 'Abdullāh Muḥammad bin Yazīd ar-Rab'ī, known as Ibn Mājah al-Qazwīnī, he was born in 209 A.H. It is not mentioned at what age he began the study of *aḥādīth*. 'Ali b. Muḥammad al-Tanāfasī (d.233) was the earliest of his teachers. It means that Ibn Mājah began the study of *ḥadīth* before 233 A.H. at about 15 or 20 as it was the custom of that period. He began his journey for the learning of *ḥadīth* after 230 A.A. He visited Khurāsān, Iraq, Ḥijāz, Syria, Egypt etc. He died on Monday, 21 of Ramdān, 273 A.H. His son 'Abdullāh has been mentioned as the one who put him in the grave, and was assisted by his two uncles. The scholars are unanimous on Ibn Mājah's great scholarship and trustworthiness.

His Works

Tafsīr

Al-Tārīkh, (biography of the narrator of *aḥādīth*)

Sunan

At present we have no information about his *Tafsīr* and *Tārīkh*. It seems that both of them have been lost for a long time. However, *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah is very famous. Hundreds of libraries contain manuscripts of this work. This book has been published many times. In a later period it became one of the six famous books which are called *الأصول الستة* 'six principal works' or sometimes *الصحاح الستة* 'the six authentic books.' It does not mean that all the *aḥādīth* recorded in these six books are authentic, it means that majority of them are authentic, with exception of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī and that of Muslim in which all are.

His Methodology for Selecting the Material

He did not mention his criteria for selecting the materials. Neither did he mention the aim he had in his mind in compiling this work. His book is of the lowest grade in the collection of the six principal works. His books contain 4341 *aḥādīth*; out of them

3002 have been recorded by authors of the remaining five books, either by all or by one of them. There remain 1339 *aḥādīth* which have been recorded by Ibn Mājah alone and not recorded by the other five. These may be put in the following gradings:

428 *aḥādīth* out of 1339 are authentic.

199 *aḥādīth* out of 1339 are good.

613 *aḥādīth* out of 1339 are of weak *isnād*.

99 *aḥādīth* out of 1339 are of *munkar* or *makdhūb*.²⁶

The other scholars, such as Abū Dā'ūd and Tirmidhi also recorded weak *aḥādīth*, but they mostly noted them in their book, but Ibn Mājah even when he recorded a false *ḥadīth*, went on silently. Therefore a lot of discussion has gone on among scholars about this book to the effect that some other books deserve to be mentioned in six principal works instead of that by Ibn Mājah. Scholars like Ibn al-Athīr (d.606), Mughlatā'ī (d.762), Ibn Ḥajar (d.852) and Qusṭallānī (d.923), disliked putting this book with the other five books. As a matter of fact, to count it as one of the six principal works or to take it out of them would not affect the book by any way. Because, every *ḥadīth* recorded in these books is searched according to its own merit and not as a *ḥadīth* quoted from one of the six works.

How it Became One of the Six Books

There is nothing reported from the early scholars that there are or there ought to be six principal works. It came accidentally due to literary process. In the third and the fourth century hundreds of books were compiled. Some of them became more famous than others. Therefore scholars began to write books on the biographies of the narrators whose *aḥādīth* have been recorded in a certain book, so that other scholars may easily judge the value of every *ḥadīth*.

For example, Ibn 'Adī (d.365), Daraquṭnī (d.385) al-Kalābādhī (d.398) and many other scholars compiled works on the narrators who have been mentioned by Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. This is not only with Bukhārī but the same happened with other works such as books of Muslim, Abū Dā'ūd etc.

In later periods, scholars began to combine two or more books, such as the combination of the materials of Bukhārī and Muslim by Ḥumaidī, Ṣaghānī etc. On the same pattern some

scholars began to combine the two works written on the biographies of Bukhārī and Muslim.

However, 'Abdul Ghanī b. 'Abdul Wāhid al-Maqdīsī (d. 600) compiled a work called *Al-Kamāl* in which he collected all the narrators who have been mentioned in any of the six books, namely, Shaikh of Bukhārī, Shaikh of Muslim, *Sunan* of Nasā'ī, *Sunan* of Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan* of Tirmidhī, and *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah. This work became the base for many famous works on the dictionary of the narrators, such as Mizzī, Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr, Mughlatā'ī, Khazrajī and Ibn Ḥajar etc.

Thus the reckoning of Ibn Mājah as one of the six principal books is due to Maqdīsī's work. Later on scholars began to mention these six works together. As their narrators were mentioned in a single book, these six books began to appear as a single unit. But to put any book in this single unit or to take it out does not add to, or detract from, the value of the book or material in it, because, as I have mentioned earlier, every single *ḥadīth* is tested according to its own merit and not by the prestige of its recorder.

Main Feature of *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah

The book has very little repetition, and it is one of the best in arrangement of chapters and sub-chapters, a fact which is recognized by many scholars. It is divided—in the edition of M. Fuwād 'Abdul Bāqī—in 37 chapters (*kitāb*) and contains 4341 *aḥādīth*.

Commentaries of *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah

It has not been very lucky in attracting the attention of scholars. Very few commentaries have been written. The best one perhaps—is of Mughlatā'ī (d.762) titled: *Al-I'lām bi Sunanihi 'Alaihis-Salām* (incomplete) and not published yet.

26 - F. 'Abdul Bāqī, note on *Sunan* Ibn Mājah, pp. 1519-20.

10
Imām Ṭabarānī

ABUL Qāsim Sulaimān bin Aḥmad bin Ayyūb al-Ṭabarānī al-Lakhamī was born in 'Akka in the month of Ṣafar 260 A.H. His family belonged to Yemenī tribe Lakhm who migrated to Quds and settled down there. His mother belonged to 'Akka. It seems that his father was very fond of education, so he directed his son for the learning of *ḥadīth* in very early age. He began the study of *ḥadīth* in early age. Dhahabī mentioned that Ṭabarānī began to learn *aḥādīth* in 273 A.H. in Ṭabarīya. It means that he was at that time about 13 years old. In 274 A.H. he went to Quds for the study. In 275 A.H. he was in Qaiṣariya for the same purpose. He made extensive journeys for this purpose and visited Syria, Egypt, Yemen, Arabian Peninsula, the present-day Iran, Afghanistan etc. He spent some 30 years in the learning of *ḥadīth* and the number of his teachers exceeds one thousand. He visited Aṣḥfahān for the sake of study in 290 A.H. After finishing his study in that city he went to other places, but he returned to Aṣḥfahān and chose it as his home and lived there for more than half a century. Ṭabarānī died in 360 A.H.

It seems that the governor of Aṣḥfahān Ibn Rustum fixed for him certain amounts and he used to receive it. He is one of those scholars who compiled very large number of books.

Here is an incomplete list of his works. Most of his books perished in early days. Sezgin mentions some 13 works under his name, even not all of them belong to Ṭabarānī. Thus about 10 of his works are known to us at present.

He has not been so lucky in attracting the attention of modern scholars. Only one of his books *al-Mu'jam aṣ-Ṣaghīr* has been published and that too is full of mistakes.

His Works

Musnad al-'Ashara
Musnad ash-Shāmiyīn
An-Nawādir
Fawā'id

Musnad Abū Hurairah
Musnad 'Āisha
Tafsīr al-Qur'ān
Du'ā'
Dalā'il an-Nubuwwat
Aḥādīth at-Ṭiwāl
Ḥadīth Shu'bah
Ḥadīth A'mash
Ḥadīth Auzā'ī
Ḥadīth Shaibān
Ḥadīth Ayyūb
'Ishrat an-Nisā'
Musnad Abū Dharr
Ar-Ru'yā'
Al-Jūd
Faḍl Ramadān
Al-Farā'id
Ar-Radd alā al-Mu'tazilah
Aṣ-Ṣalāt 'ala ar-Rasūl
Aḥādīth Zuhri from Anas
Aḥādīth Ibn al-Munkadir from Jābir
Ḥadīth man Kadhab
Akhbār 'Umar b. 'Abdul-'Azīz etc
Al-Mu'jam as-Ṣaghīr

But his most famous work is *Al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* in 12 volumes.

This is the encyclopedia of *ḥadīth* which contains not only *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ but a great deal of historical information as well. This book has absorbed totally or partially hundreds of early works. The work ought to be published after critical edition. Several libraries contain different volumes of this work, but at present it is difficult to say that it would complete the work or not. The second work which was very dear to Ṭabarānī is his *al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ*, in which he collected mostly rare information and knowledge concerning *aḥādīth*, some of the authentic and other non-authentic. It is complete in two huge volumes in Istanbul and needs editing and publishing.

The smallest one in this series is his *al-Mu'jam as-Ṣaghīr* which has been published twice. The second edition is the worst one. In this book he recorded one *ḥadīth* on the authority of each of his teachers. Thus the numbers of his teachers exceeds

thousands.

He died in Aṣfahān on 28th Dhīqa'da 860, at the age of one hundred years and ten months.

Nature of *Mu'jam* Work

It differs from one author to another one. Sometimes it is arranged according to alphabetical names of the Companions, other times according to regions and some other times according to the alphabetical names of the teachers of compilers as has been done by Ṭabarānī in his *Mu'jam aṣ-Ṣaghīr*.

Here is a list of some famous *Mu'jams*:

Mu'jam Ṣafar by Silafī

Mu'jam Ṣafar by Sammān

Mu'jam by Ismā'īlī

Mu'jam by Ibn al-A'rābī

Mu'jam by Ibn Shāhīn

Mu'jam al-Kabīr by Dhahabī

Mu'jam Niswān by Ibn 'Asākir

Mu'jam Shuyūkh by Ḥākim

Mu'jam Shuyūkh by Dimyātī

Mu'jam Shuyūkh by Ibn al-Muqrī

Imām Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī

ABU as-Sa'ādāt al-Mubārak bin Muḥammad bin 'Abdul Karīm al-Jazarī was born in 554 A.H. in Jazīra' of Ibn 'Umar, a town north of Mauṣil; In 565 A.H. He belongs to a famous literary family. They were three brothers. Mubārak b. Muḥammad, a *Muḥaddith*, 'Alī b. Muḥammad, a historian, author of *al-Kāmil fil-Tārīkh*, Naṣrullah b. Muḥammad, a man of literature, and author of many literary works. It is very surprising that all of them are known by the name of Ibn al-Athīr. He came to Mauṣil and made it his permanent residence.

Ibn al-Athīr was a very religious man, and a scholar of very high rank. He was the leading figure in Arabic language, exegesis of the Qur'ān, grammar, linguistics, *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* (Islamic law).

He continuously held important advisory posts in government. Several governors and even the government changed, but all of the rulers were in need of him. He was offered a ministerial post but refused it. His refusal caused some anger to the authorities, but he explained his stand and satisfied them.

His Works

He compiled many works in different fields of knowledge. Here is a list of a few of them.

An-Nihāyah fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth

Ash-Shāfi fī Sharḥ Musnad ash-Shāfi 'ī

Al-Inṣāf bainal-Kashf wa al-Kashshāf

Jāmi' al-Uṣūl fī Aḥādīth ar-Rasūl

In later days he suffered from gout (joint pain) in his leg and was unable to stretch his leg or walk.

The King and ministers used to visit him asking for his experience and sincere advice. Later on a physician came from Maghrib and treated with some ointment. There was good improvement but Ibn Al-Athīr asked his brother to pay the physician and discharge him. The brother was astonished and asked him why he was taking such a decision while there is good

improvement. He replied: "Well, you are right, but now I am in comfort from the authorities. I dislike going to their doors, and prefer to live in peace and comfort. When I was healthy I used to go to their doors, now they come to me in important matters. Therefore rest of the life I want to spend in freedom from those people". His brother followed his advice, and Ibn al-Athīr was contented to live with the severe pain.

It is said that all his literary works are productions of his days of illness. He used to dictate to his students and by this way his books were compiled.

He died in 606 A.H. in Mauṣil.

Main Features of *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*

He collected all the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ recorded in:

Mū'atta' of Imām Mālik

Saḥīḥ of Bukhārī

Saḥīḥ of Muslim

Jāmi' of Tirmidhī

Sunan of Nasā'ī

Sunan of Abū Dā'ūd

First of all he omitted all the *asānīd*. Afterwards he arranged the chapters according to alphabetic order. For example in *Sunan* work, first chapter begins with *Ṭahāra* (cleansing) but the letter T comes in the sixteenth number. Thus his book began with *Imān* and *Islām* إيمان والإسلام which are written in Arabic by the first letter A. When he records a *ḥadīth* he mentions that out of those six authors who recorded it in their books. He mostly keeps the wordings of Bukhārī and Muslim, and describes if there were variants in expression. Then he gives the meanings of the difficult words. However, when consulting this book and quoting from it, one should not refer to original works such as Bukhārī to give expression that this original work was consulted. In case one wants to be sure of exact words of the authority mentioned, one must go to the original work.

However, the book is very useful to scholars. It has been published more than once, and the best edition until now is the edition of 'Abdul Qādir al-Arnāwūt of Damascus.

Imām al-Haithmī

ALĪ bin Abū Bakr bin Sulaimān al-Haithmī was born in Rajab 735 A.H. He studied the Qur'an and after reaching the age of maturity, he joined the famous *ḥadīth* scholar of his time, Zainuddīn al-'Irāqī. He accompanied Zainuddīn in most of his journeys for Ḥajj or for learning of *ḥadīth*. Thus Zainuddīn was his teacher as well as his colleague, because both of them studied together under many famous scholars.

Zainuddīn gave al-Haithamī his daughter in marriage. Moreover, he taught Haithamī the science of *ḥadīth*. Under his guidance Haithamī learned the method of extracting *zawā'id*, that is to select only those *aḥādīth* which are not mentioned by some particular scholars. Haithamī was a great expert on this subject. He compiled many works on *zawā'id*, that is he collected only those *aḥādīth* which were in the said book but were not found in the six principal books.

He compiled *zawā'id* of *Musnad* Aḥmad on six principal works and named it *Ghāyatul Maqṣad fī Zawā'id Aḥmad*, and *Musnad* of al-Bazzāz and named it *al-Baḥr az-Zakḥkhār fī Zawā'id al-Bazzāz*, and that of *Musnad* of Abū Ya'lā, and that of *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* of Ṭabarānī and named it *al-Badr al-Munīr fī Zawā'id al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr* and that of *al-Mu'jam aṣ Ṣaghīr* and *al-Awsaṭ* and named it *Majma' al-Baḥrain fī Zawā'id al-Mu'jamāin*.

Besides these he compiled many other works on the same pattern. However, he collected all those above mentioned works in one single work named *Majma' az-Zawā'id wa Manba' al-Fawā'id*. He dropped the *isnād* totally, arranged the book according to *Jāmi'* and *Sunan* pattern, explaining the grade of *ḥadīth* or mentioning names of narrators who were impugned, though his gradings were not always acceptable to later scholars. The book was published in 10 volumes by Qudsi in Cairo in 1352 A.H.

The author stripped *aḥādīth* of *isnād* for the sake of brevity, but it created a sort of defect in the work. However, it is a great encyclopedia of *ḥadīth*. Haithamī was praised very much by his contemporaries and later scholars. He died on 19th Ramadan 807 A.H.

Imām as-Suyūṭī

JALĀLUDDĪN ‘Abdur Raḥmān bin Kamāluddīn as-Suyūṭī was born on 1st Rajab 849 A.H. His father died while he was only six years old. He was reared in the guardianship of Ash-Shihāb b. Aṭ-Ṭabbākh. However, he had very good opportunity for learning. In the list of his teachers we find almost all the famous scholars of his time and their number reaches up to 150 scholars.

The number of works compiled by him is about six hundred, some of them in a page or two while some others in many volumes. His main activity was to abridge the books of early scholars. By this he gained the enmity of many scholars who accused him of stealing the materials of early scholars.

He was principal of many academic institutions. Due to certain conspiracies and jealousies he was relieved of the post. Later on, when the same post was offered to him he refused to accept it. He was very much respected and high ranking officials used to visit him.

His Works

As I mentioned earlier his works are in great numbers reaching up to 600. The one which concerns us here is his comprehensive collection of *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ.

We have seen earlier that Ibn al-Athīr and Haithamī collected *aḥādīth* from several books and arranged them into one book.

However Ibn Ḥajar (d.852) thought of collecting all the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ in a single book but he abandoned this idea. Later on his pupil Suyūṭī thought on the same line and compiled the following works:

Al-Jāmi’ al-Kabīr or Jam’ul-Jawāmi’

Suyūṭī intended to collect all the *aḥādīth* of the Prophet ﷺ in a single book.

He divided the work in two sections:

a) Sayings of the Prophet ﷺ.

b) Actions of the Prophet ﷺ.

Into the first section, he arranged alphabetically the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ.

However, in the second section concerning actions, he arranged them according to the Companions separately. He omitted the *isnād* totally and referred to the authorities who endorsed the particular *ḥadīth* in his book.

He provided a lengthy list of the works on *ḥadīth*, whose material he had collected already. He mentioned the list so that in the event of his death any other scholar could continue the work.

However, he died without its completion. During this period, he made two small collections mostly from the material of his *Al-Jāmi’ al-Kabīr* “the Grand Collection.” These are:

1. *Al-Jami’ aṣ-Ṣaghīr* which contains 10010 *aḥādīth*. There are the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ arranged in alphabetical order without *isnād*. He completed this work on 907 A.H.

2. *Ziyādāt ‘ala al-Jāmi’ aṣ-Ṣaghīr*.

After finishing *al-Jāmi’ aṣ-Ṣaghīr*, he collected quite good quantity of material and arranged them in the pattern of *Jāmi’ Ṣaghīr* and made it the supplement. However Yusuf an-Nabahānī mixed the material of these books together in one unit on the pattern of Suyūṭī and named it *Al-Fatḥul Kabīr fī Dammaz-Ziyādāt ilā al-Jāmi’ aṣ-Ṣaghīr*. It was published in three volumes in Egypt in 1351/1932. As the original work was arranged in alphabetical order and not according to subject, therefore it was very difficult to use these books.

An Indian scholar ‘Alī Ḥisāmuddin (d.975 in Makkah) known as Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī arranged all the material of these three books according to legal chapter and named it *Kanzul ‘Ummal fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wal-Af’āl*. This is the greatest collection of *aḥādīth* in a single book. The book has been published twice in Hyderabad in India.

As the collection contains all sorts of *aḥādīth* and Suyūṭī’s judgments on the authenticity of *ḥadīth* are not sound, therefore, the book is not useful for general reading. However, there is a need for a comprehensive collection.

Suyūṭī died in 911 A.H. in Cairo.

Books on Subjects Related to *Hadīth*

I HAVE described only a few books out of many hundreds relating purely to *hadīth* literature. However, there are many topics and problems related to *hadīth* and *hadīth* literature and many books have been compiled on every related subject. Below I am going to give a list of some subjects on which books are found in *hadīth* literature.

Let us begin first with the general conditions of teaching and learning.

1. There are books on the behaviour, etiquette and conditions which ought to be fulfilled by the teacher. One of the best books on the subject is *Al-Jāmi' li Akhlāq ar-Rāwī wa Adab as-Sāmī'* by Khaṭīb al-Baghādī.

2. On the method to be applied by teachers in dictation, there is a good book called *Adab al-Imlā' wa al-Istimlā'* by Sam'ānī.

3. About students and journey for learning of *aḥādīth*, there is a book called *Ar-Riḥlah* by Khaṭīb.

However, there are many chapters in *Al-Jāmi'* (mentioned under No. 1) concerning students.

4. As far as it concerns the question of writing down of *hadīth*, there is a good book by Khaṭīb Baghdādī called *Taqyīd al-'Ilm*. A comprehensive study of the subject has been carried out by the present writer, titled: *Studies in Early Hadīth Literature*.

5. What method should be used for revision and corrections after writing down *aḥādīth*, one of the best books on the subject is *Al-Ilmā'* by Qādī 'Ayāḍ.

6. To evaluate the certain certificates given to students by teachers, there are books on the subject such as *Al-Wajāza fī Tajwīz al-Ijāzah* by Mu'ammarī.²⁷

I have described earlier, that *aḥādīth* have been sorted out by different kinds. There are books containing only one sort of *aḥādīth*, such as:

27 - *Tadrīb* II, 52.

7. Books containing *Mutawātir aḥādīth*²⁸ such as: *Al-Azhār al-Mutanathira* by Suyūfī.

8. Books containing *aḥādīth Qudsi*²⁹ such as: *Al-Ithāfāt as-Sanīya* by Manāwī.

9. Books containing *aḥādīth* which had 'illa, some hidden defect such as: *Al-'Ilal* by Dāraqutnī.

10. Some orders of the Prophet ﷺ were abrogated by him in later period. There are books containing this sort of *aḥādīth*, such as *Al-I'tibār fī an-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh min al-Āthār* by Ḥāzimī.

11. Certain sayings of the Prophet ﷺ had relation with certain occasion, to describe these occasions there are books such as: *Asbāb Warūd al-Aḥādīth* by Ḥusainī.

12. Sometimes one finds two *aḥādīth* seemingly contradictory, to clear their meanings and to reconcile them, there are books such as *Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth* by Shāfī'ī, and *Tā'wīl Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth* by Ibn Qutaiba.

13. Every subject has its own dictionary. We find legal dictionaries, technical dictionaries etc. Likewise there are dictionaries relating to *aḥādīth*. There are many dictionaries of this sort, one of them commonly used by scholars is *Nihāyah* by Ibn al-Athīr in four volumes.

14. When it comes to commentaries, there are hundreds of books of commentaries on *hadīth*. Sezgin has referred to 56 commentaries on *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī only. If we collect it with other books which deal with *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī by one way or other, it would exceed one hundred.

Even pure *hadīth* literature has been divided in many subdivisions according to the methods applied by compilers in arranging the material. I have discussed earlier the books called (1) *Musnad*, (2) *Ṣaḥīḥ*, (3) *Jāmi'* (4) *Sunan*, (5) *Mu'jam*, and (6) *Zawā'id*.

However, there are many other divisions such as *Mustakhrāj*, *Juz'*, *Fawā'id*, *Masha'ikh*. *Mustakhrāj*, that is a later scholar chooses one of the early works like *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī, and narrates the same *hadīth* in his book passing Bukhārī, joining *isnād* of Bukhārī in upper part mostly with the teacher of Bukhārī. There are many books written on this pattern by later scholars.

28 - For definition see above p. 50.

29 - For definition see above p.52

Juz'

This sort of book contains either a good collection of *ahādīth* on a single topic as *Juz' al-Qirā't* by Bukhārī, or they collect narration of a single narrator in one book like *Juz' of Ibn 'Arafa* etc. It exceeds a few thousand.³⁰

Mauḍū'āt

On spurious *ahādīth* there are many books, for example by Ibn al-Jauzī, Suyūfī, Mulla 'Alī Qārī and Shaukānī. The work of Mulla 'Alī Qārī *Mauḍū'at-Kabīr* and of Shaukānī, *al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah* are very useful for general readers.

No doubt there were no facilities of modern printing and thus it was not possible to make indexing system as it is used now. But *Muḥaddithīn* developed from the first century a method for learning called *Aṭrāf*, that is to refer only to beginning of *ḥadīth*. Basing on this system many books were compiled which were used as indexing of *ḥadīth*. One of the best ones which is still in print is entitled *Tuḥfatul Ashrāf* by Mizzī.

When it comes to the biographies of the narrators, it may be divided into several categories.

a. Histories of a particular city. It was the fashion of the Muslim scholars that they used to write the history of the cities, which were actually the biographies of the famous scholars of the city. It need not be mentioned that reference to *Muḥaddithīn* in these histories has the lion's share. We may say in a few early centuries, every city in the Muslim world had not one history, but several, with many supplements. For example, *History of Baghdād* by Khaṭīb (d. 463) which has been published in 14 volumes has several supplements such as supplement of Sam'ānī in 15 volumes, of Dubaithī in three volumes, of Najjār in 30 volumes.

History of Damascus by Ibn 'Asākir (d.571) is in 80 volumes. Even this grand history has many supplements. Second method for compiling biographies was to compile a book on the narrators mentioned in certain books. For example, biographies of the narrators whose name occur in the book of *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī, by Ibn Abū 'Adī, (d.365) Daraquṭnī (d.385), Kalābādhī (d.398), Al-Bājī (d.474) etc. This is not confined to *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī only but most of the famous books on *ahādīth* had this sort of books.

30 - Kaṭṭānī, *Risālah Mustafarḥah* 94.

The third method for compiling the biographies of narrators was to mention only one type of narrators such as trustworthy, (*thiqāt*) such as *Thiqāt* by Ibn Ḥibbān, 'Ijlī, Ibn Shāhīn etc. Or book on *weak* narrators. Even the weakness comes by different causes. For example: weakness due to failure of memory in old age. I may mention in this regard *Kashf al-Iltibās bi man Rumiya bil-Ikhtilāf* by Ibn al-'Ajamī or a sort of weakness because the narrator used to practice *tadlīs*. In this regard one of the best books is *Jāmī' at-Taḥṣīl* by al-'Alā'ī, etc.

However there are other books which deal with the weak narrators in general. The most famous one is *Al-Kāmil* by Ibn 'Adī, (d.365), still unpublished. One of the best books published on weak narrators is that of Dhahabī, called *Mizān al-I'tidāl*.

The fourth method for compiling the biographies of narrators was to mention the narrators irrespective of their weakness or trustworthiness or whether they lived in this city or that or whether their *ahādīth* were found in one book or another. One may mention in this regard *Tārīkh* of Ibn Mu'īn, of Al-Fasawī, of Ibn Abū Khaithama, of Ibn Abū Hātim ar-Razi and *At-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* of Bukhārī. The later two books have been published in Hyderabad.

As the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ had special reverence among the narrators, many books have been written on their biographies. One of the best ones is *Al-Iṣāba fi Tamyīz aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* by Ibn Ḥajar. Sometimes men become famous through their nicknames, اللقب. There are dictionaries of the people famous by nicknames exceeding fifty volumes³¹ called *Majmū'at al-Alqāb* by Ibn al-Fūfī.

Sometimes men are known by *kunya* 'surname' like Abu al-Qāsim, Abū Aḥmad, meaning father of Aḥmad. In Arab tradition, this is one of the means of respect, instead of naming him directly one might call the man father of so and so. There are many books written on *kunā*, because very frequently a narrator in *isnād* was mentioned by surname or *kunya*.

For early narrators one of the best ones is *Al-Kunā* by Dulābī

31 - Ziriklī, *A'lām* IV, 124.

(d.310) and the book has been published, in two volumes in Hyderabad, India.

There are so many other subjects and so many books that it needs a separate book on the subject. However, those who can read Arabic, may consult *ar-Risāla al-Mustaṭarfaḥ* by Kaṭṭānī, the best book available on the bibliography dealing with the subject of *ḥadīth* and related materials.

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Supplement
The Science of *Rijāl*
As a Method
In the Study of Ḥadīths

The Science of *Rijāl* as a Method In The Study of *Ḥadīths*

THE substance of this paper consists of the analysis of the variant versions of a single *ḥadīth*: a *ḥadīth* regarding the Prophet ﷺ visiting Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ while the latter was ill. The purpose of the exercise, however, is not to look at the *ḥadīth* but to look beyond it and behind it. I am arguing for the possibility of a science of *rijāl*: a science of evaluating the qualities of narrators of *ḥadīths* in their transmission of *ḥadīths*. Having established this possibility I will argue that:

1. The significance of the mass of textual material known as '*ḥadīths*' is best understood and explained in the light of such a science of *rijāl*.
2. Evaluating the factual contents of *ḥadīths* with the use of such a science will lead to results which are much more reliable than any of the methods modern scholars have proposed for the study of *ḥadīths*.
3. The methods of the *ḥadīth* scholars working within the classical Islamic style of *ḥadīth* study, the *muḥaddithīn*, in studying *ḥadīth* are at least similar to what I have described as *ḥadīth* study based on a science of *rijāl*.

Thus, with a *ḥadīth*, which has over a hundred variants, I make no attempt at all to evaluate the soundness of the *ḥadīth*, or to date it, or to separate 'fact' from 'embellishment' in the *ḥadīth*. I do not even wish to suggest that because there are so many versions of this *ḥadīth* one should think it is a sound *ḥadīth*. This is because the *ḥadīth* itself is not the subject of this paper. I am only interested in showing that by gathering together many variant versions of a *ḥadīth* it is possible to come to conclusions about the qualities of *ḥadīth* narrators in their

narrations of *ḥadīth*. One could evaluate the skill of a *ḥadīth* narrator in preserving and transmitting the words and meanings of a *ḥadīth*— regardless of whether such a narrator was writing down *ḥadīths*, whether he was memorizing them, or whether he was using some entirely different method. Moreover, such an evaluation of skills of a narrator is based on material which is public and currently available— it does not rely on some esoteric 'experience' of *ḥadīths* and it can even be quantified if one's tastes run in that direction.

In Ibn Ṣalāḥ's *Muqaddima*,¹ the most basic presentation of classical Islamic *ḥadīth* criticism we find the following statement:

يعرف كون الراوي ضابطاً بأن تعبير رواياته بروايات الثقات المعروفين بالضبط والإتقان، فإن وجدنا رواياته موافقة ولو من حيث المعنى لرواياتهم أو موافقة لها في الأغلب والمخالفة نادرة عرفنا حينئذ كونه ضابطاً ثباتاً، وإن وجدناه كثير المخالفة لهم عرفنا اختلال ضبطه ولم نحتاج بحديثه . والله أعلم .

"To know a narrator's control over his material (*dabt*) we compare his narrations with the narrations of sound narrators (*thiqāt*) who are well known for their control of their material and their thoroughness. If (1) we find his narrations to be in accord with their narrations, even if only in sense [and not in wording], or (2) we find that his narrations are usually in accord with their narrations and that he only rarely opposes them, then we will know that he is in control of his material and is reliable. But if we find that he often opposes [sound narrators] we will know that he is not reliable and we will not use his *ḥadīth* as a sound basis for argumentation. God only knows best."

The procedure of comparing variant versions of a text is familiar to Western scholars from the analysis of the variant versions of the Gospels. In the case of the *ḥadīth* I have discussed in this paper, Marston Speight has applied that same kind of procedure to this *ḥadīth* in an article devoted to the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd.² But the exercise I am undertaking is crucially different from such exercises: I am not concerned with

1- In 'Abd al-Rahīm b. Husayn al-'Irāqī's (d. 805) *Al-Taḥyīd wal-Īdāh: Sharḥ Muqaddimat Ibn Ṣalāḥ* (Madīnah: al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, 1969), 166.

2- R. Marston Speight, 'The Will of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ: The Growth of a Tradition', *Der Islam*, 50 (1973), 249—67. The *ḥadīth* of Sa'd is probably the *ḥadīth* which has received the most attention in Western literature. For an excellent survey see David Powers's articles, 'The Will of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ: A Reassessment' (*Studia Islamica*, 58 (1983), 3—53) and 'On Bequests in Early Islam' (*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 48 (1989), 185—200).

identifying the reliable texts or the reliable portions of the various texts I will study. Rather, I am interested in determining the possibility of reaching judgements regarding the *narrators* of these texts through a study in the variations in the texts as they are narrated through different narrators.

This attempt to reconstruct the reliability of narrators through a study of their texts is, in my opinion, the procedure Ibn Ṣalāḥ is outlining in the passage quoted. Although the study of the Gospels seems an appropriate analogy for the study of the *ḥadīths*, this is the point at which the analogy fails. There simply are not enough versions of each passage in the Gospels to be able to go beyond speculation about textual emendations to a study of the narrators of the texts themselves. One finds, for example, forty-five versions of the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd narrated through Zuhri. As we find seven students of Zuhri narrating these *ḥadīths*, it becomes possible to compare the narration of these *ḥadīths* through Zuhri to come to some tentative conclusions on their grasp of the material they were transmitting. It is this possibility which I would like to establish in this paper: that were this experiment to be repeated over a number of *ḥadīths* narrated through Zuhri, for example, we would be able to identify those of Zuhri's students whose narration of material from Zuhri is most reliable.

Once again it is important to spell out what I would like to avoid by this method: 'counting' narrations is entirely misleading; one has to 'weigh' them. In the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd we find twelve or thirteen versions being narrated through Mālik from Zuhri. But the consistency of these narrations is such that one would not want to leave them for the narrations of, say, Sa'd b. Ibrahīm, even if they were twice as many in number.

In fact, that there are a certain number of narrations which quote the text in a certain way depends on factors like the popularity of a text, or the fame of a narrator at a certain time. Such factors have nothing to do with the reliability of the text. Having many parallel narrations is useful, but determining the reliability of a narration is not a simple game of adding up narrations of two kinds and then deciding in favour of the more numerous.

The Phenomenon: The Correlation between Chains of Narrations and Texts Narrated:

The *ḥadīth* describing the Prophet's ﷺ visiting Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ during the latter's illness occurs in thirty-one *ḥadīth* collections.³ I have chosen to identify these *ḥadīths* as 114 in number.⁴ Version 4 is as follows:

حدثنا الحميدي حدثنا سفيان حدثنا الزهري قال: أخبرني عامر بن سعد بن أبي وقاص عن أبيه ، قال: مرضت بمكة مرضاً فأشفيت منه على الموت ، فأتاني النبي ﷺ يعودني ، فقلت : يا رسول الله ، إن لي مالاً كثيراً ، وليس يرثني إلا ابنتي ، فأتصدق بثلثي مالي ؟ ، قال : لا ، قال : قلت : فالشطر ؟ قال : لا ، قلت : للثلث ؟ قال : الثلث كبير ، إنك إن تركت ولدك أغنياء خير من أن تتركهم عائلة يتكففون الناس . وإنك لن تنفق نفقة إلا أجرت عليها ، حتى اللقمة ترفعها إلى في امرأتك ، فقلت : يا رسول الله ، أحلف عن هجري؟ فقال : لن تخلف بعدي فتعمل عملاً تريد به وجه الله إلا ازددت به رفعة ودرجة . ولعلك أن تخلف بعدي حتى ينتفع بك أقوام ويضرّ بك آخرون ، ولكن البائس سعد بن حولة يرثي له رسول الله ﷺ أن مات بمكة ، قال سفيان : وسعد بن حولة رجل من بني عامر بن لؤي .

"Ḥumaydī told us that Sufyān said: Zuhri related: Āmir b. Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ told me narrating from his father, that his father said: I became very ill in Makkah so that I came to the brink of death. So the Prophet ﷺ came to visit me. So I said, 'O Messenger ﷺ of God, I have a lot of wealth, and only my daughter is inheriting from me. May I give away two-thirds of my wealth as charity?' He said, 'No.' I said, 'How about a half?' He said, 'No.' I said, 'What about a third?' He said, 'A third is a large [amount]. It is better that you leave your offspring wealthy than that you leave them paupers, begging from people. You will be rewarded for whatever you spend, even for the morsel of food you put in your wife's mouth.' So I said, 'O Messenger ﷺ of God, will I only be left behind from my emigration?' He said, 'If you are left behind, for every deed you do for the pleasure of God you will increase in rank and stature. Perhaps you will be

left behind after me so that some people benefit from you while others are harmed by you. But the unfortunate one is Sa'd b. Khawla.' The Prophet ﷺ expressed sorrow at his death as he died in Makkah. Sufyān said: Sa'd b. Khawla is of the 'Āmir b. Lu'ayy tribe."

Analysing the various versions of this *ḥadīth*, one sees that much of the variation in the text is strongly correlated to the variation in the chains of narration through which the versions are narrated. A comparison of the sixteen versions of the *ḥadīth* which are reported on the authority of Sufyān—Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd with the thirteen versions narrated on the authority of Mālik—Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd identifies certain definite patterns within the text in each of the two groups. Later, when we add the eleven versions of the *ḥadīth* narrated through Thawrī⁵—'Āmir—Sa'd, we (bid that the texts of this group also have their own distinct features).

Comparing these versions group by group with each other, the anomalous will begin to stand out. This is the phenomenon I would like to identify clearly in the forthcoming section. In this first look, I will speak broadly of the topics mentioned in the various versions—basically ignoring variations in the wording of the sentences representing these topics. In a second look at these versions (in the section "wording") I will study the correlation of details such as the peculiarities of wording and the treatment of issues mentioned in the *ḥadīths* to the chains of narration. In this section I will simply identify these two phenomena.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the chains of narration through which the 114 versions studied in this paper are transmitted.

The *ḥadīth* is reported from Sa'd himself along with a few versions (105—7) which report it on the authority of 'Ā'isha bint Abī Bakr and some (108—14) which report it from 'Amr b. al-Qārī. The most numerous versions (1—62) are reported by Sa'd's son 'Āmir from Sa'd. Forty-five (1—45) of these are reported through Zuhri To all—'Āmir—Sa'd. The other major group of these reports (46—58) is through Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir—Sa'd.

5- Two of the narrators from Zuhri are named Sufyān: Sufyān al-Thawrī and Sufyān b. 'Uyayna. I will refer to Sufyān al-Thawrī as 'al-Thawrī', while I will use 'Sufyān' to refer to Sufyān b. 'Uyayna.

3- 'Ḥadīth collection' here includes books which contain *ḥadīths* but are not necessarily seen as *ḥadīth* collections.

4- In many cases the decision to assign a number to an occurrence of the *ḥadīth* is straightforward. Sometimes, however, I have assigned two distinct numbers to versions which are not necessarily distinct (as one example of many, see the discussion of Versions 55 and 57 on p. 152). The only logic to the numbering is that of convenience—where I encounter a phenomenon in which I will need to distinguish between two narrations of a *ḥadīth*, I have assigned two numbers to the narration.

There are four major groups of versions narrated from Sa'd by narrators other than Sa'd's son 'Āmir. Versions 63—71 are narrated by Ḥumayd b. 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Himyarī who heard the *ḥadīth* from 'three children of Sa'd'. Another one of Sa'd's sons, Mus'ab, narrates versions 72—80 from Sa'd. Abū 'Abd ur-Rahmān al-Sulamī narrates versions 81—8 from Sa'd, while a daughter of Sa'd, 'Ā'isha, narrates versions 92—7 from Sa'd.

The Appearance of Various Themes:

Ḥadīths of 'Āmir b. Sa'd – Sa'd

The following outline describes the *ḥadīth* of 'Āmir b. Sa'd—Sa'd – the Prophet ﷺ (versions 1—62):

The Visit

- A The circumstances of the visit: time, place, and fact of illness.
- B The Prophet's ﷺ visit.

The Question of the Bequest

- C That Sa'd had a lot of wealth.
- D That he had only one heir, a daughter.
- E A conversation on the amount of the bequest.
- F Reason for denial of request: Better leave your heirs rich.....
- G Consolation: Whatever you spend will be considered a good deed.

The Issue of Emigration

The specific question

- H Sa'd's concern regarding being 'left behind'.
- I Parry and consolation: If you are left behind, your good deeds will increase your rank with God.
- J Veiled prediction that Sa'd will survive the illness.

The general problem

- K Prophet's ﷺ prayer for the emigrations of his Companions.
- L Grief at Sa'd b. Khawla's death.
- M Identification of the reason for the Prophet's ﷺ grief.

In studying the appearance of these sentences in the versions of this *ḥadīth*, I find it useful to think of full versions and truncated versions. Truncation is sometimes explicit, where a bit of the *ḥadīth* is narrated and then the author of the *ḥadīth* collection writes 'and he narrated the remainder of the *ḥadīth*...' or words to that effect. Sometimes there is an argument for presuming that such a truncation would have occurred. The context of the narration of the *ḥadīth* can itself suggest this as I will argue in the case of version 5 below. Or, the fact that all the sentences related to a single theme are missing can suggest that perhaps one of the narrators or the *ḥadīth* collector was interested in only a certain subject discussed in the *ḥadīth* and so he narrated only the sentences of the *ḥadīth* dealing with that subject. Thus, there will be full versions, explicitly truncated versions, versions with contextual indication of truncation, and versions in which there is a likelihood of truncation along thematic lines.

Figure 2 is an abbreviated representation of the way in which the thirteen sentences appear or do not appear in the first twenty-three of the *ḥadīths* I will discuss. Each letter in the second-last column to the right indicates the presence of the sentence with the corresponding label in the outline above. For the full versions, in the far right column I have also listed letters representing the sentences missing in each version—while a dash in place of a letter indicates the presence of the sentence with the corresponding label in the outline above. For the full versions, in the far right column I have also listed letters representing the sentences missing in each version ---- while a dash in place of a letter indicates the presence of the sentences.

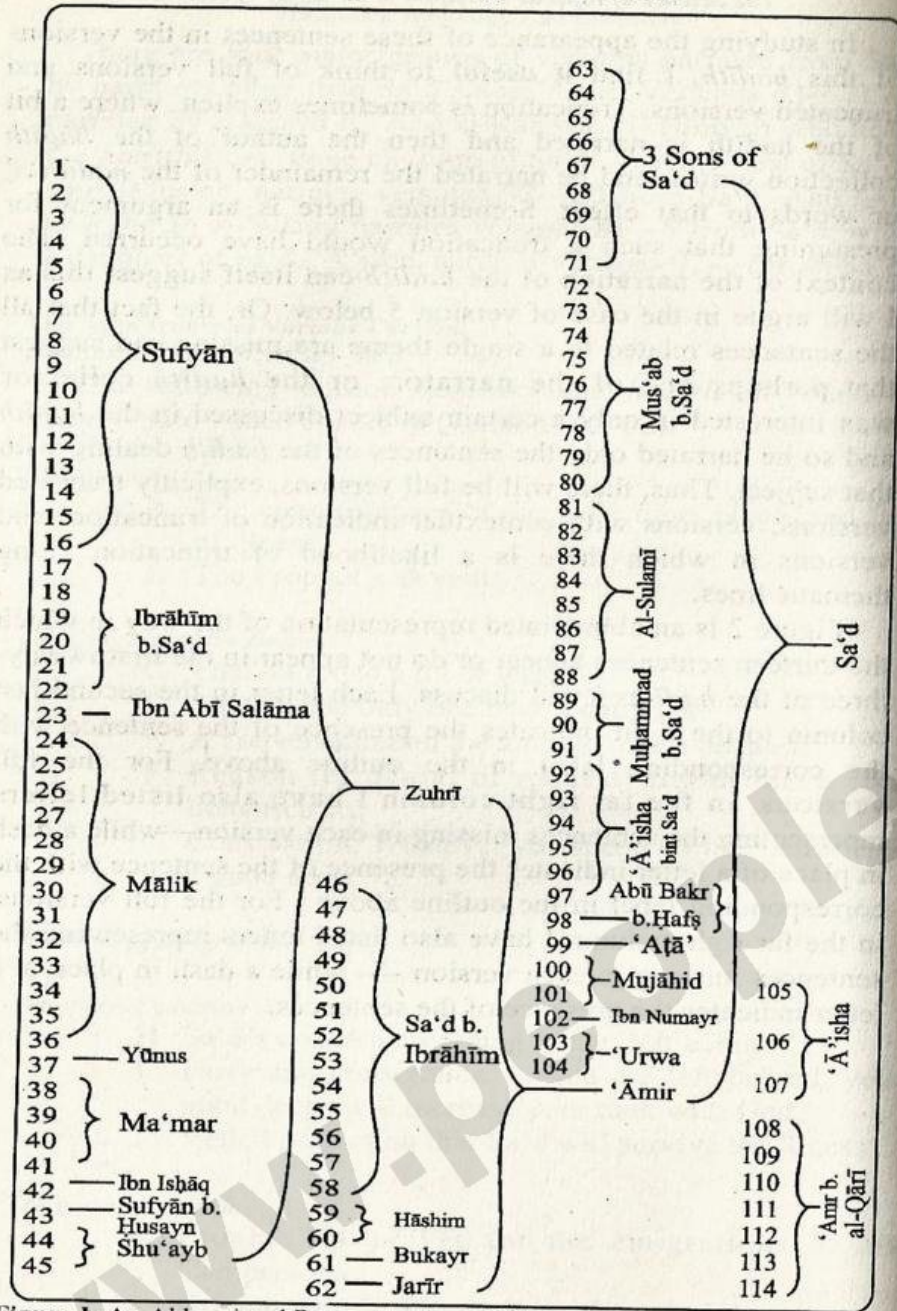


Figure 1: An Abbreviated Representation of the 114 Versions of the Hadith of Sa'd.

Chain of Narration	Sentence Present	Missing Sentence
1. Sa'd b. Manṣūr Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
2. Ḥumaydī Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
3. Ibn Sa'd Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/ JKLM	-----HI-----
4. Ḥumaydī Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
5. Yūnus Sufyān	AB/????/HIJKLM	-----
6. Ḥumaydī Sufyān	AB/CDE./.....	-----
7. 'Āmir b. 'Uthmān Sufyān	AB/CDEF/	-----GHIJKLM
8. 'Uthmān b. A. Shayba Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
9. Ibn A. Khalaf Sufyān	A./.../.....	-----
10. Ibn A. 'Umar Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/ IJKLM	-----H-----
11. Hishām, Husayn, Sahl Sufyān	AB/CDEF /	-----GHIJKLM
12. Sa'dān b. Naṣr Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/h JKLM	-----I-----
13. Zakariyā b. Yahya Sufyān	./...G/HIJ...	-----
14. Zakariyā al-Mirwazī Sufyān	aB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
15. Zakariyā al-Mirwazī Sufyān	aB/.../.....	-----
16. Abū Khaythama Sufyān	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
17. Ahmad b. Yūnus Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd	BA/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
18. Yahya b. Qaza'a Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd	BA/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
19. Mūsā b. Ismā'il Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
20. Yahya b. Yahya Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
21. Yūnus b. Muḥammad and Yahyā b. Yahya Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	-----
22. Tayālīsī Ibn b. Sa'd, Ibn Abi Salāma, and others	AB/CDEFG/ABHIJKLM	-----
23. Mūsā b. Ismā'il Ibn Abī Salāma,	BA/CDEFG/	-----HIJKLM

Figure 2: Ḥadīths of Zuhrī----'Āmir-----Sa'd: Group 1.

I have used a lower-case letter to represent a sentence in where the wording of that sentence is significantly different from the usual wording. For example, in version 14 the first sentence has been split up:

... أنه مرض عام الفتح مرضاً أشفى منه على الموت ، فاتاه النبي ﷺ يعوده وهو بمكة .

(Sa'd said that :) he became ill in Makkah to the point that his illness took him to the brink of death. So the Prophet ﷺ came to visit him while he was in Makkah.

Normally, the mention of Makkah comes along with the mention of Sa'd's sickness so that A can properly represent all the 'circumstances of the visit' as in the outline. I indicate this, and similar minor variations from the routine, by the lower-case form of the letter representing the sentence.

I represent the simple omission of a sentence by a blank in the place where one expects the letter which stands for the sentence. Thus, since there is a blank in the space for H in version 2, one knows that the sentence simply does not appear in this version.

I have placed question marks instead of letters representing sentences where there is a contextual indication of truncation. In version 5, there are question marks where one expects C to G. This *hadīth* is taken from Ṭaḥāwī's *Sharḥ Ma'ānī l-Āthār* from a chapter discussing *hadīths* dealing with emigration. The sentences dealing with Sa'd's bequest have been omitted as a unit. This context suggests the possibility that Ṭaḥāwī might have had the entire *hadīth* but narrated only the portion which was relevant to his immediate discussion.

I have placed dots instead of letters representing sentences where the narration of the *hadīth* itself contains explicit indication that the narrator has truncated the *hadīth*. Version 6, for example, is taken from the *Tamhīd* of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr. This version occurs in the middle of Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's discussion of Mālik's narration of this *hadīth* in the *Mū'aṭṭa*. Having already quoted a few other versions of this *hadīth*, and being in the midst of discussing the full version of this *hadīth* in the *Mū'aṭṭa*, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr narrates sentences A to E of the *hadīth* and then says '... and he narrated the (rest of the) *hadīth*'.

Along with version 6, versions 9, 13, and 15 also contain explicit indications that the *hadīth* has been truncated. Abū Dā'ūd narrates version 9 in his *Sunan* on the authority of a 'joint' chain of narration: "Uthmān b. Abī Shayba and Ibn Abī Khalaf both *ṣaid*... Sa'd said that he fell ill (Ibn Abī Khalaf added the words "in Makkah", then they both agreed in their narration) in illness during which he came to the brink of death..." The parenthetical mention of the difference between Ibn Abī Khalaf's narration and that of 'Uthmān b. Abī Shayba could justify assuming that we have here two narrations each of which contained all the thirteen sentences which Abū Dā'ūd mentions. If he is careful enough to note the missing word 'in Makkah', he certainly would note the omission of an entire sentence. Nevertheless, because of the speculation here, I have chosen somewhat arbitrarily to assign the version to 'Uthmān b. Abī Shayba and to attribute only sentence A to Ibn Abī Khalaf.

Bayhaqī mentions version 13 after recording version 12 in full. After quoting the portion of the *hadīth* which differs from version 12 he says that the narrator of version 13 related the rest of the *hadīth* as in version 12. Baghawī records version 15 on the authority of Zakariyā b. Yaḥyā b. Asad having quoted a fuller version of the *hadīth* of Sa'd, and after narrating the first two sentences he says 'and he narrated a *hadīth* with the same meaning'. In this case we also have a version of this *hadīth* in *Ta'riḫ Dimashq* which is narrated through Zakariyā b. Yaḥyā b. Asad. This is a full version containing all but sentence M. This too could be taken as evidence that Baghawī might have had the fuller version. Considering the tendentious nature of this field, however, I have dismissed these versions to minimize the speculation involved in reaching my results.

As Figure 2 shows, four versions (6,9,13,15) contain explicit truncation, three versions (7,11,23) are abbreviated in a way which suggests that thematic interest was the cause of the truncation. Of the remaining sixteen versions, there are three (3,10,13) which are missing one or two sentences. The only other anomaly is that in versions 14 and 15, both narrated by the same student of Sufyān, the initial sentence is divided up as discussed above.

Mālik's *hadīths* from Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd follow the same general pattern as those of Sufyān from Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd, although they are easily distinguished from Sufyān's *hadīth* in their wording:

حدثني مالك عن ابن شهاب عن عامر بن سعد بن أبي وقاص عن أبيه قال : جاءني رسول الله ﷺ يعودي عام حجة الوداع من وجع اشتد بي ، فقلت : يا رسول الله بلغ بي من الوجع ما ترى وأنا ذو مال ، ولا يرثني إلا ابنة لي ، أفأتصدق بثلثي مالي ؟ قال رسول الله ﷺ : لا ، فقلت : فالشطر ؟ قال : لا ، ثم قال رسول الله ﷺ : الثلث ، والثلث كثير ، إنك أن تدر ورتك أغنياء خير من أن تدرهم عالة يتكفون الناس ، وإنك لن تنفق نفقة تبتغي بها وجه الله إلا أجرت حتى ما تجعل في في امرأتك ، قلت : يا رسول الله . أأخلف

6- It is worth noting that in each of versions 7 and 11 the *hadīth* actually ends at sentence F. Another look at the outline on page 6 will indicate that it is possible to view sentence F as part of the succeeding discussion of emigration. Such an amendment in the outline would make the abbreviation in versions 7 and 11 fit my definition of truncation due to thematic interest quite precisely.

بعد أصحابي؟ فقال رسول الله ﷺ: إنك لن تخلف فتعمل عملاً صالحاً إلا أزددت به درجة ورفعة. ولعلك أن تخلف حتى ينتفع بك أقوام، ويضر بك آخرون، اللهم أمض لأصحابي هجرتهم، ولا تردهم على أعقابهم، لكن البائس سعد بن خولة يرثي له رسول الله ﷺ أن مات بمكة.

Mālik told us on the authority of Ibn Shihāb (al-Zuhrī) from 'Āmir b. Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ from his father that his father said: The Messenger ﷺ of God came to visit me while I was ill during the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage because of a severe illness. I said: 'O Messenger ﷺ of God, you see the stage my illness has reached and I have some wealth and only my daughter is inheriting from me. May I give away two-thirds of my wealth in charity?' The Messenger ﷺ of God said: 'No.' so I said: 'What about a half?' He said: 'No.' Then the Messenger ﷺ of God said: 'A third and a third is a lot. It is better that you leave your offspring wealthy than that The move for whatever you spend for the sake of God, even for the morsel of food you put in your wife's mouth.' I said, 'O Messenger ﷺ of God, will I be left behind from after my companions?' So the Messenger ﷺ of God said, 'If you are left behind, for every deed you do for the pleasure of God you will increase in rank and stature. Perhaps you will be left behind after me so that some people benefit from you while others are harmed by you. But the unfortunate one is Sa'd b. Khawla.' The Prophet ﷺ expressed sorrow at his death because he died in Makkah.

Chain of Narration	Sentences Present		
24.	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
25. Mus'ab al-Zubayrī	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
26. Mus'ab al-Zubayrī	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
27. Mus'ab al-Zubayrī	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
28. Abū Mus'ab	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
29. Abū Mus'ab	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
30. Suwayd b. Sa'īd	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
31. Suwayd b. Sa'īd	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
32. Al-Shāfi'ī	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/...../.....
33. 'Abdullāh b. Yūsuf	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
34. Ibn Qa'nab and Ibn Bukayr	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
35. Ibn Qa'nab and Ibn Bukayr	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
36. Ibn Qa'nab and Ibn Bukayr	Mālik	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJ KLM
37. Ibn Wahb	Mālik, Yūnus, and others	Z-A-S	.../...E./...

Figure 3: Mālik's *ḥadīth*s of Zuhrī ---- 'Āmir ---- Sa'd, (Z—A—S).

The outline used to discuss Sūfyān's *ḥadīth*s from Zuhrī can also be used for Mālik's *ḥadīth*s from Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd. One notes (Figure 3) that the initial two sentences are inverted in all the *ḥadīth*s narrated through Mālik. All the versions are complete except for versions 32 and 37. Version 32 is taken from Ṭahāwī who, having narrated a few versions of this *ḥadīth*, records the first two sentences of the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd and then says 'then he mentioned this *ḥadīth*'. Version 37 is also better seen as a reference to the *ḥadīth* than as a 'version'. Bayhaqī records the *ḥadīth* through a joint *isnād* within which Ibn Wahb also figures. At the end of the narration, Bayhaqī says, '... and in Ibn Wahb's narration the words are: "I said: What about a half, O Messenger ﷺ of God?" He said: "No. A third, and a third is a large amount (or: a third is a lot)."' As we shall see later in the discussion of wording, *ḥadīth*s narrated through Mālik are outstanding in their uniformity.

Versions 38—45 (Figure 4) include a set of four versions from 'Abd al-Razzāq—Ma'mar—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd. 'Version' 41 is another case which might better be called a 'reference' to the *ḥadīth*: Muslim quotes the chain of narration and simply says that 'a similar *ḥadīth*' was narrated to him through this chain. The texts of the three versions are quite complete and the order of presentation is the same as in the initial outline which I proposed for the Sufyān—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd *ḥadīth*s (page 4).

Chain of Narration	Sentences Present		
38. 'Abd al-Razzāq Ma'mar	Z-A-S	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	
39. 'Abd al-Razzāq Ma'mar	Z-A-S	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	
40. 'Abd al-Razzāq Ma'mar	Z-A-S	AB/CDEFG/HIJKLM	
41. 'Abd al-Razzāq Ma'mar	Z-A-S	.../.../.....	
42. Yazīd b. Hārūn Ibn Ishāq	Z-A-S	AB/CDEFG/	
43. Yazīd b. Hārūn Sufyān b. Husayn	Z-A-S	BA/CDEFG/HIJKL	
44. Ḥakam b. Nāfi' Shu'ayb	Z-A-S	/G/	
45. Ḥakam b. Nāfi' Shu'ayb	Z-A-S	/G/	

Figure 4: Other Ḥadīth of Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd (Z-A-S).

In version 42 all the sentences related to emigration are missing. Version 43 is complete, the only notable point being the inverted order of the two introductory sentences. The final two versions of the Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd *ḥadīth*s provide an

interesting example of extreme abbreviation. Both *ḥadīths* are recorded by Bukhārī from Abū 'l-Yaman al-Ḥakam b. Nāfi', from Shu'ayb from the Z-A-S chain. Both are restricted simply to the sentence: 'You will be rewarded for whatever you spend, even for the morsel of food you put in your wife's mouth.'

The *ḥadīths* of Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir—Sa'd differ significantly from the *ḥadīths* of Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd. It remains possible to use the same outline as I have proposed for the Sufyān-Z-A-S *ḥadīths*, but a new outline is more appropriate.

أخبرنا الفضل بن دكين ومحمد بن عبد الله الأسدي قالا : أخبرنا سفيان عن سعد بن عامر بن سعد عن سعد قال : جاءني النبي ﷺ يعودني وأنا بمكة وهو يكره أن أموت بالأرض التي هاجرت منها ، فقال: يرحم الله ابن عفرأء ... فقلت : يا رسول الله أوصي بما لي كله ؟ قال: لا ، قلت فالشطر ؟ قال: لا ، قلت: الثلث ؟ قال: الثلث ، والثلث كثير ، إنك أن تدع ورثتك أغنياء خير من أن تدعهم عالة يتكفون الناس في أيديهم ، وإنك مهما أنفقت على أهلِكَ من نفقة فإنما صدقة ، حتى اللقمة ترفعها إلى في امرأتك ، وعسى الله أن يرفعك ، فينتفع بك قوم ، ويضربك آخرون ، قال : ولم يكن له يومئذ إلا ابنة .

"Faḍl b. Dukayn and Muḥammad b. 'Abdullāh al-Asadī informed us, they said: Sufyān informed us on the authority of Sa'd from 'Āmir b. Sa'd from Sa'd that he said: 'The Prophet ﷺ came to visit me during my illness while I was in Makkah, and he

7- My decision to treat this as an abbreviation could be disputed. It is possible that this is not a case of abbreviation and that the *ḥadīth* which Shu'ayb had was entirely limited to this one sentence. I consider this to be an abbreviation from the longer *ḥadīth* for the following reasons: (1) Version 45 contains the words 'The Prophet ﷺ said to Sa'd...', which can be seen as a reference to the entire incident with Sa'd. (2) In his discussion of this *ḥadīth* in *Umdat al-Qārī* 'Aynī writes: 'We have narrated this *ḥadīth* from Ma'mar, Yūnus b. Yazīd, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Abī Salāma, Yaḥya b. Sa'īd al-Anṣārī, Ibn Abī 'Atīq, and Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, and all of them have said on the authority of Zuhri: "the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage", as Mālik has said. And Shu'ayb too has said this.' If the *ḥadīth* of Shu'ayb had any bearing on the question of the time of this incident it must have been longer than the versions Bukhārī has recorded. (3) Bayhaqī too refers to the *ḥadīth* of Shu'ayb as having a bearing on this issue of the timing of this incident (Ahmad b. Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Bayhaqī (d. 458), *Al-Sunān al-Kubrā*, 10 vols. (Hyderabad: Da'irat al-Ma'arif al-Nizamiyya, 192), vi. 268). (4) Version 56 of Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm-'Āmir is also limited to just this sentence. That version, too, belongs to a family of versions all of which relate the *ḥadīth* in a much fuller form. This suggests that early narrators might have considered it sufficient in its didactic content to stand by itself.

disliked it that I die in the land which I had emigrated away from". He said, "May God have mercy on Ibn 'Afrā." I said "O Messenger ﷺ of God, may I bequeath all my wealth?" He said, "No." I said, "How about a half?" He said, "No." I said, "A third?" He said, "A third, and a third is a lot. It is better that you leave your offspring wealthy than that you leave them paupers, begging people for what they have. You will be rewarded for whatever you spend, even for the morsel of food you put in your wife's mouth. Perhaps Allah will raise you up (from this sickness) so that some people benefit from you while others are harmed by you." He said: 'And he had only a daughter at that time.

In this *ḥadīth* (version 54) the portion dealing with the issue of Sa'd's emigration is a somewhat brief preface to the main part of the *ḥadīth* which is the discussion of the bequest. I suggest the following outline for the *ḥadīths* of Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm from 'Āmir-Sa'd:

The Visit and its Circumstances

- A The Prophet's visit.
- B The circumstances of the visit: place (and fact of illness).⁸

The Issue of the Emigration

- C Circumstances of the visit: That he disliked that one die in the land from which one had emigrated away.
- D The statement about Ibn 'Afrā'.

The Question of the Bequest

- E A conversation on the amount of the bequest.
- F Reason for denial of request: Better leave your heirs rich...
- G Consolation: Whatever you spend will be considered a good deed.
- H Veiled prediction that Sa'd will survive the illness.
- I That he had only one heir, a daughter.

8- The 'fact of (Sa'd's) illness' is sometimes explicitly mentioned and sometimes not. However, the word used for the Prophet's visit is *'iyāda* which can only be used in the case of a visit to a sick person. For this reason I have chosen not to distinguish between versions which make explicit mention of his illness and those which are content with mention of the word *'iyāda*.

Comparing this outline with that of Sufyān's *ḥadīth* one sees immediately that the issue of the bequest holds the centre stage in this outline. The issue of emigration is subsumed into the circumstance of the visit, and as we can see from Figure 5, in four versions the sentences relating to the emigration are simply omitted.

Again in Figure 5, a dash ('-') indicates the definite absence of a sentence, while a dot ('.') indicates its possible presence. A lower-case letter indicates that the sentence is there but in a sufficiently different form to warrant notice. An asterisk ('*') indicates that the sentence is present but at a different position from where it is expected. In addition there is a space after the **D** since in two of the versions sentence **I** come after sentence **D**.

The abbreviated version 53 is in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*. Muslim relates the chain of narration and then says 'he reported a *ḥadīth* similar in meaning to the *ḥadīth* of Zuhrī, but he did not mention the statement about Sa'd b. 'Afrā' and he did mention the sentence that "he disliked that he die in the land from which he had emigrated away.'" Thus, the dash in the position of **D** indicates that **D** is definitely not present, while the dots indicate the possibility that those sentences might well have been in the version referred to.

Versions 55 and 57 are actually a single *ḥadīth* narrated through a 'joint chain of narration' where Wakī' says that Mis'ar and Sufyān [al-Thawrī] related the *ḥadīth* to him. I have chosen to assign the words to Thawrī, while they could equally well have been Mis'ar's.

The *ḥadīths* of Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm are far less regular than the groups of *ḥadīths* we have looked at. This is reflected in the fact that it is more difficult to depict them in an abbreviated form. Sentence **I**, regarding Sa'd having had only one daughter at the time of this incident, occurs in three of the versions. In versions 47 and 48 it occurs right before the conversation on the bequest. In version 49 it occurs at the very end of the *ḥadīth* after the conversation on the bequest. To depict the order of appearance of sentence **I** properly, I have left a blank space after the position for sentence **D** in all the versions. The asterisk in versions 47 and 48 is to indicate that sentence **I** occurs in these versions. Version 55 is particularly hard to represent. Sentence **d** occurs, but it occurs as the second to last sentence. Sentence **H** is also not at its usual place. The lower-case **d** refers to the fact that in this version the statement of the Prophet ﷺ regarding Sa'd b. 'Afrā' occurs as follows:

.... فذكر سعد الهجرة ، فقال : يرحم الله سعد ابن عفران .
 "...and Sa'd mentioned emigration so the Prophet ﷺ said: 'May God have mercy on Sa'd ibn 'Afrā'."

Of course, this addition to the usual version of statement **D** is clearly a statement of a narrator and not the words of the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, sentence **I** ('He said: And he had only a daughter at that time') is the statement of an unidentified narrator. Nevertheless, the varied placement of these two Sentences adds to the overall impression of a loosely transmitted text in all the Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm 'Āmir—Sa'd texts.

Chain of Narration				Sentences Present
46. 'Abd al-Razzāq	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABC-EFG--
47. 'Abd al-Raḥmān	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABCDIEFGH*
48. 'Abd al-Raḥmān	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABCDIEF---*
49. 'Abd al-Nu'aym	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABCD EF-HI
50. 'Abd al-Nu'aym	Thawrī	S-A-S		AB---EF---
51. 'Abd al-Nu'aym and 'Ubaydullah	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABC-EFGH-
52. Muḥammad b. Kathīr	Thawrī	S-A-S		AB---EFGH-
53. Abū Dā'ūd al-Ḥafarī	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABC- ...
14. Faḍl b. Dukayn and Muh. b. 'Abd	Thawrī	S-A-S		ABCD EFGHI
55. Wakī'	Thawrī	S-A-S		AB-* EFG * IdH
56. Wakī'	Thawrī	S-A-S		--- --- G
57. Wakī'	Mis'ar	S-A-S	
58. Abū Nu'aym	Mis'ar	S-A-S		AB---hDE

Figure 5: *Ḥadīths* of Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm from 'Āmir—Sa'd (S-A-S).

- 59. Hāshim b. Hāshim A-S
- 60. Hāshim b. Hāshim A-S
- 61. Bukayr b. Mismar A-S
- 62. Jarīr A-S

Figure 6: Other *ḥadīths* from 'Āmir—Sa'd (A-S).

Versions 59—62 are the last of the 'Āmir—Sa'd *ḥadīths*. The two from Hāshim b. Hāshim (59—60) are quite similar to each other. Again, though the same elements are used in all the other Sa'd *ḥadīths* that we have seen, there are shifts in emphasis and

presentation.

٦٠ مرضت فعادني النبي ﷺ فقلت: ٥٩ مرضت فعادني النبي ﷺ فقلت:
 يارسول الله ، ادع الله أن لا يردني على يارسول الله ، ادع الله أن لا يردني على
 عقي ، قال: لعل الله (أن) يرفعك (فينفع) عقي ، قال: لعل الله يرفعك ، (وينفع) بك
 بك ناساً ، فقلت: أريد أن أوصي ، وإنما بك ناساً ، قلت: أريد أن أوصي ، وإنما لي ابنة
 لي ابنة ، فقلت: (أفأوصي) بالنصف؟ قال: فقلت: (أوصي) بالنصف؟ قال: بالنصف
 النصف كثير (قال) قلت: فالثلث؟ قال: كثير قلت: فالثلث؟ قال: الثلث ، والثلث
 الثلث والثلث كثير - أو كبير ، قال: كثير - أو كبير ، قال: فأوصى الناس
 فأوصى بالثلث فحاز (ذلك له) بالثلث ، فحاز (لهم ذلك)

I have identified the few differences between the two versions by putting them in parentheses. Perhaps the only significant difference is that the final sentence in version 59 draws the conclusion from Sa'd's bequest of a third by saying 'So people began to bequeath a third, and this became permissible for them.' In version 60 this sentence is: 'So Sa'd bequeathed a third and this was permissible for him.' Naturally, a jurist would then draw the conclusion of version 59 as a further step: since it was permissible for Sa'd, it is permissible for us.

Version 61 consists of mention of the visit of the Prophet ﷺ; then it reports Sa'd as crying and asking the Prophet ﷺ if he would die in this land from which he had emigrated away. The Prophet ﷺ explicitly says that, God willing, he will not. Then follows the conversation on the bequest followed by the sentence that it is better to leave his heirs rich than to leave them as paupers. Version 62 has no introduction and consists simply of the conversation on the bequest followed by the sentence that it is better to leave one's heirs well-off than to leave them as paupers.

The Wording

To compare the wording of up to thirteen sentences as they occur or do not occur in over a hundred versions is a tedious task. Even more important, it becomes difficult to see the larger picture in such a morass of detail. It is important, however, to see the degree to which one can correlate certain chains of narration with regularity in the text of this *hadīth*. With this intention I have chosen to provide three types of differential analyses of the wordings of the various versions.

I begin with an analysis of the first sentence of the *hadīth* of Sa'd in the versions narrated through his son 'Āmir b. Sa'd (versions 1—62). In its occurrence in these versions, this sentence provides a sort of mean example of the regular correlation between chain of narration and text. One finds that a particular wording of the *hadīth* can definitely be associated with each 'family' of chains of narration (for example, the family of *hadīths* related through Zuhri). On the other hand, even within such families, the wording does fluctuate. The crucial quality here is that the wordings within families are sufficiently similar that, were one to be faced with a text of the *hadīth* of Sa'd without a chain of narration associated with it, one would be able to provide an intelligent guess regarding its chain of narration. This can be contrasted with the narration of sentences F, G, H, I, J, and K⁹ which are so regularly reported with essentially the same wording that no specific set of words can be seen as a particularly strong indication that that version is narrated through particular family of chains of narration.¹⁰

9- All according to the outline based on the *hadīths* of Sufyān, on page 5. From the section on bequest: F-Reason for denial of request: Better leave your heirs rich... G-Consolation: Whatever you spend will be considered a good deed. From the section dealing with emigration: H-Sa'd's concern regarding being 'left behind'. I-Parry and consolation: If you are left behind, your good deeds will increase your rank with God. J-Veiled prediction that Sa'd will survive the illness. K-Prophet's prayer for the emigrations of his Companions.

10-The versions which do report these sentences with an unusual wording are particularly obvious because of the overall homogeneity in the narration of these sentences. But none of the major families of chains of narrations have any peculiar wording associated only with the texts narrated through them.

'āmF	'ām al-faṭḥī
ḥjj	ḥajj al-wadā'i
mrqt	marīqtu
mrq	marīqa
mrqN	marāḍan
M	makkata
R	rasūlullah ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama
N	al-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama
atRy	atānī rasūlullah ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama ya 'ūdunī
atNy	atānī al-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama ya 'ūdunī
'ādR	'ādanī rasūlullah ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama
'ādN	'ādanī al-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama
jāRy	jā'anī rasūlullah ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama ya 'ūdunī
jaNy	jā'anī al-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama ya 'ūdunī
kRy	k=āna rasūlullah ṣallā llāhu 'alayh wa sallama ya 'ūdunī
mwt	al-mawt

Figure 7: Abbreviations for Comparison of Wording

After the analysis of the first sentence, I discuss four specific issues on which the versions do differ:

1. Did the event occur during the Farewell Pilgrimage or in the year of the Conquest of Makkah?
2. Was Sa'd's question regarding bequest (*waṣīya*) or was it regarding giving his wealth away as charity (*ṣadaqa*)?
3. Why did Sa'd wish to give his wealth away?
4. In the conversation on the bequest, how did the negotiation (which finally settled on a third) actually proceed?

Naturally we will never really know the answer to these questions. The question being asked is: what information should we understand the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd to be giving us on these issues?

The Introductory Sentence in the 'Āmir b. Sa'd—Sa'd *ḥadīths*.

To allow the presentation of the first sentence of the *ḥadīth* in a single line, I will adopt the abbreviations in the left column of Figure 7 for the phrases in the right column.

I have used this abbreviated notation to describe the *ḥadīths* narrated from 'Āmir—Sa'd¹¹ in Figure 8. A look at the figure suffices to show how groups of *ḥadīths* cluster together in their wording—so much so that it is quite conceivable that one could recognize the chain of narration of a *ḥadīth* simply by looking at its words. Again, the versions related through some narrators are far more consistent than those related through others. Versions related through Mālik (24—36) are by far the most consistent, while those related through Sufyān are a little less so.

It is important to bear in mind, once again, that counting *ḥadīths* can be misleading: it is far more important to identify the people around whom patterns of consistency emerge. Further, consistency in wording is really an additional thing. Early narrators of *ḥadīth* are themselves quoted as having taken responsibility only for transmitting the meanings of *ḥadīths*—though they may well have striven to maintain the wordings also. The level of consistency in wording and in broader meaning at the level of the students of Zuhri, and then at the level of Zuhri and his contemporaries, is worth noting. As I will argue later, if this is a typical *ḥadīth*, then this level of consistency in narrations will allow us to identify with precision narrators whose narrations are to be relied upon, even where the numbers go against them.

The Time of the Event

Those of the *ḥadīths* narrated through Sufyān—Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd which do record a time for the event record it as being the year of the Conquest of Makkah. However, *ḥadīths* narrated through Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, Ibn Abī Salāma, Mālik, Ma'mar, Muḥammad b. Ishāq, and Sufyān b. Ḥusayn all narrating from Zuhri record the event as occurring in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage. 'Āmir b. al-Qārī's *ḥadīths* are the only other *ḥadīths* which place the event in the year of the Conquest and they do so in an unequivocal manner:

أن رسول الله ﷺ قدم مكة ، وحلّف سعداً مريضاً حيث خرج إلى حنين ، فلما قدم من
جعرانة معتمراً دخل عليه

11- Of course, only those *ḥadīths* which have an introductory sentence have been described.

"The Messenger ﷺ of God came to Makkah and he left Sa'd behind when he left for Hunayn. Then, when he returned from Ju'r'rāna to visit the holy places (in Makkah) he came to him (i.e. to Sa'd)..."

I have already made incidental mention (in note 7) of the comments of 'Aynī and Bayhaqī on this issue: both argue that Sufyān is in error here. Their argument is simply that, though Sufyān is a reliable narrator, more reliable narrators have it from Zuhri that the event occurred in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage. Ibn Hajar¹² points out that the *hadīth* of 'Āmir b. al-Qārī supports Sufyān's version:

I have found support for (Sufyān) ibn 'Uyayna's version in the *hadīth* of 'Amr b. al-Qārī which Aḥmad, Bazzāz, Ṭabarānī, Bukhārī in his *Tārīkh*, and Ibn Sa'd have narrated: 'The Prophet ﷺ came and left Sa'd ill...' Perhaps Ibn 'Uyayna confused one *hadīth* with the other...

Thus Ibn Hajar argues that, as far as the *hadīth* of Zuhri is concerned, Sufyān stands overruled by the reliable narrators opposing his narration. The source of his error might have been his knowledge of the *hadīth* of 'Amr b. al-Qārī. Nevertheless he is not able to come up with a solution better than to suggest that the event might have happened twice—once in the year of the Conquest, and another time during the Farewell Pilgrimage. 'Amr b. al-Qārī's *hadīth* cannot be dismissed easily either, since the narrators in it are all considered reliable.

Bequest or Alms?

Another point on which the *hadīth* of Sa'd seems to vacillate when viewed as a whole, is whether Sa'd was asking permission to bequeath his wealth or whether he wanted to give it all away in charity. A derivative of the word *ṣadaqa* would indicate a desire to give it away as charity, while a derivative of *waṣīya* would indicate bequest. When the *hadīths* of Sa'd are viewed as a whole, the issue seems rather unclear. But when the textual variation is indexed to its chain of narration we see, as in Figure 9, that the variation is quite discrete.

12- Aḥmad b. 'Alī Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852), *Fath al-Bārī fī Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 14 vols, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abdullah b. Bāz, Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī, and Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1959—70), v. 363.

I have coded the *hadīths* of 'Amr b. al-Qārī with a question mark to indicate that in each of the versions the narrator expresses his doubt as to whether the *hadīth* used the wording indicating bequest or that indicating alms. It is only in the narrations of Sufyān from Zuhri that we see any vacillation on this within a family of texts. This study of the *hadīth* of Sa'd has allowed us a brief amount of exposure to the qualities of *hadīth* narrators. Based on this admittedly small corpus, one might hazard that the narration of those who speak of alms in narrating this *hadīth* from Sufyān—Zuhri ought to be preferred to the four versions which speak of bequest. These four versions are:

1 No. 3 which Ibn Sa'd narrates from Sufyān;
Sufyān—Zuhri—'Āmir—Sa'd

1.	annahu qadima M 'āmF qāla: fa-mrqt	mrqN ashfaqtu 'alā nafsī mwt	fa-atRy
2.	mrqt bi-M 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atRy
3.	mrqt	mrqN ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atRy
4.	mrqt bi-M	mrqN fa-ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atNy
5.	mrqt 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atRy
6.	mrqt bi-M 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu	fa-atRy
7.	mrqt	mrqN ashfaytu minhu	fa-atRy
8.	mrq	mrqN ashfā fihī	fa-'āDR
9.	mrq	mrqN bi-M ashfā fih
10.	mrqt 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atRy
11.	mrqt 'āmF	hattā ashfaytu 'ala mwt	fa-'āDR
12.	mrqt 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu	fa-atRy
13.	annahu mrq 'āmF wa-huwa bi-M	mrqN ashfā minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atNy
14.	annahu mrq 'āmF	mrqN ashfā minhu 'alā mwt	fa-atNy wa huwa bi-M
15.	mrqt 'āmF	mrqN ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt	atRy fihī

Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd — Zuhri — 'Āmir — Sa'd

16.	'ādN fī hjj	min waja'in	ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt
17.	'ādN fī hjj	min mrqN	ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt
18.	'āDR fī hjj	min shakwā	ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt
19.	'āDR fī hjj	min waja'in	ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt

Sufyān — Zuhri — 'Āmir — Sa'd

20.	'ādN fī hjj	min waja'in	ashfaytu minhu 'alā mwt
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Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd, Ibn Abī Salāma, and others — Zuhri — 'Āmir — Sa'd

21.	mrqt	mrqN ashfaytu minhu	fa-dakhala 'alayya R ya'ūduni
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Ibn Abī Salāma — Zuhri — 'Āmir — Sa'd

22.	jāRy 'am hjj	min waja'in	ishtadda bī
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Mālik—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd

23.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
24.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
25.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
26.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
27.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
28.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
29.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
30.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
31.	jāRy 'ām hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
32.	kRy 'am hij	min waja'in	ishtadda bī	
33.	jāRy 'am hij,qāla:	wa bī waja'un	qad ishtadda	
34.	jāRy 'am hij,qāla:	wa bī waja'un	qad ishtadda	
35.	jāRy 'am hij,qāla:	wa bī waja'un	qad ishtadda	
Ma'mar—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd				
36.	kuntu ma'a R fī hij	fa mrqt mrqN ashfā 'alā		
		mwt, qāl :		fa-'ādR
37.	kuntu ma'a R fī hij	fa mrqt mrqN ashfaytu		
		'āla mwt		fa-'ādR
38.	kuntu ma'a R fī hij	fa mrqt mrqN ashfā		
		'alayya minhu mwt		fa-'ādR

Muhammad b Ishāq—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd

39. Ishtakaytu ma'a N fī hij battā idhā adnaftu fadakhala 'alayya R ya'ūdunī
Sufyān b. Husayn—Zuhrī—'Āmir—Sa'd

40. Anna R 'ādahu fī marāḍihi bi-makkata

Figure 8: The Wording of the Introductory Sentence of 'Āmir's ḥadīths from Sa'd

Versions	Chain of Narration	Bequest	Alms
1—16	Sufyān—Zuhrī—'Āmir	4	8
17—21	Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd—Zuhrī—'Āmir		5
22	(joint <i>isnād</i>)—Zuhrī—'Āmir		1
23	Ibn Abī Salāma—Zuhrī—'Āmir		1
24—36	Mālik—Zuhrī—'Āmir		12
38—41	Ma'mar—Zuhrī—'Āmir	3	
42	Ibn Ishāq—Zuhrī—'Āmir		1
43	Sufyān b. Husayn—Zuhrī—'Āmir	1	
46—58	Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir	9	
59—60	Hāshim b. Hāshim—'Āmir	2	
61	Bukayr b. Mismar—'Āmir	1	
62	Jarīr b. Zayd—'Āmir	1	
63—71	Ḥumayd—3 children of Sa'd	7	
72—80	Muṣ'ab b. Sa'd	8	
81—7	Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī	7	
88—91	Muhammad b. Sa'd	3	
92—7	'Ā'isha bint Sa'd	3	
98	Abū Bakr b. Ḥafṣ	1	
99	Ibn Jurayj—'Aṭā'	1	
103—7	'Ā'isha bint Abī Bakr	4	
108—14	'Āmr b. al-Qārī—father—grandfather	5?	5?

Figure 9: Sa'd's Request: Bequest or Alms?

- No. 10 which Tirmidhī narrates from Ibn Abī 'Umar—Sufyān;
- No. 12 which Bayhaqī narrates through Sa'dān b. Naṣr—Sufyān;
- No. 16 which Abu Ya'lā narrates from Abū Khaythama—Sufyān.

On the other side we have narrations by Sa'id b. Manṣūr (1), 'Amr b. 'Uthmān (7), 'Uthmān b. Abī Shayba (8), Zakariyā b. Yaḥyā al-Mirwazī (14), the narration of Ibn Māja's *Sunan* through a joint chain of narration (11), and, most important, three versions from Ḥumaydī (1 in his *Musnad*, 4 in Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīh*, and 6 in Ibn 'Abd al-Barr's *Tamhīd*). Although this is drawing on material which goes beyond the text of the *ḥadīth*, Ḥumaydī is known as one of Sufyān's strongest students. Indeed a look at his *Musnad* indicates that it is almost a collection of the *ḥadīths* of Sufyān. Thus, it would seem that it is not simply that *more* narrators relate the *ḥadīth* of Zuhrī—'Āmir as speaking of alms, but that the more reliable narrators are relating it in this manner.

One would be comfortable with this, were it not for the fact that one finds Sufyān b. Husayn and Ma'mar also narrating the *ḥadīth* from Zuhrī—'Āmir as speaking of bequest. In addition, all the other narrators of this *ḥadīth*, including others who narrate it from 'Āmir, speak of bequest. Perhaps we can trace this ambivalence to 'Āmir himself: he might have narrated it in

Chain of Narration	No reason	Own wealth	One heir	Rich heir
Zuhrī—'Āmir		34	34	
Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir	4		5	
Hāshim b. Hāshim—'Āmir			2	
Bukayr b. Masmār—'Āmir	1			
Jarīr b. Zayd—'Āmir	1			
Ḥumayd—3 children of Sa'd		7	7	
Muṣ'ab b. Sa'd	6			
Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī	1			6
Muhammad b. Sa'd		3		
'Ā'isha bint Sa'd		3	3	
Abū Bakr b. Ḥafṣ		1	1	
Ibn Jurayj—'Aṭā'		1	1	
'Ā'isha bint Abī Bakr	4			
'Āmr b. al-Qārī		6	6	

Figure 10: The Circumstances of Sa'd's Request.

both ways. Consider, for example, the *ḥadīth* of Abū Bakr b. Ḥafṣ (version 98) which has Sa'd asking the Prophet ﷺ:

أفأوصي في إخواني (يعني المهاجرين) بالثلث

May I bequeath two-thirds to my brothers (meaning, the Emigrants)?

In this case the bequest itself would be a bequest to charity! Certainly the Prophet's ﷺ follow-up ('... whatever you spend will be considered as charity . . .') would suggest that Sa'd was thinking of last-minute good deeds to do: a simple bequest would be relevant to his fear of death, but not to the Prophet's ﷺ reply.

The Background to Sa'd's Request

Sa'd prefaces his request with mention of one or more of three circumstances: (i) that he has a lot of wealth, (ii) that his heirs are rich, and (iii) that he has only one heir. Figure 10 shows the distribution of these three circumstances among the various versions.

Along with the complete unanimity of the Zuhri—'Āmir *ḥadīths* on the circumstances of the request, note that all the other *ḥadīths* of 'Āmir present nothing incompatible with the explicit description of circumstances in the Zuhri—'Āmir *ḥadīths*. Either no reason is put forth, or the statement that Sa'd himself was wealthy is left out. Going further down the figure one finds that Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī is the only narrator whose *ḥadīth* presents Sa'd's having had rich heirs as the reason for this request. Again, using the rudimentary knowledge of *rijāl* I have been developing in this paper, perhaps one would want to look at al-Sulamī's general career as *ḥadīth* narrator—is it just that in this *ḥadīth* he is narrating differently from other narrators, or is it the case that he often differs from other reliable narrators? If it is the latter, then perhaps we could begin to form a judgement that he cannot be relied upon.

The Conversation on the Amount of the Bequest

The progression of the conversation on the amount of the bequest is probably the one thing which varies most within the *ḥadīths* of 'Āmir. I have listed the chains of narration from

'Āmir—Sa'd in the far left column of Figure 11. Then I have constructed four columns for the four common 'progressions, I have found in the request to bequeath.

For example, '1→ $\frac{2}{3}$ → $\frac{1}{2}$ ' in the column to the left after the chain of narration represents Sa'd asking permission to bequeath all his wealth, then, being denied that, asking permission to bequeath two-thirds, being denied which he asks permission to bequeath a half, being denied which he asks and finally gets permission to bequeath a third. In this column I have noted the number of versions from each chain of narration which record the conversation on the bequest as progressing in this manner.

I have put a '1+6' in the row for the *ḥadīths* of al-Sulamī to indicate that one of these *ḥadīths* does indeed follow the pattern of requesting permission for bequeathing all his wealth, then two-thirds, then a half, and finally getting permission for a third. The six other versions are actually unique. When the Prophet ﷺ arrives, Sa'd informs him that he has given away all of his wealth to charity. The Prophet ﷺ tells him to bequeath only a tenth. Then Sa'd says, '... I kept bargaining with him and he kept bargaining with me until he said "Bequeath a third and a third is a lot."'

Here, restricting ourselves to looking only at the enumeration of differences, we find most Sufyān—Zuhri—'Āmir *ḥadīths* describing the event in one way, all the Mālik—Zuhri—'Āmir *ḥadīths* describing it another way, while all the Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir *ḥadīths* describe it a third way!

I think it important to note that even though this is the element which sustains the most variety in its narration, it too is not entirely random. One could explain away some of the variety by arguing that in narrating the meaning of the text, the thing which was relevant to the narrators was the final decision of the Prophet ﷺ. The only relevant point about all the intermediate questions was that bargaining occurred. Nevertheless, it is clear that, if there had been this wide a variety in all the portions of the narration of the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd, one would be hard put to try to identify any patterns in the narrations of narrators.

Chain of Narration	1→ $\frac{2}{3}$ → $\frac{1}{2}$	1→ $\frac{2}{3}$	1	$\frac{2}{3}$ → $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	1→ $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Sufyān—Zuhrī—'Āmir	9			2		1	
Ibrāhīm b. Sa'd—Zuhrī—'Āmir				4	1		
(joint <i>isnād</i>)—Zuhrī—'Āmir						1	
Ibn Abī Salāma—Zuhrī—'Āmir				1			
Mālik—Zuhrī—'Āmir				12			
Ma'mar—Zuhrī—'Āmir				4			
Ibn Ishāq—Zuhrī—'Āmir						1	
Sufyān b. Husayn—Zuhrī—'Āmir						1	
Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir						9	
Hāshim b. Hāshim—'Āmir							2
Bukayr b. Mismar—'Āmir						1	
Jarīr b. Zayd—'Āmir	1						
Ḥumayd—3 children of Sa'd	4					1	1
Mus'ab b. Sa'd	1	1				3	
Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī	1+6						
Muḥammad b. Sa'd						3	
'Ā'isha bint Sa'd				3			
Abū Bakr b. Ḥaḥḥ				1			
Ibn Jurayj—'Atā'				1			
'Ā'isha bint Abī Bakr				1		3	
'Amr b. al-Qārī—father— grandfather	4		1				

Figure 11: The Progression of Sa'd's Request in the Conversation on the Bequest.

The *Ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ

I have spoken of the *ḥadīth* of Sufyān — Zuhrī — 'Āmir — Sa'd, of that of Mālik — Zuhrī — 'Āmir — Sa'd, and of a few other *ḥadīths*; but what of the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ? What does the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ have to say? We could say that the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ is a story about a man whom the Prophet ﷺ visited either in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage or in the year of the Conquest, who either wanted to bequeath all of his wealth, or he wanted to give it all away in charity, or he wanted to combine both bequest and

charity, either because he had a lot of wealth, or because his heirs were rich, or because he had only one daughter, and so forth. Or, we could conduct a sort of statistical poll and speak of what *most* of the versions tell us about all of these issues and construct a sort of 'mean version of the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ. A third option is to choose those elements from various versions of Sa'd's *ḥadīth* which make most sense to us from our prior study of the history of early Islam.

Each of these options, and a few which I have not listed, have been explored in the attention this *ḥadīth* has received at the hands of Western¹³ scholars. I hope to have demonstrated, however, that it is simply not possible to discuss any text of this *ḥadīth* without also looking at its chain of narration. In a sense it is erroneous to speak of 'the *ḥadīth* of Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ'. Consider, for example, version 72 where Sa'd says:

نزلت في أربع آيات ، قال : حلفت أُمي أن لا تطعم طعماً ولا تشرب شرباً حتى أكفر
بمحمد ﷺ ، قال : فكنا إذا أردنا أن نطعمها أخذنا عوداً فأدخلنا في فيها ، وصبنا في فيها
الطعام والشراب ، فترلت في هذه الآية : «ووصينا الإنسان بوالديه» إلى قوله «وإن جاهدك
لتشرك بالله ما ليس لك به علم» قال : وكنا على شراب فتفاخرنا ، ففاحرت رجلاً من
الأنصار فرفع بلحى جمل فضرب به أنفي ، ففزره ، قال : فكان أنف سعد مفزوراً ، قال :
ونزل في تحريم الخمر ، قال : وأضبت سيفاً يوم بدر فأتيت به النبي ﷺ ، فقلت : يا نبي الله
نفلني ، قال : ضعه ، قال : قلت : لا تجعل من له غناء كمن لا غناء له ، فقال النبي ﷺ :
ضعه ، فترلت : يسألونك عن الأنفال ، قال : ونزلت في آية الوصية .

Four statements of the Qur'an were revealed about me. (Sa'd) said: My mother swore that she would not eat or drink anything until I denied [the message of] the Prophet ﷺ. (Sa'd) said: So when we

13- It is clear that there are two groups of scholars who work in almost complete mutual independence on the *ḥadīth* literature. A simple index of this independence is that there are two distinct corpora of bibliographic references which are considered necessary by each group. How one should refer to the two groups is not entirely evident. There are many 'Muslim scholars' whose work is clearly in the 'Western' style, and there are many 'Western' scholars whose work falls squarely within the classical Islamic tradition of *ḥadīth* study. A more descriptive terminology would be to refer to scholars who work within the classical Islamic tradition of *ḥadīth* study and those who work within the modern critical historical tradition of *ḥadīth* study. I simply use the words 'Western' and 'Muslim' as an abbreviation to refer to these two groups of scholars.

wanted to feed her we would take a stick and enter it into her mouth (to keep it open) and then we would pour food and drink into her mouth. So the following statement of the Qur'an was revealed about me: '... and we enjoin man to be good to his parents ...' to God's statement '... but if they struggle against you to make you associate with Allah that which you do not know ...'. (Sa'd) said: We were gathered around drink and we began to compete with each other in boasting. I began to out-boast a man from amongst the *Anṣār* so he picked up the jaw-bone of a camel and he hit me on the nose with it. ((A narrator) said: So Sa'd's nose was broken.) (Sa'd) said: The statement of the Qur'an stating the prohibition of alcohol was revealed about me. (Sa'd) said: On the day of the battle of Badr I found a sword, so I brought it to the Prophet. I said: 'O Prophet ﷺ of God, grant it to me.' He said: 'Leave it.' (Sa'd) said: I said, 'Do not treat a warrior the way you would treat someone who cannot protect himself.' So the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Leave it.' Then the statement of the Qur'an 'And they ask you about the spoils of war...' was revealed. (Sa'd) said: And the statement of the Qur'an regarding inheritance was revealed about me.

This, too, is a *'hadīth* of Sa'd! Consider also version 92 related by 'Ā'isha bint Sa'd from her father Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās:

قال سعد : اشتكيت بمكة فدخل علي رسول الله ﷺ يعودني ، فمسح وجهي وصدري ، وبطني ، وقال : اللهم اشف سعدا ، فما زلت يخيل إلي أني أجد برد يده ﷺ على كبدي حتى الساعة .

Sa'd said: I became ill in Makkah so the Messenger ﷺ of God came to visit me. He passed his hand over my face and my chest and my stomach and said: 'O God, heal Sa'd!' To this moment it seems to me as if I can feel the coolness of the touch of his hand on my heart.

Viewing simply the texts of these *'hadīths*, one is rapidly driven to the desperation exhibited in the 'composite version' of the *'hadīth* of Sa'd at the beginning of this section. Notice, however, that one could create such a situation of desperation even using the materials provided by the *'hadīths* of 'Āmir—Sa'd. It is just that, having assigned weights to the various narrators and their narrations, one is able to see one's way through the undifferentiated mass of texts which would go by the name of 'the *'hadīth* of 'Āmir from Sa'd'.

Thus, I would suggest that we speak of the 'Āmir's *'hadīth*

from Sa'd, and Mus'ab's *'hadīth* from Sa'd, and 'Ā'isha bint Sa'd's *'hadīth* from Sa'd. In particular in this *'hadīth*, all the *'hadīths* which come through the students of Sa'd are themselves sufficiently homogeneous and often sufficiently distinguished from each other for us to be able to speak of *'hadīths* of students of Sa'd. To aggregate all the *'hadīths* of Sa'd yields far too much disparity even to allow for comparison. Within the *'hadīths* of Sa'd, the level of Zuhri—'Āmir and Sa'd b. Ibrāhīm—'Āmir remains interesting in identifying the sources for the variations within the text. The level of Sufyān—Zuhri—'Āmir and Mālik—Zuhri—'Āmir takes us to the point of tedium. Of course, even this can become important when studying a particular variation within the text; but we can safely speak of a unity within the *'hadīths* well before we get to this subset of the 'Āmir—Sa'd *'hadīths*.

Conclusion

There is an integral link between texts and the names mentioned in the chains of narration through which texts are related. I have demonstrated this phenomenon in the case of one ḥadīth, but I will claim that this is a very typical case. Any ḥadīth which has made it in to Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* will have variants on the same scale as I have located for this ḥadīth.¹⁴ Any theory about the significance of the words in a text of ḥadīths remains incomplete without accounting for the manifestation of this link between texts and chains of narration in the case of that specific text.

A further claim which is implicit in much of my argumentation is that this link between names mentioned in chains of narrations of a specific text and texts reported through those chains describes a regular correlation which is sufficiently uniform for us to be able to trace it across different ḥadīths. In other words, suppose that we first find that the versions being narrated through a specific narrator tend to be associated with peculiarities in the text of a specific ḥadīth. I claim that if we then perform a similar comparative examination of the texts of other ḥadīths in which the name of this narrator figures in the chain of narration, we will find that *on the whole* the tendencies we found in the study of the first ḥadīth will be confirmed and strengthened. The hypothesis formed in the first step can be tested and modified in the second stage.

This is indeed what classical Islamic scholars do when they study ḥadīths. This method of basing judgements on the qualities of narrators by gathering variant versions of ḥadīths narrated by them is implicit in all the work of the *rijāl* scholars starting from the middle of the second century. I do not demand that their judgement be accepted, or that one even follow their methods. It is not even fair to ask that modern Western scholarship achieve the same level of explanatory rigour which the theories of classical Islamic scholars present. Their command of ḥadīth texts and their single-minded dedication to this one discipline are not compatible with the many demands on the time of a scholar in the modern academic environment. I only ask that the correlation

14- A quick look at the discussion at the first occurrence of any ḥadīth in the text of Ibn Ḥajar's *Fath al-Bārī* is enough to locate an initial dozen or so versions of any ḥadīth in Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

between texts and names mentioned in the chains of narrations of texts be seen as data which should be accounted for.

Even if in dealing with ḥadīth texts we are dealing with something like rumours, these rumours exhibit a certain correlation with the chains of narrations attached to these rumours. If we are not willing to credit that these chains of narrations consist of the names of the actual people who narrated the ḥadīth as it reached the compilers of ḥadīth collections, then we must provide an alternative explanation. Theories of Western scholars in this regard would simply dismiss these regularities in correlation between text and chains of narration instead of trying to develop theoretical mechanisms which would explain such correlations.¹⁵ To reject the methodology of *rijāl* which classical ḥadīth scholars have used in studying ḥadīth before such alternative mechanisms are proposed is to abandon a theory with far more actual and potential explanatory power for the sake of a theory which does not even aspire to address a large part of textual data available to us in the ḥadīth literature.

References to the Versions of the Ḥadīth of Sa'd

Below is a list of the sources for 114 versions of the ḥadīth of Sa'd. In the left-hand column, I have noted the version number or numbers, followed by the reference to the ḥadīth in parentheses. For works in which ḥadīths are numbered consecutively I have given the ḥadīth number; otherwise I have provided reference to the volume and page on which the ḥadīth occurs. For ḥadīths

15- Gautier Juynboll does attempt to provide such a mechanism in his theory of certain names achieving popularity at certain times ('An Appraisal of Muslim Ḥadīth Criticism' Chapter 4 in *Muslim Tradition*, Cambridge, 1983). On the other hand, his method in developing this mechanism is fatally flawed by a lack of control groups. He suggests, for example, that the name Ḥaḥṣ b. 'Umar was such a name—there was one real Ḥaḥṣ b. 'Umar, and then other people began to borrow his name to pass off their forged material on the basis of his reliability. Later *rijāl* scholars were faced with a mass of varied material all attributed to Ḥaḥṣ b. 'Umar, so they chose to assume that there were many Ḥaḥṣes. The evidence for this is, for example, that of forty-three people named Ḥaḥṣ, Ibn Ḥajar reports twenty as having fathers by the name of 'Umar (Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852), *Lisān al-Mizān* (Hyderabad, 1329), 6 vols.). But if Juynboll were to look at a biographical dictionary of poets or of physicians, he would find that people whose name is Ḥaḥṣ often do tend to have fathers by the name of 'Umar. Similarly, Ismā'īl will usually be the son of Ibrāhīm, Ḥasan will usually have 'Alī as a father, and so forth. This seems to be a pattern in naming, perhaps having to do with Arab customs regarding patronymics.

in Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* I have used the numbering provided in *Faḥ al-Bārī*.

- 38 (16357) 'Abd al-Razzāq al-San'ānī (d. 211),
46 (16358) *Musannaf*, 11 vols., ed.
98 (16359) Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A'zamī,
99 (16360) (Johannesburg: Majlis 'Ilmi, 1970-2).
- 40 (133) 72 (132) 'Abd b. Ḥumayd (d. 249), *Al-Muntakhab min Musnad 'Abd b. Ḥumayd*, Ed. Ṣubḥī Badrī al-Samarrai and Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Sa'īdī (Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1988).
- 8, 9 (2864) Abū Dā'ūd, Sulaymān b. Ash'ath al-Sijistānī (d.275), *Al-Sunan*, 5 vols., i-iv ed. Muḥammad Muhiyy al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Dār Ihyā' al-Sunna al-Nabawiyya, 1972); vol. v, ed. 'Izzat 'Ubayd al-Da'as 'Ādil al-Sayyid. (Hims: Dār al-Hadith, 1974).
- 16 (737) 56 (730) Abū Ya'lā al-Mawṣilī, Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. al-Muthannā (d. 307), *Al-Musnad*, 5 vols. (incomplete), ed. Husayn Salīm Asad (Damascus: Dār al-Mamun li-l-Turāth, 1984—5).
- 68 (781) 81 (779)
87 (746) 106 (727)
- 75 (6953) 'Alā al-Dīn b. 'Alī b. Balban (d. 739), *Al-Iḥsān bi-Tartīb Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Ilmiyya, 1987).
- 15 (v. 284) 51 (v. 281—2) Al-Baghawī, Ḥusayn b. Mas'ūd b. Al-Farra (d. 516), *Sharḥ al-Sunna*. 14 vols., ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut and Muḥammad Zubayr Shāwīsh (Damascus: al-Maktab al-Ishāmī, 1971-80).
- 12, 13, 21, 36, 37 (vi. 268—9)
60, 74 (vi. 269) Al-Bayḥqī, Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn b. 'Alī (d. 458), *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 10 vols. (Hyderabad: Dāirat al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyya, 1925).
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